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### **Determinant Factors for HIV Infection and Vulnerability among Married Returnee Internally Displaced Persons: A Case Study of Amida Sub-County in Kitgum District, Uganda**

The study focused on exploring the determinant factors for HIV infection and vulnerability among married returnee Internally Displaced People (IDP) in Amida sub-county in Kitgum district in Northern Uganda. The study applied a descriptive and exploratory approach into the phenomenon. The sample size was eighty (80) respondents (47 males and 33 females) from 7 villages in Amida sub-county.

The study established several factors that make married couples among IDP returnees at risk and vulnerable to HIV infections in Amida sub-county. These factors include risky sexual behavioural practices among couples, attitudes, community beliefs, multiple sexual partners, poverty, divorce, prostitution, search for sexual satisfaction, ignorance, submissiveness of women, alcoholism, domestic violence, religious differences in the family, peer pressure, love for material things, unemployment, lack of self-control and discipline among HIV positively living persons. The effect of the risks and vulnerability to HIV is a human rights issue. Article 16 (1) of the African Charter on Human and People's Rights (ACHPR) states that human health is an inherent human right, and „every individual shall have the right to enjoy the best attainable state of physical and mental health”. The right to health contains freedoms and entitlements. The freedoms include the right to control one's health and body, including sexual and reproductive freedom and the right to be free from interference (Ssenyonjo, 2003). According to the study, the factors for married IDP returnees being at risk and vulnerable to HIV are because human rights were not fully protected. Fourteen percent (14%) said that the infections were due to poverty and the LRA war, as a failure to protect civil and political rights. Eight percent (8%) of the respondent said the main reason for HIV infections was drunkenness and misunderstanding among married couples (men & women); 10% said that the infections were due to unfaithfulness, unprotected sex, domestic violence among married couples; 9% said the infections were due to wife inheritance; 22% said it was due to unprotected sex and mother-to-child transmissions (breast feeding); 17% said it was due to all the reasons given above. The national IDP Policy (2004) focuses on protection of the rights of IDPs to have better livelihoods after resettlement. In addition, the Uganda Human Rights Commission report<sup>1</sup> (2008) to parliament highlighted HIV/AIDS as a human right issue and advocated for a human rights based approach in fighting the pandemic, more so with attention on mitigating the factors that cause increasing risky behaviours and vulnerability especially among the most at risk population, IDPs being inclusive. The study revealed that 46.25% of the respondents said the main mode was unprotected sex & mother-to-child transmission and 3.75% said they thought the main mode was unprotected sex. The UHRC recommendations include legislation of HIV/AIDS factors aggregating the transmission of HIV/AIDS, ART, freedom of expression, violation of right to education, inhuman and degrading treatment, privacy, discrimination. In comparison, the recommendations would help reduce on risk and vulnerability. In conclusion, human rights protection cuts across many spheres of life, protecting humans from the effects of HIV/AIDS are one of them (Mwagiru, 1997). The study specifically identified at least four or more activities done to fight HIV infections and spread of HIV/AIDS such as condom use, PMTCT, ART, ABC

approach among others and attributed some achievements made to key factors such as donor supported projects in the region such as Northern Uganda Malaria AIDS and Tuberculosis (NUMAT) and the government of Uganda, in addition to requests for spearheading more initiatives and efforts to mitigate the risk and vulnerability to HIV/AIDS infections among IDP returnees.

**Key Words: HIV Infection, Vulnerability, Married Displaced Persons, Kitgum District**