Enacting Change: Theatre for Development and Former Child Soldiers

by

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Table of Contents

List of Tables ..... **v**

List of Figures ..... **vi**

Abstract ..... **vii**

List of Abbreviations Used ..... **viii**

Acknowledgements ..... **ix**

Chapter I - Introduction **1**

Definitions 4

Child soldier 4

Theatre for development 5

Cognitive dissonance 5

Internalisation 6

Importance of This Project 6

Overview of Thesis 9

Chapter II – Literature Review **13**

Ugandan Context and LRA History 13

Child Soldiers 17

Theatre for Development 29

Social Psychology: Cognitive Dissonance and Attitude Change 36

Theoretical Framework 40

Chapter III - Methods **43**

Partners 44

Recruitment 49

Data Collection 51

Drama workshops 51
Interviews 58
Observation and field journals 62
Analysis 62
Thematic analysis 63
Engagement and participation categorisation 64
Methodological and Ethical Limitations 66
Language barriers 66
Deference to and fear of Westerners 69
Inadequate sample demographics and size 73
Time considerations 75
Chapter IV – Results 77
Main Themes 77
Access to resources and cooperation 78
Domestic violence 78
Widow's concerns 79
Trauma and stigma 79
Attitude Changes 81
Alcohol abuse 82
Cooperation 83
Self-advocacy 84
Self-accountability 88
Who Changed and Where 90
Gender 91
Engagement and attitude change 91

Emotionality 94
Engagement as the key factor 95
Who Did Not Change and Where 97
Contradictory and Anomalous Results 98
Overall Impact 103
Conclusions and Conditions for Success 105
Participation and engagement 106
Language 107
Consultation and communication 108
Adequate time and compensation 109
Researcher attributes and skills 110
Chapter V – Conclusion 112
References 122
Appendix A 132

List of Tables

Table 1 – Demographics……..50

List of Figures

Figure 1: Attitude changes on the major themes, by gender. …….….91

Figure 2: Engagement and change categories by gender and combatant status……..….92

Abstract

Enacting Change investigated if Theatre be used to activate Psychological processes to change attitudes toward child soldier reintegration and post-conflict community reconciliation. Twenty Lord's Resistance Army returnees and never-recruited community members from northern Uganda participated in a four-week theatre workshop aimed at identifying community problems and practicing reconciliation skills. Workshops were accompanied by a before-during-after interview process to identify themes including productivity, alcoholism, trauma and stigma, and widow's rights. Core attitudes underlying these themes, including advocacy, cooperation, and self-accountability, were highlighted and addressed. Participants viewed the project as successful, and high to moderate attitude change was identified in 15 participants. Possible factors underlying who changed on which topics include age, gender, and combatant status; irrespective of these, active engagement emerged as the strongest determinant of change. Limitations and conditions for future success include participant and facilitator language skills, positionality and power dynamics, consultation and communication, and adequate time and compensation.

List of Abbreviations Used

ABR	Arts-Based Research
DDRR	Disarmament, Demobilisation, Rehabilitation, and Reintegration
EAC	East-African Community
EST	Ecological Systems Theory
GRG	Grassroots Reconciliation Group
HSM	Holy Spirit Movement
ICC	International Criminal Court
IDP	Internally Displaced Person(s)
LRA	Lord's Resistance Army
NRA	National Resistance Army
OSNW	Old Stories in New Ways
PAR	Participatory Action Research
(S)GBV	(Sexual) Gender-Based Violence
TfD	Theatre for Development
UNLA	Ugandan National Liberation Army
UPDA	Ugandan People's Defense Army

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Chapter I - Introduction

> *Although international interventions have helped reduce specific incidences, the practice of child soldiers still persists. It may shift locally, and abate here and there, but it endures globally. Preventative measures, therefore, remain inadequate. Former child soldiers experience challenges in adjusting to civilian life. Reintegration is complex and eventful. The homecoming is only the beginning. Reconciliation within communities afflicted by violence committed by and against child soldiers is incomplete. Shortfalls linger on the restorative front. (Drumbl, 2012, p. 1)*

The above quote may be hard to hear for many organisations trying to address the problems associated with child soldiering. Some of the biggest and best equipped organisations in the field are only equipped to address one side of the problem. The Roméo Dallaire Child Soldiers Initiative here at Dalhousie, for example, focuses its efforts primarily on prevention and management tactics, often to the exclusion of demobilisation and reintegration. More than 250,000 child soldiers currently comprise about 40% of each of the more than 60 armed groups around the globe that use them, despite preventative measures (United Nations General Assembly, 2017). Other organisations, such as World Vision or UNICEF, offer programmes aimed at removing children from militias, rehabilitating them, and reintegrating them back into society. Unfortunately, these programmes tend to fall short on reintegration, often placing children back into their communities with a bit of financial and material support but very little follow-up or ongoing support. Importantly, these programmes tend to isolate the child soldiers as the receivers of assistance, ignoring the needs of community members who are also traumatised by the conflict and are now receiving children who may be foreign to them and who they mistrust. This can spark jealousy in the community members who view the child soldiers as being rewarded for what they have done, and can reinforce stigma and divides by treating the ex-combatants and their community members

differently (Denov, 2010). Programmes often come with vocational training aimed at assisting the child soldiers to find employment. Unfortunately, this training is usually based on what the organisation thinks is economically viable and floods the market with an influx of people starting businesses in a particular trade, which devalues the skillset (Ozerdem & Podder, 2011). All of these problems coalesce to trap the community in cycles of poverty and violence that can put children at risk of being (re)recruited.

Enacting change: Theatre for Development and Former Child Soldiers tested a new method of using participant-focused dramatic processes to increase communication between former child soldiers and other community members in northern Uganda, with the goal of fostering reconciliation within the community. My project asked, **is theatre a viable tool for increasing communication and changing attitudes toward child soldier reintegration and reconciliation in war-affected communities?** In particular, I was interested in if theatre increase acceptance of and willingness to advocate for what one needs and wants while also listening to others and hearing their concerns. Initially, this was focused on tensions between former child soldiers and never-recruited community members related to ongoing trauma and stigma; however these concerns were not as poignant for these people as the literature led me to expect. Sub-questions that arose through the project included: to what extent do previous interventions impact the participants and their relationship to the current project? 13 years after the conflict ended, how much do combatant and/or community member identities still impact them? What is the role of time in the healing and ongoing reconciliation process? Social Psychological theories and literature suggest that dramatic processes will increase communication between former child soldiers and never-recruited community members, activating

psychological processes of cognitive dissonance, internalisation of performed behaviours, and, ultimately, positive attitude change. This project sought to investigate if these assertions hold up in practice. Results show that they may have. However, previous interventions with which participants have engaged, the natural healing process that occurs when one has been removed from the conflict and fighter/community member identities for a substantial period, and variables outside the control of the project may lessen the impact. While the participants' experiences and identities still impact them today, and hardships are exacerbated by an economic and political landscape that is similarly still scarred from the conflict, the contention between ex-combatants and those who were never recruited is tempered. This is not to say, however, that work is not still needed, and ongoing reconciliation and reintegration processes are still vital.

Programmes must be realistic in scope and goal. Prevention efforts are valuable but will be ineffective without adequate support for reintegration as a means of re-recruitment prevention. Programmes must be long-term if they expect to adequately reintegrate ex-combatants and foster community reconciliation. Support is needed for all people affected by the conflict and ongoing tensions if the goal is to unite communities. Importantly, programmes must be initiated from the perspective of the participants, with their self-identified needs and goals addressed in a manner that works for them, if organisations hope to help break communities out of cycles of poverty and violence. Reconciliation is a process, not an end-state, and requires constant attention and engagement from all actors involved.

Definitions

The interdisciplinary nature of this project requires that terms from several fields of study be used. These terms will be expanded on in the literature review chapter, but brief definitions of important terms are offered here.

Child soldier: According to the Paris Principles (United Nations Children's Fund, 2007), a child soldier is:

> any person below 18 years of age who is or has been recruited or used by an armed force or armed group in any capacity, including but not limited to children, boys and girls, used as fighters, cooks, porters, messengers, spies, or for sexual purposes. It does not only refer to a child who is taking or has taken a direct part in hostilities.

There are typically three ways of referring to these children in the reintegration literature: 'former child soldier', 'war-affected youth', and 'children associated with armed forces and armed groups.' For example, Betancourt (2010) uses all three terms in the abstract of her article alone. Each term has its own strengths and weaknesses. For example, they draw into question the meanings of 'child' and 'soldier,' and obscure the tensions between legal definitions and cultural understandings of these terms. In addition, the terms differ in their inclusivity, with 'war-affected youth' being so broad as to encapsulate every young person impacted by a conflict, directly or vicariously, thus rendering it effectively meaningless, and 'children associated with armed forces and armed groups' rightly differentiating between State-sponsored and illegitimate militias, highlighting the complicity of government armies in child soldier use.

For the purposes of this thesis, I will use the term 'returnee' to refer to those who meet the Paris Principle's definition of a child soldier, and 'community members' to refer to those who were never recruited. There are two key reasons for this. The first is that 'returnee' is age- and affiliation-neutral. Not all the participants in this project were under

the age of 18 when they were recruited. All but one were culturally considered youth (i.e. under 30) at the time of recruitment, but the international legal definitions do not accommodate such cultural specificity. They also held different jobs, went through cycles of return and re-recruitment, and were not all recruited by the same group. 'Returnee' simply states that regardless of age or affiliation, they were recruited and then they came back. The second, more important reason, is that this is how they refer to themselves. Regardless of the terminology typically used in the field and the literature, the post-modern theoretical framework within which this project was situated, and indeed the arguments in favour of participant-centric work, requires that I use the language that participants use for themselves.

Theatre for development: Theatre for Development (TfD) is a suite of methods that uses dramatic and theatrical processes to interrogate difficult social issues within divided communities (Breed, 2002). It creates a platform for inappropriate or unsafe conversations to be started, with a goal of moving toward positive social change. Traditionally, TfD aims to give voice to those who are marginalised by their societies, and educate communities about issues of importance to them. While collective creation and other performance techniques may be employed to do this, TfD need not culminate in a performance to be valuable. The dramatic processes in and of themselves can be change agents (Prentki & Selman, 2000).

Cognitive dissonance: In Social Psychology, cognitive dissonance is the term given to the uncomfortable psychological state that arises when one engages in a behaviour that is inconsistent with one's attitudes or beliefs. Individuals are subconsciously motivated to alleviate this tension through one of four dissonance

reduction strategies. Typically, these strategies will fail, resulting in one changing one's attitudes to be in line with the exhibited behaviour (Festinger, 1957).

Internalisation: When one comes to identify with a behaviour and fully accept the underlying attitude as one's own, internalisation has occurred. This is a process as well as an end state: as the dissonance reduction strategies fail, the individual experiencing cognitive dissonance begins to identify more and more with the behaviour; when they have all failed and the individual's attitude has changed to be in line with the exhibited behaviour, internalisation has occurred (Deci & Ryan, 2012).

Importance of This Project

The use of child soldiers is strictly prohibited by a number of international laws and doctrines, including articles 38 and 39 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) and its optional protocol (2000), and article three of the International Labour Organisation's Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention (1999). Yet in 2016 over 60 armed groups at the national or subnational level continued the practice of recruiting and using them. In northern Uganda, the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) has a decades-long history of abducting children and using them in their militias. The conflict formally ended in 2006, however the tens of thousands of children who were used by the LRA still struggle with their psychosocial reintegration today, and the country itself is still largely underdeveloped and impoverished.

In the northern region, which was the hotbed of LRA recruitment and violence, the Acholi ethnic group suffered, and suffers, more than most. In addition to the physical, mental, and economic devastation of the people, land, and culture, Ugandan tribal politics and government corruption places the Acholi in a highly oppressed position (Branch,

2010). The participants in *Enacting Change* are testament to this. These people live in an impoverished rural community outside of Gulu Town. They live in traditional Acholi huts without running water or electricity, and are predominantly subsistence farmers who sell what little they can at local markets, where they are subjected to unethical economic practices. Many of the participants struggle to engage in agricultural activities due to long-term injuries sustained during the war. Lingering trauma and psychological damage are apparent in many of these individuals, and stigma is still apparent, particularly when tensions run high. Some of the women have lost husbands due to conflict or illness, leaving them to do the work typically assigned to men as well as their own, and making them vulnerable to being forced off their land or preyed upon by other men. All but one participant have in excess of five children each, most of whom are not in school, and the highest grade level any of the participants themselves achieved was Primary 7 (equivalent to Grade 6 in Canada). The closest water borehole is one mile away, and is shared amongst the approximately 3000 people who live in the region. The closest school is several miles away and across a stream, making it unsafe for young children to make the trek. There are traditional healers in the community, but the nearest licensed medical centre or pharmacy is in Gulu Town, some 45 minutes away by boda (i.e. motorcycle taxis). The dirt pathways in and around the village are not well maintained, making these incredibly long journeys difficult even if they can find the fare. Lack of local political representation and a corrupt and/or hostile National government that benefits from the continued oppression of the northern region makes this situation seem insurmountable.

This seemingly dire situation will be returned to in the conclusion, but it points to the importance of a project like this. Despite the passage of more than a decade since the

fighting ended, the people and economy in northern Uganda still suffer. Interventions are needed to address ongoing economic, political, inter-ethnic, and inter-personal conflicts; given that a large part of northern Uganda's economy is built around the Development industry, the fact that these problems persist demonstrates the need for long-term reintegration and reconciliation projects that typical programmes do not incorporate. Post-conflict communities that work for reconciliation, make strides toward ending conflict and violence at all levels, and bring the community to an adequate level of psychosocial and economic development are insulated from the cycles of poverty and violence that are so prevalent in much of the world (Schiltz, Vindevogel, Broekaert & Derluyn, 2015).

Theatre, and indeed the arts in general, are often seen outside of the Fine Arts as a distraction, something that can bring joy to those who are suffering and ease the pain they endure. Alternatively, art is often used therapeutically, as a means of expressing oneself. Those who suffer can artistically represent how they feel, allowing an outlet for pent-up emotion and a cathartic release for those who witness and interact with the art. Researchers have studied the impact of art in these contexts, where the art object and the individuals' relationship to it are studied (Osei-Kofi, 2013). Theatre is unique in that it is simultaneously a process and a product, allowing for the process of creating the art to be studied alongside the product and people's relationships to it. *Enacting Change* investigates the utility of theatre as a means of enhancing communication within the community, and the psychological impact of engaging in dramatic processes based on self-identified issues. By collectively identifying issues within a community and using theatre to enable conversations about these issues while identifying possible solutions, the

art is not the object of study but rather the artistic process is (Selman & Battye, 2016). Core communication, problem identification and solving, and listening skills are developed through dramatic processes.

Even within TfD, an artistic product is nearly always an outcome goal. While the process is still the focus of the research, process is often superseded by product, and evaluation is often seen as trying to objectify the subjective. *Enacting Change* differs in not having a product focus and has a clear evaluative component. Thus, this project seeks to contribute to the fields of International Development and Theatre, while the implications for internalisation, including conditions for it to occur, can advance understandings of attitude formation and change processes within Social Psychology.

It is important to note that this project was meant to be exploratory and to test a methodology. The time and resources allotted to the project were insufficient to accomplish all the goals I set out to accomplish, and I cannot say with certainty that the particular form of TfD this project investigated can do what the intersecting theories and literatures suggest. However, I can say that the methodology has demonstrated the potential to achieve important objectives, and additional investigation is warranted.

Overview of Thesis

This thesis begins with a comprehensive literature review, outlining the dominant approaches in each of the three fields identified above – i.e., Development, Theatre, and Social Psychology. I will situate *Enacting Change* in the historical and current Ugandan political landscape, then explore the concept of child soldiering broadly and as it specifically pertains to Uganda. In this section I will unpack the theoretical, legal, and philosophical debates surrounding child soldiers. Long-term impacts on the children and

communities affected by child soldiering will be discussed, along with programmes which have attempted to prevent recruitment, rehabilitate children, and reintegrate them into their communities.

Next, I will discuss Theatre for Development, and give a brief overview of its historical and current uses broadly and specifically within Uganda. Theoretical and philosophical debates within the literature will be unpacked, including the introduction of the particular style used in this project as a response to some of these critiques..

Cognitive dissonance and attitude change will then be discussed. An argument will be made for why TfD should theoretically result in cognitive dissonance and internalisation leading to attitude change, and how the fields of TfD and Social Psychology can complement each other. This section will be linked back to child soldiers and the role of internalisation in shifting between identities and indoctrinating the children into the culture of the militia. The chapter ends by outlining the integrative framework of analysis upon which this project was structured.

Chapter three outlines the methods employed within the project. The first section introduces my collaborators and partners: Rafiki Theatre, Grassroots Reconciliation Group (GRG), and John Battye. Data collection methods are detailed next. The primary method of collection was the theatre workshops themselves. The main themes we addressed are detailed, including (lack of) access to resources, (lack of) cooperation, gender (in)equality, alcohol abuse, and trauma and stigma. How we arrived at these themes will also be discussed.

The theatre workshops were accompanied by a three-stage interview process. The before-during-after process will be justified in terms of the utility of the process for

ascertaining and making change and strengthening the workshops. Finally, participant observation and field journals are described.

Following this, analysis methods are presented. Thematic analysis was conducted on interview data to identify which themes resonated most with which people, and to identify areas of cognitive dissonance induction, internalisation, and attitude change. Observation and field journal data analysis was also conducted to provide context and substantiation to interview and theatre workshop data. Patterns were disaggregated by age, gender, combatant status, and emotionality. Methodological and ethical limitations and challenges are also discussed.

Chapter four outlines results. The chapter begins with a deeper discussion of the main themes interrogated within the project. Following this, the main areas of attitude change participants experienced are detailed. The strongest area of attitude change was alcohol use and abuse, and change was also seen in relation to cooperation, self-advocacy, and self-accountability. The areas of change were disaggregated by gender, age, combatant status, and emotionality. Ultimately, I will argue that while some or all of these factors may play a role in internalisation, what really matters is engagement. Contradictory and anomalous results are presented, and successes and failures will be highlighted, including ideal or necessary conditions for a project like this to be successful in the future.

The thesis concludes by arguing for the utility of TfD in child soldier reintegration and community reconciliation, reiterating the main results and the necessary or ideal conditions for success. The concept of 'stretch collaboration' will be introduced to highlight how the conclusions reached throughout the thesis are already in practice in

other aspects of the Social Sciences. Participants views on future benefits will be highlighted, as well as aspects of the project GRG and Rafiki are interested in incorporating into their work. Potential areas of future research, building on the current project, will be highlighted.

Throughout this thesis, it is important to understand the lens through which I view myself, the people with whom I work, and the world around me. I am a white, disabled, femme-presenting queer Canadian female working in a global, patriarchal, ableist colonial framework. This identity carries both privileges and oppressions, and impacts the way in which I conduct and analyse my research. Positionality will be an important aspect of the thesis moving forward.

Chapter II - Literature Review

This chapter explores the existing literature pertinent to the three fields used in this study. The chapter begins with an overview of the Ugandan post-colonial history, including the rise and fall of the LRA and its aftermath. Next, the literature surrounding child soldiers and their use will be presented, including theory, legal provisions, and disarmament, demobilisation, rehabilitation/reintegration (DDRR) programmes. A brief background on TfD theory and practice follows. Next, a discussion of the Social Psychological processes of cognitive dissonance and internalisation will be related back to the situation of child soldiers. The chapter concludes with an explanation of the theoretical framework underpinning this project.

Ugandan Context and LRA History

In 1986, following decades of post-colonial civil conflict, largely along ethnic and geographic lines, Yoweri Museveni's National Resistance Army (NRA) overthrew the government's Ugandan National Liberation Army (UNLA). Museveni was sworn in as president and has held the position ever since. While the violence and political upheaval has not ended, it has in many ways lessened, and relative political stability has endured. The NRA, backed by Bantu ethnic groups in the south, became the new government force; the UNLA, backed by Nilotic ethnic groups in the north, comprised predominantly of Acholi and Lang'o, fractured and scattered. Some fled across the border into southern Sudan (present-day South Sudan) to regroup; others stayed in the north and formed the Ugandan People's Defense Army (UDPA). Some turned to spirit mediums, hoping to retake their country through the channeling of spirits (Allen & Vlassenroot, 2010).

Alice Auma of the Acholi, claiming to be an *Ajwaka,* or spirit medium, began healing and cleansing former UNLA soldiers. Many of the former soldiers were afflicted by *Cen*, or the spirits of those who have been killed which attach themselves to the killer and plague them with nightmares, bad memories, and emotional instability. Auma, who called herself Lakwena, interpreted the war as strength and a form of healing in itself, as those who survived must be 'pure' and thus could not be killed. She claimed that the NRA were kidnapping children and imprisoning them in Gulu Town, a community in the heart of Acholiland; the spirits ordered her to form an army and rescue them. This began the Holy Spirit Movement (HSM). Lakwena and the HSM swept through the northern region, taking over the territory and eventually driving south to Kampala. They were defeated just outside Kampala in 1987, and Lakwena fled to Kenya.

During this time, Joseph Kony, an Acholi man who claimed to be Lakwena's cousin and likewise an *Ajwaka,* rose to prominence among his people. He attempted to join forces with the HSM but was rebuked, leading him to kill some of its followers and recruit his own. Kony quickly amassed a substantial following among the Acholi and Lang'o to challenge the NRA presence in the north. By 1988, the group had become known as the Lord's Resistance Army (Allen & Vlassenroot, 2010).

Identity politics have played a substantial role in post-colonial Uganda. Particularly in the north, all rebellions (the UPDA, the HSM, and the LRA) have been rooted in Acholi identity and crises not only nationally, but internally within Acholiland and the northern region (Branch, 2010). Each of these groups have "endeavoured to resolve the internal crisis through the violent resolution of the national crisis, to create internal order through military struggle against a common enemy, all cast in ethnic

terms" (Branch, 2010, p. 25). Museveni and the NRA have exploited this from the start, appealing both to tribal and regional identity for support and resistance. This appeal to identity resulted in the formation of the UPDA, which rose up as a united Acholi rebellion against the NRA, but eventually exacerbated the existing internal conflict as some factions of the UPDA began looting and forcibly recruiting Acholi people. The LRA emerged from this breakdown: as the UPDA dissolved, the rebels either fled, took the blanket amnesty that was offered by the government, joined the NRA, or assumed a civilian identity; the LRA was a viable alternative for those who wanted to continue fighting and still opposed Museveni's leadership. Kony integrated ethnic identity with regional identity, associating the 'traitors' who joined the NRA with the south, and adopted Lakwena's language of the 'pure' Acholi to launch attacks against the NRA and the 'traitors' who joined them. This legitimised the LRA's attacks on their own people (Branch, 2010). These ethnic and regional tensions persist in Uganda today.

Kony is popularly seen as a madman with no political ambitions who is hellbent on pushing his religious agenda (Schomerus, 2010a). While Kony does identify as an *Ajwaka* and a Christian, this representation is problematic as it ignores the wider cultural-religious context of Uganda and its use in rebellion: the distorted use of Christianity and traditional Acholi spirituality allows Kony to control his recruits and gain legitimacy among his followers (Titeca, 2010). The media focus on Christian fundamentalism also obscures the legitimacy the LRA may actually have, and that Westerners choose not to see (Titeca, 2010). Kony has expressed his political ambitions in interviews: to oust Museveni from Uganda and return Acholi rule to Acholiland. Ultimately, he asserted, he wants the people of Uganda to be free. While that may include living by the Ten

Commandments, Kony asserted his belief that Christianity is simply the way the world does and should run anyway and that he is not a fundamentalist (Schomerus, 2010b).

The LRA is notorious for its recruitment of children. Although Kony denies the practice (Schomerus, 2010b), tens of thousands of children have been kidnapped and forced into servitude as soldiers, cooks, porters, spies, and sex slaves. It is difficult to estimate how many children have faced this fate due to the variable lengths of recruitment, cycles of release and re-recruitment, and sub-par documentation (Annan, Blattman & Horton, 2006). While active conflict and recruitment ended nearly 15 years ago, the ongoing impacts remain deeply entrenched.

In 1991, the NRA launched Operation North to crush the LRA. This resulted in the LRA ramping up attacks and kidnapping more children. The Acholi began forming 'arrow brigades'—local defense units to protect themselves from both the NRA and the LRA. In 1994, a tentative ceasefire between the LRA and Museveni's government allowed peace talks to take place. Museveni decided that this was not enough, and instead issued a full ceasefire ultimatum, giving the LRA seven days to surrender. Kony broke the agreement and further ramped up attacks. Museveni claimed that Kony was only pretending to be involved in the peace talks to buy time while his forces regrouped in Sudan, while Kony blamed Museveni for maintaining the war to bolster southern support against the north. During this time, Sudan became involved, with various factions in their ongoing civil war supporting the LRA or NRA. The forced recruitment of children spiked to supply the LRA with more soldiers for its joint activities in Uganda and Sudan.

1995 was an election year in Uganda, and the LRA offered a ceasefire during the elections. Kony claimed that if Museveni was defeated, he would end the war entirely.

Museveni won by a landslide, and the fighting continued. In 2000, the Ugandan government issued another amnesty, urging all rebels to come out of the bush and surrender, where they would be processed through cantonment sites and reintegrated into civilian society. Many rebels took the amnesty. However, the 2002 Anti-Terrorism Act put substantial limits on who could avail themselves of the amnesty, and so the fighting picked up again. This resurgence of rebel activity sparked Operation Iron Fist, a joint exercise between the Ugandan and Sudanese armies against the LRA in both countries. Kony and his upper echelons escaped, taking more children than ever in their wake. Following this, the Ugandan government began placing the Acholi people in satellite Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camps, ostensibly for their own protection, despite limited protection being provided. The newly-minted Ugandan People's Defense Force (UPDF) threatened an Operation Iron Fist II in 2004 alongside a new wave of amnesty offers, and some 5000 people demobilised. This, combined with the International Criminal Court's (ICC) involvement in the conflict in 2003,[1] resulted in the LRA scaling back their attacks, and in 2004 the LRA was finally pushed out of Uganda into Sudan, and eventually the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and the Central African Republic (CAR) (Allen & Vlassenroot, 2010), where the remnants are still active.

Child Soldiers

Existing literature regarding child soldiers typically focuses on root causes of child soldiering, methods by which children come to be associated with armed groups,

[1] In 2003, the ICC issued arrest warrants for Kony and four other LRA leaders. The details of the warrant were initially kept secret so as not to spook the men and to encourage government involvement, but were eventually released once the LRA fled to neighbouring countries. The warrants covered Uganda, South Sudan, and the DRC, but not the CAR, which is where the LRA has been hiding since. In addition to the arrest warrants, the ICC launched investigations into the various armed forces and armed groups complicit in the conflict, which combined with the Anti-Terrorism Act to effectively overturn the amnesty.

and psychosocial outcomes of child soldiering, particularly long-term mental health. Dallaire (2010) highlighted several reasons why armed groups may choose to recruit children instead of (or in addition to) adults. Commanders establish loyalty quickly by exploiting social hierarchies that teach children to obey their elders, and by desensitising them to violence. Armed groups provide children with basic necessities and a family that they may not have in their community. Commanders can easily convince children of the war's legitimacy and may also prey on their desire to protect their people and avenge the deaths of their loved ones. Children usually are plentiful, providing an easy source of cheap labour that requires limited resources, and are in steady supply due to youth bulges in many affected countries. This is also a reason for the recruitment of girls: they can be impregnated, providing a new generation of soldiers. Girls are also targeted to be given to male combatants as rewards and incentives, and their cultural gender roles as domestic labourers can be reproduced in bush camps (Denov, 2008; Denov & Richard-Guay, 2013). Children are also disposable. Armed groups do not spend valuable resources on an injured child soldier: if they die, there are plenty of replacements. In fact, they are often used as minesweepers and bodyguards for this reason. Finally, children are unexpected: When faced with an armed and hostile child, a professional soldier may shoot, resulting in psychological damage at having killed a child, or hesitate and be killed. Either way, the militia has succeeded in weakening the opposing army (Dallaire, 2010). The interconnected social factors that create poverty, including insecurity, stringent gender roles, lack of health and sanitation, poor infrastructure, weak governance, and educational deficits that are present in communities affected by intrastate conflict put children at increased risk of being kidnapped or manipulated (Denov, 2008; Blattman & Annan,

2008) or feeling the need to join an armed group (Jal, 2009; Beah, 2007). Girls may feel that protection from structural gendered violence in their community and levels of equality will be better in an armed group (Mazuarana, 2013).

Considerable research in recent years focused on the psychosocial outcomes of child soldiering, particularly long-term mental health. Betancourt's studies (Betancourt et. al., 2008; Betancourt, 2010; Betancourt et. al., 2010) followed a cohort of returnees in Sierra Leone from their DDRR programme to six years post-demobilisation. They determined that the long-term mental health of returnees is lower than their never-recruited counterparts, particularly in terms of emotional disturbances like depression and anxiety. They also found that community and family support, access to education, and employment were strong mitigating factors, enhancing the mental health functioning of those impacted. These results point to the importance of adequate support and reintegration of returnees.

Annan, Blattman, and Horton (2006), Blattman and Annan (2008) and Annan, Blattman, Mazurana, and Carlson (2009) took a different approach, arguing that unlike Sierra Leone, Uganda provides a built-in control: since all the children were abducted, they are not statistically different from those who were not abducted in terms of demographics or aptitude. These scholars conducted the largest survey of war affected youth (SWAY) in the region by tracking 750 male returnees across the country in 2005 and 2006. They assessed the participants' psychosocial functioning and determined that while many of them exhibited some psychological distress, they were not severely impacted, and distress was mitigated by an accepting, welcoming community and community-based reintegration techniques. This is important, particularly given that

approximately half of the participants went through no formal DDRR programme. The authors also conducted a female companion study involving 619 participants, following the same process and finding similar results. Female returnees were not psychologically different than their never-recruited counterparts, with the exception of those who had given birth, who experienced stigma and were less likely to return to school. They also demonstrated that, while female returnees initially struggled more with reintegration than male returnees, both groups eventually reintegrated quite well, although females continued to be twice as likely to be rejected and stigmatised than males. One important difference between the male and female outcomes is that unlike males, females did not experience a significant decrease in employment opportunities. The authors suggested that this could be because women in general in Uganda have low employment opportunities, so lack of employment reflects structural and cultural gender-based violence rather than a recruitment outcome. Here I am using Galtung's definitions of structural (1969) and cultural (1990) violence, which see violence as being "present when human beings are being influenced so that their actual somatic and mental realizations are below their potential realizations" (Galtung, 1969, p. 168), regardless of the physical, structural, or cultural origin(s) of the influence. In the context of the present study, participants face both structural and cultural violences daily. Structurally, they are oppressed by a corrupt government that allocates resources along ethnic lines, with the Acholi consistently disadvantaged. This is exacerbated by global structural inequalities like White supremacy and Westerncentrism. Culturally, the participants are oppressed differentially based on their age, gender, combatant status, ability status, and marital status.

Much literature focuses on issues on the fringes of child soldiering, for example, resilience and agency (Schnabel & Tabyshalieva, 2013; Popovski, 2013) and the legal status of child soldiers (Drumbl, 2012). Authors focusing on these issues argue in favour of moving away from the passive victim image of child soldiers espoused by scholars and legal doctrines, and instead recognising the agency that is often exercised and articulated by children in joining, surviving, and leaving the armed group, and remaking their lives and societies moving forward (Denov, 2011).

Literature on the effectiveness of and ways of improving DDRR programmes is plentiful. Unfortunately, it tends to focus more on the disarmament and demobilisation aspect of the programmes and simply critique the ineffectiveness of rehabilitation and reintegration without offering viable solutions (Williamson, 2005; Geenen, 2007; Mazurana & Eckerbom-Cole, 2013; Knight & Ozerdem, 2004). This tends to mirror how DDRR programmes themselves play out (Knight, 2008).

This is not to say, however, that no one has reported successful reintegration efforts. McKay and Mazurana (2004) for example, established Participatory Action Research (PAR) groupings of female returnees in Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Northern Uganda. These young women all returned from their armed group pregnant or with children. Through microloans, vocational training, and ad-hoc banking systems, the women became financially self-sufficient and created the kind of reintegration that they felt was appropriate. Importantly, each of the 20 field sites ran a project which was participant driven and functioned within the specific local culture, demonstrating the need for bottom-up, inside-out programming (see also McKay et. al., 2010; Veale, Worthen, & McKay, 2017). Wessels (2006) described a similar project in Sierra Leone. Returnees and

community members were brought together to define their own goals for reconciliation. This was a largely dialogic process, allowing people to discuss their thoughts, ideas, and fears, and generate a list of priorities for moving forward. Using storytelling and games, participants were able to develop cooperation skills and appropriate interactions, as well as teach each other about what the children and communities had endured during the war.

Successful reintegration is essential for community rehabilitation and reconciliation, which is necessary to prevent or end the cycle of poverty and violence that is so prevalent in these communities. Poverty and violence are intrinsically linked on many levels. Studies have shown that as little as a five percent drop in per capita income can increase the risk of civil conflict in a community by as much as fifty percent (Miguel, 2007). While historically intrastate violence has been seen as the outcome of ethnic conflict or lack of liberal democracy, Miguel, Satyanath, and Sergenti (2004, cited in Miguel, 2007) demonstrated that this has less of an effect on violence than expected. They did, however, suggest that such factors may be mediators: States with strong, democratic governments and infrastructure may be insulated from this effect. Brainard, Chollet, and LaFleur (2007) followed this line of reasoning, arguing that "extreme poverty exhausts governing institutions, depletes resources, weakens leaders, and crushes hope" (p. 1). This begins a cycle where "poverty is both a cause of insecurity and a consequence of it" (Brainard et al., 2007, p. 2). This cycle often leads to re-recruitment of returnees. Wessels and Jonah (2006) demonstrated the importance of not only psychosocial and economic reintegration for returnees but also of community reconciliation: returnees and community members must learn to forgive and trust each other and work together to create a new community going forward to break out of the

cycle. Knight and Ozerdem (2004) demonstrated a strong positive correlation between lasting post-conflict peace and successful DDRR programmes across several countries in three continents over a 20-year span, reinforcing these assertions.

The largest hurdle to reintegration for returnees to overcome is stigma. According to Denov and Marchand (2014), "whether having been associated with an armed group by force or nonforce [sic], children's former affiliation with an armed group, and/or their participation in acts of violence may instigate suspicion, mistrust, and rejection among family, community, peers, and the larger society" (p. 228). There is a breakdown of trust between returnees and community members, in which community members are angry at and afraid of returnees for what they have done, while returnees are angry at community members for allowing them to be vulnerable. There are also difficulties with communication: returnees want to be treated as the adults they now feel they are despite being culturally considered youths and feel that community members do not understand what they have been through. This is particularly the case for girls, who often return home pregnant or with children resulting from sexual violence (Dallaire, 2010; McKay & Mazurana, 2004). Given that these communities typically hold stringent gender roles and morals surrounding women's sexuality, this 'pre-marital sex'—regardless of how consensual or coerced it was—often results in girls and their children being shunned and/or abused. Long-term mental health and psychosocial functioning of returnees may be poor, and manifestations of anxiety or depression may be seen as hostility or *Cen,* further exacerbating stigma.

The planning and executing of DDRR programmes is also problematic. Knight (2008) investigated seven DDRR programmes in Africa,[2] and showed that they tend to be isolated from the broader environment of peace and security, post-conflict reconciliation, and peacebuilding: they are treated as stand-alone interventions that do not necessarily relate to ongoing community efforts to create and maintain peace. Knight also noted the ineffectiveness of applying interventions that were considered successful in one context to another. Finally, he showed that many DDRR programmes offer education and skills training packages that are inadequate or out of touch with the economic and social environment. Authors within Ozerdem & Podder (2011) highlighted case studies such as Sierra Leone (Utas) and Mozambique (McMullin) where all returnees in a community were given the same skills training, thus flooding the market, or were offered training that was economically useless for them.

Nduwimana (2013) highlighted a number of issues with reintegration programmes in the DRC that hampered effectiveness, specifically poor planning and lack of consultation with the local population resulting in inadequate and misplaced resourcing. On the other hand, Williamson (2005) demonstrated that in Sierra Leone, "there [were] too many contingencies that [arose]…to specify in advance procedures to handle them all. Therefore, DDR[R] procedures and training should allow for on-the-ground decision-making in keeping with key child protection and human rights principles" (p. 10).

These problems have gendered implications: DDRR programmes were originally designed for adult, male soldiers, and while they have increasingly been adapted for children and females, most of them still do not adequately support the gendered needs of

[2] Angola, Democratic Republic of Congo, Burundi, Liberia, Côte d'Ivoire, Sierra Leone, Sudan.

female soldiers. Girl soldiers often do not have a weapon to turn in to verify they were a soldier (a requirement for entry into many DDRR programmes) as they either never had one or ditched it in the bush. Moreover, in many of these communities women lack access to scarce resources that are typically reserved for men, resulting in their admittance to programmes being denied in favour of boys and men (Mazurana & Eckerbom-Cole, 2013). In Sierra Leone and Liberia, girls were systemically excluded from DDRR programmes, particularly those with children, as the programmes lacked pediatric or obstetric-gynaecological infrastructure (Wessels, 2006).

Studies have also demonstrated the specific barriers to reintegration that exist in northern Uganda. In the early days of LRA child abduction, ad hoc DDRR programmes were initiated by the Ugandan government which were ineffective at best and damaging at worst. Abductees were 'rescued' from the bush and taken directly to their home village, where they faced stigma from villagers and biopsychosocial adaptation concerns due to not being properly treated, or were held on treason charges and consequently incarcerated, which contravenes international law in the case of children. World Vision and Save the Children began formalizing DDRR programmes in 1994, including programmes for children and girls, and the blanket amnesties reduced the number of people incarcerated. Despite this, approximately 25% of returnees spontaneously reintegrated, meaning they escaped or left a group and went straight home, reintegrating quietly and without any formal support (Borzello, 2007). According to Akello, Richters, and Reis (2006), despite the blanket amnesty and international law protecting children from prosecution, 70% of prisoners in Uganda in 2006 were returnees. This may help explain the high number of spontaneous reintegrations as compared with other conflicts.

It is also important to note the economic and social situation in northern Uganda. As previously noted, at the height of the conflict, the Ugandan government placed the entire Acholi populace in IDP satellite camps 'for their own protection.' While these camps are finally starting to empty, with people moving back to their traditional homelands, in 2004-2005 when mass demobilisation occurred following the ceasefire, people were still forcibly confined to these camps. This is the environment to which ex-combatants returned. Given this, it is clear why returnees struggle to become what they and their communities want them to be (Borzello, 2007). Moreover, many DDRR programmes employed sensitisation visits, whereby a social worker arrived at a community with or ahead of a group of returnees and explained to the community what the children have been through and how they need to be supported. This exposed things returnees would rather have kept secret, and also led to community members generalising the experiences of one returnee to all of them (Akello et. al, 2006). This stigma, coupled with jealousy of returnees being 'rewarded' with financial and material reintegration support (Borzello, 2007), and the emotional instability and unpredictability exhibited by returnees afflicted by *Cen,* created a hostile environment, making reintegration and reconciliation difficult. In addition, a gendered perspective is important: girls experience far more stigma than boys, particularly those who have experienced sexual violence, resulting in children or not.

Interestingly, the SWAY study (Annan, Blattman, & Horton, 2006, Blattman & Annan, 2008; Annan et. al., 2009) disagreed with much of this analysis regarding stigma and long-term reintegration. While the authors recognised that time spent in the LRA negatively impacts some returnees' economic prospects over the long-term, they argued

that this is mostly due to loss of schooling or gender-based violence and not due to stigma or a conscious choice on the part of community members to exclude them. They suggested that only about five percent of returnees report being afflicted by *Cen*, and that only approximately one-third of returnees experience intermittent high psychological distress, which does not severely impact their lives. The authors argued that this is due to high family support and community acceptance: given that children were abducted indiscriminately and systematically, community members recognise that LRA membership was never their child's choice, and that it could have happened to any child. They further argued that negative interactions returnees have with community members are targeted specifically at individual returnees (usually in a personal manner), when the attacker is drunk, or when there is a spike in rebel activity. Borzello (2007) offers a clarification to this discrepancy, arguing that "even though the community in general welcomes the returnees home – there are, for example, few reports of attacks on former fighters – stigmatisation is common" (402-403). It appears that returnees are *tolerated* in the community, resulting in better-than-typical psychosocial reintegration (as compared to other conflicts), but that the ongoing stigma in addition to the economic and physical environment remains a challenge.

It is important to note, however, that this study was conducted in the two years immediately following the war. It is probable that these years were highly emotional: tensions would have been running high, but the happiness and excitement of reunion would also have been palpable. Stigma would have been at its most extreme and support at its highest. Long-term reintegration struggles, including stigma and access to support, need to be studied after the emotion has been moderated and deep-seated fears and

resentment have come to the surface. However, waiting too long may result in issues being buried as those affected 'move on' and/or 'deal with' them through various interventions and community-based supports. This was the case in *Enacting Change:* nearly 15 years after the war ended, attempting to study reintegration outcomes and relationships between returnees and community members who have already received substantial intervention support was difficult.

As recently as 2017, studies showed that returnees still demonstrate psychological trauma and difficulties with reintegration, education, or economic prospects (Schiltz, Vindevogel, Broekaert & Derluyn, 2015; Vindevogel, Van Parys, De Schryver, Broekaert & Derluyn, 2017). Community members too have not received the kind of help they need adjusting to a post-conflict society that includes people who may have done unspeakable things and the traumas they endured through the war, reinforcing the need to bring both sides together. This exacerbates and is exacerbated by the ongoing economic and developmental hardships in the community, reinforcing the cycle of violence. While this certainly may be the case for some communities and individuals, it is not an absolute. The participants in the present study still struggle, but not to the extent that some of the literature would suggest. Nevertheless, Schiltz et. al. and Vindevogel et. al.'s studies (echoing the SWAY studies) call for community-based perspectival interventions rather than the kind of broad-based psychosocial rehabilitation and economic stimulus programmes so often seen in DDRR. *Enacting Change* tried to do just that. Moreover, techniques that help returnees and community members reconcile are also beneficial in helping all people reconcile and work together, regardless of identity, so the project is still useful even if community divides are not as prominent as expected.

Theatre for Development

Theatre for Development is a set of theatrical practices used in divided communities to interrogate political, social, and moral situations and beliefs, creating a platform for difficult conversations (Breed, 2002). TfD uses a *for/with/by* framework: theatre is created *for* an audience who is impacted by a particular issue, and performed in an educative fashion by professional actors; theatre is created by a professional acting group or a researcher/educator *with* the affected community, resulting in audience members seeing their own people performing the issues with which they struggle; or theatre is created and performed *by* members of the affected community, often under the guidance of a researcher or educator. Many projects do not fit neatly into any one of these categories: the best projects incorporate aspects of all three (Selman & Heather, 2015).

Theatre and drama are valuable tools for having conversations that may be uncomfortable or unsafe in a typical roundtable-style discussion. Moreover, it allows "people [to] *see* one another. And the act of seeing one another and one another's lives is" essential for making change (Prentki & Selman, 2000, p. 17; emphasis in original). Theatre allows people to speak their own truths, framing their stories in the way they wish their audience to understand them, while simultaneously allowing the audience to interpret and reconcile what they believe with what the performer is saying, which is essential in peacebuilding and understanding one's position in a discourse (Senehi & Byrne, 2006). In addition, theatre relies on a mechanism of metaphor and metonymy (Keir, 1980), or "the substitution of cause for effect or of one item for something that is contiguous to it" (28). Metaphors and metonymies are further enhanced by embodiment: whereas a roundtable discussion tends to be quite neutral in terms of expression, theatre

allows the actor to imbue meaning holistically with their body, face, and props (Keir, 1980). Taken together, theatre "actually *creates* community. Not always in earth-shattering ways. But the *act* of creating a piece that is based on talking to people or having people in the community performing their own stories or creating scenes about issues that go on in that community, actually does create community" (Prentki & Selman, 2000, p. 17, emphasis in original). This is essential in the context of divided communities as theatre not only creates a platform for deep listening and conversation, but also opens the door for new relationships and connections to be formed.

Many African countries have histories of using theatre in education and in the transmission of culture. Theatre was used as a tool of resistance during the colonial and decolonisation periods across Africa. In Uganda, ritual performance was culturally important in the precolonial era and became a tool of resistance as the Catholic church banned various forms of theatre as 'heathenish.' In 1947, Theatre for Development for the People and the Makerere Travelling Theatre became active in their communities, using a combination of Western and Ugandan theatre practices for development education and for political activism. As in many parts of Africa, theatre activity waxed and waned with the political climate, climaxing in the 1980s in the Boalian fervour of TfD that was sweeping across the globe. TfD is still popular across the country, particularly in slums and refugee camps (Banham, 2004; see also Chinyowa, 2009).

This style of theatre has the benefit of being explicitly and implicitly participatory. Explicitly, TfD usually includes what Boal (1974) termed "spect-actors," where audiences are invited to intervene in a scene and offer suggestions to solve a problem or further problematise the issue in ways that may not be obvious. This is

particularly beneficial for topics that are uncomfortable to discuss, such as sexuality, as it allows audience members to advise a character about what they should do rather than speak about what they themselves have done or would do. The added layer of depersonalisation makes it easier to open the topic, which can then be personalised as the audience reflects (Selman & Heather, 2015). Implicitly, audience members participate in the dialogue by seeing their own issues represented and teased out on-stage, allowing them to become aware of and work toward solving them. Ideally, the conversation is continued in the audiences' own lives after the performance is over.

Participation is important to reconciliation and reintegration: some of the studies I have highlighted have demonstrated the value of bringing people together to identify and solve their own problems. This was further demonstrated by Denov (2010) who, while investigating the reintegration outcomes of girl soldiers in Sierra Leone, found that "many of the study participants formed friendships with other participants and began to offer support to each other…the development [of] peer support structures as a result of the research became particularly evident towards the completion of the project" (803). Here, simply participating in a research project, not even with a clear participatory element, helped foster relationships and support among participants.

The arts in general have been used in therapeutic and peacebuilding contexts. Osei-Kofi (2013) demonstrated the value of arts-based research (ABR) by using various forms of art, including collage, poetry, ethno-drama (i.e. a style of theatre that dramatises ethnographic research data), and photovoice to represent issues important to participants, evoke catharsis and emotional release, build relationships, and create dialogue. Osei-Kofi argued that this is more effective than traditional research methodologies which are

power-laden and rigidly positivist. Theatre fits into Osei-Kofi's discourse, but goes further: not only does theatre have these same benefits, it also allows for hands-on practice of new skills, as well as the potential to internalise embodied behaviours.

It is important to note that this is *not* drama therapy. To start, drama therapy is an accredited form of psychotherapy. In addition, the process of drama therapy is quite different from the present project. Drama therapy begins from an issue with an intended outcome or end-state and uses drama to understand the issue and move toward the intended end-state. The goal is to solve the problem. This is done through role-playing solutions and drawing attention to how the embodied role is different from the lived reality of the client (Prentki & Selman, 2000). While there is some overlap with TfD, the intention is markedly different: TfD uses theatre not to solve a problem but to identify potential solutions the audience members can enact. Moreover, as will be discussed later, the form of TfD I use does not begin or end with any particular issue or end-state.

Despite the benefits of TfD, a major shortcoming with many projects is that they are audience-focused. The goal is to educate an audience about a problem and present solutions. Nearly all studies of TfD projects have investigated the impact on the audience members, implying that TfD must result in a performance. This need not be the case, and here some nuance is required between the terms 'theatre' and 'drama': "theatre implies that some level of performance is involved, whereas drama is a process of activities and experiences which focus on the personal and group experiences of doing dramatic activity rather than on a culminating performance" (Prentki & Selman, 2000, p. 13). This nuance is important, as the present study did not, nor was it intended to, result in a performance. The goal was to understand how or whether dramatic processes can be used

to change the attitudes and beliefs of the performers, regardless of whether the performers perform per se. One previous TfD project in Kenya, in which I was engaged as a programme evaluator, has demonstrated that such changes can occur in participants, even without a performance (Courtney & Battye, 2018).

Many TfD projects also tend to be issue-focused rather than participant-driven. While most projects start from an issue and devise a piece of related theatre to be performed for an audience, this project, and the previously-mentioned project in Kenya, called *Old Stories in New Ways* (OSNW), start from the assumption that "theatrical form and practice should emerge from intention, which must emerge from context" (Selman & Battye, 2017, para. 3). This means that the dramatic processes are not only meant to *address* problems, they should also be used to *find* the problems. As the issues are teased out, drama can be used to understand them, and work toward solutions. OSNW did this effectively, beginning with a traditional story in the Luo culture of Kenya, and using it as a foray into understanding and addressing some of the contentious social problems participants identified. This circular process is much longer than most TfD agencies or funders can support, resulting in short-circuiting of the process. However, peacemaking and reconciliation are long-term processes: "if you're going into conflict resolution…you're going in for decades, because anything less than decades is a waste of rations" (Raymont & Reed, 2012). As argued by scholars throughout this review, community-based individual-focused interventions, in contrast to existing top-down, organisation-driven programmes, are needed for adequate reintegration and community reconciliation; how can this happen if programmes start from pre-defined issues?

That said, participant-driven TfD programmes still have potential problems. Karabanow and Naylor (2015) demonstrated that, while participants in an ABR project in Guatemala were eager to take part and do what the research team wanted them to do, attempting to include them in the creation of the project was met with hesitance and mistrust. It took a lot of time and building of trust to create the kind of participatory project the authors wanted. This reflected an interesting power dynamic, where inclusion and participation, typically touted as ways of minimising power dynamics, were in fact power-laden agenda-pushing. This was an important lesson as I attempted to foster a truly participatory project with people who were unfamiliar with such processes or reluctant to engage. This problem may have been even more pronounced in northern Uganda, where people are unfortunately used to Western researchers and service providers coming in for short amounts of time, collecting whatever data they need or administering their pre-defined programmes, and then leaving. Moreover, this obstacle in Karabanow and Naylor's research is reflective of a 'yes-man' mentality that often presents in cross-cultural research: Western researchers working in the Global South are seen as powerful and wealthy, and thus the participants want to please them. I have experienced this in my previous research, and it is something that cross- and inter-cultural researchers must always be mindful of. Finally, Osei-Kofi (2013) expressed the view that one of the biggest challenges ABR faces is being taken seriously. Engaging in art is the easy part; "the struggle [is] more about what it means to embody such a practice in an academy that is in many ways hostile to conceiving of research" that is not 'scientific' (p. 146).

Facilitation is inherent in TfD and was an important aspect of this project. According to Hogan (2002), "facilitation is concerned with encouraging open dialogue

among individuals with different perspectives so that diverse assumptions and options may be explored. This is in contrast to…dualistic, win-lose, competitive, debating styles of discourse in [W]estern societies" (pp. 10-11). When one facilitates a conversation, one is encouraging participants to think outside the typical box of conversation and work together to identify and solve problems in a way that is impactful and meaningful for them. Of importance to the present study is the Kiser facilitation model (p. 71), which moves through a process of consulting with the participants to identify issues, collectively designing the intervention, facilitating it, and evaluating it from the participants' perspectives. This process is reflected in TfD as the Stages of the Popular Theatre Process (Butterwick & Selman, 2003), where researchers and participants identify the issues, analyse them dramatically, create scenes, discuss them, and start the process over with new issues that arise in the process. This is not a linear process and requires constant re-evaluation of the self and the participants. Hogan (2002) argued that changing the attitudes of participants is the most difficult but important aspect of facilitation, suggesting that:

> if a desired output of a workshop is a change in attitude then new information and/or skills need to be integrated into the participants' thinking and behaviour… Changes in attitude are based on two-way communication in which the facilitator and participants engage in dialogue (rather than debate). As a result of a workshop, new information, new skills, and new attitudes should result in changed behaviour (Hogan, 2002, pp. 149-150).

While I agree with Hogan, she missed a crucial component of attitude change. Engaging in dialogue alone does not necessarily result in the emotional engagement or understanding necessary for true attitude change. Embodying the perspective of another person and feeling the way they feel can strongly affect understanding of perspective and

change one's attitudes. In Social Psychology this process is explained via theories concerning cognitive dissonance and internalisation.

Social Psychology: Cognitive Dissonance and Attitude Change

First described by Festinger in 1957, cognitive dissonance is the uncomfortable psychological state that arises when one behaves in a counter-attitudinal manner. This means that when one exhibits a behaviour that is not in line with one's own beliefs, one feels negative emotions and general discomfort. To alleviate this, one unconsciously moves through a series of dissonance reduction strategies: strengthen the existing attitude, downplay the dissonant (i.e. inconsistent) attitude, add new consonant (i.e. consistent) cognitions, or ignore the dissonance entirely. When these fail, as Festinger argued they usually will, one must change the attitudes to be in line with the behaviour. When one changes one's attitudes in this fashion, internalisation has occurred: the individual "has come to personally identify with the value of a behaviour and thus fully accept it as their own" (Deci & Ryan, 2012, p. 421). Thus, behaviour creates attitudes rather than the (perhaps intuitive) reverse.

Originally, attitude change was tautologically seen as the predominant indicator of cognitive dissonance induction. Instead, Devine, Tauer, Barron, Elliot, and Vance (1999) argued that flattened or negative affect (i.e. emotion) are an in-the-moment indicator of dissonance induction. In addition, the phenomenon of vicarious cognitive dissonance has been highlighted (Cooper, 2010): participants experience cognitive dissonance and, hopefully, attitude change through seeing an in-group member behave in a manner that is different from the group's typical behaviours. These are important for the present research as data collection involved noting moments of such emotional

changes in the participants while performing and observing each other perform. Since attitude change as a metric of dissonance is circular logic, and other metrics for measuring dissonance involve neurological instruments, in-the-moment affect and questions regarding emotions during exercises were the metrics used for identifying dissonance. Finally, Vaidis and Gosling (2012) argued, contrary to Hogan's assertion, that simply giving information is not enough to evoke attitude change: free choice in receiving discrepant information and, importantly, a commitment to act on it and embody it, are essential for attitude change to occur. Moreover, there is an investment consideration: the more effort one puts in to such engagements, the stronger the cognitive dissonance and resultant attitude change.[3]

Internalisation typically comes about organically through being socialised into a culture and interacting with different people but can also come about as the result of forced behaviour. Indeed, the 'forced-compliance' paradigm is the method of nearly all studies that aim to induce cognitive dissonance and study its effects, beginning with Festinger's original study in 1957. But previous research has shown, following from Vaidis and Gosling (2012), that choosing to engage in an activity, such as drama, can also create cognitive dissonance and internalisation (Courtney & Battye, 2018). Importantly, however, that study employed professional actors who work in social theatre; they may have already internalised many of the behaviours involved in the programme and are primed to think about different perspectives and work to understand them. Therefore, a project such as the present one, which used non-performers in a dramatic setting, is important for contributing to the fields of Social Psychology *and* Theatre. A shortcoming

[3] For a full review of the field, see Harmon-Jones and Mills (1999) and Cooper (2012).

of the literature on internalisation as it relates to cognitive dissonance, however, is that there have been very few longitudinal follow-up studies to show if the attitude changes persist over the long-term (Sénémeaud & Somat, 2009). It is therefore important to recognise that while participants in *Enacting Change* largely claimed attitude changes, it is impossible to know if these attitude changes persisted once the study concluded.

To come full circle, internalisation is important in relation to the literature on child soldiers. Gates (2011) and Vermeij (2011) both referred to the role of socialisation and internalisation in the recruitment and eventual reintegration of child soldiers. Gates analysed the different retention strategies of armed groups that use child soldiers, arguing that socialisation through teaching, violence, and bastardised cultural/spiritual rituals results in the internalisation of the group's specific culture. Vermeij echoed this in her study, which relied on interviews with returnees in northern Uganda to identify the specific tactics the LRA uses to create loyalty in their soldiers. Vermeij differentiated type I internalisation, which is learning a behaviour, from type II internalisation, which occurs when one comes to fully identify with the behaviour and accept the basis of it as their own attitude. Type II occurs in LRA soldiers, making counter-socialisation and reintegration much more difficult, and is the type of internalisation with which I am most concerned. Internalisation of LRA culture requires internalisation of new behaviours and attitudes which are functional in the returnees' current context. This is also important for community reconciliation: just as returnees must be resocialised into their new context, community members are themselves adapting to a post-war context and must also be flexible in the way they receive and interact with returnees.

Returnees' identities change from ‘child’ and ‘civilian’ to ‘soldier’ and back again. This is something that both returnees and community members must navigate (Shanahan, 2008). While personality and identity formation theories are beyond the scope of this thesis, it is largely agreed in the Social Psychological literature that such processes result from the interaction of internal, cognitive forces and external, relational forces. Attitudes are inherently social: they exist and are expressed linguistically, and can only be understood as an attitude if there are conflicting attitudes to which they can be compared. An attitude is not an internal state of being, like an emotion, but rather a higher-order cognition that only exists once it is verbalised to another individual (Shotter & Billig, 1998). Once formed and expressed, an attitude becomes part of one’s identity, to be changed through behaviour and interactions with others. Individual life narratives also matter: how one feels about one’s experiences and behaviours is important in attitude formation (Roesler, 2008). This has implications for cognitive dissonance and attitude change: one will not feel cognitive dissonance, regardless of how discrepant a behaviour is, if the subject does not perceive a discrepancy. One also will not internalise a behaviour if one is able to successfully employ one of the dissonance reduction tactics, or if an attitude is resistant to change, resulting in dissonant cognitions being held simultaneously. Resistance to change can occur if an attitude is deeply embedded in an individual’s identity or fundamental world view, or if an attitude shift could result in embarrassment or ostracism (Wicklund & Brehm, 2004).

Navigating identity changes and adapting to a civilian identity after being socialised into a soldier identity is a difficult aspect of child soldier reintegration, as returnees must accept the age, gender, and socioeconomic expectations that accompany

their culturally-ascribed identity, and community members must accept that the returnees have changed; some of these changes can be positive while others may require additional support. Given the important role of internalisation of a new social context upon abduction into the LRA, it stands to reason that internalisation of attitudes that lead to a stronger post-conflict society must be embodied by returnees and community members, both for reconciliation within the community and for surviving and thriving collectively in a post-conflict environment.

Theoretical Framework

In the field of Psychology, Integrative Psychotherapy is a system of psychotherapy that draws on various systems to bring together specific techniques that work well in collaboration with one another. This does not mean that practitioners make up their own system, or pick therapeutic techniques at random; rather, it is argued that the theoretical underpinnings of the different chosen techniques complement each other and come together to work in a way that is uniquely beneficial for the individual client. This method is useful for clients who present with complex concerns that cannot be treated by a single treatment method (O'Reilly-Knapp, 2016).

The world of child soldiering is similarly complex. For this research, I employed an integrative framework of analysis. I used the three fields discussed in my literature review—Child Soldier literature and associated Political Science and Development theories, Theatre for Development, and Social Psychology—to tease out the unique constellation of needs and wants of each participant. The factors participants identified allowed for more targeted activities and also highlighted commonalities within the specific community that can allow for broad-based interventions that work for these

specific people. This is in contrast to previous studies which have attempted to transplant interventions from one post-conflict community to another. This approach reflects a more interpretivist post-modern lens, allowing the participants to speak their own truths and knowledges and do what works for them. Here I am using Lyotard's (1984) definition of post-modernism, which rejects meta-narratives and asks us to move beyond the idea of one overarching Truth in favour of individual truths.

This integrative framework is similar to Ecological Systems Theory (EST) (Brofenbrenner, 1979), which recognises that the interconnected web of personal, social, economic, and environmental factors at play in the lives and relations of all people are important to their functioning. While EST could be a viable framework for this research, typically research is conducted at only one of the four levels of factors (i.e. micro, meso, exo, or macro levels) (Onwuegbuzie, Collins, & Frels, 2013). It also simultaneously goes too deep and not deep enough: it suggests that each factor is important, which may not be the case, and does not recognise that different factors may be more or less important for different people. The communities to which returnees (re)integrate typically have limited resources. Assuming that all potential factors that play into poverty, conflict, reconciliation, and reintegration are relevant and important may reinforce the status quo, in which valuable resources are allocated to interventions that are useless for the community. The integrative framework used here evades these issues by not pre-determining the kinds of concerns participants will bring to the table. While I had an idea of what some of the key issues might be based on the literature, I was surprised to find that many of these themes were not concerns for the participants, such as chronic ostracism of returnees, while other themes I had not considered, such as alcohol abuse,

were of great importance. Thus, it was important to stay agile and listen to participants to target the factors they identified in favour of those I expected to be important.

Chapter III - Methods

This project was methodologically complex and experimental, drawing on the fields of Theatre, Psychology, and Child Soldiers, and requiring cross-discipline and cross-cultural partnerships. Traditional TfD is performance-driven and audience-focused, whereas this project focused on participant change through the dramatic process; a performance was never part of the plan. While the style of TfD employed through *Old Stories in New Ways* was similar in that it aimed to address contentious social issues and change attitudes within performers using dramatic techniques, and eschewed pre-selection of topics to be explored and dramatic techniques to be employed, it was ultimately still performance-driven and audience-focused (Selman & Battye, 2017). It also employed professional actors and performers, which was possibly a contributing factor to the success of the project (Courtney & Battye, 2018). Participants in *Enacting Change* had little to no theatre experience. Similarly, while I was among the researchers in OSNW, my contribution was to project evaluation through a Development and Psychology lens; I have no theatre background and thus required a consultant in the form of a Creative Director. In addition, the context and participant population posed particular recruitment difficulties and ethical considerations, thus requiring NGO partnerships. These partners will be introduced below. Regarding Psychology, cognitive dissonance and internalisation literature has moved beyond the original forced compliance paradigm to include vicarious cognitive dissonance and has looked at ways that individuals commit to or resist change or hold multiple dissonant cognitions at once. However, existing literature has not investigated the processes at play in a theatrical context. Finally, as highlighted in the literature review, child soldier literature and practice tend to involve

top-down programming that isolate specific concerns and people with little or no input from those impacted, although there are excellent exceptions to this.

This chapter begins by identifying the various partnerships associated with *Enacting Change*. It then discusses the recruitment process and data collection and analysis techniques, including discussions of how these methods relate to existing literature. Finally, methodological and ethical considerations will be discussed.

Partners

Grassroots Reconciliation Group (GRG) is an organisation based in Gulu, Uganda, that aims to "facilitate the transition process to help LRA ex-combatants and their war-effected communities to rebuild their lives and improve their socio-economic status through holistic, culturally appropriate and locally designed projects" ("What We Do," n.d.). The organisation is run by local people and uses a bottom-up framework to ensure that all programmes are culturally appropriate and economically relevant. GRG brings returnees and community members together in its programmes, enabling them to work together to rebuild their society rather than persist in interpersonal and structural conflict. GRG has five main programme categories: Livelihoods, in which beneficiaries are supported financially and materially to train for and/or start a career; trauma support, in which beneficiaries are offered personal and group psychological support and peer-support training opportunities; community microfinance, in which beneficiaries can access personal or group loans as well as receive training in tracking, saving, and spending their money; community reconciliation, in which beneficiaries work together to address ongoing trauma and stigma stemming from the war, engage in traditional cleansing and healing ceremonies, and develop conflict resolution skills for inter-personal

conflict; and cultural activities, which in the past have included theatre, music, and dance presentations, educational support, and vocational training, and are offered based on the needs and wants of the community being engaged.

Beneficiaries are chosen through a nomination process: local leaders and community members nominate individuals or families that they feel would benefit from GRG's programming. To reduce nepotism in the nomination process, and to encourage peer support and leadership, only one member from each household is selected. Since its founding in 2007, GRG has worked with 40 groups of beneficiaries, comprised of 20-30 members each. More than 5000 people have been indirectly impacted through the community outreach, entrepreneurship, and leadership/peer support training programmes. At present, GRG is expanding its outreach beyond just those affected by the LRA conflict to offer support to the communities in northern Uganda who are currently receiving an influx of refugees from South Sudan.

I partnered with GRG because of its demonstrated track record of success, culturally specific bottom-up approach, and previous use of theatre and performing arts in reconciliation. However, the primary reason for the choice was its unique method of bringing together returnees and community members. This is rare within reconciliation and DDRR programming. As detailed in the literature review most programmes focus on returnees, and community members are engaged as support mechanisms at best. Stigma reduction is often done (problematically) through sensitisation visits, and support, be it financial, material, or psychosocial, is given to returnees but not community members, often resulting in jealousy and frustration among the latter. As Betancourt et. al. (2010) and Knight (2008) pointed out, effective reintegration and reconciliation programmes

cannot be divorced from the broader community environment, and *all* war-affected people need to be involved and supported in the transition. GRG's collaborative approach takes steps toward addressing these concerns. Moreover, the social psychological theory I employed relies on participants with conflicting attitudes working together to embody other perspectives and strive to understand one another's point of view. This requirement would be impossible to fulfill if I partnered with an organisation that worked only with returnees. GRG has done theatre projects in the past, and staff were excited at the prospect of learning new techniques that could be incorporated into existing programming or future theatre activities.

My main point of contact within GRG was Maggie Amony. She is GRG's program director and was crucial in helping with organisation of the project, including facilitating meal preparation and costs, securing boda operators and negotiating fares, finding accommodations, and providing invaluable cultural expertise. Two research assistants acted as translators for the project: Denis Odoch translated all interviews and assisted with translation during the workshops, and Prisca Akullu was the primary translator for the workshops. Both have done translation work for GRG in the past.

Founded in 2010, Rafiki Theatre is an organisation based in Kampala, Uganda that uses TfD techniques to engage vulnerable communities in the East African Community (EAC) and DRC. Rafiki has three main target areas: "apply civil theatre in education for sustainable development, health, gender equality, among others;" "resolve justice in nonviolent ways and to transform the cultural & (sic) structural conditions;" and help "target communities acquire knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values to transform their living" ("Our Work," n.d.). Rafiki has done incredible work on such

topics as HIV/AIDS, health and sanitation, and gender-based and sexual violence. It has also done projects in northern Uganda regarding post-conflict reconciliation and reintegration of returnees; however, its style of theatre trends toward the conventional audience-focused, problem-solving TfD seen in most projects. At present, the team is split between a project in western Uganda addressing violence and poor sanitation in South Sudanese refugee camps, and one in northeastern Uganda on cattle raiding and cross-border violence between the Karamojong of Uganda and the Turkana of Kenya.

I partnered with Rafiki because of its impressive programme history and the breadth of the topics and issues it engages. In addition, while I employed a Creative Director, having a theatre practitioner from Uganda was important, ensuring that I perform my research in a culturally appropriate manner and helping me understand people's words and behaviours contextually. Having a background in TfD in the region was invaluable in incorporating different styles and techniques that the Creative Director and I may not have thought about. Rafiki, for its part, was excited to learn new forms of TfD, and members were particularly interested in exploring the participant-focused, problem-finding techniques we employed. One of the main frustrations with TfD that Rafiki members highlighted was that NGOs contract a theatre group to create and perform a play aimed at teaching the audience something that represents the problematic situation, but not the actual problem. Rafiki's current project with South Sudanese refugees is an example of this: they are being asked to teach residents of the refugee camp the importance of hygienic toileting practices and hand-washing to stymie cholera outbreaks; the people know these things, but do not have access to water or sanitary latrines, and so the play Rafiki puts on is ineffective. One of the main skills they were

excited to learn was ways of encouraging audiences to advocate for what they actually need to solve their problems rather than passively absorb the same tired messages.

Hussein Madden, the director of Rafiki Theatre, was my main point of contact and the representative who worked with us in Gulu. Like Maggie, Hussein was invaluable in helping me understand the cultural and social context I was entering, and the kinds of TfD that are often employed in the region. He also has in-depth knowledge of previous TfD projects which have been carried out in the northern region with LRA-affected individuals, which was beneficial in helping me situate my project. Hussein and John Battye, my Creative Director, also worked together to plan the daily workshops, with John often acting in a mentorship role while also learning from Hussein the specific and unique form of TfD with which he works.

John Battye is a PhD Candidate at the University of Alberta. He has spent over a decade working in social theatre and TfD in Canada and Kenya. John founded an improv theatre group in Guelph, Ontario that used theatre and drama to engage vulnerable youth in overcoming social anxiety and bullying, and to increase self-esteem and confidence. He has also designed and implemented theatre programmes around Ontario assisting school-aged children who are struggling with poverty and domestic abuse, bullying, homophobia and transphobia, and social stigma to find ways of speaking out about and addressing their issues. For the last five years he has been a member of the OSNW research initiative in Kenya as both a researcher and dramaturg, and was my mentor and eventual co-author as I conducted my own research on the psychological processes at play within the participants (Courtney & Battye, 2018).

I understand theatrical facilitation techniques and have done ample research into various forms of TfD and how they have historically been employed, but I am not qualified to design and implement a project of this scale. John has the necessary experience and qualifications to assist me in this endeavour. Moreover, the participant-focused and problem-identification style of TfD this project employed is relatively new, having been devised by John and OSNW Primary Investigator Jan Selman. There is no one better qualified for this task than him. In addition, having worked together for several years, we have a very strong professional rapport. While his assistance and guidance were invaluable to me and the project, John gained from the experience as well, broadening his project development and implementation skills, testing this new form of TfD in a different context, learning more about his own skills and abilities, and forming connections with other practitioners.

Recruitment

In July 2018, GRG staff informed their beneficiaries in Abole, a village just outside of Gulu Town, that I would be coming to their community and asking them to participate in a theatre project and a series of interviews. Brief information was given, including the time frame and purpose of the study, and they were asked to indicate if they would be interested in receiving more information from me. Twenty people expressed interest. I fully informed these individuals of the project upon my arrival, including the nature of the questions they would be asked, time commitment, and risks and benefits. They were given the opportunity to ask any questions or express any concerns they had, and the schedule was negotiated. Conversations were conducted in Acholi via translation. They were then given a consent form, which was written in English but read to them by

an Acholi translator, and were asked to sign it. Table 1 shows the demographic breakdown of the sample.

Participant	Sex	Age	Combatant Status	Age at Recruitment	Time in LRA	DDRR
1	F	25	Community Member			
2	F	30	Community Member			
3	F	55	Community Member			
4	F	35	Community Member			
5	F	54	Community Member			
6	F	57	Community Member			
7	F	42	Returnee	13	6 months	3 months
8	F	31	Returnee	14	2 years	None
9	F	42	Returnee	19	2 months	None
10	F	48	Returnee	18	1.5 years	1 month
11	F	33	Returnee	15	6 years	None
12	F	32	Returnee	14	2 months	None
13	M	48	Community Member			
14	M	45	Returnee	23	1 month	None
15*	M	38	Returnee	22	3.5 years	7 months
16	M	56	Returnee	32	2 days	None
17	M	38	Returnee	15	2 years	None
18	M	32	Returnee	13	1.5 years	2 months
19	M	46	Returnee	25	1 year	1 month
20	M	36	Returnee	18	1.5 years	1 month

*Table 1: Demographics. *This participant dropped out of the study at the mid-point.*

The demographic makeup of this participant sample, as well as the small sample size, are both important in considering the results of the project. This will be discussed more fully in the limitations section, but it is important to note that 20 individuals is not

enough to speak with certainty toward the viability of this style of TfD in reconciliation and reintegration, and the age and gender breakdown of the sample is such that the results are suggestive but not necessarily transferable.

Data Collection

Enacting Change employed several data collection methods. The workshops themselves were the primary method of data collection, which were informed by a three-stage interview process. The workshops in turn informed the interviews. I engaged in participant observation strategies daily, and also kept a field journal and personal diary throughout my time in Uganda. These methods will be outlined in this section.

Drama workshops. The primary method of data collection was the drama workshops themselves. While ABR traditionally sees art as the outcome of a research project, with art being used to represent the information gleaned from a research project, or as a form of therapy, this style of TfD, following Selman and Battye (2016 and 2017), used art as the research medium.

Returnees and community members were brought together to ask questions and explore issues in their community using theatrical games and improvisation techniques in a workshop environment. Workshops ran for five hours per day, three days per week, for four weeks. Themes to be explored were determined from the first round of interviews. Each participant was asked in their first interview to tell me what kinds of problems exist in their community, as well as community strengths that could be used to help address these problems. The themes that emerged were used to create goals for each day's workshops and identify which activities and games would be used. The main themes that

emerged will be discussed in depth in the results chapter; however, it is important to identify them here to understand how we moved from interview data to workshops.

Lack of productivity was the most common concern participants articulated. While this meant many different things, at the core was that people are not working as hard as they can nor producing as much as they would like due to lack of access to physical and social resources, and inadequate cooperation among participants. Reducing the broad theme of 'productivity' down to 'access to resources' allowed us to expand 'resources' beyond just materials needed for farming to include basic rights like education and healthcare, and social and political resources such as cooperation, representation, and accountable leadership, all of which were identified throughout interviews. Cooperation was highlighted as a key strength the community possesses, but one that could be bolstered to improve their productivity.

Domestic violence was another problem consistently mentioned. Every woman and a few of the men said that domestic violence is a main concern for them. This included violence among all family members irrespective of sex as well as explicit gender-based violence (GBV) and was usually rooted in alcohol abuse. Alcohol abuse was also brought up as a problem in its own right in many contexts: as a catalyst for domestic violence, one of the root causes of lack of productivity, in relation to health problems, immorality and promiscuity, economic concerns, and general idleness and laziness. Previous work done on cooperation and support was pertinent here as well.

Widows' concerns, specifically land rights and (lack of) support from family and community members, were also highlighted. Land wrangling, in this case referring largely to widows being chased off their land and/or people, usually returnees and those

displaced during the war, claiming land that is not theirs, was brought up less frequently but with stronger vehemence than some other issues. These themes flowed into talking about the war as so much of the land issues have their roots in that timeframe, allowing us to bridge into stigma and trauma.

It was tricky to figure out how to approach trauma and stigma. These were the topics I set out to unpack, but in interviews, most people said they are no longer concerns. However, they were still concerns for some people, and others said they wanted to ensure these problems do not resurface. This made it worth trying to delve into these difficult topics. However, this group has previously done theatre activities that had them re-enacting their trauma and many wanted to do that again. We felt that, despite re-enactment being something many wanted, the ethical downsides to it, such as the potential for personal or vicarious retraumatisation, as well as the forward-looking goal of the project, required that we focus on present-day stigma and ongoing trauma instead. Exercises were planned around giving voice to returnees who still experience stigma and asking for/offering support for ongoing trauma. We were cognizant of potential triggers and wanted to avoid bringing up memories or specific harms committed.

Secondary themes such as dependency on NGOs, community leader responsiveness, child protection, HIV/AIDS, and crime were also highlighted throughout the first interviews. These themes were woven throughout the workshop, tied into other topics, and revisited as we got deeper into the major themes. The strength of the way John set up the workshop is that each skill built upon previous ones, so that in the final few days when we tackled big issues like domestic violence, problem-solving and

communication skills learned in the early days were already cemented. A full workshop schedule is appended (appendix A).

Broadly speaking, three different kinds of exercises were employed. Many exercises contained elements of two or all three of these styles. The first type is the multiple ending exercise. Participants created scenes involving disputes between husbands and wives, approaching government leaders for financial or infrastructural support, negotiating contracts with money-lenders or 'middlemen,' and working safely and effectively with NGOs and Westerners. Participants constructed the scenes to come to a point of dilemma or major problem, and then worked together to theatrically solve the problem, by playing out possible solutions to see what the outcome could be. An example of such an exercise involved a woman playing the role of a money-lender and three other participants playing local farmers. The lender gives the farmers seed to grow a crop on the promise of buying the produce for a fixed price. The lender then refuses to buy some or all of the crop. This happens regularly in this community. The first solution offered was that the farmers should sign a contract with the lender to hold her accountable. The critique was that a contract is meaningless if there is no external enforcement of it. An alternate ending involved the farmers withholding some of the crop until they were sure the money-lender would buy it so that if she did not, they could eat what they withheld. If she showed up to buy it, they would then present her with the rest. The problem with this was that there was no guarantee she would come back for the remainder, and the farmers would be stuck with the leftovers when they really needed the money. The third suggestion was that they go to her office in town and demand that she or her boss buy the produce. This worked; however, the lender vowed to never work with

them again, thus destroying the relationship and their future financial security. The final solution offered was that the farmers should not work through lenders or middlemen at all, instead pooling their crops so they can sell them at the main market for full value. The critiques here were that, first, this is a magic solution: it seems obvious but clearly must not work because if it worked, we would not have a problem. Secondly, it only works if the entire village agrees to it. Since we cannot change other people, we need to work with what we have available to us.

The goal of these exercises is not to solve the problems, but rather to understand what the core problems are in these relationships and learn problem-solving skills that could be used when such problems occur. Moreover, participants are encouraged to think outside the box to solve problems, and also to think ahead to the possible consequences of their solutions and challenge the idea that there are easy solutions to major dilemmas.

Intervention exercises are similar to multiple ending exercises in that the solution offered to the dilemma in the skit is critiqued by other members of the participant pool. However, instead of critiquing and debriefing after the scene is presented, participants are invited to intervene directly in the scene by adding a different character or by taking the place of one of the characters in the scene, similar to Boal's (1974) concept of the "spect-actor." This can be done by a participant who has intimate knowledge of or experience with the dilemma or proposed solution, or by someone who has never experienced it who may offer an outside perspective. An example of such an exercise was used on the day we discussed widows' concerns. Various scenes were created that depicted widows being mistreated by their community, and the participants in each group offered a solution in the ending of their scene. Two of the women in the group who are themselves widows

were asked to jump in and change the scene in any way they wanted to demonstrate how that solution would actually impact them, or what they need instead. We also did intervention scenes related to trauma and stigma against returnees where any participant, regardless of their combatant status, was invited to intervene in a scene to unpack, reinforce, or critique a solution offered. The point of these exercises is to encourage dissenting voices to speak out, and for people to learn from those who are directly impacted by the issues being discussed in ways that they themselves are not.

Both multiple ending and intervention exercises are techniques in which cognitive dissonance may be induced. Intervention exercises allow participants to physically embody a counter-attitudinal or novel behaviour, which can induce cognitive dissonance, and multiple ending exercises allow participants to see an in-group member play a role that may be counter-attitudinal or novel to the larger group, which can induce vicarious cognitive dissonance. In both cases, they see their suggested solution fail, resulting in frustration or sadness which leads to dissonance reduction tactics being employed and, hopefully, internalisation, or they see their solution succeed, resulting in happiness or catharsis and ultimately a reinforcement of the attitude that led to the suggested solution.

Finally, non-realistic exercises are ones in which participants intentionally do not role-play, instead engaging in symbolic or evocative behaviours which metaphorically and metonymically represent real-world problems or dilemmas. An example of this kind of exercise asked participants to place something on another person's body to represent how they have been harmed by a loved one's alcohol consumption. One woman tied a scarf around the man's mouth to reflect how her husband cannot speak clearly to her when he is drunk. Another woman tucked a piece of paper in the front of the man's pants

to illustrate the sexual violence that often comes from drunk men. A man put a scarf over the subject's head to show that he does not understand what is going on when people around him are drunk. Another example of this type of exercise was used on the day we addressed intra-community support. Participants were paired off and tasked to 'give' their partner something they think they need. They were then tasked to ask their partner for something specific. The goal of this exercise was for participants to experience what it feels like to be offered support that is useless for them, and then to ask specifically for what they need. Many of them mentioned in their interviews that support for one another is not as strong as it could be and is often superficial and hollow.

The benefit of these exercises is that participants can say or do something in a safer space than the role-playing exercises, engaging with their emotions toward the problems they identify without necessarily being expected to solve them. They also build core skills such as cooperation, effective listening, and advocacy, which are necessary for the more concrete, role-playing exercises in addition to being important life skills.

It was important to design and implement a theatre programme and study it simultaneously in order to explore the potential of a new reintegration and reconciliation vehicle for organisations and programmes working on such topics. In so doing, it was hoped that the study would also contribute new understanding to the literature on theatre- and arts-based approaches to fostering reintegration and reconciliation. In contrast to the predominantly audience-focused problem-solving TfD projects in East Africa, including those described earlier, my project in Abole was exclusively participant-focused and sought to test a mechanism of change which has been effective with professional performers within a non-professional context. As noted previously, a performance was

never part of the plan, with the dramatic exercises and scenes created being simultaneously mechanisms and markers of attitude change.

Interviews. The second form of data collection used in this project was the interview, including a participant debrief. Participants were interviewed three times throughout the project. These conversations lasted 20 to 60 minutes each, and both relied on and informed the workshops in a mutually constitutive manner. 10 participants took part in the debrief, which lasted approximately 90 minutes.

The first round of interviews was conducted upon my arrival in Gulu in late September 2018. These interviews asked questions about existing attitudes and views on barriers to reintegration and reconciliation, difficulties the participants experience in their daily lives, and community strengths and weaknesses. Participants were also asked about what they hope to gain from the theatre programme, what kinds of problems they hope to address and solve, and what they feel would indicate a successful programme. This was the baseline data to which future attitudes could be compared. Recordings of these interviews were shared with John upon his arrival and were used to prepare specific details of the theatre programme.

A second round of interviews was held half-way through the workshops so I could ask questions about specific things participants did or said during the theatre programme and how they felt about them. This allowed me to determine if cognitive dissonance was being induced, and to identify evidence of early change. For example, if a participant indicated in their first interview that they felt or believed that stigma against returnees was no longer a problem, but during an exercise they embodied a role that had them take the brunt of the subtle stigma many returnees articulated, the second round

gave me the opportunity to ask how it felt. Cognitive dissonance induction can often be seen through flattened or negative affect. I could also ask about specific moments where I perceived that they might be feeling sad, scared, or uncomfortable during an exercise and ask them to reflect on it. The second round also gave me the opportunity to ask participants logistical questions, such as how they felt the theatre programme was going and what they thought could or should be changed to make it more effective. 18 of the 20 participants participated in a second interview. One person was absent on all three days of the interviews, and another decided to leave the project at this point.

An informal focus group, in the form of a participant debrief, was conducted after the workshops were completed but before the final round of interviews. The debrief consisted of 10 participants: seven returnees (five women and two men) and three community members, all women. This allowed for an in-depth group discussion regarding the themes and issues explored in the programme, areas of change the participants may have seen in themselves and each other, and their perception of the effectiveness of the project, and allowed John and me to evaluate their attitude change. The group setting is important: my previous research showed that discussion can be a vehicle for change. Interviewing allows participants to vocalise and commit to their attitudes which is an aspect of change highlighted in the internalisation literature (Vaidis & Gosling, 2012). This is particularly important in a focus group setting, where participants must debate and discuss their attitudes and beliefs, allowing for further changes in attitudes or re-commitment to a stated attitude (Courtney & Battye, 2018).

A final round of interviews was conducted after the theatre programme was concluded. These interviews again targeted specific behaviours and things said

throughout the programme and the participants' views on them. I also asked about any attitude changes they had seen in themselves. The data collected in these interviews was the most important, as it showed the progression of attitude changes and provided evidence of success or failure in the utility of TfD in activating Social Psychological mechanisms of attitude change. In these interviews, participants were also asked for their feedback regarding the effectiveness of the theatre programme. I asked if they found it helpful or beneficial, if they felt their goals were met, and if they think this is a viable tool for identifying and solving problems that can or should be used in future programmes, by GRG or other groups. 17 of the remaining 19 members participated in a third interview. One participant missed his interview, and one participant started his but we decided to end it ten minutes in as his brother had passed away the day before and he was not cognitively or emotionally able to engage in an interview at the time.

This before-during-after interview and focus group framework has been useful and successful in my previous research. More importantly, it is reminiscent of Butterwick and Selman's (2003) Stages of Popular Theatre Process method, which closely resembles the Kiser Facilitation model Hogan (2002) highlighted. By using interviews alongside the theatre programme, John and I were able to adjust the programme to meet the needs of the participants and maximise the effectiveness of each exercise. While debriefs and discussions about each exercise and theme occurred throughout the programme, the interviews allowed me to understand from each specific participant what was going on for them, and help them move toward the kind of positive change they want. Questions regarding the quality of the programme and what the participants think can or should be

done differently were also important aspects of the constant self-reflection in which John and I engaged.

Interviews were semi-structured and largely open-ended. This study required that participants feel free to speak for themselves, tell their own truths, and identify their own needs, desires, capacities, concerns, and attitudes. To ask targeted questions regarding pre-defined themes would be problematic in this regard. Dialogic interviews that allow the interviewer to dig deeper into certain answers rather than go down a checklist of questions are beneficial for understanding the interconnected web of factors at play in each participant's life and their needs wants, in line with my integrative framework.

Interviews are fallible and run the risk of demand characteristics, meaning participants may say or do things that they think I want them to say or do rather than speak their own truths. However, other forms of data collection are riskier. Using a Likert Scale to ask participants to rate their perceived level of reintegration or reconciliation on a scale of 1-10 or selecting 'yes' or 'no' on a questionnaire asking if successful reintegration and reconciliation have been achieved may allow for the kind of quantitative data that is widely perceived as robust and scientific. However, this assumes a number of things: demand characteristics will not be present (participants can and, in my experience, will, answer what they think I want to hear); there is an operational definition of reintegration and reconciliation (these words means different things to different people, and a Likert Scale will not demonstrate that); there is only one factor to reintegration or reconciliation (a Likert Scale or yes/no binary does not capture the full spectrum of factors that play into such complex processes); the participants are literate (not all participants can read a questionnaire); and such scales are culturally appropriate

(this kind of scaling system is commonplace in the West but may be foreign and confusing to the participants). Moreover, as mentioned, interviews and focus groups can themselves be mechanisms of change. Given this, my judgement was that the risks of demand characteristics in an interview are worth the protection against worse threats to research integrity and the potential benefits of interviews.

Observation and field journals. The third method of data collection employed was participant observation. While I did participate in some of the exercises and took an active role in planning the project and workshop, John was primarily responsible for facilitation, allowing me to observe the participants throughout the project. Observational data was collected in three forms. Detailed notes on each exercise was collected during the workshop, including participants' behaviours, words, and apparent emotions. This data helped inform the interviews, allowing me to ask participants about specific things they said, did, or felt. It also provided a secondary source of data to use in the fine-tuning of each exercise. I also kept a field journal where I collected my thoughts and feelings related to the project, the people, and the general socio-political context in which I was working. Finally, I kept a personal diary that allowed me to collect my own thoughts, struggles, and activities. This was mostly for my own mental health and self-interest, but some of this writing was valuable in understanding my positionality within the project and to engage in self-reflection and reflexivity, which is important in any research.

Analysis

Enacting Change employed qualitative analysis. This included a thematic analysis on interview, debrief, and observation data, as well as field journal analysis to identify attitude changes participants claimed and that I observed. Changes were disaggregated by

age, gender, combatant status (i.e. returnee/community member identity), emotionality (i.e. how often a participant expressed a specific emotion), and level of engagement in an effort to understand why changes occurred for some individuals and not others.

Thematic analysis. Thematic analysis was applied to the data collected through the workshops and the interviews. First-round interviews were analysed to identify key themes flagged by the participants, as well as barriers to reintegration and reconciliation, fears and insecurities, capacities, and hopes for the future. Sub-themes and underlying concerns were identified within these broad themes, and patterns regarding gender, age, and combatant status were highlighted. These themes and patterns were used to provide baseline data against which second- and third-round interview data could be compared to ascertain individual- and group-level change, and to choose specific workshop exercises that are best suited to address the kinds of concerns and themes raised. Second-round interviews were subjected to the same form of analysis, and data was compared to the data from first round. Areas of cognitive dissonance induction and early attitude changes were identified, and disaggregated by gender, age, combatant status, and emotionality. The debrief was used mostly to inform third-round interviews and as a mechanism of further change. However, areas of cognitive dissonance induction and attitude change that were identified in the debrief were noted. Finally, thematic analysis was applied to third-round interviews. These interviews provided the most fruitful data, as questions asked here mirrored questions asked in first interviews: what are the participant's attitudes and beliefs on the themes that were identified in the beginning and interrogated throughout the workshops? Answers were compared to first-round responses to discern if attitudes had changed. I also asked participants if they felt they had changed, if their

stated goals for the programme were met, if they feel they are better able to move forward, and how they feel about the utility of this programme. Answers to these questions informed my results and conclusions as well.

This system of thematic analysis and data comparison allowed me to look for results on an individual and group level. Themes that were identified within first and second interviews as being important to each participant were pooled to reflect themes that are important to the whole community, with those identified by multiple participants being prioritised. Gender, age, combatant status, and emotionality disaggregation allowed for more specificity in terms of what kinds of issues specific demographics within the community find important. At the same time, comparing second- and third-round interview data to first-round interview data for each participant allowed me to track individual attitude changes on the themes they specifically noted as being important, which informed results regarding the utility of TfD to identify problems and to induce cognitive dissonance and, ultimately, attitude change. Throughout the thematic analysis process, observational data was used to provide specific examples of things said or done. These concretisations could be either individual, demonstrating anomalous or specific outcomes, or could be emblematic of group-level results.

Engagement and participation categorisation. Participants were categorised based on their level of engagement and participation, and their level of attitude change. Engagement and participation were based on attendance and active engagement in the workshops. Those who were chronically absent and disengaged when present fell into the low category, while those who were nearly always present and actively participated were classified as high participation and engagement. Those who were frequently but not

always present, in-and-out, and/or engaged more passively (i.e. sitting and watching rather than participating actively in exercises or conversation) fell into the moderate category. Attitude change categories were based on amount of stated or demonstrated changes and degree of change. Someone who articulated little to no attitude change was classified as low change. Those who articulated changes on the major themes, such as alcohol abuse, domestic violence, or advocating for oneself were classified as high change. Those who articulated or demonstrated changes on some of the secondary themes, or only one or two of the major themes, were classified as moderate change.

This classification system allowed me to see whether certain types of people (age, gender, combatant status, and emotionality) were more engaged than others and whether some types of people experienced more attitude change than others. I was also able to determine if there was a relationship between participation and engagement. This also allowed me to look at the negative space: who *did not* change and *where*. Even those who fell into the moderate or high change categories had areas where they experienced little to no attitude change; combining this classification system with the thematic analysis above, I was able to see where absenteeism and disengagement were related to lack of change on a particular theme. It also helped me understand which themes may be ones that are so ingrained that participants demonstrated resistance to change (Wicklund & Brehm, 2004).

Each participant was asked what their own marker of success for the project would be in their first interview. In their third interview, I asked them if that marker had been achieved without specifically saying it was their marker for success (to avoid priming and demand characteristics). For example, if someone said their marker of success would be that they feel that their community members are more cooperative, one

of the questions I asked in their third interview was 'have you seen changes in levels of cooperation in your community.' They were also asked explicitly if they feel that the project was successful. This allowed me to say that the participants themselves felt that the project was successful and that their goals for the project had been met, bolstering my own interpretation of the success of the project.

Methodological and Ethical Limitations

There are some key limitations to be aware of in this project, and indeed in work like this in general. Language barriers, post-colonial deference to and fears of Westerners, inadequate demographic representation and sample size, and time considerations, were the strongest limitations in this project. Some of these limitations are (potentially) unique to this project, and provide lessons for future work, while others are inherent to TfD. Some of them carry ethical concerns that one must be aware of and work to address, as does the Academy in general. Limitations will be revisited in the results chapter as necessary or ideal conditions for a project like this moving forward.

Language barriers. The largest limitation was language. None of the participants spoke any English, and John, Hussein, and I do not speak Acholi. It was thus necessary to hire translators. Conducting interviews through a translator is hard enough; even more difficult is carrying out a full theatre project, where emotional nuance and specificity of language are crucial. Despite our experienced translators being fluent in English, they both sometimes struggled to get specific meanings and nuances across.

Part of this was an ability barrier on their part, but it was also partly a structural difference in the languages. Acholi seems to be far more concrete than English in that Acholi-speakers struggle to talk about abstract concepts or use metaphor. Concretising

the themes in tangible examples seemed to help participants understand the themes better, but it also resulted in some people fixating on the specific example and struggling to extrapolate the theme or lesson back out to the larger context. For example, when addressing widows' concerns, issues of land rights and laws were unpacked. Participants know that widows have a legal right to the land their husband leaves them, but traditionally they do not have this right and as such many widows are chased off their land by their husbands' families. This is further complicated by clashes between cultural and legal norms related to gender roles and status. These are abstract concepts; participants put them into an intervention scene depicting a widow who is chased off her land and then is assisted by a human rights lawyer who fights for her right to stay. This helped many of the participants change their outlook on how a woman should be supported after her husband dies. However, one of the men in this scene assumed during its creation that the woman had killed her husband, and therefore the law does not apply to her. This was not part of the scene, which ended with the woman staying on her land. When asked if he has changed his outlook on widow's rights, he remained fixated on how women who have killed their husbands do not deserve to stay on their land. Even after I explicitly said that I am referring to women whose husbands have died of natural causes, he could not get past this very specific concretisaton. This is an extreme example, and it is difficult to know to what extent this individual's own cognition impacted this fixation, but other participants similarly struggled to generalise the themes to the broader context.

The language barrier was also particularly impactful when it came to discussing emotions. TfD in general, and this participant-focused form of it in particular, relies on a willingness and ability to engage with and harness emotion. Moreover, discussing

emotion is essential for determining if cognitive dissonance had been induced and to link attitude changes with emotions. Generally speaking, the Acholi do not seem to discuss their emotions. Emotions and feelings are considered personal and private and are kept to themselves. One participant even said in her first interview that part of the initial intervention they received from GRG was to "stay silent and count to 10 without breathing. And that is what [she] always practice[s]." They were taught not to express their emotions or tell others that the stigma harmed them. As much as I disagree with this practice, it is a cultural difference that I must acknowledge. This was confirmed by the many people I spoke to while trying to understand this difference: GRG staff, Hussein, Denis, and Prisca all explained this to me, as did an Acholi friend I made while living in Gulu and an Australian missionary who has lived in Uganda amongst many different ethnic groups for 17 years. John and I had a very open conversation with the participants near the beginning of and several times throughout the workshops about the importance of speaking about our emotions and how we feel about certain things, and they indicated that they agreed and would try. And yet asking 'how do you feel' usually resulted in answers like "I felt like I'm doing the right thing" or "I felt it was the truth." These are not emotions. Rarely would we get an actual emotion from participants, and if we did it was usually a superficial one like 'sad,' 'bad,' or 'angry.'

Through these consultations, we also learned that not only do they typically avoid discussing emotion, Acholi does not have the words to discuss emotion in the same way we do in English. There are three ways of asking 'how do you feel:' *Cwinyi Kwilo Ningo*, which translates to 'what does your heart whisper;' *Cwinyi Waco Ningo,* which means 'what does your heart tell you;' and *Iwinyo Ningo,* which translates to 'how do you listen

to yourself.' The third is the most common way of asking about a feeling, but we found that the second was more likely to get us answers that were closer to what we considered an emotion. However, none of them are really asking about how something feels in the same way we would understand it in English. This could be similar to the problem with discussing abstract concepts, as feelings and emotions are abstract but they talk about them in terms of concrete actions or examples. Alternatively, it could be that they do not conceptualise emotion the same way we do. They certainly feel emotion: I saw them laugh, cry, get angry, express despair, articulate hope, and imply jealousy. But it proved nearly impossible to talk about these feelings without speaking the same language.

Deference to and fear of Westerners. Another barrier is the tension between local people and Westerners or NGOs. I felt that the participants were skeptical of my presence and the project at first, and rightly so. As Mergelsberg (2010) put is, "many people, especially in the more accessible IDP camps, are used to white visitors conducting some interviews and then leaving. 'You come to ask questions and you say you'll return, but we never see you again'" (171). This community has had interventions in the past from local and international NGOs, and they expressed to me that some of these programmes have been exploitative in the sense that the researchers or NGOs came in, pushed their agenda or collected their data, and left without giving anything back. We tried as much as possible to not do this. We made sure to ask for their feedback constantly, informally during lunch or debrief and formally during interviews, which they said they had never experienced before. We used that feedback to adjust the programme daily. We also provided food every day, gave them some books and toys for their children at the end of the project, and spent the last day cooking some Canadian food for

them and having a general conversation about ourselves, our different cultures, and answering other questions they had beyond the day-to-day activities. We tried to make sure that they felt comfortable talking to us and being open and honest about things that they did and did not enjoy and things about which they were concerned. However, there is only so much we can do to reduce the power dynamics inherent with being white, Western researchers living and working in a global colonial context. They were not always honest with us about their likes and dislikes about the project, and deferred to us irrespective of their own wants and needs; this is ironic given the work we did on self-advocacy and standing up for oneself.

This became a problem when one participant took issue with arrangements for the food that was prepared for them. He believed I was overpaying the cook, using incorrect figures. He felt that the food was not worth what he (incorrectly) thought was being spent and accused her of pocketing some of the money. In the second week, all but three participants boycotted and refused to participate. Frustratingly, I was the last to hear about this participant's concern. The participants wanted us to give them money for things like school fees and produce instead of food. This was a dilemma, as I was not allowed to pay participants, but providing food is also ethically contentious. They also expressed that the food was inadequate, and they wanted more if they were to be fed instead of paid. I later learned the food estimate I received from GRG was not adequate, even though I had been assured it would be. Participants were reminded that they could leave the project at any point, and all but the instigator chose to stay.

This again demonstrates the deference to Whites which is so pervasive in many post-colonial societies: I had no way of knowing if the price was fair, so I accepted it,

which contributed to a larger problem. Again, if my goal is to listen to the people and do what they think is right, I must trust local partners when they give me a figure. This incident also brought up an interesting theoretical and ethical dilemma. I really wanted this to be a bottom-up, inside-out intervention where participants take an active role in designing a project that best fits their needs and allows them to identify and solve their own problems in a way that works for them, rather than a typical top-down programme parachuted in from the West. Too many programmes throw money at a problem and rely on 'white saviours' for quick fixes. When given the opportunity to flip that script, they asked me to throw money at a problem and offer quick fixes. But in addition to being barred by the ethics board from giving them money, it also would not address the underlying challenge: I could pay their kids' school fees for the year, but that does not help them make money for school fees in the future. Unpacking and addressing the core barriers in their lives that prevent them from making an adequate income in the first place will help them in the long run. This is exacerbated by a culture of silence: during a conversation with Hussein and one of his colleagues, I learned that many Acholi people (and arguably the Ugandan populace, to varying degrees depending on ethnic group) do not want to talk about the war or their problems in general, preferring instead to take their lives day by day. While part of this is the result of the ethnic power politics suppressing the Acholi's attempts to make their concerns heard, it is probably also a symptom of the insecurity they face daily in that it is difficult to look to the future when one struggles to feed oneself today.

If the point is to listen to participants and help them identify and solve their own problems, then am I meeting that goal by telling them that giving them money to address

the immediate symptoms of a deeper problem is not the answer? On the other hand, given the history of dependence that the literature and the participants identified, it makes sense that they would ask for what has always been given to them in the past. What they want is to pay their kids' school fees. What they know is that White people and NGOs will pay their kids' school fees. It was a novel experience for them to be given the agency and responsibility of finding income generation with the guidance of white people and NGOs. So perhaps the problem is not that I was telling them what they need and want, contravening my post-modern outlook, but rather that they do not know what to ask for and so they default to what they know. With that said, however, this phenomenon is not unique to the Ugandan context: Cameron (2009) highlighted three Andean case studies that resulted in similar behaviour. Here he argued that the drive to work toward short-term, immediate goals such as building a school or medical facility rather than invest long-term in training teachers and health personnel or improving water and sanitation infrastructure was the result of "infrapolitics" (Scott, 1990, cited in Cameron, 2009), or the subtle ways in which the participants "pursue their own goal, while maintaining appearances of compliance with the powerful" (Cameron, 2009, p. 698). Cameron suggested that rather than the people not knowing what they want, they in fact know exactly what they want: obtain an income and meet their goals now at the expense of long-term investment. They are also skeptical of outside interventions, and they know that building schools and increasing student enrollment, despite lacking the teachers or long-term educational infrastructure to support it, will bolster their credibility on the national stage, increasing their chances of success in the future. From this perspective, my post-modern outlook is once again called into question: where is the line between

‘partnership,’ where all parties learn from each other, and ‘ownership,’ where the community or researcher(s) has control over the project, potentially to negative ends?

Inadequate sample demographics and size. Sampling issues were another limitation to this project, but were a limitation I took on knowing the alternative would be worse. I had to partner with a local NGO for two reasons. It is culturally and ethically inappropriate (and unfeasible) to arrive in a village and try to run a project like this without a local introduction and leadership approval. I also needed access to a population who would be willing to work with me on some very contentious, personal, and possibly culturally inappropriate topics, which meant that I had to connect with an established group that was used to this kind of work. It would have been impossible to recruit people off the street for this project through cold-calls or flyers.

There were several downsides, however. First, I had little control over recruitment. Ideally, I wanted 20 people evenly distributed between men and women, returnees and community members. Based on the demographics of GRG’s beneficiaries and the self-selection process, I ended up with 12 women and eight men, one of whom dropped out, and all but one of the men was a returnee, meaning that male community member voices were woefully under-represented. All but one participant was over the age of 30, and more than half were over 40, meaning that youth voices were not represented in this project. This makes it very difficult to offer conclusions regarding age, gender, or combatant status disaggregation. It also meant that the participants had already received interventions from GRG and other NGOs and researchers, so some of the issues I thought would be important, like stigma and trauma, were not perceived to be significant. The tension between returnees and community members was not nearly as

deep as the literature suggested it would be. This is obviously positive, but it meant I had to think on my feet to reframe the project. These tensions may have been stronger if the participants had not previously received substantial support, or if the community was more immediately post-conflict. As a result, it is difficult to say if TfD is a viable tool in more urgent contexts, or if their previous interventions have made them more amenable to such work. It is also impossible to control for factors outside of the project which may play a role in changing participants attitudes toward certain themes, limiting the robustness of findings.

It is important to note that 20 people is a small sample and limits the generalisability of the findings. While a larger sample would provide more robust results, allowing me to speak to the overall utility of TfD as a method of reintegration and reconciliation, the methodology itself runs into limitations as the sample size increases. The Creative Director advised me as an expert in this kind of theatre that more than 20 people becomes increasingly difficult to manage as the sole facilitator. Additional facilitators would be needed for a larger sample size, as well as additional translators. We would also need a larger workspace, which may have required renting a facility, and more meals. In addition, more time would have been needed to ensure that all voices are represented and to complete all the interviews. All of these things require increased funding that I did not have access to. A different version of this project had us running two groups, each three days per week, with John, Hussein, Prisca, Denis, and I working six days per week. This again would have been financially unfeasible, and would have required more work on GRG's end for recruitment. It would also have been taxing on the research team, so we decided against this plan. The small sample size was strategically

and logically decided upon, but it does limit the scope of the findings. With that said, the goal of this project was not to be transferable in the actual content. Part of why so many DDRR programmes fail is that a programme that was effective in one context is transplanted onto another without considering the specific concerns of the individuals impacted or their community (Knight, 2008). While 20 people is a small group, it does allow me to tentatively suggest if the method itself works, and if tested with a larger group or in a different context, the results may be more robust. But this is for the method only. The actual content of such a programme must be community specific as "practice should emerge from intention, which must emerge from context" (Selman & Battye, 2017, para. 3). This consideration is often overlooked in development practice.

Time considerations. A project like this is exploratory and meant to be a first step in a long-term process. This was very clear in this project. I did not have adequate time to develop the strong relationships and community connections needed for such personal and intimate work, and the project was limited as a result. We also did not have enough time for the workshops. We wanted eight hours a day, four days a week, for four weeks. Participants agreed to five hours a day, three days a week, for four weeks, which we never actually had as people were never punctual, left early, were in-and-out all day, took long lunch breaks, and were often absent. As a result, we were not able to dig into the issues as deeply as we would have liked, nor were we able to address as many issues as the participants brought up in their interviews. We tried to address as many themes and topics as possible at a more superficial level; John and I both feel looking back that we should have done the opposite, targeting a few of the really relevant themes and topics at a much deeper level. More time would have made this easier. This limitation is an

interesting one, however, in that it is partly due to our participants not being trained artists. OSNW was similar in many ways to this one, but absenteeism and tardiness, while still a problem, were not nearly as significant. That was probably because they were professional, paid artists who mostly relied on participation in the project as their primary source of income. We wanted to see if TfD works with non-artist populations, and the answer is a qualified yes, but (unsurprisingly) with a lower degree of effectiveness.

Chapter IV - Results

Using the data collected through the first round of interviews, the main themes to be addressed through the workshops were determined. Observational data was collected alongside interview data from the second and third interviews and used to understand which people changed their attitudes related to which topics. This chapter details these results, which will be discussed within the broader context of the community, ethnic group, and Ugandan culture. Contradictory or anomalous results are also highlighted and discussed. The results will be located within existing TfD, Development, and Social Psychological literature and practice, and arguments for how they reinforce, contradict, or question the status quo in these fields will be made. Finally, the core research question, is TfD a viable tool for increasing communication and changing attitudes toward reintegration and reconciliation in war-affected communities, is answered: while the project was successful, it faced substantial limitations. Ideal conditions for future success will be highlighted.

Main Themes

Interview data was used to understand the main problems in Abole and guide creation of the daily workshops. Participants highlighted many problems and concerns in their community, and we grouped similar concerns together, targeting the overlapping areas. Out of this process, the main themes to emerge were access to resources, cooperation, domestic violence, alcohol abuse, widows' concerns and land wrangling, and stigma and trauma related to the war. Less prominent themes were woven throughout the workshops and integrated with the major themes.

Access to resources and cooperation. The most common concern was lack of productivity. This seemed to mean different things to different people, but at the core of the issue was a sense that people are not working as hard as they can or should, and thus are not able to live the kind of life they want. Most people related 'productivity' to agricultural work, and inaction here was largely based on lack of access to physical resources, poor climatic conditions, or a physical inability to do the work based on age or injury. This last one was particularly a problem for returnees, as several of them have permanent physical limitations stemming from their time in the bush: "our guns were very heavy for us. Because I was so young it has gone into us, some of us still struggle with this." Widows often struggle without support as they must do the work traditionally assigned to men as well as their own. Lack of access to markets was also a concern: due to their inability to grow adequate volumes of food for even basic consumption, there is rarely enough surplus to sell at market. This is exacerbated by their physical distance from market spaces, lack of transportation, inadequate political representation and poor infrastructural support. As a result, they are forced to sell what little they have at small, local markets dominated by 'middlemen,' unethical purchasers who buy small-scale produce at below-market value to take to the main market centres and sell for a profit. This problem ultimately came down to the core themes of access to resources, both physical and social, and cooperation, which was reported by nine participants as the key strength the community possesses, but one they would like to bolster.

Domestic violence. Every woman and a few of the men said that domestic violence is a main concern for them. Interestingly, they take a very Galtungian (1969; 1990) definition of 'violence,' including not only physical, man-to-woman violence but

also emotional abuse, neglect and abandonment, and not doing one's familial or parental duties. They also include children, extended families, and even neighbours in their definition. The participants rooted domestic violence in alcohol abuse, saying that these things only happen when people are drunk or as retaliation against someone for being drunk. Alcohol abuse was also brought up in its own right as a problem in the community in many contexts: as a catalyst for domestic violence, one of the root causes of lack of productivity, in relation to health problems, immorality and promiscuity, economic concerns, and general idleness and laziness.

Widow's concerns. Widows' concerns were a problem for three of the women who were themselves widows, and land wrangling was brought up five times. In this context, land wrangling referred either to a widow being chased off her husband's land by his relatives, or land being illegally bought and sold. This last concern is often rooted in the war: returnees took whatever land they could find irrespective of ownership, and those who were born during or after the war in the bush or in the IDP camps before being resettled were unaware of land boundaries and so, again, took whatever land they could find. Nepotism and economic issues play a role here as well, as those with political connections or financial resources are able to bribe the courts to rule in their favour when a land dispute occurs. Lack of access to resources re-appears here.

Trauma and stigma. In interviews, I asked participants if trauma and stigma are still issues in Abole. Of the 19 people I asked about trauma, ten said it is still a problem and nine said it is not. While it would appear that trauma is only seen as a problem by a small majority, when these numbers are disaggregated by combatant status, the difference of opinion becomes clear: more than half of the returnees said that trauma is still a

problem, while only three community members agreed. While all individuals may have been traumatised during the war, studies show that returnees were more traumatised than community members (Betancourt et. al., 2008; Betancourt, 2010; Betancourt et. al., 2010). Those who were most impacted by trauma are the ones who said they still struggle with it today.

A similar trend appears with stigma. All 20 participants were asked in their first interview if stigma is still a problem returnees face in Abole. Five people said yes while fifteen said no. It appears that overwhelmingly, participants feel that stigma is a concern of the past. However, when disaggregated by combatant status, a different picture appears: all five of the people who said stigma is still a problem were returnees. While most returnees feel that stigma is not a problem, it is significant that *only* returnees said it is. Again, those who are most impacted are the ones who are saying it is a problem, while those who do not and never have experienced it say it is no longer a concern.

Interestingly, despite more than half of the participants stating that neither trauma nor stigma are still concerns, they were both brought up throughout the first-round interviews as issues that they would like to address. For example, some participants said that while trauma is no longer a problem, today "there is no more support, people need to support themselves" in case trauma resurfaces. One woman brought up inter-generational trauma, where "the trauma theme seems to be creating more trauma in the young ones: in a bid to watch and learn a lesson, they try to go and practice it." Regarding stigma, several people spoke about subtle stigma: there is no longer overt stigmatisation of returnees, but it is not uncommon for someone to bring up someone else's past during heated debate or when drunk, or for aggressive behaviour to be blamed on having

previously been a soldier. This is in line with the findings from the SWAY study (Annan, Blattman, & Horton, 2006; Blattman & Annan, 2008; Annan et. al., 2009). Others brought up an ingrained sense of fear and mistrust, pointing out that there are some who will always intrinsically mistrust someone who was a soldier. Listening to some of the participants talk about their own personal struggles, it is clear that internalised stigma and self-blame are problems as well. One woman said she feels she is a bad mother for being unable to financially support her children because she struggles to farm due to injury from the bush. Moreover, the two individuals who clearly show signs of what we would call PTSD in the West said in their interviews that they no longer experience trauma. They feel that through the support they have received from GRG, they no longer experience the trauma they did upon their return from the LRA. This is suggestive of the impact of NGO interventions: there seems to be this idea that since they have had substantial psychosocial support, trauma and stigma have been addressed, despite these issues still being present for many people.

Attitude Changes

Changes in attitudes were determined by answers given in third-round interviews and comparisons between the three interviews, supplemented by participants' words and behaviours throughout the workshop. Recall that one participant dropped out prior to his second interview, and two participants did not participate in a third interview, so some of the questions were not asked of them.

With the exception of alcohol abuse, the major themes participants highlighted were ones for which explicit attitude change would be difficult: themes like 'domestic violence' or 'access to resources' are not linked to an explicit attitude. Therefore, we

worked toward changing core attitudes that can impact these abstract concepts: when participants spoke about their struggles, attitudes towards and problems with cooperation, self-advocacy, active listening (i.e. hearing the perspectives of others and supporting others in the ways they need), and self-accountability were consistently highlighted.

Alcohol abuse. The largest change was in relation to alcohol abuse, which, in addition to the core attitudes above, is also rooted in an explicit attitude toward alcohol. Half of the women said that they had either quit drinking or had confronted loved ones about their drinking. One woman succeeded in convincing her husband to cut back on his drinking, and as a result he has reduced his violence toward her and their children. This is significant in relation to her own views on alcohol and also in her ability to advocate for herself. One woman "used to prepare alcohol, to prepare local brew…no longer, [she has] left," sacrificing a source of income in favour of increased health and safety.

Two men also said that their relationship to alcohol had changed. One of these men was honest about his struggles with an alcohol addiction; playing the role of an abusive, drunk husband and seeing how his friends are hurt by their own and their loved ones' excessive alcohol consumption convinced him to cut back on his alcohol intake. He now only drinks casually, after all his work is done, and not to excess. The other man had a different outlook on alcohol from other participants. Whereas everyone had a story to tell about how they have been harmed by another's drinking or how their own alcohol consumption has hurt them or their loved ones, this individual's parents brewed alcohol and thus alcohol paid for his school fees, food, and clothing growing up. He therefore did not view alcohol as a negative thing. When challenged by the other participants, he at first held to his belief that alcohol is a good thing. As we further interrogated the theme,

and also related alcohol abuse to many of the other issues we had discussed through the project, he began to see that alcohol does in fact have negative consequences. While his change on this theme was not terribly profound, he did eventually recognise that "alcohol is somehow bad in one way or the other. Especially when you are approaching a group of people and you have taken alcohol and are drunk," others may be uncomfortable, and he should therefore make an effort to protect those people and avoid them when he is drunk.

Cooperation. Many participants' attitudes toward cooperation changed in favour of being more supportive to one another and more amicable in their interactions. Several of the women changed their attitude toward cooperating with a drunk husband, choosing to defuse the situation rather than meet him with aggression. One man felt that he is now more approachable, whereas before he "never knew how to speak to people, [he] always ignored people." Participants engaged in a non-realistic exercise asking them to offer support to one another and to ask for specific support, and then compared the differences between the offered and requested support, which led many participants to recognise that they must listen to people when they request specific help.

This was further concretised on the days we worked on widows' rights and stigma-related issues, both of which involved intervention exercises where a widow or returnee is offered support that actually makes their lives more difficult and other participants are asked to intervene with solutions. Several participants said in their third interview that they had seen the level of support and cooperation in their community increase through exercises like these. This was particularly the case for those who played the role of a widow or returnee in the skits.

Self-advocacy. The corollary to listening to the needs of others is that one needs to ask for support. The importance of self-advocacy ran throughout the workshop, and here again substantial change was seen. Three women who previously believed that asking for help makes one look weak changed their outlook by the end of the project, coming to believe that asking for specific help not only ensures that one's needs are met, but also frees resources in not giving what little one has unnecessarily. The participants in this project, and their wider community, view 'a supportive advice' as the most important thing one can give another, and a panacea to solving all problems. It is significant that the three women in this example were, at the beginning of the project, probably the strongest adherents of this logic; in fact, when asked which of emotional, material, or service support is the most important thing one can give another, two of them said emotional. Moreover, they are both widows, and played a crucial role in the intervention exercises dealing with widows' issues. That these three women now see the importance of asking for what one needs and listening to others is indicative of the value of this kind of work.

Self-advocacy also increases communication in other areas as community members feel more comfortable being open and honest with each other. This is significant in a culture where vulnerability is seen as a weakness and emotions are personal and private. One man found that he has more friends now and is able to go to them with problems. One woman had a personal crisis in the week between the end of the workshops and our final interview in which she said if she had not been able to tell her friends specifically what she needed and "if these people had not supported [her] emotionally, [we] would have found [her] dead." The man who played the role of a returnee in the skit mentioned above, who is himself a returnee, changed substantially in

this area. In his third interview, he said that when he first returned from the bush he was treated like he was in the skit, with NGOs and adults telling him what he needed and what to do, but never asking him what he needed or wanted, exacerbating the mistrust and animosity between the two groups. In the scene, being able to advocate for himself and tell the NGO workers and his community members what he needed made him feel like "people were concerned about [him] and they were not really interested in hurting [him]." He "told the other members of the society not to awaken the problem by using coercive methods, they should just take [him] slowly, and that is what [he] felt was really new." He also played a widow in an intervention scene. Playing such a different role, as a woman and a widow, gave him a new appreciation for the hardships these women face. He now believes it is important to not only tell people what he needs, but to ask people what they need and listen to their answer.

In addition to asking for what one needs, another aspect of self-advocacy we tackled was self-confidence. The two main approaches we took here were maintaining eye contact and standing up for oneself to those in positions of power. It is viewed as inappropriate in Acholi culture for people to make eye contact with those of higher status. This includes government officials, NGO workers, white people/Westerners, and men (over women). While we did not necessarily want to challenge a cultural norm, we did want to unpack the idea of power or status and who can hold them in different contexts, as the participants discussed uncomfortable or unfair power dynamics in their interviews.

The participants did one non-realistic exercise involving eye contact where the men and women were lined up across from one another and asked to make and maintain eye contact while walking across our workspace. They did the exercise a second time

where, upon meeting in the middle, the women put their hands on the men's heads and pushed them down to their knees while continuing to maintain eye contact. The point of this exercise was to flip the typical gender power dynamic, as well as challenge their ingrained belief that men hold more power and status than women. This exercise was difficult for but well-received by most participants, and we incorporated eye contact throughout the remainder of the workshops. The majority of the women stated in their third interview that they felt more empowered as a result of the eye contact work: they are more comfortable to meet another's eyes and also more able to communicate with their friends and relatives. The men had a less pronounced response, but most of them responded favourably as well, with only two viewing the exercise as problematically upsetting traditional relations. One man found that making and maintaining eye contact has made his job as a counsellor easier when he needs to go to court in cases of domestic violence: making eye contact and disrupting power dynamics made it easier to speak to lawyers and judges and to argue a case. This man found in general that the project made his job as a counsellor easier as his fellow villagers learned these skills and changed their attitudes and behaviours, and as he learned better mediation skills.

We also did a lot of work on standing up for oneself to people in positions of power or authority. We explored power dynamics related to spouses, local and government leaders, and 'outsiders.' 'Outsiders' included NGOs, middlemen, and Westerners. These dynamics were challenged largely through the multiple-ending exercises. Through these exercises, several participants learned better ways of communicating and found strength in their ability to advocate for themselves.

One woman, who played the role of a middleman who cheated the community members, changed her outlook on middlemen and her "way of interaction because [she] has turned to be very keen to monitoring the person who comes to [them] in order to not be cheated." At first interview, five people said that community leader responsiveness was a big problem in their community, and more brought it up in the early days of workshop. One man changed his outlook on community leaders, gaining a better understanding of what a community leader must go through, and how they should respond to their constituents. A woman who played the role of a local leader who was unable to meet her community's demands despite advocating to an unresponsive government said she felt caught in the middle and was upset that she could not help her community. She thus changed her outlook on community leadership, recognising that sometimes they try but ultimately the government must make decisions.

Throughout the project, intimate partner conflict and violence reappeared as a topic of great importance to the participants. These issues were explicitly tackled on the days that we dealt with alcoholism and gender-based/domestic violence, but the theme was present in other contexts as well. Most women stated by the end of the project that they felt more confident in standing up to their husbands. One man also stated that he had confronted his wife about some of the hurtful things she had said and done to him.

In an intervention scene where John played the role of a white water-systems engineer who was brought in by an NGO to address the community's water concern, the participants were tasked with convincing him to help them. One man rightly pointed out that John's unwillingness to help may be race-based, and if that is the case, there is really nothing they can do to change the perception, so they may have to work within this

prejudice. Others tried tactics like begging, bribing, or shaming John into helping them. Ultimately, one woman had the idea to pool the community's money together to pay John as a deposit, and then negotiated a payment plan, which included caveats for crop failure leading to economic deficits. This was a huge turning point for many of the participants, who saw the value of not only self-advocacy but also self-accountability.

Self-accountability. One of the core attitudes we tried to weave throughout all the exercises was self-accountability: "you can't change other people." Most participants seemed to hold a dichotomy between internalised oppression and self-blaming on one hand, and a strong sense of 'the other' as the one who must change to solve the community problems on the other. Participants sometimes blamed themselves for their children's hunger or for getting swindled by middlemen, but then often did not seem to see their own role in the community problems, focusing on giving advice to other people instead of making changes in their own lives that could help them adapt to or change their own relationship to broader issues. Scenes that allowed participants to explore their own role in a dilemma and how that role is shaped by both internal (personal) and external (societal and interpersonal) factors really resonated with participants. This is interesting given that many DDRR programmes, and indeed international law, tend to push a victim mentality, telling returnees and community members that returnees are not to blame for what they have done. While legally this may be the case, it denies returnees the agency they exert (and in many cases, claim) in becoming a soldier, leaving an armed group, and community reconstruction (Popovski, 2013; Schnabel, 2013). Prior to our arrival, it was common for participants to believe that if one gives another enough advice and explains that their behaviour is wrong, eventually that person will change. Through the multiple

ending exercises where problems persisted despite the individual's best efforts to change the way the other behaved, some participants began to shift their thinking slightly. One woman realised that all the advice in the world will not change someone who wishes to do or think something. One man said that he had come to see that some of his friends may not quit drinking: "it would be very good if we could change all of them so that they stop drinking alcohol…but it's very difficult…I just give up in giving them more advices because I feel like they are not considering my advice."

A big shift came on the day we explored GBV. John and I performed a scene portraying a man beating his wife. Participants were invited to advise the wife (me) as to what I should do to prevent the abuse from occurring. One participant understood right away that it did not matter what I did, my husband (John) was going to beat me, because he had chosen to do so irrespective of my actions. Suggestions the women gave me included: have dinner prepared when he gets home, cook better food, beg forgiveness, and offer to perform sexual acts. I tried all of these to no avail: John still beat me. They eventually realised that none of these things would work, and said during debrief that in their own lives, these things rarely worked. (The men, coincidentally, were quiet during this exercise). The suggestion that did help was telling me to turn to John's brother for intervention. We had already done substantial work on reaching out to others for help, and the participants felt that using a mediator was something that could be very effective and culturally appropriate, particularly if that mediator is a male and a relative.[4] The flip

[4] An important nuance is required here: John and I performed a scene for the participants, which is in line with conventional, audience-focused performance-based TfD. The difference, however, is in intention: we had a relationship with the participants, and dramatised an issue they have identified in the manner they have said they experience it. Moreover, John felt that letting participants see their own issue reflected back at them and be a more passive observer in this case was more beneficial than performing it themselves as it gives them the opportunity to be the outsider. Given that domestic violence is something they all

side to it working, however, was some participants began viewing mediators as change agents, which was at odds with our emphasis on self-accountability and working to adapt to situations rather than changing others. We asked participants to think about what they saw and the advice that was given. Do you always take all the advice given to you? The participants agreed that they only take the advice they think will work. So they make a choice. This nuance of agency within change – that is, choosing to change rather than being changed by someone – was a big shift for many people who previously argued that one can change another and that their own growth and change through NGO intervention and community involvement was testament to that.

Who Changed and Where

It is important to note that while the results above were the dominant ones, not all participants experienced all of these changes, and those who did experience changes did not experience them similarly. It is impossible to identify all underlying factors for who changed and why; however patterns that emerged suggest that gender, age, combatant status, and emotionality may be possibilities. The reality is that a combination of these factors, in conjunction with the complexity of the programme themes and methodology, synergistically created changes, in addition to the roles played by factors outside our control, such as events and circumstances within the participants' personal lives and community. This section explores some of these patterns and illustrates the complexity of changing attitudes related to convoluted themes. Despite this complexity, however, engagement and participation emerged as the key factors in attitude change.

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experience, and all experience differently, seeing the main idea as an observer can help participants focus on the theme rather than the specific details.

Gender. A gender dynamic is difficult to determine: two men did not participate in a third interview and therefore were not asked about changes in their views on alcohol and self-advocacy, but self-accountability was addressed in the second interview as well as the third, and in a daily debrief, so the two men who missed the third interview are included in these numbers. It is possible that the other themes may have been similarly impactful if the two men who did not participate in a third interview had done so.

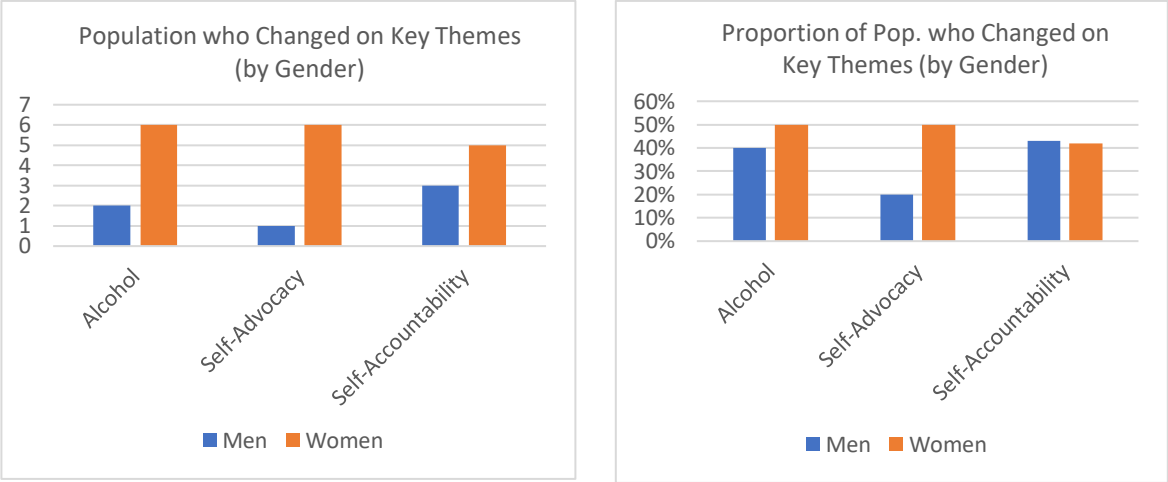

Figure 1: Attitude changes on the major themes, by gender.

A higher proportion of women than men said their attitudes changed toward alcohol and self-advocacy. Self-accountability in the form of understanding one's own position in a conflict and working to change it rather than changing other people resulted in changes in roughly equal proportions between the genders. Figure one shows the gender breakdown on major themes by both raw number and proportion of the gender.

Engagement and attitude change. Participants were grouped according to their level of engagement and participation, as well as their level of attitude change. 18 of the 19 participants were grouped in the same category for both metrics – i.e. high, medium, or low for both engagement and attitude change; one participant demonstrated high

engagement and only moderate change, and he was one of the men who did not do a third interview, so his level of attitude change may have been higher than I perceived from his day-to-day activities and second interview. Figure two shows the gender and combatant status breakdown of those in each category, both by raw number and by proportion of each category.

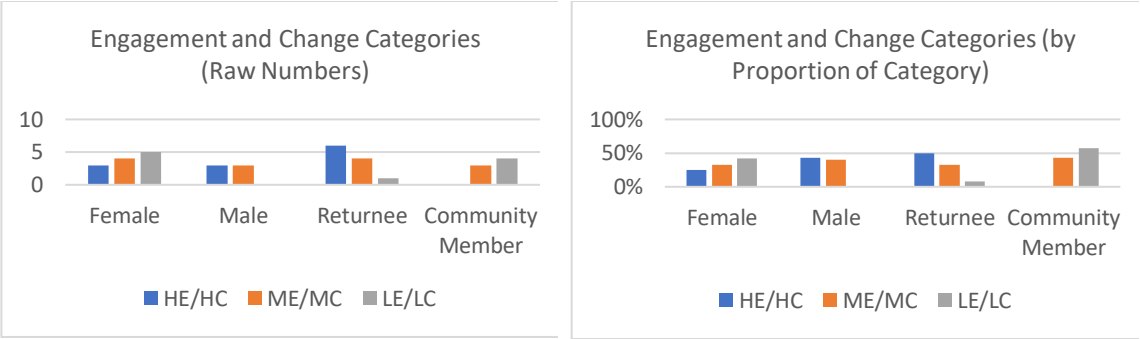

Figure 2: Engagement and change categories by gender and combatant status.

The gender impact changes when participants are grouped by degree of change. Men appear to be more impacted than women, with a higher percentage of the male population in the high and moderate change category than females. The gendered impact discussed above, where women changed more than men in terms of outlook on alcohol and self-advocacy, may have been lessened had the two men who did not participate in a third interview done so. The fact that including their numbers in the change figures relating to self-accountability showed a higher change in men than women would corroborate this. With that said, however, those who demonstrated the most profound changes tended to be women. Degree of change was determined based both on number and magnitude of changes. The two individuals who demonstrated the most substantial change in terms of quitting drinking, encouraging others to quit drinking, and asking explicitly for what is needed, were women. This could reflect another level of gender difference. However, as an added dimension of complexity, they were also two of the

older participants. Conversely, the entirety of the low change group was women. Four of the five were above the average age of the entire sample as well as the average age of the women. However, the high and moderate change categories both include participants who are above the average age of the sample and their own gender. The gender dynamic here is murky at best, and age may be a contributing factor to change as well.

Of particular interest is the breakdown of returnees and community members. The majority of those who experienced high or moderate change were returnees, and nearly all of the returnees fell into the high or moderate change categories. This clearly shows that returnees experienced higher attitude change than community members. But why? As discussed previously, returnees have already navigated a series of identity shifts (Shanahan, 2008). They have gone from civilian to soldier and back to civilian, and in some cases have gone through these shifts multiple times as they escaped/were 'rescued' and were re-recruited. They have also gone through normal life changes from child to adult, but often at abnormal and culturally inappropriate ages, such as a child who is recruited at 12 years, or a girl who is impregnated in the bush at 14. Identity shifts and attitude changes go hand in hand, as each feeds into the other as one grows and learns. However, the abnormal and age-inappropriate identities add an additional layer of ongoing attitude changes: the LRA socialised children into their own culture, which was in many ways different from anything they knew or was previously expected of them. They had to adapt to that culture to survive, and then had to adapt back to a socially acceptable identity and set of attitudes and behaviours upon reintegration. One's own life experience and how one interprets the world through the lens of those experiences also plays a role in these shifts (Roesler, 2008). Is it possible that the returnees demonstrated a

higher level of attitude change than community members because their life experiences of turbulent and abnormal identity shifts primed them to be adaptable and ready to change their attitudes based on the current context? Community members also experienced identity shifts that a normative group of people would not have had to endure, such as being uprooted from their homes and becoming IDPs, experiencing a physical or mental disability, or becoming widowed. Were these shifts as substantial as those the returnees experienced? Was the context different enough to result in less of a priming effect?

Emotionality. Recalling that cognitive dissonance is linked to attitudinal changes, I analysed the degree of emotionality within participants and how that related to their degree of change. Participants in the high change category articulated more and/or stronger attitude changes related to a particular emotion or set of emotions coming out of specific activities. Both personal cognitive dissonance, created by embodying a counter-attitudinal or novel behavior, and vicarious cognitive dissonance, created by watching an ingroup member with whom one identifies behave in a manner that is counter-attitudinal or novel to the group, have been shown to lead to attitude change; this finding is in line with existing literature. With that said, the people in the moderate and low change categories certainly articulated fewer specific emotions or exhibited lower emotionality than those in the high change category, but there is no distinction between the two groups in terms of emotionality. Cognitive dissonance, as demonstrated in this project by flattened or lowered affect during dissonance and normal or heightened affect upon alleviation, plays a role in attitude change to a certain extent, but there may be other factors outside the control of the project that contribute as well.

Some of the non-realistic exercises in which participants engaged included physically manipulating another person's body and facial expressions to look like their sibling and mimicking the posture, mannerisms, and behaviours of others in their community. When asked how these activities felt, five participants reported feeling more love toward their 'sibling' and feeling like the individual they were pretending to be in terms of their status and identity within the community. Four of these five individuals were in the high change category, while the fifth was in the moderate change category but did not do a third interview. This could suggest that those who have strong imaginations and are able to connect to an embodiment are also more emotional and more susceptible to attitude changes. It is important to recall however that discussing emotion with the participants was extremely difficult. Due to cultural and linguistic differences, John and I and the participants struggled to have conversations about feelings and emotions, which necessarily limits these results.

Engagement as the key factor. Gender, age, combatant status, and emotionality patterns notwithstanding, the strong relationship between participation and attitude change is clear. With only one exception, those who demonstrated high engagement and participation also demonstrated high attitude change. It seems intuitive: you get out what you put in. And yet, this understanding is lacking in the design of conventional TfD programmes, which are more passive and rely on watching rather than participating, as well as in DDRR programmes where returnees are put in functionally-appropriate schools (as opposed to age-appropriate ones) and therapy, often against their will, and given vocational training which is nearly always based on what the organisation running the programme thinks will be most useful for the participants. Active engagement in

identifying and solving one's own problems, advocating for what one needs, and playing an active role in designing the programme that will be most beneficial for them, is lost.

Those who demonstrated the least change were also the least engaged. Recall that participation and engagement classification was based both on how often the participant was present and how engaged they were when they were present. Some of those in the low participation group had high rates of absenteeism; others were there much of the time but were very disengaged, simply sitting and watching or even sleeping. These participants demonstrated very little to no attitude change. There were other participants who were also quite absent or in-and-out as they attended to their children or to other responsibilities, but when they were present they were engaged and actively participated. These individuals were mostly grouped in the moderate participation category, with one of them in the high participation category as she was extremely engaged when she was present, and showed attitude change commensurate with their level of engagement. It is possible that some underlying factor in the returnee identity is a contributing factor to why they were the most engaged, or that something relating to age or gender impacts willingness to engage and/or emotionality; the data is insufficient to posit one way or the other in this regard. However, that those who were most engaged also demonstrated the most change suggests relationship between the two. This is in line with cognitive dissonance and internalisation literature. Vaidis and Gosling (2012) showed that a willingness and commitment to receive discrepant information and embody counter-attitudinal behaviours is important for internalisation. The more effort one puts into a counter-attitudinal behaviour, the stronger the cognitive dissonance and internalisation.

Who Did Not Change and Where

This can be further demonstrated by looking at the negative space: who *did not* change and *where.* The five women in the low participation category demonstrated little to no attitude change. But even those in the high/moderate participation and change categories had areas where their absence related to a lack of change. The following are not causative. I do not mean to imply that a participant's lack of change on a particular theme is exclusively due to them missing that aspect of the workshop. Just as one short workshop like this is insufficient to instigate substantial, long-term change, missing one day cannot be the sole contributing factor to a specific lack of change. Moreover, we cannot control for factors outside the project that may also have played a role in a participant's (lack of) change. However, this result does suggest a relationship between (lack of) engagement and (lack of) attitude change.

One man stated in his second interview that the community members have tried everything to solve their problems, specifically regarding access to water, but to no avail: "we tried various means and I think there's nothing more than what we've suggested." This is different from what many other participants said when asked if any exercises they have done so far could be useful for their problems: most of them said that practicing these skills and testing solutions will help them in the future. This man was absent on the day we discussed finding solutions to problems by thinking on their feet and trying different things. Another participant continued to believe that with enough supportive advice "someone can change…through the plays we acted with GRG I have recovered from the mental representations and have adopted whatever advices they have given me because I used to feel very bad, so I feel I am now changed." In fact, she believes that

giving advice to change someone is something she learned through the project. She missed the exercise on GBV day where the nuance between choosing to change and being changed was unpacked. Another woman had a less pronounced version of the same lack of change, recognising that one may not be able to directly change another, but arguing that one can still give advice and support another where they are and that sometimes that will change them. Despite being the person who arguably demonstrated the most change, she also missed GBV day and therefore missed that nuance.

One woman demonstrated no change at all in relation to listening to what others have to say and supporting them in the way they need to be supported, continuing instead to "give them guidance on how to stay among the societal members." Similarly, she did not learn anything about advocating for herself. While these themes ran throughout the workshop, the days that dealt with them specifically were GBV, stigma, widow's issues, and offering support. She was absent three of those days. Similarly, a woman who missed alcoholism day has not changed her attitude toward dealing with drunk husbands, instead continuing to believe that one must "shy down and not respond." Could these participants have experienced more change had they been present on the days we tackled these issues? It is impossible to know, as there are so many potential confounding variables influencing changes in the participant's lives, but these results are suggestive of a relationship between active engagement and attitude changes.

Contradictory and Anomalous Results

It is important to note contradictions to these results. One area of contention was between the idea of self-accountability and not changing others on one hand, and the use of mediators on the other. Many of the participants internalised the importance of self-

accountability and adapting oneself to a situation rather than relying on others to change, and many experienced great change in their trust and acceptance of mediators as a helpful way of solving problems. However, some seemed to combine the two concepts and land on using mediators as a way of forcing a change in someone else's behaviour. This was brought out most clearly on the day we worked on GBV when my character called John's character's brother to intervene in the situation, which helped to end the abuse. Initially, many of the participants saw this as the brother changing John's character. Most of the participants saw the difference between *being changed* and *choosing to change* when they were asked to think about times that they had chosen to take advice, like John did, and when they had chosen not to. Some of them did not grasp this nuance.

Another contradiction can be seen between changes participants themselves say they experienced, and behaviours they exhibit. For example, five women said in their second and third interviews that the work on self-confidence and self-advocacy has made them more confident and specifically more able to make eye contact. While some of these women did show increased confidence in terms of speaking out and participating throughout the project (as perceived by me), some of them did not, and none of them made eye contact with Denis or me during the interviews.

One aspect of problem solving that participants worked on is the idea of 'the magic solution.' People in this community are very good at giving advice, but it is often superficial or obvious advice which does not actually work, for example, telling someone to just make more money if one struggles to pay one's bills. Many participants said that these kinds of solutions are commonplace but unhelpful and that they want to find ways of actually understanding and getting to the roots of problems to solve them. Through the

workshops participants practiced a number of skills that will help them find adequate solutions to their problems. Many indicated that this was useful, but some still believe that simple solutions are best and did not change in this regard.

When asked if they think theatrically playing out a problem repeatedly with different outcomes is beneficial, the participants all said that they think it is. Yet, Prisca overheard one participant during the lunch break complaining to the other participants that this is a waste of time, he gets it and does not understand why we keep repeating the same scene. Not only does it appear that the purpose of the exercises had not been understood, it also reflects one of the strongest limitations of interviews: demand characteristics. This was also possibly demonstrated by participants saying in interview that they had learned something or changed an opinion, but then not being able to give concrete examples of where the change came from or what specifically they had learned or changed. It is common for TfD participants, and indeed people in general, to be unable to pinpoint a specific moment of attitude change. However, when they struggle to even relate the change to a particular day or exercise, I question if they actually did learn anything, or if this was another demand characteristic. This places a further limitation on the findings: without being able to link a stated change to a specific exercise, the change cannot be fully attributed to the project. We did our best to maintain a safe space for participants and remind them that nothing they say or do will get them in trouble or upset us, and I was explicit at the beginning of each third-round interview that I needed participants to be truthful with me even if they think I want to hear something different, but I cannot control their responses.

While most participants claimed their attitudes surrounding supporting one another had changed, supportive behaviours did not seem to change. During the eight weeks between first meeting the participants and the final day of interviews, there were four deaths within the wider community. One woman was personally impacted by three (two were her grandchildren and another was a niece or nephew), the niece or nephew was the child or cousin of one of the participants, and one man lost his brother or brother-in-law (as relationship words are difficult to translate, the exact relationships are unclear to me). This is a lot of loss, and in one exercise we focused on one of the deaths to highlight issues of offering and asking for support. Despite most participants expressing an attitude change related to supporting others and seeking support, when asked if she has received any more support than she otherwise would have, the woman who was impacted by the three deaths said, "no no, not yet." She also did not feel she was able to specifically ask for additional support.

Many participants said they have changed in their ability to advocate for themselves in asking for support and in standing up for themselves, and yet when asked what they did not like or would change about a project like this, said that the physical activities were sometimes too difficult or were inappropriate for women. Their consent forms specified that they were free to not participate in any activity if they could not or did not want to. We reminded them of this on at least three occasions throughout the project, including specifying that if an activity is too difficult or is gender-inappropriate, that they should tell us this and that they can either sit out or we will modify it. And yet, not a single person told us this during workshop, waiting instead until the final interview where seven participants brought it up.

The deference to and fear of Westerners highlighted in the limitations section of the methods chapter resurfaces here: despite the work we did on self-advocacy, particularly in relation to those in positions of power, the participants did not tell us in the moment what they needed. It also demonstrates demand characteristics: participants did what they thought we wanted them to do rather than what they felt was best for themselves, which is *actually* what we wanted them to do. While this is certainly not surprising, it is something that must be considered, and researchers and practitioners should work to mitigate it in future projects.

One interesting discrepancy came from a woman who said in her third interview that she has not changed her views on asking for specific support. Before the workshops she felt that asking for support makes one look weak. Through discussing this in the interview it became clear that she actually does feel more able to ask certain people for specific things, but that "very many people talk about getting a solution for a problem but they don't actually do what is needed. It never changes." She can ask for help but does not believe that others will help her. This is an interesting nuance that no one else demonstrated. She and the other woman who demonstrated the most substantial change were very honest about the magnitude of change they and their community experienced. Whereas one man spoke about the project being life-changing and other participants talked about their substantive growth and increases in community support and cooperation, these two women were very honest about the fact that while they and their community members have changed, one short project like this is not enough to completely alter the way they think and behave. They also said that they have seen a change in other participants' willingness and desire to help each other, but little change in

actual behaviours, suggesting that the attitudinal changes have not fully internalised. This is not surprising: John and I did not expect a short project like this to result in huge, life-altering changes. However, for them to tell me that the project was good but was not necessarily life-changing tells me that they are being honest, not just telling me what I want to hear. This makes their results more valuable, particularly since they are the ones who demonstrated the most change.

Overall Impact

In an analysis of a PAR project conducted in Sierra Leone, Liberia, and Uganda involving female ex-combatants who returned from the bush pregnant or with children, Veale, Worthen, and McKay (2017) pointed to three intersections where the largest amount of change was seen in the participants. These intersections were individual and community emotion, personal agency and public engagement, and personal and community resilience. Supporting the girls in their own emotional struggles while also working to change the emotions and beliefs of the community members toward the girls allowed both sides to become more cooperative and supportive of one another. Activities that supported the girls in their own objectives and goals while ensuring that their outputs and behaviours were in line with community expectations created stronger synergy between and flexibility within the returnees' aspirations and the community's expectations. Finally, strengthening the personal resiliency of both the young mothers and their traumatised community members and the systemic, infrastructural resiliency of the society enhanced reintegration in all target areas.

These same intersections, seen through a slightly different lens, were areas of change within this project. We actively tried to engage participants' emotions and use

them both as a mechanism and a marker of change. We did not have access to the community beyond the participants, but many of the themes, such as alcoholism, advocacy, widow's issues, and stigma are themes that affect not only the individual but also the community. Participants engaged in behaviours that are representative of their own views and also those of their community members, and spoke about using their new beliefs to change those of their neighbours. Many of them also said that they had seen changes in the way they cooperate with and support one another within their community. Similarly, personal agency and public engagement was a core theme in the project: "you can't change other people." The idea of self-accountability and adapting oneself to a situation while also working to change the situation and support others as they do or do not change was one that was well received by most participants. In addition, the goals of the individual participants largely reflected the goals of their wider community: they want increased productivity, access to resources, and better representation. However, how these goals are perceived by the individual is not necessarily uniform. Through the course of the project, many participants identified changes in themselves in relation to understanding one another and what the other needs and wants, and working together to meet their goals. Finally, the project targeted some of the core aspects of resilience, such as personal accountability, coping with trauma, and self-advocacy. This is a community that has been traumatised by a three-decade war, is extremely rural, and is oppressed by ongoing ethnic tensions and national tribalism. The community must have structures in place that allow them to navigate these barriers, and the individuals themselves must also be resilient in their own personal traumas and struggles. Several participants indicated feeling more able to advocate for themselves to those in positions of power, asking for

what they need and defending themselves against predatory outsiders. Many of the community members also changed their outlook on trauma and stigma, realising that it does still happen to the returnees and that they need to work toward mitigating it. In turn, many of the returnees felt more able to talk about the ongoing trauma and stigma they face and what they need to cope with it.

Veale, Worthen, and McKay's analysis of their projects holds true in this one as well: the intersections between individual and community factors are the areas of greatest change. This is in line with Knight's (2008) conclusions that invoking community supports and reconciliation in reintegration efforts is integral to success. It also demonstrates the importance of bringing both sides together in a divided community, and of working in a bottom-up, inside-out manner: rather than applying a pre-defined programme to a divided community with pre-determined activities and target areas, it is necessary to listen to the participants about what they need and want and tailor the project to meet their aspirations. This also reinforces the integrative framework of analysis used in this project, demonstrating the importance of being flexible in planning a project and allowing the participants to speak for themselves regarding which individual and social factors are important for their own quality of life. Indeed, one participant articulated this in his final interview, saying that "[Telisa] has always been at our level and that is one of the most important things."

Conclusions and Conditions for Success

Coming to the core research question, is theatre a viable tool for increasing communication and changing attitudes toward returnee reintegration and reconciliation in war-affected communities? Most of the participants felt that their own stated marker of

success for the project had been met, in full or in part, and all felt that it was successful. According to the participants themselves, the project was a success. Moreover, all but five participants demonstrated moderate to high attitude change on the main themes of the project. Most participants were engaged and willing to participate, and felt that they can use some of the skills in their daily lives. In fact, many of them said they already had. Hussein and Maggie agree that this style of TfD can be useful for them moving forward in their programming. TfD can be a viable tool for attitude change and reconciliation.

But what is more important is the nuance regarding what success means. Under what specific conditions is theatre a viable tool for this kind of Development work? Limitations within this project were discussed in the methods chapter but are revisited here in the form of ideal or necessary conditions for a project like this to be successful. Willing and active engagement, language skills, consultation and communication, adequate time, and researcher attributes and skills are all considerations in ensuring a successful project. These conditions will be discussed here, along with ethical and theoretical limitations to meeting these conditions.

Participation and engagement. Participation and engagement are important factors. Participants must be willingly present and engaged to experience the kind of change they and a TfD project would like to see. Engagement means active participation, a willingness to be open and honest with themselves, each other, and facilitators, and a willingness to try counter-attitudinal or novel roles. More research is required for a better understanding of what other kinds of individual factors, such as age, gender, or personal history play a role in attitude change in the context of post-conflict reconciliation, and in

willingness and capacity to engage. This might require a larger, more representative and evenly distributed participant sample, which requires additional funding and personnel.

Language. Another important ideal condition is language. Facilitators and participants must be able to communicate with each other to bring out and understand the emotional nuance of this work. Working through translators leaves too much open to interpretation and important conversations are lost in translation. Mechanical differences between languages like English, which have ways of discussing abstract concepts, and Acholi, which tends to be very concrete, make this work extremely difficult. Concretising abstract concepts may help, but may also result in fixation on the specific concrete example, as it did in this project, and the participants may struggle to generalise the attitude changes to other contexts.

Similarly, an ability (and willingness) to talk about emotion and feeling is necessary in TfD. Participants must be able to dig in to the emotional aspect of the problems and issues in their communities in order to understand other perspectives and work toward positive change. Cultures that frown upon speaking about emotions, or languages that do not have words to discuss emotions the same as the facilitators, will struggle with this. This makes TfD projects very difficult.

This condition, however, brings up an ethical concern: I only speak English and French, so I am saying here that I should not try to do this kind of work with those who speak neither. This means that such an important intervention should only be run with those who have access to a colonial language, which means those who are at least semi-educated and probably live in urban settings. Those who do not have the financial or logistical ability to go to school and learn a colonial language are already underserved by

development work and academia, precisely due to this consideration, meaning that the exclusion is systemic and compounds upon itself. TfD tries to bridge these very gaps. Alternatively, researchers and practitioners can learn the local language; however, in Uganda there are 45 tribal languages. One person cannot learn all of these, plus the others in other countries where this kind of work is needed. Kiswahili is widely spoken in eastern Africa and makes a good bridge language as most people speak it at least on a formal level, so learning it may be the solution to meeting this condition.

Consultation and communication. Another condition is that adequate consultation and communication be done in advance. Problems with logistics, participant and researcher expectations, chains of command, and finances are to be expected in international research, and flexibility is necessary (Williamson, 2004), but major problems can be mitigated with proper consultation in advance of the project starting (Nduwimana, 2013). This project nearly fell apart due to poor communication. Research or Development projects in general cannot survive if there is miscommunication, lack of trust, and inadequate budgeting and logistical planning, but this condition is even more important in work like TfD that is so personal and intimate.

With that said, this condition goes both ways: Westerners must commit to adequate consultation and communication, but local partners and participants must also be willing to be honest with the researchers about their needs and wants from the outset, and to not ask for handouts and easy solutions. We can only move to a place of overturning the dependency that has been created and fostered by the West if the recipients of such programmes are also willing to take responsibility for their own actions and control of their own lives. However, as previously highlighted by Cameron (2009)

and Karabanow and Naylor (2015), this condition brings into question theoretical and philosophical outlooks: how post-modern is it to ignore the stated needs and wants of the participants and force a post-modern structure upon them? When they ask for money and I refuse, can I blame them for not wanting to ask for other things as well?

Adequate time and compensation. Time considerations are important in this type of work. While this project was only meant to be exploratory, determining if the methodology has merit, it was clear that five hours per day, three days per week, for four weeks was an inadequate amount of time. Alternatively, a project like this could be run as a full-time endeavor, demanding eight hours per day, five days per week, for several months. This would allow us to tackle all the issues the participants brought up to the depth that we want as researchers. This runs into ethical concerns, however: participants will rightly expect to be compensated if they are engaged full time in TfD and not their own economic ventures and farming. Payment is ethically contentious in research, yet to not pay them for this kind of time commitment is also unethical. We could run a project similarly to how we did, for a few hours a day, a few days a week, but we would have to limit the scope, targeting only some of the issues participants highlight. Who gets to decide what those are? This runs the risk of either the researchers making the decisions or only the loudest voices being heard, which is part of what this methodology and my theoretical framework tries to address. A third approach could split the difference, engaging participants full time for one month, allowing deeper exploration of a few more issues. But again, asking them to take an entire month away from their subsistence farming is unethical without adequate compensation. There are many possible iterations of how a project like this could be done, but ultimately time and compensation are key

factors. Time and compensation decisions are partly made based on the recommendations and challenges of the Research Ethics Board. This kind of research is necessarily fluid and demands that researchers make on-the-spot decisions. Ethical review processes need to catch up to the nature of social sciences and humanities research approaches such as those used in this project in order for this condition to be safely and ethically met (Thomson, 2013).

Researcher attributes and skills. The final condition applies to the researcher(s): this work is emotionally taxing. Living in an unfamiliar environment, where one is isolated and often unsafe, is extremely difficult. The kind of topics that this and other TfD work tends to address, such as GBV, war, and financial insecurity, can be dark and heavy. A researcher who is unprepared for that may struggle, which will in turn impact the work. Researchers who have mental disabilities are at even higher risk of struggling to keep afloat, as are women/femme-presenting researchers who may experience various forms of sexual harassment and assault. Those who identify as a sexual or gender minority may also struggle in an environment where they are forced to adopt a binary gender identity and heterosexual orientation for safety reasons. Moreover, introspection and reflexivity, while important, can be mentally challenging when one is made aware of one's own privilege and at the same time may experience racism for the first time in one's life. For people like myself, who carry diagnosed mental illnesses and are female but identify as both a sexual and gender minority, work like this can be enormously taxing. The project was successful overall, but how much better could it have been if I had been in a better mental state? Or if all these other conditions had been met? Analyses need to be seen through the lens of one's identity and the privileges and struggles therein.

This does not mean that we should not engage in this kind of work. It means, however, that researchers must be honest with themselves about what they can handle and what kinds of amenities, resources, and partnerships they need to feel safe and comfortable. I was able to draw on my research partners, particularly John, as a support system. Indeed, for the six weeks that John was with me in Gulu, many of these difficulties were mitigated: the sexual harassment and assault was lessened (although it did not disappear) as long as I was with a man, and while my own disabilities and gender/sexual identity were still difficult to manage in the social context, his presence and support made it easier. Moreover, it is important for researchers to remember that being white and/or Western comes with incredible privileges alongside these difficulties. For example, we have the privilege of mobility: this is not a permanent situation for the researcher. The project will end, and the researcher will return to their home. That knowledge can make the situation more tenable, and also remind researchers of the value of the work: the participants do not get to leave the environment in which the researcher is struggling. The work may be difficult, but in my opinion, it is worth the struggle if it is beneficial for those who need the supports. In this case, the participants themselves felt that the project was impactful for them: "out of all the visitors we have been receiving it is only your project that has helped us a lot, I have picked a lot of information. Even though it was short, I can't leave without saying that."

Chapter V - Conclusion

> *In politics and at work and at home, collaboration is both necessary and difficult. We want to get something done that is important to us, but to do so, we need to work with people who view things differently than us. And the more important the issue and different the views, the more necessary and difficult the collaboration. (Kehane 2018, 9)*

Conventional collaboration starts from the assumption that there is one solution to a clearly defined problem and that laying out a plan that all parties agree to will result in that solution being realised. In his book *Collaborating with the Enemy,* Adam Kehane (2018) introduces the concept of "stretch collaboration:" in complex situations, we must abandon the traditional 'for the good of the whole' dogma and instead recognise that all parties have different but equally valuable ideas of what the problem is and how it should be solved. Instead of the loudest, most powerful voices making the decisions, laying out the plan, and placing the burden of change on the others, stretch collaboration requires that we listen to other voices, be willing to experiment with different solutions, and recognise our own roles in a problem and a solution.

While Kehane is certainly not the first person to recognise that traditional collaboration is not always effective, and that what he terms "stretching" is often necessary, he does concretise the notion in a very intuitive and relatable manner. *Enacting Change*, and TfD in general, stretches. The integrative framework and interpretivist post-modern outlook used in this research requires seeing each factor that plays a role in ongoing reintegration and reconciliation in each person's life, targeting those specific factors in a bottom-up manner without wasting resources by targeting all possible factors as identified by the powerful. Participants are invited to speak their own truths in a safe, theatrical space, and are required to listen to what others have to say.

While all participants have their own ideas regarding community problems and solutions, they are asked to work together to try to support each other and move from where they are now to where they want to be – whatever that looks like to each of them. Participants do not all agree on the problems or solutions, but work together to collectively understand where the others are coming from and experiment a way forward by dramatically identifying and speaking out about their concerns, creating scenes depicting possible solutions and the ramifications of them, and intervening to critique, support, or problematise each other's ideas. Through the process, the schism between agency and self-advocacy on one hand and hearing and supporting others on the other hand, is confronted: you can't change other people. Participants must recognise and change their own role in a problem in order to address the overall problem. *Enacting Change*, and stretch collaboration, "move away from paying attention only to one dominant whole, one optimum plan, and one superior leader, toward attending to multiple diverse holons…multiple emergent possibilities, and multiple cocreators" (3).

This project asked: is theatre a viable tool for increasing communication and changing attitudes toward child soldier reintegration and reconciliation in war-affected communities? Participants all said the project was successful, and 14 out of 19 experienced moderate to high attitude change. The answer therefore is a qualified yes. The theme that saw the most attitude change was alcohol abuse, along with the core attitudes of cooperation, self-advocacy, and self-accountability which ran through the other themes participants identified. It is difficult to identify demographic features that underscore frequency or degree of attitude change. Men seemed to experience more frequent change, while women experienced a larger magnitude of change. It also seems

that returnees experienced more attitude change. The older population seemed to experience the least amount of attitude change, although there were those above the average age of the sample and their own gender who experienced moderate to high change. Moreover, those who experienced the most change also exhibited the highest degree of emotionality, linking changes explicitly with an emotional response to an exercise more often than those who experienced little to no change. Once again, the demographics underlying emotionality are difficult to pinpoint.

While the relationships between emotionality, attitude change, age, gender, and combatant status are ambiguous, what is clear is that engagement is vital. Those who were most engaged demonstrated the most attitude change, irrespective of demographics. Those who fell into the high change category were present and actively participated the vast majority of time, and those who fell into the moderate change category, while perhaps not always physically present, were mentally present and took an active role in activities. Those who exhibited little to no change were absent the majority of the time, and passively watched or slept when they were present. This makes sense intuitively, yet many DDRR and Development programmes continue to engage participants passively through 'education,' 'awareness-raising,' and 'capacity-building.' It is essential to engage participants actively in a bottom-up manner, allowing them to take ownership of programmes and drive the changes they want to see.

While the project may have been successful, it was only conditionally so. Obstacles such as language barriers, inadequate time, recruitment and demographic limitations, and deference to and fear of Westerners, hampered success. Some of these limitations are inherent to the methodology; however, speaking the same language as

participants, engaging in substantial consultation and communication with the affected community, leadership, and partners, and ensuring adequate time and compensation is allotted to the project and participants, are all conditions that can and (where possible) should be controlled. There are times throughout this thesis where I have pointed to cultural differences in language and behaviour as a reason why things may not have been well-received or understood, or identified certain behaviours as demand characteristics when they may have been infrapolitics or there may be a culturally important reason they presented, but there are likely other differences that I have failed to identify, placing limitations on the meanings distilled from the results. There were also some themes, such as trauma, that participants wanted to explore in ways with which I was uncomfortable: I have neither the skill nor the access to resources needed to engage with something that could potentially be (re)traumatising to some participants. Moreover, reflexivity is important: I am a white, Western 'woman' working in an impoverished post-conflict former colony. This identity presents challenges in any cross- or inter-cultural work. I am also comparatively wealthy and hold substantial power and privilege in these relationships. The gender implications are such that the participants may not relate to me the same as they would a man in my position, and I am subjected to more violence than my masculine counterparts. In addition, my own mental health impacted the success of the project, lowering my ability to do the work to my full potential and resulting in my premature departure from Gulu. The present stage of my career and my own identity and ability status are things that I need to be aware of and work to mitigate where I can. Within Development literature, "there are many useful paths to critical inquiry… Unfortunately, editors and reviewers of the journals in which we must 'publish or

perish' continue to reject manuscripts that do not include the expected content of a typical scientific research paper" (McBrien, 2019). As such, it is difficult to ground limitations which are rooted in positionality and identity within existing literature, pointing to a further research gap that must be addressed.

Successful reintegration and community reconciliation are essential for exiting cycles of poverty and violence. In Northern Uganda, a thirty-year war has left behind a generation of uneducated and disenfranchised young adults. People have been traumatised by things done to them and things they have done as soldiers, as have their community members as civilians. Without basic education, most of the population lacks fundamental knowledge and skills to pursue higher education or enter the workforce, leaving them dependent on small-scale farming and unskilled labour. Fear and resentment exist on all sides, and frustration and lack of trust toward local and national leadership abounds. Without closing these gaps and addressing these structural and cultural violences to find a way forward, the hot embers of the conflict can easily reignite.

There is a need to bring people together to reimagine their future. While there are plenty of DDRR programmes and NGOs operating in northern Uganda and other (post)conflict societies, they miss this fundamental position. Programmes that support returnees in their rehabilitation and reintegration are essential, but the families and communities receiving these returnees must be part of the dialogue as more than afterthoughts or passive support structures. Programmes need to stretch: we do not all need to agree on the solution, or even the problem, but we do need to work together to make the situation better. Veale, Worthen, and McKay's (2017) results demonstrated that the areas of most change and progress were found at the intersections of what the

returnees and their community members wanted, needed, and felt. These results held true in the present project as well.

Theatre allows for diverse people to come together to discuss topics that may otherwise be unsafe or uncomfortable to talk about, and it empowers people to speak their own truths and learn from one another. *Enacting Change* demonstrated this in many ways. The only people who said that stigma is still a problem were returnees; several community members said they had no idea that returnees still felt stigmatised or grappled with lingering trauma. Similarly, while everyone had a story to tell about how they have been harmed by alcohol use in Abole, one woman said she had always been afraid to speak about it because she did not realise that others felt the same. In the domestic violence scene John and I depicted, one woman said that she thought that kind of violence did not happen to white women, allowing me to share my own abuse story. While these kinds of conversations can happen sitting around a table, the visceral reactions to seeing and physically engaging with such profound problems make it more real and easier to engage with. In this way, theatre provides the necessary elements for attitude change: embodiment of and active, consensual engagement with counter-attitudinal or novel behaviours. Such engagement has the potential to induce cognitive dissonance, which usually results in attitude changes. This can only happen if diverse voices are equally heard, which cannot happen if all sides of a conflict are not brought together. Typical DDRR programmes do not bring both sides together, nor do they actively engage participants in this way.

In the introduction of this thesis, I described the seemingly destitute personal, economic, and social situations in which the participants live. The description is apt: they

are poor, uneducated, ethnically oppressed, and live with physical and mental disabilities. But that is not their whole story. In my first round of interviews, I asked them what strengths their community possesses. While most Development projects traditionally focus on the negatives and what needs to be 'fixed,' I wanted to see what kinds of tools they already had and how they could be bolstered and instrumentalised. Cooperation and support among community members was chiefly highlighted. One man said "…we are very cooperative and coordinated. We try as much as possible to solve our own conflicts, to calm down the problems," while others pointed to how they "love each other as group members" and they "look at each other as a brother and sister." Not only is this a key strength, it was also something they wanted to continue building as a focus of the project.

It is also important to note, in this project and with any cross- and inter-cultural research, that these individuals are not passive, helpless victims in need of rescue by 'white saviours'. Alongside strengths, I asked what kinds of things they have done to try to solve the problems they brought up. The one they are most proud of is their cash-box savings system: community members contribute what they can to the cash box, which "become[s] an emergency fund for [them], [they] can easily borrow when [they] have an emergency." Similarly, they have a livestock rotation system where the community collectively owns livestock and each farmer takes a turn using the animals' labour or milk. When the animals breed, the offspring are either sold for cash-box money or are put into the rotation. They have organised rotational work groups to tend to things like building a local school, repairing their bore hole, and maintaining the roads in response to lack of financial and infrastructural support from local and national leadership. They have also tried collective farming, where everyone grows the same produce so it can be sold at

the main market, or they all grow different produce so it can be shared, providing everyone access to all possible food rather than simply what they themselves can grow. While these solutions have not all been successful, the innovation and drive to help themselves, and desire to move forward, shines through. People who possess a strong sense of community, feel deep connection to others, and demonstrate a drive to work together and puzzle out solutions to problems are well suited to TfD. The people of Abole, the wider Acholi region and, to an extent, most African cultures are very collectivist and communitarian, making TfD a potentially powerful tool for them.

Through *Enacting Change*, many of the participants said they felt they had more tools to continue working toward making their lives what they want them to be. Participants felt more empowered to stand up for themselves and each other, and more inclined to look closely at those who claim to have the community's best interests at heart but may actually be quite self-serving. Most of them stated in interview that they felt that theatre is a valuable way of identifying and solving problems, and that they plan to use some of the dramatic techniques in future conflict resolution situations. They also said they felt more connected to their community members; in fact, two women even rekindled their relationship after they had had a falling out the previous year. Most of them felt their attitudes had changed, and that they would continue listening to one another, recognising how they must change as much as their counterparts.

GRG and Rafiki, too, found value in the project. GRG is currently engaged in a programme in Lamwo, a district north of Gulu District that is home to about a million South Sudanese refugees. They are interested in incorporating some aspects of *Enacting Change* into their programming there, as well as their ongoing programmes around

Acholiland. Maggie and GRG director Kasper are eagerly waiting for John and me to produce a report outlining the key activities and findings from *Enacting Change*, which will help them use the techniques in future programming. Rafiki is also interested in incorporating these techniques into their projects. While I was in Uganda, the team was split between a refugee camp in Adjumani, a community along the border of Uganda and South Sudan, where they are teaching people the importance of hygiene, and Karamoja, a district along the border of eastern Uganda and northern Kenya, engaging the Karamojong and the Turkana peoples about the dangers of cross-border cattle raiding and working toward peaceful coexistence. Both projects are more conventional TfD, where NGOs have commissioned Rafiki to produce a play to teach a population something that, to be frank, they probably already know. Rafiki is intrigued by the idea of engaging with audience members directly on stage and working with them to find ways to address root problems rather than what the NGO thinks is the problem. Following a skill-sharing workshop I organised between John and Rafiki, Hussein incorporated the intervention style of scene into the Karamoja project and found that it was well received. Rafiki also recently finished a short project in Ghana and Burkina Faso, using the 25th anniversary of the Rwandan genocide as a theme to try to quell building tensions in that part of the continent. Here again some of our techniques were used.

Research is still needed to realise the full potential of this style of TfD. How much more effective could it have been with more time and money? Would I have found similar results in a population more recently impacted by conflict? What if the sample had been more evenly distributed in terms of gender, age, and combatant status? How much of the Acholi and Ugandan culture played a role in the findings, and would other

cultures respond in the same way? What is the impact of working with people who speak the same language rather than through a translator? Although engagement is clearly an important factor impacting who changes, what of the other demographics? Some themes resulted in more attitude change than others, while others seemed resistant to change; why, and which other themes are resistant to change? Relatedly, why do some people resist change, or hold multiple dissonant cognitions? How much did my own mental health and the situations with which I was dealing impact the potential of the project? What else could I have done to mitigate the power dynamics inherent in being a white, Western researcher operating in a global colonial framework? TfD is widely used around the globe to teach people about myriad problems and address conflict, but the for/with/by framework discussed in the literature review has limited space for this participant-focused style. Conventional TfD is valuable, absolutely, but the style tested in *Enacting Change* has the potential to be a powerful addition to the TfD lexicon, as well as a valuable tool to add to DDRR and reconciliation projects.

These and other questions will be interrogated as I move into my PhD, where I plan to continue investigating TfD. These are also potential areas of study for Development, Psychology, and Theatre scholars. The integrative framework with which this project was implemented is important for change within individuals and communities but it also has important implications for academia: just as individuals must stretch in their collaboration with colleagues, relatives, and community members, fields of research must stretch in their collaboration with each other. Interdisciplinary research and praxis are essential to ensure that those harmed by armed conflict are able to move beyond their scars and restore some semblance of harmony.

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Appendix A

This timeline identifies the key themes engaged each day, with representative examples of exercises. Group discussions between each set of exercises and the daily debrief at the end of each day are not included in here, but participants were constantly asked what they think or feel about each exercises, and at the end of each day, John recapped what was done that day, asked for feedback, and prepped participants for the next day's activities.

Monday, 22 October 2018

- Introductions – Telisa, John, Hussein, Denis, Prisca, Participants
- Goals/purpose of project discussed
- Games intended to learn each other's names, get participants moving
    - Low-stakes exercises focussed on problem-solving, cooperation, listening skills – eg. Throwing two balls around a circle, but each person can only have each ball once. How do we indicate to other participants that we have already had one of the balls? How do we work together?
- Building confidence speaking in a group, being loud, taking up space
- Importance of engaging with and discussing emotion

Tuesday, 23 October 2018

- *Day truncated as participants have a village meeting this afternoon
- Focussed on status – what is, who has it, who can have it, what to do with it
- Exercises intended upset the notion of status and identifying who has power in what kinds of situations

- Advocating for oneself to those in positions of power – eg. Asking other participants for food and water, how do we convince others to help us?
    - Also targets cooperation
- Building confidence in communicating with those of higher status and reclaiming power
    - Maintaining eye contact across with each other, particularly women to men

<u>Wednesday, 24 October 2018</u>

- Focussed on embodiment and the body, and thinking/acting like someone else
- Exercises intended to understand how other people feel and view the world – eg. Act like someone else in the group
- Exercises intended to understand how people view others and the self – eg. Physically manipulate another participant's body to look like their sibling
- Exercises intended to upset the notion status and power – eg. Behave and speak like the community's LC2, try to physically look like them, and engage with the emotions and feelings that come from being like this person
- Non-realistic exercises intended to focus and get in touch with the inner voice, feelings, intuition – eg. Drawing shapes in the sand with the foot with the eyes closed
- Exercises intended to build on emotion – eg. Physically manipulate another participant's face to express a specific emotion
- Exercises intended to understand the body – eg. Embody a non-human animal or inanimate object

- Exercises intended to obtain information from someone and behave like another person– eg. Interview game: interview another person as themselves, and then the other person pretending to be someone else

Monday, 29 October 2018

- Focussed on problems and dilemmas – what is a problem, and what is a dilemma?
- Exercises intended to identify a problem or a dilemma in a situation, and recognise that we may have different ideas on what those are
- Exercises intended to identify who has the problem in a situation
- Exercises intended to test possible solutions to the problem or dilemma, and recognise that we may have different ideas on how to solve them
    - No magic solutions! Dilemmas do not have easy solutions (or any solutions)
- Use theme of lack of productivity – eg. Hussein in a scene is not working and asking others to do things for him. What is the problem, and who has the problem?
    - Second time through, participants intervene to try to solve the problem/dilemma, and other participants critique/problematise offered solutions
- Exercises intended to build on status and advocacy – eg. Identify and try to solve problems/dilemmas when the person who is able to fix the problem is in a position of status or power
- Exercises intended to build on confidence, advocacy, obtaining information, and listening – eg. Tell other participants what problem you have and specifically

what you need to solve it, ask other participants what they need to solve their problem

- Final exercises of the day asked participants to get into groups and create a scene that depicted a typical problem or dilemma they face in their daily lives

Tuesday, 30 October 2018

- Continuation of problem/dilemma identification and solving
- Participants presented their scenes from yesterday – scenes included NGOs not listening to what they actually need, instead doling out pre-defined programmes; Money-lenders not showing up to buy produce after harvest; Lack of local/national leader responsiveness
    - Other groups watch each scene, identify the problem, who has the problem, and offer/debate possible solutions. Group performing goes through each possible solution to demonstrate why it will not work
- As an extension of self-advocacy and asking for help, the value of a mediator is introduced here

Wednesday, 31 October 2018

- Focussed on support and active listening – build confidence in asking for support, different ways of asking for and offering support, offering actual assistance if possible rather than hollow advice
- Exercises intended to give participants space to talk about what kind of support they need for the problems in their lives, and for other participants to offer them support

- Exercises intended to demonstrate the value of listening to others rather than offering what one thinks the other needs – how does it feel to be offered useless support, and then to be offered valuable support?
- No magic solutions! Do not offer things you cannot give/do
- Exercises intended to differentiate emotional, material, and service supports – advice is emotional support and can be valuable, but is not always what the other person needs/wants
- Exercises intended to build on confidence in eye-contact – eg. Make and maintain eye contact while asking for/offering support
- Participants create scenes where one person requires assistance and other participants must help – person who needs help must ask for it, others are not mind-readers
    - On the second round, participants present their scenes with other participants intervene to change them

<u>Monday, 5 November 2018</u>

- *Day truncated because all but three participants refused to attend due to issues with compensation and food. We eventually got to wok about two hours into the day as the three participants convinced others to come
- Focussed on alcohol use and abuse
- Exercises intended to understand how alcohol impacts people – eg. A non-realistic exercise involving putting something on a participant's body to demonstrate how they have been harmed by another person's drinking and their own drinking

- Exercises intended to understand why people consume alcohol – eg. A non-realistic exercise involving physically represent the reason
- Exercises intended to demonstrate a problem or dilemma involving alcohol – eg. Participants create a scene depicting such things as intimate-partner violence and disruptive noise/behaviour. Remaining participants identify the problem, who has the problem, and offer possible solutions
- Exercises intended to increase confidence in standing up to someone and confront them about their alcohol use – eg. Participants tell Hussein something they have always wanted to tell someone in their lives

<u>Tuesday, 6 November 2018</u>

- *Day truncated as Maggie came to deal with the boycott and money issue from the previous day
- Continuation of alcohol use and abuse
- Participants re-create scenes from yesterday, implementing some of the offered solutions to try to solve the problem
    - What are the strengths and weaknesses of each solution?
- Exercises intended to build self-accountability – "you can't change other people": how do we get manage a situation if we cannot force the other person(s) to quit drinking?

<u>Wednesday, 7 November 2018</u>

- Focussed on gender-based violence

- Exercises intended to identify and nuance the meaning of GBV and recognise that this may mean something different to different people – eg. Participants depict something they consider to be GBV
- John and I performed a GBV scene, participants are asked to give me suggestions to prevent the violence from occurring
    - Focus on self-accountability and agency: I cannot change John, only myself, so how can I get out of the situation if I cannot change him, and how can we convince John to choose to change?
    - Value of mediation reintroduced
- Exercises intended to frustrate participants to the point of recognising that there is not necessarily a solution to every problem/dilemma – eg. Participants are split into men and women and identify something they are not able to do because of their gender. The other group tells them how they can do the thing they want to do, while all possible solutions are rebuked because ultimately they cannot do them because of (seemingly) unchangeable cultural rules
    - This exercise also helps participants understand what the other gender experiences, and gives them space to think like the other gender to try to solve the problem

<u>Monday, 12 November 2018</u>

- Bridge day: from GBV into land issues into widow's issues
- Exercises intended to hear from the other perspective – eg. Men line up and the women say things to them that men say to women in their community, for example, "you're ugly," "go back home," "just suffer with my kids."

    - Then reverse it, things women say to men include “you’re lazy,” “tired of your craziness,” “you cook, I just want to rest.”
- Exercises intended to stand up for oneself and build confidence in speaking out about GBV – eg. Non-realistic exercise where participants put something on an opposite-gender participant’s body to show how something they have said to them hurts them
- Exercises intended to build self-accountability – eg. Non-realistic exercise where participants put something on opposite-gender participant’s body to show how they themselves have said things to hurt them
- Widow’s land rights as an example of GBV: Exercises intended to understand how/why widows lose their land – eg. A man plays the role of a widow who is being thrown off her land, other participants tell her how she can fight back. She tests solutions, and most do not work
- Exercises intended to build on supporting one another – eg. A woman plays the role of a widow who is being thrown off her land, other participants offer her support they would be willing to actually give a widow in real life
- Exercises intended to build on how others see us, thinking/acting like another person, asking for/giving support, problem identification, problem solving, and active listening – eg. Participants build scenes involving a problem/dilemma a widow faces, including a possible solution. Two participants who are themselves widows intervene directly in the scene to change any aspect of the scene that is not accurate to how a widow is treated or the efficacy of the potential solution. Scenes include teen girl being kicked out of school or nonpayment of fees and

widowed mother cannot pay, so girl finds a husband to pay her fees; hut is falling apart and widowed woman cannot fix it, so the children go to their deceased father's brothers for help, but they refuse; widow is being thrown off her land with her daughter, but the sons are allowed to stay because they are boys.

  - No magic solutions! Value of mediators, lawyers and human rights councils, and familial/community support reinforced

<u>Tuesday, 13 November 2018</u>

- Focussed on stigma, trauma, and other issues related to returnee/community member relations
- Exercises intended to frustrate participants – eg. Two groups of people, one "returnees" and one "community member" (participants were not asked to identify their status and could play the role of either group of person at their discretion). Participants say what one group is not allowed to do that the other is, while the other gives them possible solutions.
- **Importance of flexibility and adaptability: this exercise was not working and resulting in conflict, so we chose to end it a few minutes after starting**
- Exercises intended to demonstrate what trauma and stigma still lingers for returnees – eg. One participant who is comfortable stating their community member status and one comfortable stating their returnee status each simultaneously acts what a "bad day" looks like. The community member walks around aimlessly, grumbling about school fees and lack of money and property and his house falling apart, while the returnee runs in circles clutching his head shouting he does not know what to do, he thought it would be better when he

came home, his children are dead and he misses them, and eventually curls up in a ball sobbing that he doesn't know what to do over and over again

- Exercises intended to think like someone else and hear from the other side – eg. Participants are asked to walk in a circle around a single participant and say things to her that community members say to returnees, and the single participant replies with things that a returnee wants to say back but is not allowed to
- Exercises intended to hear from the other side, problem/dilemma solving, self-advocacy, self-accountability, cooperation, and active listening– eg. Participants create a scene depicting a problem they themselves have faced as a returnee or that they have seen returnees face. Other participants intervene to change the scene to show how returnees are actually treated in their experience, and/or to critique or problematise a solution

Wednesday, 14 November 2018

- Final day. Began with a 90 minute debrief for those who wanted to be part of it, and then had some fun chatting and cooking and eating together