

**PRESS STATEMENT BY WORUDET AND OTHER RIGHTS ORGANIZATIONS IN  
KITGUM AND LAMWO DISTRICTS ON THE RISING INCIDENCE OF INTIMATE  
PARTNER VIOLENCE (IPV) IN THE SUB-REGION**

**7<sup>th</sup> March 2025**

**Introduction:**

As we prepare to mark this year's International Women's Day whose theme is "Accelerate Action For Gender Equality" tomorrow, we the rights organizations gathered here today wish to draw the attention of all duty bearers to the increasing incidence and gravity of gender based violence (GBV), especially intimate partner violence (IPV) in our homes and society. IPV is behavior within an intimate relationship that causes physical, sexual or psychological harm, including acts of physical aggression, sexual coercion, psychological abuse and controlling behavior. Acts of IPV range in how often they occur or how violent they are. It can happen to both women and men in intimate relationships: dating, married, cohabiting, separated or even divorced. IPV can happen no matter your age, income, ethnicity, culture, religion or disability. It must therefore be a concern to all of us.

**The Situation:**

According to the 2024 Uganda Police Annual Crime Report, a total of 14,126 people were victims of Domestic Violence, 72.7% (10,276) of whom were female adults, 22.3% (3,161) Male Adults, 2.2% (323) Male Juveniles and 2.6% (366) Female Juveniles. This statistics goes to confirm that women, young and old, are disproportionately the major victims of domestic violence and that even juveniles are among survivors. In 2023, a total of 249 persons were killed as a result of aggravated domestic violence; 95 were male and 113 were female. The 2022 National Survey on Violence in Uganda conducted by the Uganda National Bureau of Statistics (UBOS) also found that intimate partner violence (IPV), which is often a precursor to femicide, was at 45%, the highest being in Acholi sub-region at 78%.

Kitgum and Lamwo districts have recently been in the news for reported cases of men killing their Partners, the highest degree of intimate partner violence. Sometime last year, a 20-year old young man in Lakwor Parish, Lalano Sub-county in Kitgum District, followed his estranged 19-year-old wife to her parents' home and strangled her to

death. He is still in police custody awaiting conviction. Two weeks ago, in Lamwo District, another young man murdered his wife and ran away. The Police is still searching for him. Early this week at Lalekan in Orom Sub-county, a man died one day after a brutal fight with his wife. These are but just a few of the cases that get to the authorities and the media. Many more must be out there, unreported but similarly grievous.

### **Our call to Action:**

- We condemn in the strongest terms, all forms of violence in the home and family, especially intimate partner violence. It is a violence that is least expected because it occurs between people who are supposed to be caring for each other.
- We urge the different arms of government involved in law enforcement, right from the LC1 in the villages to the police at the sub-county and district levels, to intensify surveillance, arrest and successful prosecution of suspects to deter potential offenders from committing such crimes. We would like to hear stern action taken against parents and relatives who “negotiate” away cases of violence and prevent such cases from being reported to the authorities for appropriate actions.
- We acknowledge the resource constraint that law enforcement agencies, particularly the police, are experiencing and we call on our MPs to continue to advocate for increased budgetary allocation to police so that they effectively and efficiently execute their constitutional responsibilities. We also call on development partners, local, national and international, to continue supporting the work of the justice, law and order sector (JLOS).
- Most of these cases of aggravated domestic and gender-related offences find their roots in the continuing breakdown of the family and traditional safety nets. We call upon Ker Kwaro Acoli (KKA) and clan administrations to play their traditional roles in protecting women, preventing intimate partner violence and making sure that perpetrators found guilty undergo appropriate corrective measures.
- We call upon religious leaders, cultural leaders, community and political leaders as well as the media, not only to come out openly and condemn this brutality

directed at partners in intimate relationships but to continue speaking against the vice and sensitizing their audiences to help survivors and ensure that perpetrators are reported and prosecuted.

- We challenge all duty bearers to respond appropriately to the urgent need to mobilize and empower all duty bearers with the knowledge and skills to detect early warning signs of violence in intimate relationships and act on those signs through the recommended referral/reporting pathways to avert the violence. It is very sad and regrettable that in both the reported cases of partner or wife murders in Kitgum and Lamwo, friends and family members knew the victims were in vulnerable situations but never took sufficient precautions to protect the targets of the acts of violence. The accused assaulted and killed their victims in their parents' homes.
- We encourage partners to take advantage of the informal and formal referral systems (LCs, Police, Clan, Relatives) as an avenue to talk about the issues bothering them instead of resorting to violence. And for the actors in the referral pathway; let us respond to the cases we receive with the urgency they deserve.

As WORUDET, KINGFO and other member human rights organizations active in the Acholi sub-region hereunder append our signatures to this press statement as a way of reaffirming our commitment to ending intimate partner violence and other forms of violence in the home and pledging our total support to work with local and national governments and other like-minded organizations to ensure not only justice for survivors but also a Uganda where no woman or man in an intimate relationship lives in fear of violence. We shall not lose hope. We must persist, remain steadfast and stand in solidarity in our collective efforts.

To the families of those who lost their dear ones to this heinous crime of intimate partner violence, please, receive our sincere condolences.

Partner Logos

