

David Kani Olema

Potentially Tragic Experiences that Confront Armed Conflict Displaced Populations: The State of the Internally Displaced Persons in Gulu District, Northern Uganda.

(Abstract)

The study documented the traumatic experiences, the physical and social state of the families living in Internal Displaced Persons' (IDP) camps as a result of civil conflict. A total of 135 individuals from 45 families selected using systematic randomisation were interviewed, three persons per family; a child and the two parents in five different camps around Gulu. Descriptive analysis done of yielded: a very high level of traumatic event Load (number of traumatic experiences per person) ($M = 18.74$, $SD = 7.50$), experience of at least three forceful displacements per person (Number of times displaced $M = 3.35$, $SD = 1.71$), an average of 6 years living in IDP camp. A high level of physical health problems was reported (number of physical sickness reported $M = 5.0$, $SD = 2.19$), with a very poor population (total possessions value $M = 0.69\$$, $SD = 2.49\$$), and a big number of people living in a household ($M = 10.34$, $SD = 3.85$). In conclusion, these situations under which the IDPs, especially the high traumatic event load, and dire poverty level render the IDPs susceptible to: diseases, malnutrition, alcohol abuse, and domestic violence whose victims are often women and children, and mental health disorders. The findings of the study yield very important insights into situations internally displaced persons live in, immediate and long term interventions.