



## SUCCESS STORY

### Commemorating the Victims of the Attiak Massacre



*Chairman Omach Anthony Atube, local council 5, Amuru District, lays a wreath during the memorial ceremony in Attiak.*



*The monument to the victims of the Attiak massacre provides a place where family members can commemorate their loved ones.*

**May 2009** – On April 20, 1995, more than 250 people were massacred by the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) in the Ugandan town of Attiak. The group also abducted as many as 100 townspeople during the onslaught. The following day, all those remaining alive fled their homes and sought refuge and protection in a camp for displaced persons.

Fourteen years later, as peace returns to northern Uganda, the once-bustling trading center is slowly recovering from the devastation, but Attiak, the former home to one of the LRA's most senior commanders, remembers April 20 as one of the most horrific days in its history.

Today, a monument stands near the location where executions were carried out, and the town holds an annual memorial service to commemorate the lives of the victims.

USAID's Office of Transition Initiatives provided support to the community for this year's ceremony, which was attended by more than 800 people.

At the event, local leaders from Amuru District urged the attendees to forgive, forget, and unite for the betterment of their communities. Speakers also warned against focusing energy on revenge, as such efforts would only fuel further conflict in a region where peace and recovery are taking hold.

Amuru District's Resident Commissioner, Edwin Komakech, used the opportunity to urge the residents of Attiak to support the current peace by returning to their former homes. He asked people to try and rebuild their lives, noting that the LRA is no longer a threat and the Government of Uganda has pledged to provide basic services to the returning population.

Local leaders felt the event was a positive step toward reconciling people with past events and bringing them home to rebuild their lives.