

Mr. Victor Ochen



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Founder, African Youth Initiative Network

Victor Ochen, himself a childhood victim of war, and the African Youth Initiative Network, which he founded to work for the healing of trauma and to promote youth leadership, have been nominated for the 2015 Nobel Peace Prize by the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC).

He founded The African Youth Initiative Network, based in Lira, Uganda, in 2005, to work in two critical areas: medical rehabilitation of those who have suffered burnings, mutilations of all kinds, rape, and psychological torture, and the building and promoting of youth leadership. It has built a national and international network of medical professionals that helps victims rebuild their homes and livelihoods. Just one network program in the Acholi region provided 1,500 medical treatments and counseling sessions to 574 victims during 2011-2012.

The youth-led network conducts outreach programs to promote dialogue between youth in different communities in northern Uganda, and has begun a one-week Peace Camp to teach skills in conflict resolution, peace building and leadership, as well as understand the law as a tool for human rights.

In May 2014, the network organized the first National War Victims Conference, attended by more than 250 people from all corners of the country, as well as representatives from Kenya, Mali, Nigeria, Burundi and other countries. The goal was to develop a roadmap for a successful transitional justice process in Uganda to address healing the physical and emotional wounds of war to build toward national reconciliation.