



## SUCCESS STORY

### Using Drama to Support Northern Uganda's Recovery



*The Lamele Theatre Group performs a recovery-focused drama for the residents of Patiko, Gulu District.*

USAID/Uganda

**December 2009** – As peace has taken hold in northern Uganda, connections between the region and the rest of the country and its institutions are growing deeper by the day, and much of the success of the reintegration process is due to the efforts of the Government of Uganda and its Peace, Recovery, and Development Plan (PRDP). Nevertheless, in many rural and marginalized communities, the government's recovery assistance activities are not fully understood because of a lack of outreach and insufficient efforts to disseminate information.

Early in 2009, USAID's Office of Transition Initiatives (OTI) completed a survey in northern Uganda and found that more than 95 percent of respondents had heard about the PRDP. However, very few northern Ugandans knew who was responsible for implementing the plan, how much money was involved, or which districts were being targeted.

In an effort to overcome this knowledge gap and help encourage Ugandans as they continue to recover from the 23-year conflict with the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), OTI supported a local nongovernmental organization (NGO) that works in the dramatic arts. The NGO enlisted local artists to develop 72 dramatic radio broadcasts grounded in the tenets of peace, recovery, and development.

Over a period of four months, the dramas were aired in the local Luo language throughout Uganda's Acholi sub-region. The broadcasts explored themes of reconciliation, family values, culture, security, and agriculture. One multi-episode show focused on three families that left camps for the internally displaced and returned home after the LRA insurgency ended in 2006. The show explored the complexities of restarting lives and sustaining relationships in a post-conflict setting.

The shows have received a tremendous response from ardent listeners who identified with the challenges and issues portrayed. The most powerful episodes were rewritten for the stage, and the plays have been performed in communities where internally displaced people are returning. These productions are giving residents and returnees an opportunity not only to learn but also to interact and provide feedback on many issues.

The Government of Uganda has welcomed this crucial initiative that is helping citizens understand the recovery process and benefit from its objectives.

Contact: Nichole Graber, Program Manager  
e-mail: [ngrab@usaid.gov](mailto:ngrab@usaid.gov); telephone: (202) 712-5436  
Web: [www.usaid.gov](http://www.usaid.gov) – Keyword: OTI