



SUCCESS STORY

Kitgum District Takes Center Stage during Camp Phase-Out



Kitgum LC-5 Chairman John Ogwok presents a goat at the appreciation ceremony in Padibe.



The Padibe LC-3 Chairman fielded questions at the discussion session in Padibe.

March 2009 – For more than 20 years, northern Uganda’s local council (LC) system of government was disrupted as conflict raged and communities were displaced and forced to move into camps. In the governance vacuum, “camp commanders” took over the leadership role.

Now, in a more peaceful time, displaced people are leaving the camps and returning to their former homes, and the return and resettlement process is underscoring the need for the Government of Uganda (GoU) to re-establish a formal local council system that can assume leadership and deliver services.

The Kitgum District Government, with support from USAID’s Office of Transition Initiatives, held five ceremonies to recognize the transfer of leadership responsibilities from camp commanders to local councils. The grant provided the opportunity for the Kitgum leadership to interact with camp leaders and thank them for their commitment and efforts, as well as to stress the administrative transition.

Handover ceremonies were held in five sub-counties: Padibe East, Palabek Kal, Kitgum town, Madi Opei, and Kitgum Matidi. At the ceremonies, the camp commanders were presented with a certificate and a female goat as tokens of appreciation for their hard work.

GoU representatives from all levels attended the ceremonies, including officials from the Kitgum District Office of the Chief Administrative Officer, the LC-5 Chairman, and the Resident District Commissioner. In addition, a representative from the Office of the Prime Minister held interactive discussions with attendees at the events. The officials also informed attendees about plans for the district and explained how the communities would benefit from the upcoming government-sponsored projects.

The ceremonies proved successful because they gave community members an opportunity to meet with their leaders, discuss issues they are facing, and learn how their government intends to tackle them.