
CONCEPT NOTE

Workshop on **Women and Girls in Conflict: Learning from Lived Experience to Inform Policy Responses**

Permanent Mission of Canada to the UN

885 Second Avenue, 14th Floor

16 June, 2016 – 9:30-17:30

BACKGROUND: 'I AM EVELYN AMONY'

The autobiography, *I am Evelyn Amony: Reclaiming My Life from the Lord's Resistance Army*, will be launched in New York on 15 June 2016. The book documents the author's daily life as the forced wife of Joseph Kony, leader of the armed group the Lord's Resistance Army. Abducted as a young girl, Amony first trained as Kony's personal escort before becoming his wife at 14, and bearing three of his children. Her book provides unprecedented insights into the organization of the armed group during the 11 years she was held captive, the relationships that defined it and her experience, and a reflection on what it meant to survive this experience.

Evelyn was captured in 2004, reuniting with her family with two of her children, one is still missing, lost in battle. A year later, she joined the Juba Peace Talks to act as a liaison between Kony and peace delegates. Following the end of the talks, her book documents Amony's daily struggle to care for her children and extended family, the poverty, social stigma, and trauma she lived with daily; but also, of the ways she works to repair her relationships to others and build a future, including forming a survivors group to share stories, give peer support and form collective groups.

Now chair of the Women's Advocacy Network (WAN) – which has grown from 20 to 900 women in the last three years – Amony offers incredible insights based on her experience, and that of women of the network, on the forms of justice and reparation they seek, the challenges of reintegration for women and girls associated with fighting forces, and the sometimes lack of fit between international policies and programmatic interventions, and the daily lived experiences and needs of those affected by conflict. The book foregrounds the value and necessity of understanding individual lived experience for policy-makers and practitioners to effectively respond to the gendered dimensions of peace and security.

RATIONALE FOR THE WORKSHOP

To 'learn from lived experience' is to recognize the agency of victims, acting within limited and debilitating positions, and to begin to work with this knowledge to design better policies and programmes to widen spaces for seeking peace, security and justice at level of the everyday.

The workshop will take place on 16 June, following the New York launch of *I am Evelyn Amony*, which will take place on 15 June (see Annex for additional information on the launch event). The workshop will use the book as a starting point for a discussion on learning from lived experiences, examining key

themes reflected in the book to explore peace and security issues with a greater understanding of context-specific and gender-responsive impacts. The panel discussions will bring together survivors of conflict, including the author, with policy-makers, practitioners and donors, to humanize conflict and peace and security interventions, and explore how everyday life can shed new insights into policy or programme needs.

The workshop will focus on three topics discussed in *I am Evelyn Amony*, which are of global relevance and significance: (i) transitional justice and social repair; (ii) children born of wartime sexual violence; and (iii) comparative historical and contemporary perspectives and lessons learned in countering violent extremism. Each panel discussion will feature a range of perspectives, including expert practitioners, policymakers and survivors—inspiring reflection, discussion and action.

Building a greater understanding of conflict and peacebuilding is of great importance at the present moment, given renewed global commitment to tackling protracted and recurring cycles of conflict by building sustainable and inclusive peace. In 2015, the United Nations completed three reviews of its work on peace and security—on peace operations, peacebuilding architecture, and the women, peace and security agenda. Each of these reviews found that, given the complexity of current global threats—from violent extremism, to forced displacement and climate change—the United Nations and its member states must re-evaluate current approaches and priorities.

The agreement on a goal of peaceful and inclusive societies in our new 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development makes it clear that we cannot build peace on the basis of exclusion, inequality and marginalization. This is of particular relevance in the case of women. Evidence from the three UN reviews makes it clear that women’s meaningful participation and leadership in conflict prevention, resolution and recovery is directly correlated with a higher likelihood of sustainable peace. Greater understanding of the experiences as well as obstacles to participation and empowerment encountered by women such as Evelyn can improve the policy and programming responses of the international community.

OBJECTIVES

The main objective of the workshop will be to contribute to a better understanding among policymakers, practitioners and donors responsible for peace and security programming, of the complexity surrounding conflict-related violence and its impacts, in order to inform more nuanced and long-term policy responses.

Specific objectives include:

- (a) Presenting key themes in *I am Evelyn Amony*, and engaging with the author, other survivors of conflict, and expert practitioners and policymakers.
- (b) Highlighting best practices of victim-centered and human rights-based approaches to peacebuilding and transitional justice;
- (c) Strengthening understanding of the importance of ensuring that women, including conflict survivors, are equal and meaningful participants in post-conflict reconstruction;
- (d) Learning lessons for peace and security challenges in other contexts, including for example in relation to Boko Haram.

EXPECTED RESULTS

A report of the meeting capturing discussions will be shared publicly on the websites of UN Women and ICTJ, and directly with meeting participants.

PARTICIPANTS

This event aims to bring together policy makers, donors, academics and practitioners.

PROVISIONAL AGENDA

Wednesday, 15 June – Japan Society	
17:45-19:00	Launch of <i>I am Evelyn Amony: Reclaiming My Life from the Lord’s Resistance Army</i> and reception (see Annex for additional information on the launch event) – followed by light refreshments
Thursday, 16 June – Permanent Mission of Canada to the UN	
9:30	Registration (light breakfast provided)
9:45	<p>Welcome Remarks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Ambassador Michael Grant</i>, Deputy Permanent Representative, Canada • <i>Ambassador Richard Nduhuura</i>, Permanent Representative, Uganda [TBC] • <i>Mr. Abdoulaye Bathily</i>, Under-Secretary-General and Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Central Africa and Head of the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa • <i>Ms. Lakshmi Puri</i>, Assistant Secretary-General and Deputy Executive Director, UN Women • <i>Mr. David Tolbert</i>, President, ICTJ
10:30	<p>Contextualizing <i>I am Evelyn Amony</i> and Lived Experience in the Realm of Policy and Practice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Dr. Erin Baines</i>, Associate Professor, Liu Institute for Global Issues, University of British Columbia • <i>Ms. Evelyn Amony</i>, Author and Head, Women’s Advocacy Network (Uganda), with <i>Ms. Ketty Anyeko</i>, Transitional Justice Expert, The Fund for War-affected Children and Youth (Uganda)
11:00	Coffee
11:15	<p>Panel 1: Gender, Transitional Justice and Social Repair</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moderator: <i>Dr. Erin Baines</i>, Associate Professor, Liu Institute for Global Issues, University of British Columbia • <i>Ms. Jacqueline Mutere</i>, Founder, Grace Agenda (Kenya) • <i>Ms. Ketty Anyeko</i>, Transitional Justice Expert, The Fund for War-affected Children and Youth (Uganda) • <i>Ms. Maria Alejandra Martinez</i>, Aliarte Youth Network (Colombia) • <i>Ms. Kelli Muddell</i>, Director, Gender Justice Program, ICTJ

	<p>This panel discussion focuses on victim agency and participation in transitional justice and social reconstruction processes, with a focus on women and girls affected by conflict-related violence. Panellists will discuss the potential of inclusive transitional justice and social repair to transform social inequality; and the challenges of ensuring that these efforts address the daily challenges of poverty, ill-health and trauma, as well as daily forms of social stigma and rejection faced by survivors of sexual and gender-based violence, and former child soldiers.</p> <p><i>While trials or truth commissions focus on the most egregious harms, Evelyn documents the ways violence unfolds in the day to day reality of her life before, during and after her abduction. Her testimony prompts us to think differently about the interconnections between wartime and peacetime violence (and consequently, questions of responsibility, and of political or programme interventions). How does violence impact women differently depending on the cultural and structural conditions in which they live? How does that in turn shape their “justice” demands and how does that shape what can be provided as a response to violations?</i></p>
12:45	<p>Lunch (a light lunch will be provided)</p>
13:45	<p>Panel 2: Taking a Long-Term View: The Particular Needs of Children born of Wartime Sexual Violence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moderator: <i>Ms. Mary Page</i>, Director, Human Rights, MacArthur Foundation • <i>Ms. Evelyn Amony</i>, Head, Women’s Advocacy Network (Uganda), with <i>Ms. Ketty Anyeko</i>, Transitional Justice Expert, The Fund for War-affected Children and Youth (Uganda) • <i>Ms. Leila Zerrougui</i>, Under-Secretary-General and Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict • <i>Ms. Zainab Bangura</i>, Under-Secretary-General and Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict • <i>Ms. Virginie Ladisch</i>, Head, Children and Youth Program, ICTJ <p>This panel discussion addresses the long-term challenges stemming from the un-redressed justice needs of children born as a result of wartime sexual violence and their mothers. Without justice, the consequences of motherhood as a result of conflict-related sexual violence multiply and amplify with time, engendering new violations, including ongoing disrespect for the rights of children born of sexual violence and the rights of their mothers. Considering the unique and enduring consequences of sexual-and gender-based violations, this panel will focus specifically on the impact of the lack of accountability for sexual crimes leading to motherhood, and emphasize the need for effective support.</p> <p><i>In Acholi and Lango alone, it is estimated that there are between 3,000 and 8,000 children born as a result of wartime sexual violence. This problem is not unique to Northern Uganda, but rather this pattern of violations and subsequent rejection of mother and child is being repeated in other contexts. In her diaries of daily life, Evelyn reflects on some of the challenges facing her children as they grow into adults, and the difficulties of being stigmatized as the children of perpetrators. How can we better understand and address the causes of stigma and rejection? How can practitioners anticipate and respond to the needs and challenges faced by children born of wartime sexual violence?</i></p>
15:15	<p>Coffee</p>

15.45	<p>Comparative Historical and Contemporary Perspectives in Violent Extremism</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moderator: <i>Ms. Naureen Chowdhury Fink</i>, Head of Research and Analysis, Global Center on Cooperative Security • <i>Dr. Dyan Mazurana</i>, Associate Research Professor, Research Director at the Feinstein International Center at the Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy, Tufts University • <i>Ms. Jackie Seck Diouf</i>, Deputy Director, Africa II Division, UN Department of Political Affairs • <i>Ms. Nahla Valji</i>, Deputy Chief, Peace and Security Section, UN Women <p>This session will take a comparative approach to violent extremism – including its impacts on and engagement of women and girls. Many violent extremist groups are known for a particular gendered ideology which informed the role and experience of women associated with these groups. Extremist groups are also known for building armed groups on the basis of a religious ideology, forced recruitment of children into their ranks, the use of children to carry out attacks, and the exposure of child combatants, in particular young women and girls, to sexual violence. The panel will discuss what we can learn from the experiences of victims in a range of contexts, situate this within the efforts to prevent and counter violent extremism more broadly, and contribute to a greater understanding of current challenges in preventing and countering violent extremism.</p>
17:15	<p>Wrap up and closing remarks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Ms. Nahla Valji</i>, Deputy Chief, Peace and Security Section, UN Women • <i>Ms. Virginie Ladisch</i>, Head, Children and Youth Program, ICTJ • <i>Ms. Evelyn Amony</i>, Author and Head, Women’s Advocacy Network (Uganda)
17.30	<p>Conclusion of event</p>

DETAILS OF THE WORKSHOP

The workshop is co-organized by UN Women, the International Center for Transitional Justice, and the Liu Institute for Global Issues, University of British Columbia, made possible through funding from the European Commission and the SSHRC Partnership Grant, Conjugal Slavery in War, and generously hosted by the Permanent Mission of Canada to the UN.

The event will take place from 9.30 to 17.30 on Thursday, 16 June, at the Permanent Mission of Canada to the UN.





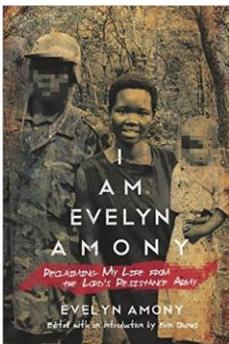
**I Am Evelyn Amony:
Reclaiming My Life from the Lord's Resistance Army**
Book Launch with the Author

June 15, 2016
Japan Society, Murase Room
333 East 47th Street
5:45-7:00pm
Light refreshments to follow

ICTJ and UN Women are pleased to invite you to the launch of Evelyn Amony's recently released memoir, *I am Evelyn Amony: Reclaiming my Life from the Lord's Resistance Army*. Reflecting on her life as the forced wife to Joseph Kony, leader of the armed group the Lord's Resistance Army, Amony provides a rare glimpse inside the rebel group that continues to operate in Central and East Africa to date, nearly 30 years after it was founded.

Abducted as a child, Amony first trained as Kony's personal escort before becoming his wife at 14, bearing three of his children. Evelyn's memoir recalls daily life at the centre of the LRA high command, including the challenges of daily life and navigating complex gender relations. Following her capture in 2004 and a brief reunion with her family, Evelyn participated in the Juba Peace Talks to act as a liaison between Kony and peace delegates. When the talks collapsed, Amony returned to care for her children and siblings in the grinding poverty that is life after the war in northern Uganda.

Now chair of the Women's Advocacy Network (WAN) composed of 900 survivors, Amony strives for justice and reparation on behalf of war affected persons to date.



"Evelyn Amony provides penetrating insights into one of the most notorious yet least understood armed groups, the Lord's Resistance Army. This is an invaluable account of what a woman experienced during years in captivity and, after escaping, her struggle to regain her humanity and agency. Essential reading for anyone studying armed opposition groups, women and war, transitional justice, and recovery."
—Dyan Mazurana, Tufts University