Cheryl Heykoop & Adoch Juliet

Young people are often disproportionately affected by conflict and war and have important stories to share about what happened. This is recognised internationally, and young people are now encouraged to share about their experiences and perspectives in post-conflict truth telling. Yet, we rarely consider how involving young people in truth telling impacts their lives. The question remains, their stories matter, but at what cost?

The war did not leave out children and youth. If you exclude young people you are leaving out a vital part of the story."

Young person, Acholibur

Here at NMPDC, the Young People in Transitional Justice research team is working with young people, aged 11-21 to identify if and how young people wish to share about the past. Through the use of art, play, and other creative methods, we are asking the questions: what do young people want to share about the past, with whom do young people want to share with, why do young people want to share, and in what ways (e.g. in groups or individually, through writing, drawing, talking etc.). With this information we hope to change the ways that young people are engaged in truth-telling about the past here in Uganda.

The Young People in Transitional Justice Research Team recently submitted a video to the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada explaining our research. This video was shortlisted as one of the top twenty-five submissions. To see the video visit: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vpSxdjGrQDI

The Value of Memory

Komakech Deo Okot

The NMPDC engages in an ongoing event documentation, which entails the documentation of war related crimes in six sub-counties of Kitgum district. Kitgum was at the centre of the insurgency, and a lot of atrocities committed have not been documented or acknowledged. The centre works closely with the local authorities, individuals and groups that hold specific memories to enhance the process of identification of significant conflict related events.

Memory and memorialisation are issues being advocated for by survivors and victims’ family members. In spite the importance attached to remembering, many issues arise when it comes to memorialisation. Some massacre sites do not have memorial objects in place, and memorial prayers are not organised on an annual basis. For this most communities depend fully on handouts from organisations.

“I come across memories everyday in my work, and I have noticed not only the fading state of memory, but also that people remember different things. How important is memory, and how bad is it to forget? I believe that engaging victims into reflecting on individual and collective memories of horrific moments of their lives will bring not only a genesis of healing process, but when well documented would serve to inform posterity.”

In this issue:

“Our Stories Matter, Our Own Way!”

The Value of Memory

Photo Story: Seven Years of Peace

Special points of interest:

• Our Library is open on Monday (10:00am - 4:30pm), and Tuesday to Friday, (9:30am to 4:30pm)

• Do you have any valuable stories, photos or objects for our museum? Come by the centre and approach one of our staff.

• Every Wednesday: Film Exhibition & Debate, start at 4:45pm at the NMPDC!
We are on the web!
www.refugeelawproject.org/nmpdc.

The quote by ex-LRA fighter Norman Okello reads: “We visited village after village, killing every living thing that we found there. During the mission I just witnessed hundreds of different ways in which we could kill someone”. Next to it are domestic objects that have been used for maiming and killing. Norman’s life story is written down in the book In the Service of the Lord’s Army, by Theo Hollander. It can be downloaded for free from www.refugeelawproject.org/nmpdc.

“Porolok iwii meja karacel en aye yoo me kelo kuc ki ribe”
“Round table talks are the way to bring peace and togetherness”

Seven Years of Peace
Lisa Peters
On the 20th of March the NMPDC opened her first exhibition: Seven Years of Peace: Images of War and Peace Making. It takes you on a journey through the years since peace has returned to Uganda. Through photos, objects, newspaper articles and videos you will look back on the past, stand still in the present and look out for the future. Come to the centre and experience it yourself.

Above: Newspaper articles on peace, justice and reconciliation are displayed. Should there be amnesty? What do victims think? Mato Oput or the ICC? What is ‘true justice’?

Right: A visitor looks at the strings of pictures that were taken during the 1990s in the IDP camps.

Above: While screening the documentary Untreated Wounds, ways of securing peace and reconciliation are displayed on the foreground (photo book and Mato Oput bowl). Photos of daily livelihood activities are showcased on the left, and down the stairs is a space for visitors to write their personal challenges on the blackboard.

Do you have any stories, photos or artefacts for our museum? Please come by the centre and talk to one of our staff.

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