

**Working for peace:
“People have the wisdom and only need the mechanism
to tap in to change their lives”**

**By Odembos Maloba
URDT**



The human-right’s Peace and Governance Programme of Uganda Rural Development and Training Programme (URDT) has received a high rating, according to the end of year programme evaluations and follow-ups conducted at URDT Campus and in the field. This was revealed by Makerere University Peace and Conflict studies in its research findings, which strongly concluded that the civil society organisations in Uganda have had a very big contribution to the promotion of peace and reconciliation. In the same spirit the Kibaale Ecumenical Joint Action committee chose URDT as leading in matters of Peace and Reconciliation in the region. Confirming what we go through with the cross section of people and issues brought at URDT for arbitration, and mitigation, URDT was recognized for its work right from the family, district and regional level. Most significant are the effects that the programme has had on the lives of ordinary persons, particularly the marginalized children and some disadvantaged men and women who can now stand up and demand for their rights from duty bearers. Remaining is the obligation from the service providers, be it the Government or private sector who structurally need to learn to unlearn.



**Odembos Maloba, the URDT human rights in charge
arbitrates in a child neglect case.**

Over 700 domestic related conflicts have been resolved through alternative dispute resolution (ADR) this year. This has created peace and reconciliation in the local communities. 450 children have been out of family related problems and conflicts including neglect, desertion, child abuse and denial of education as a right. A number of

local council leaders and their committee members have had trainings in the alternative dispute resolution (ADR) approach at URDT. This team includes paralegals at sub-county levels and opinion leaders. This programme has seen restorative justice take the lead with high impact, more so than the retributive justice, which is very expensive and not familiar to many people in these communities.

What is the way forward?

The people at the grass roots level should own and determine the destiny of their lives, if at all peace and reconciliation is to be realized at all levels. The interveners in makers of peace and reconciliation should be sensitive and should avoid hijacking the processes, but help out in conflict mapping and identification. Where there is need to involve third parties, it should be done in a manner that respects and holds the concerned parties with the mandate to resolve their differences and only be given support where necessary. People have the wisdom and only need the mechanism to tap in to change their lives and create new situations for them selves.