

Summary of Main Findings and Recommendations

1. ***Peacebuilding processes and actions are commonplace across Uganda***, especially in the survey districts. National, district-level, and community-level stakeholders, both state and non-state, are involved. Traditional authorities, such as the *Obusinga Bwa Rwenzururu* (cultural institution) in Kasese, clan chieftaincies in Kaabong, the Kyabazinga in Namayingo and *Rwot* in Amuru, work toward promoting peace within their areas. Non-State actors, specifically CSOs and religious institutions are playing an equal role. The state previously clashed with the *Obusinga* and had violent encounters leading to the 2016 attack on the palace the cultural institution and subsequent arrest of the king, but the *Omusinga (the king)*, the *Nyabaghole*, and other kingdom officials now work hand-in-hand with the state, CSOs and the Inter-Religious Council of Uganda (IRCU), to promote peace even when there are still concerns about central government's unkept promises. In Karamoja (Kaabong), Namayingo and Acholi (Amuru), traditional chieftaincies, CSOs and religious institutions work with the state to promote peace by dissuading young people from cattle rustling, getting recruited and radicalized into violent extremism, resolving local land conflicts, managing post-conflict trauma, and participating in post-conflict development work and for instance in Kasese, Amuru and Kaabong districts CECORE established Local Infrastructures for Peace like the Youths Peace Champions who respond to community conflicts . These interdependencies reveal functional local peacebuilding actions that can be sustainable by addressing capacity gaps, strengthening sustainability measures, and fostering stronger connections and collective action linkages.
2. ***Peacebuilding policy and legal frameworks exist and reflect global and regional rules***, from the 1995 Constitution of the Republic of Uganda to policies and laws that govern almost all sectors in which peace building is necessary, such as land, elections management, policing, administration of justice, and local governance. Uganda has a draft peacebuilding policy, The National Transitional Justice Policy, Alternative Dispute Resolution Policy (draft) and The Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework. There is also a National Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security, 2021-2025, which was intended to provide strategic priorities for conflict transformation and peacebuilding in Uganda. At district and community levels, awareness about international and regional instruments that guided the formulation of local policies is limited, although national frameworks reflect and domesticate global and regional commitments. The rigor and realism of peacebuilding policies needs to be strengthened by translating, localizing, and popularizing these instruments among local-level peace building actors – women and youth groups, Lower Local Government (LLG) structures, CBOs, and local media.
3. ***Uganda's constitution and operational laws localize global and regional policies***, such as UN human rights rules, the African Charter on Human and People's Rights and its protocols. This evident localization of regional and international commitments means that peacebuilding policymakers, technical officials, and national-level CSOs, are aware about the various global, continental, and regional peacebuilding policies. They know the peace and security cooperation rules under regional institutions like the EAC, ICGLR, and IGAD. They understand the practical measures Uganda has undertaken to operationalise these policies. Variations exist in the force of law these regional rules: while ratified EAC protocols are binding and become integral to national laws of Partner States, IGAD and ICGLR rules are less binding even when Uganda has operationalized IGAD rules.

4. *Uganda has delayed completion of key peacebuilding policies.* This is ironical for three reasons: First, in 2000, regional states from the Greater Horn and Eastern Africa identified peace policies as essential for preventing and managing conflicts, and promoting peace in the region. Second, Uganda's National Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding Platform in the OPM was tasked to draft the peace policy in 2008, now seventeen (17) years since the process of formulating a peace policy began. The Platform produced a draft policy in 2022, after 15 years, which references various international policies that will be localized by that policy when it is completed. Finally, there are various activities and programs the country has implemented since 2008 that are consistent with the draft peace policy, indicating that the country has been using scattered policy instruments and tools to undertake peacebuilding processes. Therefore, the absence of a specific policy instrument does not necessarily imply absence of actual policy; state policies need not be written.
5. *Subnational Actors' peacebuilding practices may be consistent with global and regional rules* but these peacebuilding actors have limited knowledge about global, regional and continental peacebuilding policies. At district and community levels, within the survey districts, global, continental, and regional policies and other instruments, as well as some of the national policies [and/or draft] policies, may not be readily known. Technical officials and educated CSO officials may know these rules but they are fewer compared to the vast majority of subnational peacebuilding actors. It is not clear, to what extent subnational actors analyse international, continental, regional, and national instruments let alone localize the analysis inherent in these rules. The expertise they acquire from such analysis, if any, remains difficult to ascertain. The connection between international peace policies and local realities is more practical than knowledge-specific. Peacebuilding practices, however, are consistent with issues like inclusivity, peaceful conflict resolution, respect for local access-to-justice procedures, and human rights.
6. *Uganda Conflict early warning and early response (CEWERU) under the IGAD framework has established some national, district, and sub-county peace structures,* such as National Steering Committee, District Peace Committees, alongside structures under the National Security Council (NSC): District and Sub-County Security Committees. These structures address conflicts as and when they erupt and/or prevent conflicts. Many lower-level peace committees, which are not under the NSC, need reactivation due to limited resources, competing priorities, and inability support for peace and stabilization projects. District Peace Committees, for instance have inadequate coordination mechanisms. There is weak capacity, among peacebuilding structures at national and sub-national levels, in terms of technical and financial resources to effectively coordinate and oversee efforts of local-level structures, in areas like conflict analysis, early warning, gender-sensitive and diversity-sensitive analysis. As a result, recurring communal conflicts, which can erupt into inter-group violence, remain persist.
7. *The external context influences local infrastructures for peace in Uganda by incentivizing local actors to make national peacebuilding policies and/or implement global and regional commitments.* Regional factors affect peacebuilding initiatives at national level and in border districts where cross-border security threats prevail Management. Primary peacebuilding stakeholders are national MDAs and specialized peace and security agencies. The general inclusivity and representation of Uganda's peacebuilding policies and initiatives is adequate, as reflected in the constitution, policies, and laws, which cater for marginalised groups. The policy alignment and adaptation is adequate in that national policies reflect regional policies, and these regional rules are, to a large

extent, reflected in activities that address local needs and realities of Ugandans at subnational level.

8. *The greatest hurdle in Uganda, however, is the non-completion of the peace policy.* Alongside the myriad activities that CECORE may implement under the program, the completion of relevant policy instruments is very important as an M&E issue. Dedicated efforts will be needed to complement state efforts in finalization of these policies, their operationalization through relevant legislations (enactment of Acts of Parliament and Regulations), and development of administrative procedures for their implementation. Therefore, as part of the M&E system for subnational interventions under the program, CECORE's direct contribution toward completion and implementation of these policies, during the lifetime of the program, would be a commendable achievement.
9. *The GPPAC Global Secretariat (GS) plays an important role it acts as an enabler, facilitator, and connector for regional and local peacebuilding.* The GS equips members with the necessary tools, networks, and resources to navigate and adapt to these ever-changing conditions. GPPAC prioritizes facilitation of regional learning and fostering stronger connections among members, by linking peacebuilders across the region, supporting the development of joint and comprehensive strategies that bring together diverse perspectives across the region, and facilitating cross-regional exchanges and engagements with working groups that enable regions to learn from one another regions and adapt strategies in line with this learning.¹ Therefore, CECORE can work with another partner in this Project, *Mensen met een Missie*, to build complementarities and augment local ownership and flexible local peacebuilding action, amplify their respective expertise, mobilize collective action, and influence policy and practice in ways that improve the peace and security landscape in a country and region where peace and security in the past 15 years has generally been shaky and fragile.² Other actors like *Women's International Peace Centre* (WIPC) support local peace builders, including but not limited to individual peace actors, Refugee Law Project (LRP), Centre for Women in Governance (CEWIGO), and International Center for Transitional Justice (ICTJ), which underlines the existence of other peace builders with whom CECORE can work³. This can be done by creating awareness about continental and regional peace building instruments, supporting Uganda to honour and fulfil her obligations beyond signing and ratification, and to finance the domestication of the signed and ratified peace building instruments⁴, specifically finalizing Uganda's Peace Policy and other related instruments. This is especially important in building subnational expertise, expanding, extending, and deepening peace, because: "there is no good expertise at the district, we have structures but peace is looked at from the security angle/perspective, there is lack of analysis from the peace building angle." Besides, "peace building has been

¹ Interview, Virtual meeting, 2 April 2025

² KII, Andrew Malinga, GIS Officer, CEWARN/IGAD, Kampala, 10th April 2025

³ KII, WIPC, Kampala, May 2025.

⁴ Ibid

linked to armed conflicts, yet there are conflicts in the country, rural-urban issues, land issues”, election conflicts and other social tensions.⁵

Recommendations

1. **Prioritize completion of relevant policies:** CECORE should work with ministries of Internal Affairs, Justice and Constitutional Affairs, Parliament, and Offices of the Prime Minister and the President, to support processes aimed at finalizing the draft peacebuilding policy, raise awareness of the national transitional justice policy, the Rangeland Management and Pastoralist Policy, Transhumance Protocol, support localization of NAP III on WPS and any other policy instruments currently under development or reform.
2. **Undertake multi-level capacity building for local infrastructure for peace:** under program intervention strategy # 01 and # 03, CECORE should link global experience and expertise to strengthen the functionality of district, sub-county, and community peace structures through relevant interventions as suggested under each sub-objective. This is critical for strengthening foundations for conflict prevention, peace building, and building resilience in local contexts.
3. **Develop and operationalise robust M&E system:** in order to achieve intended results under each intervention strategy, CECORE should design an M&E system that monitors activity implementation at indicator level (Table 8); update or redesign data collection tools for documenting progress; ensure periodic (monthly, quarterly, and annual) program reporting; involve multi-level reporting; and prepare for MTE, end-term evaluation, and program-impact assessment. Post-program impact evaluation, about 5 years of implementation of the *Connections for Peace* program, should also be planned, resources allocated, and later implemented.
4. **Work with state structures at all levels:** While Uganda still faces difficulties in ensuring multiple dimensions of total peace – ecological, socioeconomic, ideological, and political – the State is relatively present in all areas and corners of Uganda. And the state seeks to retain control over almost all processes taking place within its territorial domain, more so activities related to peace building and conflict resolution. Given the sensitivity of the program, specifically its linkages with domestic control, power politics, sensitive issues like land and ethnic conflicts, interactions with peace and security actors, the more state structures are involved the better for the program.
5. **Work with non-State Stakeholders:** building on the network, collaborative, and partnership-building logics of GPPAC operations, it is important for CECORE to join other project partners working in Uganda and the region, such as *Mensen met een Missie*, to build synergies. Besides, in all the survey districts there are CSOs, religious and cultural stakeholders, and the media, who are involved in peacebuilding work. These actors can complement the *Connections for Peace* program. Coordination and collaboration with these stakeholders will engender collective action and synergies during program execution.

⁵ WIPC, Ibid.