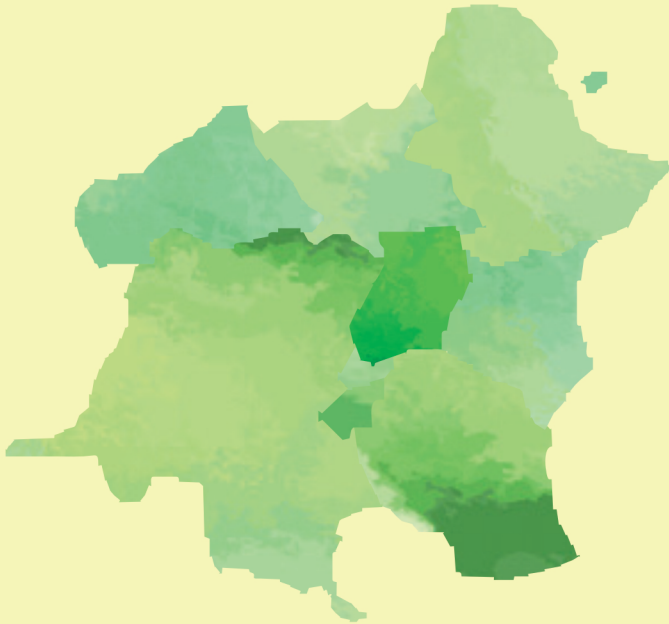


Josef Wieland, Dominik Fischer (eds.)



Transculturality and Community

Learnings from the Hope Development Initiative in Uganda

Josef Wieland and Dominik Fischer (eds.)

Transculturality and Community.

Learnings from the Hope Development Initiative in Uganda

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Josef Wieland and Dominik Fischer (eds.)

Transculturality and Community

Learnings from the
Hope Development Initiative in Uganda

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Preface

This book is the result of a 10-day research trip to Central Uganda and Uganda's capital Kampala as part of our Transcultural Caravan, a project linking interdisciplinary research in the area of governance and leadership centering on transcultural challenges. Zeppelin University's Leadership Excellence Institute Zeppelin (LEIZ) organizes research trips with a different focus each year. This time, the topic of the previous Transcultural Leadership Summit 2017, focusing on the Sub-Saharan African region, became the target region for the corresponding Transcultural Student Research Group. The group focused mainly on the works of the Hope Development Initiative (HDI), a social business initiative in Amolatar, central Uganda, and described it from a research perspective. The inhabitants of this region, which is primarily a 100km long peninsula surrounded by lakes, face several challenges due to fragmented infrastructure and socio-dynamic processes limiting the economic progress of the people, and particularly the women, living there. The HDI was founded in 2010 after the Lord Resistance Army conflict in Northern Uganda. The communities that were farming communities and directly or indirectly impacted by the conflict found themselves in a weak position afterwards. As a social business the HDI concentrates on empowering women to become small entrepreneurs growing rice and thus earning an income. It aims to fight poverty and develop the region. Further projects in the fields of healthcare and infrastructure are also conducted by the HDI.

Against this backdrop, a group of Zeppelin University students and lecturers visited the HDI in central Uganda in autumn 2018 together with students and lecturers from Makerere University. During the research trip, Dr Agnes A. Apea, founder and CEO of the HDI, who had already introduced her organization during our Transcultural Leadership Summit, provided access to HDI facilities and stakeholders in Amolatar. The student researchers were given the unique opportunity to conduct field research on their research questions, which constitute the core of this book. Access to, internal and external stakeholders of the HDI was the key

component in the process of gathering data for the research. The book covers interdisciplinary perspectives spanning politics, economics and sociology. A joint research symposium between Zeppelin University and Makerere University in Kampala, Uganda served to introduce the project to a broader audience. We would like to thank the contributors for their work and particularly Dr Agnes A. Apea and our colleagues from Makerere University who were invaluable facilitators for this book.

Friedrichshafen, October 2019

Josef Wieland
Dominik Fischer

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Alexander Shevelov is a final year M.Sc. student of Corporate Management & Economics at Zeppelin University as well as Innovation Manager and founding member of Bodensee Innovationscluster. Furthermore, after long professional and academic experience in the fields of Digital Transformation and Supply Chain Management and Logistics, he is about to start a social project in Uganda focusing on the impact of Digital Transformation on Uganda's agriculture and the people working in it.

Louisa-Madeline Singer holds a degree in Politics, Administration and International Relations from Zeppelin University with a focus on global governance, civil society and migration. She has academic and practical experience in studying and promoting transcultural and inter-religious dialogue. She is currently continuing her studies in Global Governance & Diplomacy at the University of Oxford.

Charlotte Theiss holds a degree in Sociology, Politics and Economics from Zeppelin University. She is passionate about transculturality, in particular in the context of gender dynamics. She is looking forward to continue to gain experience in this subject in the foreseeable future.

Cara Thielen is about to finish her bachelor studies of Sociology, Politics & Economics at Zeppelin University. As part of the organization team of the Transcultural Leadership Summit in 2017 and 2018 she has gained insights into the transcultural thought, its implications and the challenges connected to it. Fascinated and inspired by the African continent and the work of the Hope Development Initiative she sets a focus towards international affairs and global politics.

Introduction:

The HDI and the District of Amolatar

Catherine P. Anena

More than ever before, there is global consensus that the path to sustainable development must be built on a foundation of equality, inclusiveness and universal enjoyment of human rights. Several studies have indicated that closing the gender gap can accelerate development, implying that gender equality is not just a question of justice enabling women and men to have equal opportunities in all aspects of life, it is a question of good economics and is essential for development. Gender disparities in basic human rights, resources, economic opportunity and in political voice directly and indirectly limit growth in developing countries and, sadly, women and girls bear the greatest and most direct costs of these inequalities¹. Situations of conflict and war naturally escalate such negative outcomes and impact severely on groups of people that are already vulnerable – again women and girls suffer the most here. Indeed, Sustainable Development Goals numbers 5 and 10 urge governments the world over to put in place specific and practical measures to reduce gender inequalities in order to promote gender-equitable growth and development outcomes.

¹ Mason A.D. & King E.M. (2001): *Engendering Development Through Gender Equality in Rights, Resources, and Voice*. A World Bank Policy Research Report. New York: Oxford University Press. See also: Gelb, A., Ali, A.G.A., Dinka, T., Elbadawi, I., Soludo, C. et al. (2000): *Can Africa Claim the 21st Century?*, Washington, D.C.: World Bank.

*Gender relations and the status of Women in the Amolatar district
of Northern Uganda*

Northern Uganda experienced a protracted conflict that spanned over 20 years (1986-2006), resulting in over 1.8 million people being internally displaced into IDP camps, and over 85% of the population becoming heavily dependent on humanitarian aid. Much of the population in the region had their livelihoods disrupted, leading to increased poverty, malnutrition and a high mortality rate. Indeed, the region has been noted for having a high Human Poverty Index (HPI) of 46.1% compared to the national average of 37.5%, and the region has the highest level of illiteracy in the country – 36% compared to the national average of 27%. Women, young people and children have undeniably borne most of the brunt of this protracted conflict (GOU 2012, 2007; HRW 2005, 2003). Following the landmark agreement on the Cessation of Hostilities by the two warring factions in 2006, a period of relative peace and normality returned to the region and it is estimated that, by 2012, over 98% of the formerly displaced people had returned to their villages of origin or to transitional villages and trading centers in the region. The government of Uganda and other development agencies have implemented several developmental interventions as a means of rebuilding the war-torn region (GOU 2012, 2007; HRW 2005, 2003). However, the region still has overwhelming needs, especially in the areas of livelihoods, healthcare and education.

The Amolatar district is located in northern Uganda, in the Lango sub-region. It was formed in 2005, carved out of Lira District. The district contains 346 villages, organized into 33 parishes, and covers an area of approximately 1,758 square kilometers (679 square miles). It is estimated that, in 2012, the population of the district was about 127,400. The dominant ethnic group in the district are the Lango people or Langi. The Langi are predominantly patrilineal and patrilocal. The social structure is deeply patriarchal in nature, and men are traditionally venerated and held in high regard with a social position high above that of women. Men are traditionally the providers and hence have full control over household resources. Women are expected to contribute fully to household farming activities and provide labor and support to various income-generating activities of their spouses but remain fully dependent on the men for providing for the household. Gender inequality manifests itself through dominant traditions such as polygamy, widow inheritance and payment

of a bride price or dowry by the man to his bride's family. Early marriage and forced marriage of young girls to older men is also common practice, as this brings wealth in the form of a dowry to the girl's parents.

In the period following the war, the government and other agencies have, in line with the millennium Development Goals and the Sustainable development Goals, increasingly focused on women with Women's Economic Empowerment (WEE) projects (Anena & Ochen 2017; Mugisha 2006; HRW 2005, 2003; Akumu et al. 2005). As a result of these interventions, there has been tremendous expansion of women's engagement in agricultural productivity and trade. However, gender imbalances continue to play a key role in regulating women's control of incomes from the sale of their produce, as these are traditionally seen as the preserve of men.

The Hope Development Initiative (HDI)

HDI was introduced in 2010 as a way of empowering women in the Amolatar district and providing households with a much-needed source of income to create self-sufficiency and reduce overdependence on spouses or government and humanitarian handouts. The agency has positioned itself as a leader in mobilizing women towards economic emancipation and development in the district. At the helm of the Hope Development Initiative, Dr Agnes Atim Apea mobilized women in the Amolatar district to jointly address the severe deprivation, gender inequality and suffering that the people were going through after decades of war. The normalized gender inequality, coupled with overall poor farming methods, a lack of access to quality agro inputs, and limited access to extension services were a significant hindrance to the growth and development of the agricultural sector in the region. The HDI introduced rice growing and mobilized female farmers into the scheme, turning them into commercial rice farmers. Under HDI, women benefit from access to high-yielding rice seeds and other inputs necessary to improve crop yields; have access to a tractor at highly subsidized rates; access to extension services and training on proper skills for rice farming; as well as support for joint marketing. The HDI started with 11 women in 2010 but has grown to include over 11,000 members as of 2019. This book documents the achievements of the HDI project in northern Uganda.

Part I

Entrepreneurship

The Impact of Digital Transformation on Uganda's Agriculture

Alexander Shevelov

1. Introduction

Mobile phones and the internet have significantly affected practically all sectors of the economy and agriculture is no exception. Uganda is one of the least mechanized countries in the world and smallholder farmers have, on average, a tenth of the tools of their peers in other developing areas. This lack of technology has undermined the competitiveness of Ugandan smallholder farmers, reducing their productivity and tightening a “doom loop” where they are not able to invest in the necessary technology or machinery. The integration of this technology and machinery, or new digital models, in their daily lives as well as in their agriculture processes enables market access, pricing and financing, creates potential to drive radical changes in the farming sector and paves the way for a stronger connection of farmers worldwide. To cut a long story short, this procedure is called Digital Transformation. Digital Transformation is underway in Uganda, as shown by the increasing number of people using smartphones, and thereby accessing digital content and services. This is having a profound positive effect on the socio-economic development of the country. By using these digital platforms, the result is greater access to life-enhancing services while at the same time speeding up productivity and efficiency across key sectors of the Ugandan economy. New opportunities will emerge for smallholder farmers to collaborate, innovate and participate in ways that positively impact their lives and, in turn, the whole country.

The paper reviews the recent literature on the current situation of agriculture in Uganda as well as the impact of corresponding technologies on the rural sector. Furthermore, the paper will highlight some of the challenges and barriers within the agriculture sector which are faced by the country and, especially, by farmers in the poorer regions. Under the auspices of the Transcultural Research project, this paper also introduces a research framework for describing the current situation and the main benefits of Digital Transformation in Uganda but also in rural areas, using the NGO “Hope Development Initiative” and the corresponding community, as a sample. In order to analyze these topics, a qualitative case study has been conducted and will be presented in the research design. The questions will be approached by addressing the understanding of Digital Transformation, the current situation of agriculture in Uganda, the (potential) impact of Digital Transformation on agriculture and the people working in the sector and finally, its challenges in term of smallholder agriculture. This is followed by academic and practical implications and a conclusion.

2. *Research Design*

To study the complex phenomenon of Digital Transformation and its impact a qualitative case-study methodology is applied. First, though, it is necessary to get an overview of the status quo of Digital Transformation in Uganda, as well as its impact on agriculture and the people employed in the sector. Therefore, desk research has been conducted, which provides a wealth of information regarding Digital Transformation in Uganda and further related topics, as mentioned above. Furthermore, the information collected through the desk research helps not only to understand the development and the impact of Digital Transformation on Ugandan agriculture, but also on the Ugandan political system, the infrastructure situation in the country, business potential and other relevant factors which are significant for the acceleration of Digital Transformation but which could also prove to be a barrier. The desk research includes textbooks, news articles, review articles, publications and strategy papers of the Ugandan government and meta analyses. The interviews were conducted during a research trip to Uganda at the beginning of September as well as post hoc via digital communication channels, after arriving

back in Germany. In order to not exceed the limits of the research, the case study has been conducted on the Hope Development Initiative. The Hope Development Initiative (HDI) is a development organization in a particularly rural and isolated area in Amolatar district (Northern Uganda), which not only focuses on improving farming but also seeks to empower women.

A case study approach has been used to investigate a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context as well as the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clear (Robert K. Yin 2014). Since neither the impact of Digital Transformation in Ugandan agriculture nor on those working in it is clear, the Hope Development Initiative will be explored as a research subject to point out the impact of Digital Transformation that has already taken place, as well as any potential impact. Furthermore, the research will focus on analyzing the barriers in the agricultural processes relating to Digital Transformation as well as mapping out possible solutions. Based on the theory and literature review, interviews have been conducted with board members and active members of HDI, representatives of the state as well as of representatives of political party foundations and universities.

In this context it is important to note that, during the interview, several challenges arose. When our group arrived, the communities received us with the expectation of bringing professional and immediate support to improve their agriculture processes. The communities didn't understand our purpose of being an interview partner for academic reasons as part of our research study. Moreover, the nature of the interviews was partly improvised and had an informal touch. Even though the selected interviewees were capable of articulating themselves, the translator's command of English was limited significant terms (such as "Digital Transformation", "logistics", "process transparency") – which are very significant for my research study and its findings – were either not known or not understood. In contrast to the interviews in the rural areas, the interviews conducted in the city proved to be more successful. The interviews conducted in the city may generate more content and be enriching for understanding several processes connected to the Digital Transformation and the agricultural sector, but the rural experience is very important to understand the barriers and challenges of Digital Transformation in this isolated area as well as providing an opportunity to experience "pure and naked" agriculture processes.

3. *Literature*

Digital Transformation is a deliberate and ongoing digital evolution not only of business processes but rather of the whole company, business model, idea process as well as strategically and tactically methodology (Mazzone 2014). Digital Transformation is a way of networking all economic sectors and adapting players to the new conditions of the digital economy (Bouee & Schaible 2015) but, all in all digital transformation causes significant changes to daily life, to the economy and society through the use of digital technology and techniques and their effects. Consequently, digital transformation can take place for companies, business models, processes, relationships, products, etc. to boost the performance and reach of a company (Bowersox et al. 2005). This ongoing and holistic transformation of the economy and society holds many promises to inspire innovation, generate efficiencies and improve services and, additionally, spur more sustainable growth as well as enhance well-being. As previously stated, Digital Transformation offers many possibilities, including productivity. It can enhance productivity performance by enabling innovation and reducing the costs of business processes. Nevertheless, even though digital technology flourished in the mid-1990s, average productivity growth has slowed down over the past decade. It is a kind of paradox observing rapid technological change in contrast to the slow growth of productivity. However, the reason for the slowdown of average productivity is the huge performance gap between more and less productive firms. OECD analysis shows that the most advanced firms worldwide have not slowed their rate of productivity but have improved it by adopting digital technologies efficiently (OECD 2016). It is important to note that Digital Transformation has not an instant impact on productivity growth, but rather over a longer period.

In the literature, Digital Transformation in Uganda as a topic is discussed but the quantity as well as the quality of the resources are limited. Nevertheless, it can be seen that Digital Transformation is taking root in Uganda, progressing in leaps and bounds. It has already had an impact on the financial sector by drastically changing traditional bank services and forcing banks to offer a multitude of digital bank services, including mobile phone payments, mobile wallets and mobile money transfers (GSMA Mobile Money 2018). Moreover, The National Information Technology Authority Uganda (NITU-U) places special emphasis on transforming

Government services by rolling out several eGovernment projects, which are included in Ugandan Digital Vision. This covers inter alia: eVisa, IGG online Declaration System, Electronic Government Procurement, Digital Communication with citizens and others (NITA Uganda 2017). Furthermore, Uganda is one of the most entrepreneurial countries in Africa and to keep this high level the Government of Uganda realized the need to invest in economic infrastructure, with a view to speeding up Digital Transformation by supporting the development of the start-up culture. In particular, investments flow into start-ups within the transport sector, delivery services, digital solutions for education and communication (National Development Plan, Uganda Vision 2040 2015).

One of the major drivers of Digital Transformation in Uganda is the Ministry of ICT & National Guidance. The prime objective of ICT is the Digital Uganda Vision 2040 by aligning investments in the different sectors to improve Uganda's information and communication technologies for speeding up the Digital Transformation and, inter alia, creating an attractive proposition for global investors. The Digital Vision of Uganda pursues the goal of empowering its citizens, sustainable development, economic progress, reducing poverty and improving education through digital innovation and connecting initiatives as well as start-ups across multiple sectors. One of the main strategic objectives – which was launched in 2015 under the auspices of the second 5-year National Development Plan (NDP II) – is to transform Uganda's agriculture sector from a low-income economy with a low technological level into a competitive and market-driven middle-income economy (Ministry of ICT & National Guidance 2018; National Planning Authority 2019).

“Transformation of Uganda's economy, start with the Transformation of Uganda's agriculture”

Agriculture is the main pillar of the Ugandan economy employing 65.6% of the labor force, of whom 77% are women, and 63% are youth. Moreover, the agriculture sector contributes 25% to the country's GDP and is the main source of income and food for over 70% of the population (World Bank 2018). Agricultural production in Uganda – which includes food and industrial crops, forestry, horticulture, fishing and livestock farming – is mainly dominated by smallholder farmers. Uganda is one of the leading producers of coffee and bananas in the world. In addition, the

country is also a major producer of tea, cotton, tobacco, cereals, livestock and fishing products. Based on these mentioned features, it is very important to note that the 40% of total export earnings in 2012/13 were contributed by smallholder farmers. Furthermore, smallholder farmers deliver between 75% and 80% of the total agricultural output and marketed agriculture produce. In comparison, enterprises and commercial farmers deliver about 15 percent (Second National Development Plan 2015-2019 2015). As can be seen, agriculture remains a crucial sector not only for the general growth of the economy but also for the reduction of poverty, especially among the rural poor, due to the strong support of the smallholder farmers. Despite the weighting of agriculture in Ugandan economy, there are still numerous challenges and barriers in terms of the poor performance of the agriculture sector: slow development and adaptation of technological innovation, low investment as well as limited access to land and agriculture finance, gender inequality even though women make up most of the labor force, poor pest control as well as poor quality of seeds, climate change, poor Food Chain Management and so on (Second National Development Plan 2015-2019 2015). As a way to tackle all these challenges and barriers, Digital Transformation and its primary “tool” meet all the requirements. But what about Digital Transformation in Uganda?

Digital Transformation in Uganda’s agricultural sector is under way, as evidenced by the growing number of farmers and smallholders accessing digital content and services. With more people using digital technologies and digital services, Digital Transformation will have a direct impact on social and economic activities and will support progress towards national and global development goals. In this paper three areas of agriculture sector will be highlighted where Digital Transformation and mobile technology – at the heart of Digital Transformation in Uganda – are having a considerable impact on Uganda’s agricultural sector. The first area is productivity and efficiency, which are still at a low level (World Bank 2019). To shape positively the situation of low productivity and efficiency in Uganda’s agriculture the main focus should be on the digital opportunities enabled by mobile platforms. Digital Transformation solutions in the form of mobile technologies is helping to tackle several inefficiencies and barriers in the agriculture sector, which often have a negative impact on productivity. Digital or mobile platforms not only enable costs to be reduced for the supply of weather information, farming

techniques or access to vital information for farmers but also ensure transparency for prices and market activities as well as having a positive impact on smallholders' value chains improving efficiency, facilitating security and reducing waste. Thanks to basic digital communication services smallholders are able to communicate more efficiently and effectively with one another or with government ministries and small businesses, thus reducing travel and transport costs as well as unproductive time. A further essential factor for increasing the productivity and efficiency of agriculture processes is the digitalization of the procurement of crops of smallholder farmers and the implementation of digital farmer records to enable better tractability (GSM Intelligence 2019; World Bank 2018). The second highlighted area is digital finances. Compared to the traditional cash-based transactions digital payment provides smallholder farmers with a safe and efficient way of money transfer but also saves their productive hours, which would otherwise have been spent travelling to access financial services or handling traditional transaction and payment methods. GSMA research for 2018 indicated that regular users of digital mobile financial services in Uganda saved at least 12 productive hours (World Bank 2018; GSM Intelligence 2018). Mobile Digital solutions also improve access to a larger range of financial services which could have a positive impact on the economic growth of agriculture and poverty reduction in developing countries (Burgess & Pande 2015). This large range of financial services enables easier investment and thereby allows smallholder farmers to invest in (hi-tech) farming machines and Digital / Smart-Farming Solutions. This in turn has a positive effect on the growth of productivity and efficiency regarding agricultural processes as well as improving income and the livelihoods of smallholder farmers (Anker & Mbiti 2015). According to a study by Halewood and Surya (Halewood & Surya 2012) digital information and communication technologies generated growth up to 36% of farmers' income in several Sub Saharan African countries, such as Uganda. Furthermore, the possibilities of better access to mobile finance services take the fear of crop failure or other important bases of farmers' livelihoods, because mature mobile services vendor are able to provide pay outs to the farmers despite that fail (Sen & Choudry 2011). The third important area of agricultural sector affected in a positive way by Digital Transformation is social life. As described above, the positive impact of Digital Transformation on the agricultural areas such as productivity and financial services, gives smallholder farmers an edge

not only economically but also regarding their social lives. One the sub-aspects of social life in terms of agriculture and the people working in it is communication. As one of the most important “engines” within our social life, communication is undergoing enormous change thanks to Digital Transformation. The digital age entails a variety of digital communication solutions that not only support individuals to intensify relationships as well as the frequency of their contact with family and friends but also helps to connect communities and systems and creates new opportunities for collaborating, innovating and participating in a way that positively impacts their lives and, in turn, the whole world (World Economic Forum 2015). The second sub-aspect is education within the digital age. Digital Transformation expands access to knowledge and expertise in the form of internet platforms, digital network solutions and many other digital services, which increase the quality of education as well as agriculture and business skills development (ITU GSR-17 discussion paper 2017). Digital mobile solutions enable networking with larger domestic and multi-national agriculture companies, which leads to an extension of knowledge for smallholder farmers, thanks to the cooperation and the expertise of these companies. It can further enhance general agricultural knowledge, skills in plant management, seed selection, storage and distribution, leading to higher wages (World Bank 2018; Designing ICT for Agriculture 2018). Moreover, due to this digital networking with other companies or digital agriculture-platform providers smallholder farmers can improve their (digital) literacy and numeracy skills (ITU GSR-17 discussion paper 2017). The last sub-aspect of social life in terms of the smallholder agriculture sector is the gender gap. It will take more than a century to close the gap between men and woman in Sub Saharan Africa, more precisely it will take 135 years for men and women to be equal. As far as Uganda is concerned, we are seeing a positive development showing that this Sub Sahara African country has positioned itself in the top third of gender ranking worldwide (World Economic Forum’s 2018 Global Gender Gap index 2018). However, there is still an enormous gender gap, especially in the smallholder agriculture sector, that needs to be addressed urgently, not only for reasons of justice and equality but also for reasons of “rational” economics. The World Bank report for 2018 shows that if digital technologies can reduce costs and expand access to new forms of digital communication it will create advantages for women. Higher incomes and higher access to information positively affect the

negotiating position of women within households or working areas, and therefore improves gender equality (Sakbira & Qaim 2016). Moreover, women in Uganda make up 55% of the economically active population among smallholder farm households and contribute more than 75% to total farm labor as well as over 90% to farm-level primary processing operations. However, men are still three times as likely to be the head of the smallholder farming households as women (UBOS 2010). Research by Sakbira & Qaim shows that digital technologies in terms of the Digital Age can be used as a means to tackle the unfair distribution of work among smallholder farm households as well as the belongings and value that women are entitled to. In terms of this gender gap, digital technologies improve the probability that women will jointly own more productive assets, have a positive effect on gender equity and family business partnerships, ensure an equitable distribution of work and responsibility and, generally, enhance female empowerment in daily business (Sakbira & Qaim 2016). On the whole, it should be pointed out that digital technologies provide women with skills, encourage women into entrepreneurship and innovation and provide the right conditions to enable women to participate fully, fairly and equitably in the smallholder agriculture business.

4. Challenges and barriers

Key challenges as a reason for the slow progress of Digital Transformation within the smallholder agriculture sector are lack of skills and education, poverty and poor infrastructure. The disproportionately huge lack of agriculture skills and education make the managing of digital agriculture technologies, ICT facilities like computer and hi-tech machinery very difficult. In particular, women are most affected by this skills and knowledge gap, even though they manage most of the work in smallholder farm households. Not only within the smallholder agriculture sector is the lack of digital skills very significant but also, generally, throughout the whole country. The latest report from the Uganda Bureau of Statistics shows that around 43% of respondents report a lack of confidence or lack of knowledge and skills as reasons for not using the tools of the digital age (Akullo & Mulumba 2016; GSMA 2018). Another barrier which slows down the progress of Digital Transformation is the inadequate financial

power of smallholder farmers. The widespread rural poverty among the smallholder households complicates access to digital tools and the relevant equipment. The Uganda National Household Survey 2016/17 shows that more than 8 million people (approx. 21% of the whole population) live in poverty, compared to 6.6 million in 2012/2013. Even though agriculture is the main source of employment (especially for poorer households) and also the main sectoral contribution to poverty reduction in Uganda, an unacceptable share of smallholder farmers lives below the poverty line (The Uganda Poverty Assessment Report 2016). Living in such conditions does not give the farmers the possibility to invest in digital technologies and other hi-tech solutions that could be the decisive drivers in terms of enhancing efficiency. The last challenge examined in this research is the poor (digital) infrastructure among smallholder farmers. With the focus on digital infrastructure in order to not exceed the limits of this paper, a number of important challenges remain. Despite the fact that the Ministry of Information, Communication and Technology started in 2006 to implement the National Data Transmission Backbone Infrastructure and e-Government Infrastructure Project after receiving funding infrastructure in Uganda, especially in rural areas, is still a key challenge that slows down Digital Transformation throughout the country. On the other hand, it must nevertheless be said that Uganda has well-developed ICT infrastructure, which demonstrates that its system for mobile communications and its information footprint are unusually expansive, thereby effectively supporting the progress of Digital Transformation. Nonetheless, factors such as high service taxes, prices of mobile phones as well as broadband services in Uganda (which are more than three times as high as in the average LIC in Africa) and general internet services make these services unaffordable for many smallholder farmers (Uganda's Infrastructure, World Bank 2012). Furthermore, around one fifth of the population of Uganda are still not covered by a mobile broadband network, despite much investments in related projects (GSMA 2018). Despite huge reforms in this country, electrification rates, too, are still very low. Only about 10% of the population has access to electricity, and in rural areas the figure is less than 5% (ENDEV 2018). In Uganda, there is still a huge lack of a good mix of energy sources for power generation, which causes low access to modern energy as well as inadequate infrastructure for power generation, transmission and distribution. Moreover, tariffs are still unaffordable for farmers (Second National Development Plan 2015).

Although they are not essential components of digital infrastructure elements such as transport, water resources and supply and irrigation are at a low level and therefore do not support Digital Transformation but rather restrict its progress. It is important to recognize that adequate infrastructure is not only key for the progress of Digital Transformation among smallholder farmers, but it is also an essential key for economic growth and competitiveness in Uganda.

5. Results I

5.1 *Understanding Digital Transformation*

The results have clearly shown that the interviewed experts have recognized that Digital Transformation not only means taking analogue information and encoding it into zeros and ones, digitizing processes or working with technology to simplify workflow but rather it involves a digital revolution which affects all sectors of economic and social life as well as directly connecting these sectors with each other. It affects and changes significantly daily life in economy and society, through the use of digital technologies and techniques. Digital Transformation entails innovation, speeding up efficiency and productivity and positively shaping sustainable economic and social growth as well as enhancing general well-being (Int. 9, 10, 11).

5.2 *Agriculture in Uganda and its challenges*

All of the interviewed experts are aware that agriculture is the backbone of the Ugandan economy and employs most of the Ugandan labour force. Moreover, agriculture in Uganda is not only the main source of income for most of the population but thanks to the variety of its agricultural products and its geographic position Uganda has become one of the major exporters in Sub Saharan Africa (Int. 10). The interview with the Commissioner of the Ministry of ICT and National Guidance produced findings that confirm the need for the rapid development of Ugandan agriculture and its infrastructure. As mentioned in the results of the literature research, the project "Ugandan Vision 2040" has already placed a strong focus on

the sustainable development of the agriculture sector, with the attention on increasing the overall efficiency and productivity – as well as that of single individuals – (Int. 9). Unfortunately, the challenges and barriers of Ugandan agriculture discussed in the literature research have also been confirmed by the results of the interviews conducted for this paper. It has been confirmed that the overall low efficiency and productivity, undeveloped food chain management, lack of education and skills development, low quality yields and seeds, unaffordable agriculture utilities because of the inadequate financial resources of smallholder farmers and, finally, challenging climate / weather situation and slow adoption of digital technologies are holding the sector back. Moreover, the investment situation is critical – i.e., public investment is way below the 10% annual budget, in spite of government agreements and its goals (Int. 9, 10, 11).

5.3 The impact of Digital Transformation on agriculture and those who work in it

Nowadays, Digital Transformation is one of the major issues in Uganda and its politics. The aim is to use all the possibilities of the Digital Age to transform all economic, political and social sectors of the country. This transformation means an increasing productivity, improving the value chain along several sectors, entails new products and strategies and brings people together even when differences seems irreconcilable (Int. 9, 10). Uganda focuses particularly on the transformation of its agriculture sector using the Information and Communication Technologies as one of the crucial instruments of Digital Transformation. Agriculture is the main sector for the Ministry of ICT and National Guidance, and its target is to improve digital infrastructure, invest and develop ICT innovation-hubs as well as promote talents and adapt continually to the changing requirements of Industry 4.0. As part of Digital Transformation many advantages could be created. The digital age entails many solutions and technologies that will enable a long-awaited boost for the export economy, helping to increase the agricultural skills of smallholder farmers and making this sector attractive to young people because of the opportunity for working with multi-national companies and stakeholders from different countries (Int. 9). Furthermore, Digital Transformation will facilitate access to the agriculture sector market, to knowledge and will connect all smallholder

farmers worldwide. It will enable the access to financial providers (such as Mobile Money, a solution that is already in place) which will enable farmers to afford agricultural equipment and digital technologies and will, in addition, generate transparency and digital information interchange among rural areas: factors that are absolutely essential. Digital Transformation will enable several cost factors along the Supply and Value Chain of smallholder agriculture to be reduced, will increase the sector's productivity and efficiency, improve food chain management as well as logistics and, finally, generate the right conditions for "the right crops, at the right place, at the right time" (Int. 9, 10).

5.4 Digital Transformation and its challenges in terms of smallholder agriculture

Despite all the euphoria, the development of Digital Transformation in Uganda's agriculture is still proceeding in leaps and bounds. According to the findings of the interviews conducted, the main challenges are poor infrastructure and the lack of money to improve and maintain it, the lack of skilled experts possessing the talents to handle Digital Transformation of agriculture as well as the lack of an appropriate attitude and awareness to accelerate implementation the Digital Transformation. As already mentioned in the previous section, the smallholder agriculture has received little attention and support from the government, e.g., not reaching the government goal of the 10% annual budget investment in the agriculture sector. Moreover, Uganda has problems to link already implemented digital solution with the smallholder agriculture sector system. Nonetheless, the interviewed experts agree that Digital Transformation will not make those obstacles disappear but rather help to tackle these and allow more room for sustainable development (Int. 9, 10, 11).

6. Results II

6.1 *Digital Transformation within the HDI areas of Amolatar District*

The Hope Development Initiative (HDI) is a civil society organization which successfully operates in the field of agriculture in rural Uganda. It defines itself as a “female farmers organization” and was founded by Dr Agnes Apea and twenty other women in 2010. It seeks to empower female rice farmers in rural Northern Uganda to gain financial independence and to improve the process and skills of farming. Its work consists in the distribution of seeds, the realization of agricultural training, the availability of production plans, supporting measures to access the market and provide financial support. HDI mainly operates in Amolatar District, a very rural and isolated area in Uganda which is not really comparable with other regions (Int. 12). A ferry and power generator were recently established, major infrastructure developments for the district to which HDI largely contributed. HDI considers itself as a hybrid of CBO, NGO and cooperative. It faced legal difficulties to register as an NGO since it makes a small but does not qualify as a business either. HDI has a large membership-base since it operates within a whole district (Int. 12). HDI’s CEO Apea – who was also appointed Chair of the Local Government Finance Commission – has the main responsibility for the organization. A small team supports her with administrative work in the city. In the district, she employs a group of women who are in charge of the mill, the store and in reaching out to the communities. They are mainly women in political leadership positions, such as chairpersons and publicity mangers.

Firstly, it must be said that the command of English of some members of HDI from the rural area was limited and the interviewees had a weak understanding of the focal points of the research topic as well as of the interview questions. Nevertheless, several useful facts emerged during the discussions.

6.2 *Understanding of Digital Transformation*

As might be expected, the interviewees from the rural area were not informed about the significance of Digital Transformation as well as about its possible impact on the agricultural sector (Int. 1-7). Only the

interviewed economics student who is working as an intern at HDI, gave some very helpful comments out of it. The interviewee explained that Digital Transformation enables productivity and efficiency to be increased as well as connecting people over great distances (Int. 8).

6.3 Agriculture in Uganda and its challenges

In comparison to the results from the literature research it became apparent that agriculture in the Amolatar District is affected by similar challenges. The challenging weather conditions and climate change make a rich harvest impossible, skills and education as well as agricultural tools (including equipment such as tractors or oxen) are lacking and the financial situation is not ideal. Moreover, the farmers are not able to afford good quality seeds, which could yield healthy plants as well as a rich harvest for a longer time frame. The other challenge is the lack of good quality irrigation despite the fact that Amolatar District is one of the hottest and driest regions in Uganda. In terms of agricultural business the lack of transparency regarding the market situation, market prices for goods and the adequate customers or partners mean a challenge for rural farmers and HDI to make a profit or at least sell their goods for a fair price (Int. 1-7, 8).

6.3.1 The impact of the Digital Transformation on the agriculture and its participators

After developing an understanding of Digital Transformation as well as all of its facets and aspects together with the interviewees from the rural areas, it became evident to all HDI members and parties that Digital Transformation can bring a wide variety of advantages and opportunities to positively affect their livelihoods, particularly as a result of improving their agriculture processes. It was interesting to see that, even though the HDI smallholder farmers are aware of the lack of infrastructure usual farming equipment, they are nevertheless convinced of the huge positive impact of digital solutions. It is also important to mention that HDI and its members have already started to work with simple digital tools within their farming business that increase both efficiency and productivity (Int. 8).

Moreover, the HDI members interviewed are aware that higher-level digital solutions have the ability to speed up the general productivity and efficiency of the farming business, to improve the basic marketing process, to enable better communication between other individuals living in the rural areas, but also with other organizations and multi-national companies. Moreover, digital solutions finally enable access to agriculture markets and to a broad portfolio of buyers as well as greater transparency regarding prices and other relevant information. It is also important to mention that this kind of solution will also create a new foundation for education and skills development (Int. 1-7, 8).

6.4 Digital Transformation and its challenges in terms of the smallholder agriculture

According to the interview findings, the main challenges are the poor – or rather lacking – infrastructure, the lack of electricity and mobile broadband network. The widespread rural poverty among the smallholder households complicates access to digital tools and necessary equipment but high service taxes, prices of mobile phones as well as broadband services also mean that mobile communications are unaffordable for many smallholder farmers in Amolatar. Furthermore, the huge lack of skills, education as well as a lack of confidence and understanding of the potential opportunities of Digital Transformation make managing digital agriculture technologies very difficult (Int. 1-7, 8).

7. Implications

In terms of this research the following implications for policy, practice and further research can be derived. Even though the Ugandan government is of the role played by agriculture in the Ugandan economy and its role in the labor force as well as its contribution to the GDP, it nevertheless became apparent while researching this paper that the government doesn't pay appropriate attention to agriculture. Moreover, it must be viewed critically when the political aims set by the Ugandan government – i.e., public investment of 10% of the annual budget – could not be met. Therefore, the research project shows that the Ugandan government and

the Ministry of ICT finally realized the issue and started the Digital Uganda Vision to improve existing Digital Transformation strategies, policies and plans into an overall Digital Vision for Uganda, with the sharp focus on stronger support for smallholder farmers such as HDI members.

Second, there are practical implications for NGOs and similar players operating in non-Western countries. The research shows that the lack of confidence and adequate knowledge regarding digital skills is significant throughout the whole country. Nonetheless, despite all the challenges and barriers such as infrastructure and poverty, HDI emerges as a forerunner for gradually integrating simple digital solutions and placing trust in the potential positive impact of Digital Transformation on agriculture but also on the social lives of people working in the sector. It can be observed that the HDI members are open and eager to explore these unknown possibilities of the digital age and they also show awareness of the significant positive changes that digitalization can bring to their daily business.

8. *Conclusion*

It should be stressed in conclusion that, apart from the facts and figures regarding the critical situation in Uganda in terms of financial situation, infrastructure quality and other areas in need of development, Uganda has nevertheless been making notable progress for years. The Government of Uganda put a sharper focus on increasing income and reducing poverty and developing general and digital infrastructure. This includes investments in digital infrastructure not only in urban areas but also in rural regions and their communities, developing ICT innovation hubs as well as promoting suitable talents and experts for shaping as well as designing the Industry 4.0 environment. It is also important to mention that, as part of the "Industry 4.0 project" both the Ugandan Government and the Ministry of ICT are paying particular attention to the agriculture sector by developing digital technologies that enable an increase of the agriculture productivity and export economy, helping to enhance the agricultural skills of smallholder farmers and making this sector attractive to young people, enabling access to a wide range of funding options as well as more transparency within the (global) agricultural market. However, government objectives must not be neglected; these have already been set

and communicated so as to create a greater understanding and awareness for Digital Transformation among the population.

As mentioned in the previous chapter, HDI is one of the communities concerned that could be affected by the Ugandan Digital Vision. But even before this digital evolution reaches Uganda's rural areas, HDI is demonstrating its pioneering role in terms of its adaptability and self-development to the upcoming digital era. Despite the unstable financial situation, a lack of government support, immense lack of farming utilities, non-existent access to sufficient electricity and inadequate conditions for farming and cultivation, Hope Development Initiative members are trying to make the best of their situation. HDI members have already integrated simple digital technology tools, with the primary objective of increasing productivity and transparency. But the most decisive factor is that the whole community has a positive attitude towards Digital Transformation as well as its potential positive impact on their agriculture and social life.

This paper should not only inform about the current state of Digital Transformation in Uganda or its rural areas, using HDI as a sample, but rather point out the variety of advantages brought about by integrating digital technologies within the smallholder agriculture process, something that, in turn, has a positive effect on the growth of productivity and efficiency of the whole country as well as improving social life and development. This paper should also present how, with the help of small actions, significant progress can be made, not only for economic and technological development, but also socially, addressing the problems of gender equality and social exclusion. But it is only when everyone involved – government, private sector, industry experts and the population – cooperates and works together that its opportunities can be maximized. If this occurs, there is no limit to what can be accomplished. The continent really could be transformed.

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How does the HDI Create Value in a Social Enterprise through Inclusive Female Leadership?

Asha Olol

Abstract

The purpose of this research is to explore the framework of female leadership in a rural area that has not yet been researched within Uganda. In this article a qualitative analysis of female leadership is conducted by examining the Ugandan Hope Development Initiative. Based on expert interviews, current characteristics of female leadership are analyzed and classified as well as contextualized with the relevant theoretical frameworks. The analysis shows the positive impact of the HDI in the socio-economic life of its female members. The results of this study are important insofar as they shed light on the basic structure of precisely those factors described above in a region that has thus far been insufficiently scientifically researched. This can lead to a better understanding of the subject of female leadership in rural East-African context.

1. Introduction

This article analyses the topic of female leadership in Uganda and its socio-economic impact. Female leadership is investigated in the context of the Hope Development Initiative, which has the task of empowering women in the rural Amolatar region. The initiative tries to foster social entrepreneurship of local women by promoting rice-farming activities within their communities. To gain a more in-depth look, a group of stu-

dents of Zeppelin University's Leadership Excellence Institute Zeppelin made a trip from late August to early September 2018 to gain a better understanding of the local conditions, to conduct interviews with various stakeholders and to attend a symposium on female leadership and entrepreneurship at Makerere University.

Female leadership of black women in the African context is still a field of research that needs to be explored, especially academically, to scrutinize the female leadership of a socio-economically marginalized group.

The theoretical analysis of female leadership has been done using an interconnected dual approach. First, it is devoted to the global north theories. Further, global south theories on the topic of female leadership will be discussed. Accordingly, a review of the most relevant Western and African literature on female leadership is provided. A check for consistency, differences and further approaches is also provided. The theoretical part concludes with the statement of the research question.

In chapter 4, the methodology and the approach of the qualitative on site-interviews are outlined. For this purpose, six expert interviews were reproduced and evaluated. These are then analyzed on the basis of pre-defined parameters and evaluated afterwards. Finally, an analysis of the observed phenomena is undertaken.

After evaluating the interviews, the empirical findings are analyzed with respect to the theoretical literature. Hence, conclusions are drawn about whether the empirical results confirm or reject the research question. Derived from the theoretical analysis of the interviews, practical recommendations for the HDI are drawn. Since the HDI is a practice-oriented female empowerment organization, practical derivations and recommendations are highlighted.

2. *Research design*

This design has been pursued to discover and explain the socio-economic impact of female leadership in the Hope Development Initiative in Uganda's Amolatar district.

The initially established hypothesis states that the HDI has a positive impact on its members in the economic field. This leads to a broader improvement in terms of female leadership and the socio-economic share of women members. This statement will be investigated further.

Exploratory research that provides flexibility to gain insights and formulate a well-founded hypothesis is used. In social research, the exploratory method is described as a process of putting oneself in place many times and where the discovery is possible and broad. The results forming the theory are regarded as grounded by researchers as the previous exploratory work is accepted due to its validation (Stabbings 2001). Semi-structured interviews were used to gain insights from the interviewees on site. In this qualitative data collection strategy, the researcher asks the interviewees predetermined but open question (Given 2008).

In predicting the research design, correlation and causation play a role. Even if two factors co-vary, this does not mean that they cause each other (The Context of Design 2010). Causation is more than correlation, which rather highlights a scientific problem. A correlation is observable, while a cause is not. A cause, therefore, needs to be inferred.

The pursuit of a causal chain serves to illustrate the stated research question: the context of design – indirect causal relationship: causal chain of Hope Development.

Figure 1: Socio-economic effects causal chain based on three types of causal relationships



Source: Own representation.

An indirect causal explanation indicates that phenomenon Y (here: socio-economic effects of the women) is influenced by the factor X (here: member of the HDI). The linear indirect causal chain argues that female HDI members affect the income level of the object of investigation, which is linked to female empowerment and, in turn, affects the women socio-economically.

3. *Process of Accessing the Research Field*

The introduction to the research area was an interesting and challenging undertaking. The first contact with the initiative took place in March 2018. The Leadership Excellence Institute of Zeppelin University expressed its interest in cooperating with the Hope Development Initiative in Uganda and, accordingly, focused on eight main topics.

These are:

- Business
- Social entrepreneurship
- Digital transformation
- Politics & governance
- Civil society
- Culture & identity
- Leadership

The author of this article decided on the cluster topic leadership because it is, on the one hand, in her field of interest and, on the other hand, a very relevant topic in this context. A first input session took place in May 2018 via videoconference with the head of the initiative, who had visited Zeppelin University for a symposium the previous year.

Here, the timeframe (August 29, 2018 to September 7, 2018) of the research trip was determined for the team. Thus, there were ten full days for meetings, interviews and issues relevant to the pursuit of individual research. In advance, stakeholders had been identified and sent to Dr. Ing. Apea and her team in Uganda. The information on the meeting with the predefined interview partners on site was provided after arrival.

Finally, the interviews with the women of the Hope Development Initiative took place in the villages belonging to the HDI. Here, various villages were visited.

Hence, the group always gathered under a mango tree, which is usually considered a central meeting place in the villages visited. Here “leadership coming from, and embedded into the community, not from above it [took place]” (Apea & Göller 2018). Dr. Apea then introduced the team, the topics and the purpose of the gathering.

Although there are conceptual frameworks for culture and communication that conceptualize culture and related cross-cultural communication, the research results of Gudykunst and Ting-Toomey served as a guide (1988).

Early studies researched interpersonal communication in a cross-cultural context. This reflects a variety of aspects of perspective and methodological orientation in cross-cultural interpersonal communication (Ting-Toomey & Felipe 1991).

Uganda's Amolatar district is, in terms of cultural diversity, highly heterogeneous, which made the topic of cultural communication relevant in terms of communication for the research.

4. *Expert Interviews*

Expert interviews are understood in qualitative analysis as a systematic and theory-based procedure in the form of data collection from persons who have exclusive knowledge (Kaiser 2014). For the purposes of categorization, the form of expert interviews can be classified as systematizing and theory-guided (Empirical Methods 2018).

According to this typology, the researcher uses previously generated knowledge acquired during the literature analysis as well as data collection. In this context, an expert is defined as a person who shares specific, previously inaccessible knowledge and information with the researcher (Bogner & Littig 2009).

Methodological reflection about the standard method of expert interviews in qualitative research varies in terms of the contextual interpretation of the analysis. Interpretative social researchers Froschauer and Lueger investigate and question the frameworks of so-called *meaning collectives*. These are made by conditions of inter-subjective construction (Froschauer & Lueger 2009).

5. *Theoretical Approaches*

In the following, leadership theories assigned to the global north are introduced for a comparison in this academic field. To thoroughly examine

the Ugandan case of female leadership, global south theories and the appropriate literature are discussed and analyzed.

This dual approach was selected due to the cross-border and cross-cultural character of this topic. A dispute with one literary thread would only theoretically highlight the content. At the beginning, the theoretical definition of the global north and its approaches are clarified and presented. Special attention is paid to the theories and the current research status. This paper then focuses on the global south theories, more precisely on literature dealing with East African female leadership. Here, fundamental theoretical approaches are clarified, and the current state of research is explored. Different leadership approaches as well as other issues relevant to the topic of female leadership, such as gender, women's land rights and the rule of law in the Ugandan context, are further investigated. In addition, the relevant academic literature is presented. The chapter ends with the statement of the research question.

5.1 Definition and Differentiation of Global North and Global South

In a broader sense, the global north can be described as the so-called first world. The term generally refers to the economically richer and more developed¹ countries like the United States, the United Kingdom or Germany, among others (Odeh 2010).

This paper will then focus on global south theories, more precisely on literature dealing with East African female leadership. Here, fundamental theoretical approaches are clarified, and the current state of research is explored.

In contrast to the global north countries, the term global south is used for countries whose economic income is predominantly based on agricul-

¹ The Human Development Index (HDI), which measures the developing status by three pillars: a long and healthy life, knowledge and the standard of living, shows that Uganda is categorized in the subgroup of countries with a low human development and thus also belongs to the global south due to these characteristics. The East African country ranks 162 out of 189 countries. In the years 1990 and 2017, Uganda experienced a slight improvement according to the three weightings of the HDI. A near stagnation is recognizable in the years 2015 and 2016. Overall, the average annual HDI growth rate of the specific country was 1.90% between 1990 and 2017.

tural work. It describes the economically underdeveloped countries of Africa, China, Brazil and India, amongst others.

Population growth increases in comparison to the global north, which has low growth. In the global south there are considerable shortcomings in terms of infrastructure and the supply of the population (Odeh 2010).

Political instability and economic difficulties are reflected in the dependence of the south on the north and in the international trade and the political participation in the north (loc. cit.).

Regardless of the geographical location, any nation which does not meet the categorization of the north is defined as the global south. It represents primarily previously colonized countries that need international aid and agendas (Trefzer et al. 2014).

5.2 *Research on Female Leadership*

The term female leadership is omnipresent in 21st century academic discourse on the economic and societal participation of women. This term is often relevant in related contexts, such as global progress, poverty alleviation and gender parity as opportunity drivers (UN Women 2018).

5.2.1 *Female Leadership in a Masculine Culture*

Throughout the 21st century, the research awareness of the female advantage in leadership issues is visible (Hewlett et al. 2005). A comparison between male and female leadership styles was undertaken by Eagly & Carli (2003), who describe the female style as being more effective in contemporary situations. Their research provides evidence that women experience a certain advantage in typical leadership situations, but also some disadvantages from negative assessments of their leadership expertise. The two researchers claim that social change due to women being in leadership positions meets the nerve of the time in an organisational context (loc. cit.).

Ethiopia has made tremendous progress within one generation towards gender equality and female leadership. A study of the UN recognizes a huge development in the case of primary school enrolments of girls. However, there are still 58 million girls worldwide not in school; most of

them in Sub-Saharan Africa and parts of Asia (Benn 2005). Still, large gender disparities constitute the status quo within Ethiopian society. Ethiopia's Prime Minister Ahmed filled 50 % of his cabinet with female parliamentarians. Shortly afterwards, he inaugurated Sahle-Work Zewde, an experienced diplomat, aged 68, as Ethiopia's first female president (Ahmed & de Freytas-Tamura 2018). The Prime Minister's Chief of Staff noted that "In a patriarchal society such as ours, the appointment of a female head of state not only sets the standard for the future but also normalizes women as decision makers in public life" (New York Times 2018: A9).

Uganda's Bureau of Statistics and the UN Program on Gender Equality and Women Empowerment released various gender-related analyses in 2013. The collaborative project shows the relative distribution of political top leadership by sex from 2001 to 2012 in a five-year interval (Mung'yereza 2013).

Dr. Agnes Atim Apea, the initiator of the Hope Development Initiative in Uganda, is a member of the Local Government Finance Commission, which is an advisory board for the central and local governments of Uganda (Government 2017).

Table 1 shows that there is a highly uneven distribution within political party top leadership positions. Systematic representation of women in high leadership and decision-making positions has not been achieved in Uganda. Still, transitions in governance are normal conditions in politics. The handling of power is a proactive process, though changes in tradition are markers of governance transitions (Zips & Weilenmann 2011).

Table 1: Percentage distribution of political party top leadership by sex (2001-2012)²

Year	Male %	Female %	Total (Number)
2012/13	94.7	5.3	38
2006/11	94.7	5.3	38
2001/05	96.8	3.0	31

²Uganda Bureau of Statistics 2013.

5.2.2 *Transformational and Relational Leadership*

Burns (1978) set a new paradigm for leadership and received global attention for his work. He conceptualized leadership as transactional or transformational. Those who lead through social interactions are described by the researcher as transactional. In the case of transactional leadership, the conceptual explanation focuses on the exchange or gain of goods or assets. Stimuli are money or other rewarding mechanisms (Bass & Riggio 2006). Transformational leaders, however, reach their followers in another way. The achievement of extraordinary outcomes is one characteristic of transformational leaders and the enhancement of the development of leadership skills of their subordinates (loc. cit.).

Studies have proved that female leaders tend to be more transformationally driven in their leadership style than male leaders. The effectiveness of the transformational approach outperforms the transactional approach in a variety of fields (Bass 1999). Bringing transformational leadership in a context with gender, there is a tendency for women to be more transformational, and, therefore, more effective leaders, whereas men tend to manage more by exception (Bass & Riggio 2006: 18).

According to the business ethicist Wieland, leadership is a creative process and research interest in this field is currently large (2017). This is also reflected in the relatively new approach of Relational Leadership, which analyses two perspectives within the approach. Early Relational Leadership researcher Uhl-Bien described the entity and relational perspectives in leadership (Uhl-Bien 2006). The entity perspective can be indicated as being focused on identifying one's attributes in interpersonal relations, whereas the relational view identifies leadership as a social construction which enables a certain understanding of leadership (loc. cit.). Following this methodology, the Relational Leadership Theory (RLT) was invented on the basis of these two perspectives as a framework for the research on leadership. RLT aims to theoretically explore and understand the relational dynamics within leadership issues (loc. cit.). Scholarly research of leadership theories has increased in the last few decades and has thus led to diverse leadership theories. An extensive qualitative review of leadership theory of the 20th and 21st century was conducted by researchers to give an overview due to the large worldwide research interest in this field (Dinh et al. 2014).

5.3 *Theoretical Development of the Research Question*

In the existing theoretical literature on female leadership the debate is on the impact of female leadership as an economic and social driver. Here female leadership is seen as an important factor in the social empowerment of women.

This study has the purpose of identifying possible discrepancies between the above theoretical analyses of female leadership and practical female leadership in a rural African context as experienced during the on-site research.

Granted that there is progress based on the economic empowerment of women the research question that arises in this paper is how the progress in women's lives can be categorized under female leadership aspects.

6. *Literature Review*

6.1 *Theoretical Literature on Female Leadership*

From previous investigations on leadership and female leadership it became apparent that there is global literature on this topic. Yet, there is a stronger representation of literature dealing with the global north in this research field (Gipson et al. 2017). Nevertheless, female leadership is a topic that has been identified globally in the 21st century and is scientifically relevant to the north as well as the south (Elmuti, Heather & Henry 2009). Publications predominately originate in the north and can be considered more global in this respect, but trends in the south are concerned with the same theories with respect to differences in the social, political and economic framing (op. cit.).

In addition, examples from the global south, such as Botswana and Ethiopia, have been able to provide practical female leadership examples in the recent past. Female leadership has undergone a disruptive change in these societies, which is considered as significant globally.

Cornerstones of leadership such as power, control, influence and authority have historically been misused to marginalize under-represented groups. African women are part of this group. In the research, theory and conceptualization of leadership, African women leaders are essential (Ngunjiri 2010). This view was in general confirmed by the researchers

Blunt and Jones, who published a case study-based paper with the title “Exploring the limits of Western leadership theory in East Asia and Africa” (1997).

Past research defined and conceptualized leadership under the premise of being white. Therefore, according to Parker (2005), leadership needs to refocus in the 21st century (2005). As organisational researchers started to study female counterparts in leadership, considerable research into gender and leadership began. The focus was still predominantly on one group, white women. Race neutrality is assumed based on studies of white women and men (Parker & Ogilvie 1996). Parker and Ogilvie challenge the practice of leadership by including another unobserved factor, namely culture, among the marginalized group of women leaders (loc. cit.).

6.2 Practical Literature on Female Empowerment in Uganda

6.2.1 Development of the Empowerment of Women in Uganda

Gender equality is a global goal, as reflected in the UN-Convention against Discrimination of 1979, which states:

“(...) the full and complete development of a country, the welfare of the world and the cause of peace require the maximum participation of women on equal terms with men in all fields” (United Nations 2018).

In Uganda, women have subordinate status in a male-dominated environment (Fentiman & Warrington 2011). The National Ministry of Gender, Labor and Social Development, therefore, introduced the first nationwide gender policies in 1997. The recognition of gender and development issues was behind the government’s efforts, which questioned social roles and the relationship of men and women in society. An equal and inclusive participation of all social groups in the economy, politics and socio-culture is the basis for sustainable progress according to the policy (MOGCD 1997).

Throughout Uganda, women’s groups at grassroot levels are trying to overcome subordinate roles and promote women’s empowerment. Women’s organizations, with support from international agencies as well as donors, have done advocacy work. Among these, the Action for Development, Uganda Women’s Network and Africa Women Educationalists were ac-

tive (Nabacwa 2002). Uganda was pioneering as it was the first African country with a female vice president, Dr. Specioza Wandera Kazibwe (Tripp & Kwesige 2002). Furthermore, the Ugandan constitution insists that one third of the parliament consists of women (loc. cit.). Uganda, hence, reserves 112 of 427 seats for women. These seats are established temporarily and meet with the strategy to then switch to an open seat and compete with the male counterparts (Wang & Yoon 2018). Furthermore, access to, and ownership of, land is an important aspect of economic welfare, and, therefore, an indicator of the societal participation of women in Uganda.

6.2.2 *Women's land-ownership in Uganda*

The UN Sustainable Development Goals concentrate on gender equality at a higher level. The goal is to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of all girls and women. The SDG indicator 5.a.1 deals with women's ownership of agricultural land (United Nations 2018).

Still, women's access to land is hampered by law in Uganda. The Ugandan Land Act of 1988 states the following:

Any decision taken in respect of land held under customary tenure, whether in respect of land held individually or communally, shall be in accordance with the customs, traditions and practices of the community concerned, except that a decision which denies women or children or persons with a disability access to ownership, occupation or use of any land or imposes conditions which violate articles 33, 34 and 35 of the Constitution on any ownership, occupation or use of any land shall be null and void (Uganda Legal Information Institute 2018).

This paragraph of the Land Act regulates the rights of women, children and people with impairments to the ownership of land. The question that arises here concerns the common characteristics of these three groups of people. The latter are considered to live under certain circumstances and are, in individual cases, possibly not fully mature citizens whose rights are claimed by third parties. Consequently, in this legal case women are, in terms of their rights, grouped with children and citizens with disabilities and thereby attributed with an inferior legal status to men. Furthermore, the constitution of Uganda deals in paragraph 33 with the rights of

women (Constitution of the Republic of Uganda 1995). The expressionary statement of the constitution states as follows:

Committed to building a better future by establishing a socio-economic and political order through a popular and durable national Constitution based on the principles of unity, peace, equality, democracy, freedom, social justice and progress (op. cit. Preamble of the Constitution of Uganda 1995).

A paper written for the World Bank Conference on land and poverty in 2017 sheds light on the current circumstances. It is stated that women and men in Uganda do not have equal rights in respect of land ownership, access and control. A special role is assigned to divorced, separated and widowed women or those in marital cohabitation. Gender roles play a superior role in property and land rights in Uganda, where land is a basic production factor, and, therefore, vital (Doss, Summerfield & Tsikata 2014).

The lack of consistent implementation and enforcement of gender equality threatens women's fragile situation with regard to secure access and ownership rights. This fact impacts on women's economic and social status. Consequently, the constant failure of the translation of laws into action has caused inequality between the sexes and has led to women being disadvantaged by discriminatory practices in property rights (Swaminthan, Walker & Rudadya 2008).

Perceptions, social norms and belief systems have also given rise to discrepancies between females and males in Uganda. Traditionally, land "belongs" to men. According to Mugabo (2016), the cultural practices before colonialism ensured gender-neutral access to land by the authority of the clan. The cultural heritage of the colonial era shows that the legal system was male dominated. Women and children were expected to be free labor with no legal access to ownership (Swaminthan, Walker & Rudadya 2008).

Consequently, the customary land law, clan structures, family expectations and myths like "women don't own land" have led to legal and societal disadvantages for women according to the Land and Equity Movement in Uganda (Land in Uganda 2018).

6.2.3 *The Hope Development Initiative in Uganda*

The Hope Development Initiative is a social enterprise working with female farmers to transform communities. The female farmers are engaged in the production, processing and trading of rice. The initiative provides farm inputs and finance to farmers to earn rural incomes and sustain natural resources. The aim is to help women in a war-torn region to recover economically and socially. HDI has 10,900 women farmers in Lango sub-region organized into several farmers' groups. Each member has a minimum of one share in the initiative, which is an innovative social organisational structure in this region. This structure leads to a transfer of responsibility, which is distributed at different leadership levels in the female community of the HDI (USAID 2016). The initiative was founded by Dr. Agnes Atim Apea, an African female leader who has focused on the problems of her community since 2010. She was among the BBC's list of 100 inspirational and innovative women in 2017.

The UNDP Uganda Human Development Report of 2015 focuses on Northern Uganda, where the Hope Development Initiative is located. With the theme "Unlocking the Development Potential of Northern Uganda", it contributed to the National Poverty Reduction Strategy for this post-conflict region (HDR 2015).

The United Nations (UN) stated with the Durban Declaration:

"(...) the need to integrate a gender perspective into relevant policies, strategies and programmes of action against" (UN, ...) which can lead to a disadvantage with regards to living conditions, violence, multiple forms of discrimination and poverty among other factors." (UN-Documents 2001).

As the majority of Ugandans are subsistence farmers, the initiative's aim is to increase rural incomes by means of rice production and thereby improve livelihoods of the inhabitants through food and nutrition security. This initiative was backed by Uganda's Government (2011-2014) as its National Development Plan identified rice as a strategic crop for agricultural enterprises (Second National Development Plan (NDP II) 2015).

Rice is a relatively new crop in the plan but gained importance as a local food commodity. The value chain of rice cultivation, from planting to harvesting to sales, generates a large demand for labor and, therefore,

rice is a strategic crop within the agricultural sector (Uganda National Rice Development Strategy 2009). In addition, rice has a positive impact on the livestock industry and allows a high return on investment.

According to the United Nations Development Programme, rice is the most traded food commodity on the borders of the East African Community. It is simultaneously the second largest imported food commodity in the EAC. In addition, rice is the most exported agricultural good. This suggests a discrepancy between rice production and processing in the countries (loc. cit.).

In 2008 the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries developed the National Rice Development Strategy for 2009 to 2018. The long-term goal is to make Uganda a self-sufficient rice manufacturer (loc. cit.). The overall goal is to increase rice production, as a first step, to meet food security within Uganda and, in a further step, to export any surplus. This requires strategic partners and stakeholders so therefore the Government has aligned with the Coalition for African Rice Development framework. Rice production increased considerably during the last decade according to the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development. The production peak was reached in 2014 by producing 237,000 tonnes. Since 2013, rice prices on the world market have been relatively stable at a price of 350 US dollars per ton. For small farmers and community farming, rice production can be a profitable business due to the low production costs, mainly labor (loc. cit.).

7. *Expert Interviews in the villages*

Expert interviews are understood in qualitative analysis as a systematic and theory-based procedure in the form of data collection from persons who have exclusive knowledge (Kaiser 2014). As a category, expert interviews can be classified as systematizing and theory-guided (Empirical Methods 2018).

According to this typology, the researcher uses the previously generated knowledge acquired during the literature analysis as well as data collection. In this context, an expert is defined as a person who shares specific, previously inaccessible knowledge and information with the researcher (Bogner & Littig 2009).

Methodological reflection about the standard method of expert interviews in qualitative research varies in terms of the contextual interpretation of the analysis. Interpretative social researchers Froschauer and Lueger investigate and question the frameworks of so-called meaning collectives. These are made by conditions of inter-subjective construction (Froschauer & Lueger 2009).

7.1 Selection of Expert

According to Meuser and Nagel (Meuser & Ulrike 1991), expert interviews were conducted frequently in qualitative research but were rarely thought about. In the field of expert interviews, they bemoan a lack of literature on methodical reflection of precisely this type of research.

Unlike other forms of open interviews, expert interviews are not about the person under analysis, the person with their orientations and attitudes towards the individual or collective life context. The context in question here is an organisational one that is not related to, or identified with, the person being focused on, but rather is more represented as a factor (*loc. cit.*).

The status of the expert is in some way specified by the researcher and is limited to a specific question. Irrespective of the specific research interest, experts are addressed as someone who, in any way, has responsibility for the design, implementation or controlling of a problem solution, or a person who has privileged access to information about groups or decision-making processes (*op. cit.*: 443).

The experts can be the target group of the investigation, and the interviews are designed to analyze the experts' field of action. The interest here derives interest from a research question. In general, this type of examination is to define the external effects and to determine norms as context conditions of the researcher (*op. cit.*: 445f.).

Moreover, there is no pre-defined quantitative benchmark for the number of expert interviews. This number is revealed by the distribution of information among the experts (Gläser & Laudel 2010).

In order to illustrate a variety of perspectives, an attempt was made to involve experts from various fields.

In addition to the internal stakeholders of HDI, to which the members, here women, belong, external experts were involved too.

The external stakeholders come from local areas: political, social or societal. This reflects the research interest of the socio-economic output of the HDI as well as its field of action. The quality criteria used in selecting the experts were:

1. Which experts have relevant knowledge in relation to the research question?
2. Which of these experts can provide accurate answers?
3. Which of these experts is willing and accessible to this information?

A total of 26 experts were contacted, and 20 gave feedback. Of these, four cancelled, six were not available for a personal interview due to the local distance and four of them were not available for various other reasons. All interview participants agreed to being recorded for the purposes of documenting the interview. An anonymized table of the six guided interviews can now be found.

This is divided into an anonymous position description and the village of origin; the respective group of people was given an abbreviation for easier assignment.

Table 2: Six guided expert interviews in Uganda

Abbreviation	Position	Village
A1	Local Leader level & HDI member and husband	Alumyomiwangi
A2	Local Leader level & HDI member	Achwali
A3	Local Leader level & HDI member	Oturoad
A4	HDI member	Abarikori
A5	UN Women representative	Kampala
A6	HDI initiator	Kampala

Source: Own representation.

The expert interviews A3 and A4 were done simultaneously. Interview A6 with the initiator of the HDI took place in two separate interviews (see Annex A6 (I) & A6 (II)). The data collected in Table 2 is a total of

150 minutes and 21 seconds of audio material. The average interview duration was 25 minutes and 7 seconds.

As a supplement to the expert interviews, central discussion rounds during the research trip and their content are analyzed based on conversation fragments taken from the audio data. In total, four expert panels were held with the Transcultural Research Group of Zeppelin University and local partners in Uganda. Each discussion round had a central topic, which was discussed to the origin.

The following table contains a list of abbreviations of the four rounds, the topic of the panel, the partner organization and the place where it took place.

Table 3: Central discussion rounds in Uganda

Abbreviation	Topic	Partner	Location
B1	Leadership under the Mango tree	HDI	HDI Mill, Amolatar region
B2	Leadership from the chief house perspective	Chief House Officials	Chief House, Amolatar region
B3	Symposium about Development in Uganda	Konrad-Adenauer-Foundation (KA)	Konrad-Adenauer-Foundation foreign office, Kampala
B4	Symposium Female Leadership and Entrepreneurship in Practice	Makerere University	Makerere University, Kampala

Source: Own representation.

7.2 Interview Guides

According to Bernard (1988), semi-structured interview guides are best used if the researcher has only one way to acquire the data and information from the interview partners. This type of interview guide is, therefore, also interesting in the context of field research as well as in the present academic work. Semi-structured interview guides have the advantage

that they provide a concrete set of instructions for the researcher and are reliable and comparable in terms of qualitative data (Cohen & Crabtree 2006).

Open questions give interviewers the opportunity to discover unprecedented facts that are interesting in the context of the research interest. Thus, researchers develop a keen understanding of the research topic.

The interviewer used a paper-based semi-structured interview guide, but the discussion during the tape-recorded interview might diverge from the interview guide (*loc. cit.*).

Operationalization is, in the technical terms of the methodical interview creation, the translation of the research question into interview questions. This can be presented, in more concrete terms, in two steps (Mayer 2006). The first step, conceptional operationalization, concerns the concretization of the research subject. As a result, due to the degree of concretization, easier interview questions can be derived from this. In the next step, instrumental operationalization is conducted; here the best possible questions are considered in order to reach the research goal (*loc. cit.*).

In this work, the research question on the socio-economic effects of participation in the Hope Development Initiative (Case Study) and the relationship with the theoretical construct of female leadership had to be translated into interview questions. In addition, the interview guide for external experts and the initiator of the HDI were adapted to reflect the best possible research interest. The external partner (see Table 2: A5, UN Women) was able to contribute to a better understanding of the local framework, and the interview was based on a different semi-structured interview guide. This is not comparable to the previous interviews (see Table 2: A1, A2, A3, A4 & A6), but can be considered as an additional resource. Based on openness, a deviation from the semi-structured guide was possible through questions (*op. cit.*: 53). Following on from social researchers Gläser & Laudel (2010), the interview guideline should be interpreted as a guideline that contains the essential questions of the interview and thus gives the researcher room for maneuver.

All interviews were conducted face to face, and all panel discussions were attended by the researcher.

8. Results

When women occupy leadership roles, gender specific prejudices can arise according to Eagly (2007). As recognized with the expert interviews, like UN Women in Kampala (A5), the superior role of men was highlighted, women must therefore first overcome an inferior role which is culturally based and is also rooted in prejudice. Traditional systems, as mentioned in Botswana, see men as natural owners of leadership rights (Marte & Zips 2018). Also, in the Amolatar region investigated these patriarchal structures exist. As culture can shift from tradition to modernity Uganda's Amolatar district is transforming in terms of gender equality through HDI.

This was the case in the villages in Amolatar, where cultural stigmas are broken up in a transformational process. The organisational context, where women are proven to be advantaged by a certain skillset, is not comparable with the context of the case study as the framework is different by its nature (Eagly & Carli 2003). What can be assumed by the daily workload and duties of the interviewed women is a certain trained skillset which is superior to that of their male counterparts. The women are responsible for agricultural production and, therefore, also for the prosperity of their families.

Furthermore, in the context of the examined research field, relationship-oriented leaders are visible based on the value of community where relationships and community networks play a superior role (Yurtkoru & Ekmekci 2011). The theoretical framing of Metz in terms of African communal ethics as a framing for good leadership should also be considered here (Metz 2018).

In consideration of the leadership paradigms, transformational leadership (Bass & Riggio 2006) and relational leadership, with its entity and relational perspective, endure (Uhl-Bien 2006). The latter is more applicable because of the role of the community in the female leadership process within the given framework of the Amolatar district. This assumption was reinforced by the interview with the initiator, Dr. Agnes Apea of the HDI, who clearly defined her role as a female leader according to Relational Leadership attributes (see A6 I-II).

The practical theories state a subordinate status of women in Uganda. These theories were confirmed on the basis of the evaluated interview data. Access to landownership is unequally distributed between the sexes. This assumption was proven by empirical data conducted on site. Con-

clusively, the aim of the HDI to empower females economically as well as socially shows positive results. Nevertheless, a precise definition of social participation as well as concrete economic data on family income, that confirm this assumption, was lacking.

This states the assumption that a positive improvement of the family income level is linked to socio-economic improvement and therefore to female empowerment. This indirect causal chain described in Figure 1 can generally be accepted for the HDI members.

9. *Limitations*

The following work deals with female leadership as a framework construct of economic and social influence on women participating in the agricultural subsistence activities of the Hope Development Initiative.

Limitations of the study, which can be taken as a starting point for further research, have also been reflected.

In respect of 'the single story' this serves as an exemplary case-related overview. Although the results of the expert interviews as well as the underlying literature point to a positive impact in the socio-economic life of women who are members of the HDI, these results should not be considered in a generalist manner because of the lack of evident information.

Although the researcher states that the number of interviews does not speak for their representativeness (Gläser & Laudel 2010), it should be noted that the population of the interviews does not represent a comprehensive picture. In addition, further research and collaboration with other NGOs and partners is needed to comprehensively skim the socio-economic implications of HDI comparatively and its relationship with current female leadership literature.

If we aim to understand female leadership as an inclusive process the role of males has to be included within the analysis. One interview (A1) resembled the approach of an inclusive gender-specific leadership analysis.

Concerning limitations within the literature, papers combining the determinants of socio-economic development, Uganda's Amolatar District as well as the framework of female leadership do not yet exist. Therefore, precise comparisons with studies conducted in the respective region were hardly possible.

Moreover, African literature in the area of female leadership in the Amolatar region was scarce and therefore could not be sufficiently contextualized with the field of research as found in HDI member communities.

Additionally, the Amolatar region is not typical for Uganda, which makes references and comparisons to other papers with similar research objectives even more difficult.

There is a high social diversity within Uganda which increases the complexity when it comes to socio-economic analyses. Consequently, generalizations were not possible. However, a single and multiple case study design can take into account this complexity.

Additionally, there is the danger of scientific limitation when analyzing a single story. This analysis attempted to avoid this limitation by applying a multiple case methodology. For this paper, the researcher collected contextual knowledge during the field research while being mindful regarding the existence of personal bias. Thereby a possible subjective understanding was contained. Still, partiality cannot be completely eliminated in a qualitative analysis.

Furthermore, time and space also contribute to limitations. There is only a certain time frame for collecting contextual knowledge on site as well as accumulating experiences in a reflective manner during a research trip. Moreover, space is a limiting factor since only certain rural villages were visited while other villages, with possibly different situations, could not be reached. Therefore, one has to keep in mind that the villages within the Amolatar region are not fully representative for the whole country.

10. Practical implications

The research project aims at understanding the dynamics of civil society in Uganda and wants to critically assess whether the European concept of civil society is applicable to the Ugandan context. The Hope Development Initiative served as a case study and provided a new perspective on understanding civil society in non-European contexts.

The theoretical basis underlying this and serving as the foundation of the work were female leadership theories generated from research in the global north and the global south. Female leadership in the theoretical

sense can be used as a theoretical and practical theory for this paper. Methodical interpretation forms relevant to the case study were practiced by means of qualitative data analysis from expert interviews. This is in alignment and discussion with the theoretical basis.

Focus topics which are further elaborated on topics such as civil society, gender equality and other topics form a conclusion of the framework of the research field that is the Hope Development Initiative in the Ugandan Amolatar district. Limitations of the study, which can be taken as a starting point for further research, have also been reflected. Finally, the practical relevance of this work as overall research within the framework of the Transcultural Research Group should be emphasized.

The present work is scientifically and practically relevant as it is dedicated to contributing to the economic development of women in Amolatar, northern Uganda. As an outlook in order to foster the economic participation of women in this region, their knowledge of personal finance and handling of money should be promoted. So far only the head of the family, who is male, is in charge of the family finances. The insufficient experience in finance was confirmed during multiple interviews.

With the analysis of the effect on female-led subsistence agriculture on the economic and societal promotion of women, this present work has added value for the future in terms of sustainable community development. An exclusionary society is not able to tackle the problems we face in today's world, such as gender inequality and poverty, and should be replaced by inclusive approaches – which focus on the common good of the whole society without exception. Therefore, this paper can function as a starting point for future research on initiatives promoting female empowerment and leadership in rural East-African regions.

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Part II
Society

Women in Uganda: Understanding the Gender (Im)balances in Rural Communities

Charlotte Theiss

Abstract

This chapter aims to examine the socially constructed power relations of women and men associated with the Hope Development Initiative (HDI) in rural communities in the Amolatar district, Northern Uganda. The purpose of this study was to generate a gender theory of female farmers in rural Northern Uganda.

Using the methodology of participative observations, interviews, participation in a symposium and focus group discussion, the author approaches the topic of gender imbalance and power relations. The research focuses on the relatively young discipline of West African feminism, aiming to expand this sparse existing framework with qualitative interviews.

The findings suggest that traditional gender relations seem to be dominant in the Amolatar district, specifically the social dominance of men and the close association of the ideas of womanhood and motherhood. Women are found to be strongly associated with caring and childbearing. Additionally, farming appears to be considered woman's work, with women being charged with much of the rice farming in Amolatar. Men, on the other hand, seem to be in charge of economics, property, and financial affairs, leading to women being dependent on men. Evidence indicates a high rate of physical violence by men towards women, coupled with a negative stigma surrounding divorce. The HDI approach of

farming as a business provides women with space and networking opportunities and the chance to contribute economically to the household. The founders of HDI consider this a strategy to transform prevalent gender roles through community building.

The limitations of this research project are the small selection of cases, the possibility of social desirability and the limited command of English presented by the interviewees.

The significance of community building and male involvement for the success of the HDI can be deduced from this research project.

1. Introduction

“[T]here was a drunkard that came to [the] home [of a woman] and caused a lot of chaos in her home. And so when [this woman] went to try and intervene [,] [she] ask[ed] him to leave her home. [H]e told [this woman] ‘[she would be] just a woman [and] this home [would not be hers]. [He] only know[s] [the wife’s] husband as the person who [could] chase [him] out of this home’.” (Interview A: 104)

This quote comes from one of the Masters students of the Makerere university who accompanied the field trip to rural villages in Amolatar and comes from this area. The quote indicates how complex the power relations and (im)balance between men and women in Amolatar might be, which will be further analyzed in this chapter. The understanding of power relations in this chapter is that power relations reflect the socially constructed cultural perceptions in a given society. Naidu (2013) indicates that these “cultural meanings and reflections” (ibid.: 156) are constructing differences for men and women in Africa (ibid.).

A specific research focus is on the traditional gender roles, decision-making processes, and the division of labor and resources in the studied communities in which HDI is present. The perspectives of rural women in Amolatar suggested that motherhood could be perceived as inseparable from being a woman. The concept of “motherhood” refers to the ability of women for giving birth to children, child upbringing, and nurturing (Otiona 2014).

African women appear to bear a double burden, with a diverse set of roles in family life and also obliged to fulfill many other duties in the

household, while men's role in patriarchal society is rather that of a decision-maker. The cultural perception of men and women differs significantly and reflects the power asymmetry of men being above women.

At the time of submission, the author is not aware of any publication that studied the transformation of power asymmetries in communities of Amolatar, Northern Uganda. Indigenous feminism and African feminism repeatedly criticize white Western feminist theories for being inadequate to reflect on the experiences and livelihood of women in different parts of the world. In response to this criticism, this chapter aims to use African feminism. In general, there is only limited literature about African gender theories and the current state of research will be outlined further (Nkealah 2016; Naidu 2013; Olorunjoba-Oju & Olorunjoba-Oju 2013; Ezeigbo 2012).

Moreover, there is no specific Ugandan gender theory addressing power relations in the remote North of Uganda. Therefore, this research was conducted to address this research gap in the context of HDI's commitment and to explore how farming rice as a business rather than subsistence farming is impacting on gender roles. The founders of HDI believe that educating rural women in rice farming can improve their social status in their remote communities. HDI emphasizes community building as a success factor. The Cambridge Dictionary defines subsistence farming as "farming that provides enough food for the farmer and their family to live on, but not enough for them to sell" (Subsistence farming, n.d.).

The applied methodology is grounded theory (GT) because GT is suitable for the development of subject areas with only limited knowledge available. This research project conducted an inductive qualitative, explorative, small-scale, multi-case study. Semi-structured expert interviews have been conducted to explore the following research question: How can the gender power (im)balances in rural communities in Amolatar be understood?

The outlined project aims to allow the first approximation to the subject of the investigation and to provide the reader with situational findings from the remote communities being studied. It does not aim to provide general assertions. The qualitative data gathered indicates an understanding of the traditional gender balance as well as the transformation in the power structures in the small sample of rural villages being studied in Amolatar. The first section introduces the current state of research and focuses mainly on the approaches of multiple (West) African feminist

theories as well as reflecting on the criticism of white Western feminism. The second section of this paper describes the method used in the study, the design, and the sampling method. The next chapter describes the data gathered and provides information about the context of the data collection. The fourth section describes the analytic method, followed by a description of the research findings. The fifth is the discussion of the results, followed by the limitations and an outlook for future research. The last section provides a conclusion and implications.

2. Theoretical Background

2.1 Sex and Gender

On the one hand, the category “biological sex” or “physical sex” refers to physical and biological characteristics, for example, having a vagina or a penis. Literature usually mentions male, female, and intersex as commonly accepted sexes (Quisumbing, Meinzen-Dick, Raney, Croppenstedt, Behrman & Peterman 2014).

The concept of “gender”, on the other hand, is contextual, fluid and can change depending on the social expectations (about gender roles) in a given society. Religion, tradition, culture, and economic influences, amongst others, affect gender roles (Quisumbing et al. 2014).

2.2 Power

There are different concepts of patriarchy. Sultana (2012), for example, defines patriarchy as “the manifestation and institutionalization of male dominance over women and children in the family and the extension of male dominance over women in society in general” (ibid.: 3). The Cambridge Dictionary defines dominance as “the situation in which [someone] has more power, influence, or success than others” (Dominance, n.d). The term of male dominance refers to men’s supreme social position above women through which they are exercising most of the influence and power in society (Connell 2015).

Men exclusively dominate institutions of importance in society and access to resources, while women are left out, leading to restricted access

to resources for women. The power structure in patriarchal communities favors men economically over women and leaves them dependent on male relatives or husbands.

By emphasizing biological differences, men socially construct masculinity as dominant and femininity as subordinate, fostering a social system of exploitation and oppression of women. The term masculinity refers to the characteristics associated with being a man in a particular society and culture. The concept of masculinity is socially constructed, and therefore, the assigned attributes vary throughout history and different cultures; nevertheless, men are typically cross-culturally socialized towards strength, leadership, and avoidance of feminine attributes (Masculinity, n.d.; Connell 2015). According to Sultana (2012), institutions seen as the family even strengthen male dominance in patriarchic societies. The concept of femininity is similar to the concept of masculinity, a social construct with different associated traits from culture to culture and within a particular culture throughout history. Throughout different historical and cultural contexts femininity is often associated with caregiving, in the broadest sense of the word, and subordination towards men. The Cambridge Dictionary defines subordination as follows: “the act of giving someone or something less importance or power” (Subordination, n.d.). The concept of female subordination refers to the claim that a given society is shaped by male domination over women and therefore in such a society, women are seen as less critical (Subordination, n.d.).

The understanding of power relations in this chapter is that they reflect the socially constructed cultural perceptions in a given society. Naidu indicates that these “cultural meanings and reflections” (Sultana 2012: 156) construct differences between men and women in Africa (*ibid.*).

Power balance refers to the distribution of power between at least two parties; if the amount of power appears to be equal then it is considered balanced; otherwise, it is imbalanced, and the power distribution is asymmetric in favor of gender (*ibid.*).

The definition of “power asymmetry” is that “relationships where the power geometries [and] are angled out of [the women’s] favor” (*ibid.*: 158) in “contexts of gendered power imbalances and hegemonic masculinities” (*ibid.*). Connell’s concept of hegemonic masculinity indicates that gender should be understood as something dynamic with different characteristics in different societies and different epochs. Moreover, Connell emphasizes that, in her opinion, the power of domination is socially con-

nected with masculinity in a given society and time. The concept implies that differences in the relationship between men, as the dominant group, and women, as the inferior group, as well as a distinction between dominant men and superior men, might have a structural base (Connell 2015). Power asymmetries in relationships, as they are understood in this chapter, mean that the balance is shifted in favor of one gender (ibid. 2013).

2.3 Summary of feminism and contrast to Western feminism

2.3.1 African feminism

African indigenous feminism is feminism that illustrates the native standpoint of African women in particular on among other things gender and lived experiences and takes decolonization into account (Wane 2011). Decolonization is defined as the process of becoming independent from a former colonizing country (Decolonization, n.d.). African feminism emphasizes the “power within indigenous relational worlds that celebrate motherhood, sisterhood and friendship” (ibid.: 618) and critiques Western theories for not acknowledging this power. African feminist theories have in common that they focus primarily on “the centrality of motherhood in African households and family organization and the agency and power of mothers as the source of solidarity” (ibid.).

Thus, according to African feminists, the attention of Western theories appears to place too much focus on the victimization of African women instead of “resistance and sources of empowerment” (ibid.). Moreover, this is precisely why African feminism centers on the characteristics and specifics of the indigenous socio-cultural context and geographical location without maligning the local culture or tradition in Africa (ibid. 2010).

The majority of publications by African feminists that could be accessed in the context of this work are of West African origin. At the time of publication, the authors are not aware of any publications dealing with power relations between men and women in Amolatar. The most relevant, and at least partially accessible, African feminist theories for this research project will be introduced in the following paragraphs.

2.3.2 *Nego-Feminism*

Obiama Nnaemeka's "negotiation feminism" (2004: 360) is a concept of feminism that should not be "feminism as an ego trip" (Oloruntoba-Oju, Oloruntoba-Oju 2013: 10).

The literature indicates that, in Nigeria, men are not seen as the "other" gender – men and women together form an inseparable entity, and neither men nor women are fully complete without the other. Therefore, nego-feminism emphasizes that men and women should continuously cooperate with each other at household and community level in Nigeria. Ideally, women should avoid confrontations with their spouses and instead negotiate, compromise and balance "with and around men even under challenging circumstances" (Nnaemeka 2004: 380). In many African cultures, the ability to negotiate and compromise are elementary values.

The view of African feminists on Western feminists is that they are very confrontational, critical in the way they challenge western societies. Nnaemeka (2004) suggests that African feminists instead address social issues through compromising and negotiating and would not choose the path of open confrontation (ibid.: 382f.).

2.3.3 *Snail-Sense Feminism*

Moreover, the Nigerian author Adimora Ezeigbo writes about womanism in Nigeria. Nigeria is shaped by a multi-cultural, strongly-patriarchal, male-centered culture, and while men might be seen as dominant and superior by nature, it appears that women, on the other hand, might be perceived as inferior (Uwandu 2018). The Cambridge Dictionary defines inferiority as being "not as good as someone or something else" (Inferior, n.d.). Feminist theorists often criticize the socially constructed perception that women are intellectually and socially inferior to men (Inferior, n.d.). Uwandu (2018) indicates that women in Nigeria are more greatly burdened with responsibilities, and they have only restricted access to resources.

Ezeigbo felt that there was a need for "realistic, practical and functional" (Akanmode 2015: 9) African feminist theories. She compares the ability of a snail to adapt to potentially hurtful surroundings with a "negotiation" (ibid.: 8) between the snail and nature (ibid.; Nkealah 2016).

According to Ezeigbo, Nigerian women should address their male-dominated environment slowly as a snail does. Women should apply compromise strategies to improve the realities about how they live (Akanmode 2015).

2.3.4 *Motherism*

The scholar and author Catherine Obianuju Olumba Acholonu's feminist study of "Motherism: The Afrocentric Alternative to Feminism" (Otiona 2014: 70) as the name suggests emphasizes the caring and reproductive role of rural Nigerian women as mothers in their families and their local communities. Nigerian women appear to be responsible for giving birth to and bringing up children. Acholonu's Motherism theory indicates that rural women should identify with and find satisfaction in wifehood and motherhood. The appreciation of motherhood is essential for Acholonu, in contrast to what Acholonu perceives as Western feminists' viewpoints which, as indicated, might consider motherhood a conventional strategy in patriarchal societies to restricting women to reproduction (ibid.). It is indicated that in remote Nigerian areas rural women engage in subsistence farming and that they might be primarily responsible for food production in the household. Other African feminists think critically about Acholonu's image of rural Nigerian women, considering it to be too romanticized and stereotypical (Nkealah 2016).

(African) Indigenous feminists have repeatedly challenged white Western feminist theories as being unfit for the experience of non-western women (and men) in distant regions (Bagele & Ntseane 2010; Wane 2011). Moreover West African feminists feel that Western value systems and the underlying theories and models undermine African culture and some even go as far as to outline "the need to resist cultural imperialism" (Nkealah 2016: 62).

According to Naidu (2013: 147) white, Western theories are not applicable, because African feminists have the impression that Western theories picture men solely as "the enemy" (Nkealah 2016: 62), while indigenous feminism emphasizes the importance of engaging, negotiating and sharing responsibilities with men.

With a generalized Western feminist approach, "struggles, negotiations and resistance" (Bagele & Ntseane 2010: 618) of oppressed and dominated women in non-western patriarchal societies might remain unnoticed.

3. Method

3.1 Grounded Theory (GT)

In contrast to quantitative research, qualitative research does not test for verification or extend existing theories, rather than generating new theories based on the collected data (Glaser & Strauss 1967: 4ff.). Therefore, Glaser and Strauss introduced GT to explore, discover, and to generate a data-based theory explaining a social phenomenon of interest. It is important to emphasize that GT is used to generate a theory based on data, which explains a phenomenon rather than merely describing it.

Hülst (2011: 21) recommends GT, especially when the research question has not been explored in earlier studies, if only limited research exists, or none of the existing theories are applicable to the research question.

(White) Western feminist gender theories are not adequate when talking about perspectives and experiences of a rural farmer in Amolatar. As a consequence, Western gender theories are not suitable for this study (Naidu 2013; Nkealah 2016). Therefore, GT was applied in this study to formulate categories based on the empirical data and to develop a gender theory focusing on farmers in rural Northern Uganda.

3.2 Study Design and Sampling Method

Quantitative research methods were not chosen because those would have been very difficult to implicate. Besides the high illiteracy rate the major challenges of using a questionnaire would have been women's limited access to the internet in the remote villages in Amolatar (Uganda Bureau of Statistics 2017: 4). Government statistics on mobile phone ownership of in 2014 indicates that it might be not uncommon for rural women¹ in Amolatar to have only limited access to mobile phones and the internet (ibid.: 24). At the time of publication, the author is not aware of any postal system that could have been used to distribute a questionnaire.

¹ 78.9% women in the age group 18-30 years and older do not own a mobile phone. In the same age group 47.7% of male residents in Amolatar do not own a mobile phone in 2014. And 97.5% women in the age group 18-30 years and older do not own a mobile phone (Uganda Bureau of Statistics 2017: 24).

The advantages of qualitative research using guided expert interviews lie in the ability to circumvent potential problems caused by lack of access to the internet and mobile phones. Besides, the use of face-to-face interviews can circumvent possible limitations as a result of the fact that the illiteracy rate in Amolatar, as described above, appears to be quite high.

Instead of distributing printed information sheets, the researcher stressed orally that participation in the research project and interviews was voluntary and that the data would be anonymized (Gebel et al. 2015).

The data collection, specifically the expert interviews, as well as the evaluation of the collected data is reasonable practice based on the GT by Strauss and Glaser GT (1967). The term “theoretical sampling” (ibid.: 9) in connection with GT means that decisions regarding data collection are based on the emerging theory and the cases selected are of particular relevance to answering the research question (ibid.).

3.2.1 *Multi-case Study*

The focus of a multi-case study is to describe “the quintain” (Stake 2006: 27), “the program or phenomenon” (ibid.) that is being researched. In this context, case studies are defined as information-rich descriptions of a phenomenon. Multi-case studies are characterized by the fact that they are usually based on a variety of data sources, and at least two cases are investigated (ibid.). This research project was undertaken to understand the particular power relationship between men and women in rural villages in Amolatar. The organization HDI aims to train women in rice “farming as a business” (Speech 1: 8) as a way to bring together rural women and improve women’s overall social status in Amolatar. HDI suggests that women in Amolatar should not only produce crops for their consumption, but should instead see rice as an opportunity to generate income (Speech 1: 8, 10).

The data collected includes seven expert interviews, one focus group discussion in the field with approximately 30 female participants, one presentation summarizing the results of the focus group at the symposium at the Makerere University and two speeches. Both men and women were explicitly included in the research project to ensure the adequate representation of potential gender-related differences in shared experiences or personal viewpoints.

3.2.2 *Sampling Method*

Semi-structured guided interviews with experts allow the interviewee to answer individually and not merely to choose between clearly defined possible answers. The underlying assumption is that by narrating their opinions and experiences, the experts share valuable information referring to the research questions. These interviews allow adjustments during the interview, for instance, to modify the order of questions or to allow for immediate responses whenever necessary (Stake 2006; Bogner, Litt & Menz 2014).

The interview questions were prepared before the field trip to Uganda. The questionnaire included, among other things, general demographic details, profession, role in the community, association with HDI, description of work task, perception of gender roles, perceived transformation of gender roles.

Indicators suggest that a majority of residents in Amolatar are engaged in farming and that the illiteracy rate among residents in Amolatar appears to be around 70% (Uganda Bureau of Statistics 2017: 4). Given the fact that English is not their native language and their lack of formal education, the interviewees expressed only limited proficiency to reflect and express themselves in English. During the field research in the remote communities in Amolatar, the interview questions for the farmers had to be adapted and simplified because of their low proficiency in English and lack of knowledge.

The researcher assumed that the use of visual methods would help to overcome the language barrier as well as this lack of knowledge. This should help to adequately identify underlying cultural assumptions that probably differ from the Ugandan to the Western perspective and the definitions of wife, husband, and farmer. Thus, the farmers engaged with HDI (Interviewees D to H) in the rural villages in Amolatar were asked to illustrate their perceptions of a farmer, a “good” wife or “bad” wife or husband. After drawing, the interviewed person was asked to explain the drawings and elaborate on what they understood by these terms. It appears to be a method that is highly subjective but allows respondents to illustrate their points of view without speaking properly the same language (Petersen & Schwender 2011).

All interviewees were recorded, and additional paper notes were taken.

3.3 *Analysis Method*

The qualitative content analysis is suitable to analyze the data because it enables interpretative conclusion about the material gathered, which will be explored further.

3.3.1 *The Constant Comparative Method*

The GT approach to analyzing data is the “the constant comparative method” (Glaser & Strauss 1967: 102), which means that the comparison of the data collected takes place at the same time as the data gathering and the coding. The constant comparison leads to “theoretical saturation” (ibid.: 61). In this context, saturation refers to the fact “that no additional data are being found whereby the sociologist can develop properties of the category” (ibid.). For this reason, achieving theoretical saturation is an indicator that sufficient data has been collected since further data would tend to confirm existing findings and bring fewer new facts and figures (ibid.).

3.3.2 *Coding and Generating Theory*

Corbin and Strauss (1996: 43ff.) describe the three different stages of coding, namely open coding, axial coding, selective coding.

Open coding is the first step of analyzing the data gathered. According to Corbin and Strauss (ibid.: 118ff.), the data is broken down into small units, the researcher then studies and compares it. Relevant words, sentences, and paragraphs in the interviews are identified. Alongside this, appropriate categories are assigned to develop what Corbin and Strauss (ibid.: 94ff.) describe as core concepts. The coding process is based on the specification of a few core categories, which are seen as the categories with the strongest meaningfulness. These indicators are continuously examined to obtain new findings. During axial coding, the researcher identifies a relationship between the categories, which are explored during the open coding, relevant for the phenomenon of interest. In this part of coding core categories are also identified, but mostly confirmed.

The categories of GT remain in the process and are open to change until the completion of the theory is developed, as they are subordinate to the principle of permanent comparison. The constant comparative method implies, according to Glaser and Strauss (1967: 21ff.), that in an ideal research process the researcher goes back to the research field to collect further material once the data gathered has been analyzed. This process is usually repeated until theoretical saturation is reached (*ibid.*). The theory developed later in this work is based on the cases outlined before “in the sense that it is situated in, and generated by recognizing patterns of relationships among constructs within and across cases” (Eisenhardt & Graebner 2007).

4. Results

4.1 Case Background – Amolatar District

Traditionally, the residents of Amolatar were mainly subsistence farmers, breeding livestock and fishing at the surrounding lake Kyoga (Speech 2: 17). According to official statistics from 2014, subsistence farming remains common, with 65% of the population in working age² (Uganda Bureau of Statistics 2017: 4). 69% of the total number of households in Amolatar “derived their livelihood from subsistence farming” in 2014 (*ibid.*: 4). Government statistics report that agriculture seems to be the most critical sector and was, in 2014, the preliminary source of income for the majority of households in Amolatar (*ibid.*: 5). The official illiteracy status rate for residents of Amolatar older than ten years was 72% in 2014 (*ibid.*: 4). The definition of illiteracy referred to in this chapter is as follows “lack of the ability to read and write with understanding in any language” (Uganda Bureau of Statistics 2017: ii) of individuals that are at least ten years old.

The Ugandan initiative HDI encourages community building in Amolatar by educating rice farmers to reduce the current gender imbalance.

² Working age in this chapter is defined as the age range between 14 to 64 years, which amounts to 17.7 million persons in the Amolatar District (Uganda Bureau of Statistics 2017: 4).

4.2 *Presentation of Results*

4.3 *Community*

The interviewees indicate that there are some overarching cultural traditions which can be found all over Uganda. The impression created is that the dominance of men and patriarchy “remains a very strong and family entrenched aspect of all these cultures” (Interview A: 133). I find evidence for the suggestion that the Langni shapes the traditional cultural norms, practices and values especially related to gender (expectations) in Amolatar, a tribe in Amolatar, Northern Uganda (Interview A: 130-139).

Evidence can be found for the suggestion that rural societies in Amolatar might be patriarchal in nature. At least this might be true for the villages explored in this chapter.

4.3.1 *Traditional Gender Role Perceptions in Amolatar*

Firstly, it seems in the rural societies that the perception is that man should be the head of the family “leader, politician, the critical decision maker both at household level as well as at community level [– t]he authority, the dominant person in any given home” (Interview A: 107) in Amolatar.

It was indicated that men speak, while women have no voice in the sense that their opinion might not be appreciated the same way. Furthermore, it is indicated that women might not speak in public because any woman doing so would be “considered a very disrespectful, badly-brought-up woman” (Interview A: 108) by the local society in Amolatar. The interviewees indicated that men dominated the HDI meetings, sat in front, and spoke, while women would probably remain at the back in silence (Interview A: 34, 44f., 98, 107).

Evidence has been found that men in Amolatar might be seen as strong leaders with very masculine attributes in the rural societies that were researched.

Secondly, the traditional role of women appears to be that of wife, mother, and carer. In Amolatar, women’s social status in their villages could depend on having male children. Hence, women might feel pressured to conceive many children, even if they cannot provide them with

food. The cultural perception was reported, “If I don’t reproduce, how can I be a woman?” (Presentation A: 4).

The culturally expected personality traits of women in Amolatar appear to reflect the perception of female subordination: they should “be very humble, very respectful of [their] spouse[s]” (Interview A: 97), “obedient” (Interview E: 75) and kneel before their husbands (Interview A: 97; Presentation A: 2, 6-7; Speech 1: 34). The body posture of kneeling seems to physically visualize male dominance (Presentation A: 2, 6-7).

The concept of femininity in remote villages in Amolatar appears to emphasize their role as a mother and care for the family.

4.3.2 *Economic Dependencies*

First of all, whenever a man is interested in marrying a woman, it appears to be customary in Amolatar that he has to pay a so-called bride price or dowry to the woman’s family. On average, this is about seven to ten cows (Interview A: 32-33; Interview B: 207; Speech 1: 13). The practice of paying a dowry in Amolatar appears to be connected to the perception that the husband bought his wife and she “now belong[s] to the man as a form of property. However, [the man] will expect to try and recover the money [- the man] sunk [into marrying her-] as much as possible from [the] woman” (Interview A: 32).

However, the causal link between the bride price and the perception of women as property cannot be determined clearly.

The cultural practice of bride price, a source of wealth creation, seems to be accepted by the clan leaders and the community in Amolatar, although it is mentioned that perceptions are changing (Interview B: 220f.; Interview D: 63, Interview H: 71 ff.).

There is evidence implying that the practice of paying a dowry in Amolatar might be connected to perceptions of the local societies of women being the property of their spouses.

Secondly, in Amolatar, “land ownership follows the male lineage” (Interview A: 43) because women are usually married off to another family which would, through the marriage, profit from the property without being related by blood. Thus, only men appear to inherit, own, and control land in Amolatar (Interview C: 25, Speech 2: 11). Women in Amolatar seem to lack the financial resources to acquire land of their own.

It seems like the patrilineal lineage of inheritance rights might lead to property in Amolatar belonging to men and not to women.

Furthermore, farming upland rice means constantly stooping and kneeling on the rice field soil, especially while sowing, weeding, and harvesting the rice (Interview A: 63-67; Interview B: 172f., Interview F: 20f.). The rice plants have to be picked one by one. The perception appears to be that kneeling reflects the subordination and obedience of women. It seems to be inconceivable for men in Amolatar to kneel in public (Interview A: 65-68).

Evidence can be found that women appear to be responsible for all steps in the farming process where kneeling is inevitable while men seem to be solely in charge of clearing, ploughing the garden and selling the rice (Interview A: 64-68; Interview B: 165f., 173; Drawing G: 1; Drawing H: 1).

The stooped body posture during rice farming appears to be perceived as feminine by the local communities in rural Amolatar. A possible explanation for this understanding might be that kneeling physically reflects the idea of female subordination in Amolatar.

The impression is created that women might be responsible for almost 80% to 90% of the work and seem to be double-burdened with household duties and a significant share of the physically demanding farming processes (Interview A: 63-66, Interview B: 164ff., Drawing E: 1).

Interviewee A indicates that women in Amolatar might not be able to meet even their basic needs without the support of their partners, for instance purchasing menstruation pads, basic pain killers or soap (Interview A: 51). However, the men are described as being the ones who make the decisions about money in Amolatar. The focus group participants made it very clear that women do not control the money in the household. It was described as a massive issue for women to keep the money, and spouses were reported to even beat up the women to get hold of the money (Interview F: 105; Interview G: 22ff.).

Thus, women in Amolatar appear to be highly economically dependent on their spouses, while men seem to control the household resources. At least this might be true for the remote villages in Amolatar explored.

4.3.3 *Domestic Violence and GBV*

The term GBV includes, by definition, any dangerous behavior performed against the will of a human being if that conduct is committed because of socially attributed gender distinctions between women and men (Chrispus Okello & Hovil 2007). Domestic and sexual violence in Uganda is reported to be accepted and, according to Interviewee A, “nobody really bats an eyelid when you’re beaten” (Interview A: 7). Evidence can be found that Amolatar is no exception, and GBV seems to be quite common (Interview A: 71-75; Interview C: 21ff.).

The perception in the rural societies in Amolatar appears to be that property is owned by men and not by women. Thus, women probably lack land of their own and would not be able to provide for themselves if they were to separate. It follows that women are probably highly dependent on male relatives. At the same time, divorced women are described as being social outcasts and easy victims of sexual harassment (Interview A: 71-75; Interview C: 21-25). Therefore, evidence can be found indicating that the majority of women stay in abusive relationships (Interview E: 82-88, Interview C: 17-23).

Domestic violence is reported to be common in rural communities in the Amolatar district, Northern Uganda.

Women appear to have only limited choice of who to turn to if they want to report a partner for “abuse and mistreatment” (Interview A: 79). Corruption is reported to be an issue in Amolatar. Interviewees expressed skepticism about the police and pointed out that rural women are penniless and lack the resources to pay a bribe. Hence, they probably cannot expect any support (Interview G: 32; Interview F: 108-111).

The findings suggest that women in remote villages in Amolatar cannot always rely on cultural institutions such as clan leaders, the police, or male relatives to find support in situations of physical abuse.

4.3.4 *HDI's farming as a business approach*

Subsistence farming was common before HDI trained women in rice farming as a business, which means that women make money growing cash crops like rice and not only producing for their families’ own consumption. HDI provides the farmers with seeds, buys the harvested rice

and organizes meetings to train women in best practices how to grow rice with the positive side-effect that women have a space to network, meet other women and exchange information. The founder of HDI emphasizes that a transformation of the attitudes and the understanding of gender roles and the involvement of men is important when challenging existing power structures (Interview B: 33ff., 173f., 182f.; Interview F: 33, 123; Speech 1: 10 ff.).

Apparently, a transformation of gender roles can already be observed. Families with an exemplary character, characterized by a more balanced division of labor and decision-making processes involving women, are being reported.

5. *Discussion & Findings*

Dominant theories of feminism cannot help us understand in full the experience of women for power relations in Uganda. Even though women in Western countries also struggle with asymmetric power relations, patriarchal institutions, and gender-related power asymmetry, it is arguably a fundamentally different form of patriarchy in remote communities of North Uganda.

The power asymmetries in remote villages in Amolatar take different institutional forms, especially the tendency of women to be doubly burdened with household duties and farming. It can be concluded that Western feminist theories do not seem adequate for analyzing power relations in Amolatar as the data also explains.

More interesting is the question of how applicable West African feminist theories are, and in which aspects, the findings of this chapter indicate similarities and differences. The results of this chapter suggest that motherhood and reproduction have a similar centrality in remote villages of Amolatar.

5.1 *The Cultural Aspect of Male Dominance*

The cultural aspect of male dominance refers to the traditional gender roles that appear to be shaped by the perception that men should be very masculine and dominant in contrast to women in the Northern Ugandan

societies researched. In these villages, men are considered to be natural leaders, household heads, and responsible for decision-making, their voice is valued in local society. Evidence can be found of deeply-rooted perception of masculinity. The cultural acceptance that men can spend their time doing what they like while women are at work appears to allow men to engage in a diverse range of social activities in the particular villages that were investigated.

While the prevalent concept of femininity in the societies in Northern Uganda emphasizes the subordination and inferiority of women, in particular, “kneeling” – a body posture which physically reflects the social expectation of women to be obedient towards men as the dominant sex – and dress code.

Women’s traditional gender role in Amolatar appears to be strongly associated with motherhood, child-rearing, and caring for the family.

As mentioned above the practice in Amolatar of paying a dowry for the bride appears to be related to the perception that women belong to their husbands, at least this might be true for the rural communities being investigated in this chapter. This attitude would imply that women don’t have a say in family planning, which would then be the sole decision of men in rural Amolatar.

The interviewees indicated that bending and kneeling seem to reflect the subordinate position of women in the rural communities in Northern Amolatar. During the process of rice farming, the farmer has to bend his or her body to pick the rice. The findings provide a plausible explanation that because of the bent body posture, farming is considered women’s work in the local societies in Amolatar. If a man helped in the farming process and bent his body or knelt, he would be perceived by the local community as being feminine. As a consequence, it follows that women appear to be responsible for all the steps in the rice farming process that make kneeling necessary. Evidence can be found that women in Amolatar bear a double burden, responsible for household duties and for much of the rice farming.

The research of Andrews, Golan & Lay (2014) indicates that the division of work in rural regions of Uganda is not ideal. The researchers identify a possible link between gender roles and division of labor.

5.2 *The Material Aspect of Male Dominance*

Men's domination on a material basis, as a second aspect, refers to the economic dependence of male relatives and spouses who appear to control most of the resources, especially money. This might be true at least for the rural societies in North Uganda which were visited during the field trip.

What seems likely in these villages is that men appear to decide about the resource allocation without necessarily consulting their spouses and the interviewees indicated that men had the power to spend the small household income on alcohol, gambling, and football. There is evidence that women lack a voice in household decision-making and their opinion might not be appreciated the same way in rural societies. The interviewees gave the example that if women in rural villages of Amolatar wanted to buy basics such as menstruation pads or soap they would need the approval of their husbands to do so.

Evidence can be found for the suggestion that the economic dependence of women in Amolatar is related to the circumstance that property belongs to men because the lineage of inheritance rights is male. The underlying practice is that women are married off into other clans, who would then profit from the inheritance. On the other hand, women lack the financial resources to acquire property on their own, at least in the villages in Amolatar. Based on the interviews, the impression is created that men claim the rice farming revenues for themselves although men contribute only marginally to the fieldwork.

Makama (2013) indicates that in the patriarchal and traditional Nigerian society, men dominate women based on material and financial aspects. Similar to Amolatar, inheritance follows the male lineage. Makama describes women's social role as being characterized by subordination and marginalization.

5.3 *The Physical Aspect of Male Dominance*

The physical aspect of male dominance can be observed in what appears to be the normalization and the high prevalence of domestic violence in the remote regions of Northern Uganda. Some of the interviewees indicated that GBV could occur in conjunction with alcohol abuse, polyga-

mous activities, and men who might be claiming the rice revenues for themselves. I found evidence that, in cases of domestic violence, women in rural societies in North Uganda might have difficulty getting support from clan leaders and the police. It seems likely that clan and cultural leadership appear to favor men and corruption might make it harder for women in Amolatar to find help.

In Amolatar I found evidence for the suggestion that divorce appears to be highly stigmatized. As indicated earlier, women lack the economic resources to provide for themselves and children belong to men. Thus, there is some evidence that women stay in abusive relationships for these reasons.

HDI reports an increase in women's self-esteem through their involvement with the HDI. This is supported by interviews with women in Amolatar. According to HDI, farming rice as a business enables women to earn money on their own and therefore contribute economically to the household. Evidence can be found that hence the perspectives of both, men and women alike, concerning traditional gender roles are shifting towards a reduced power asymmetry.

The findings of Koenig et al. (2003) support these findings, and the authors indicate that domestic violence appears to be widespread in Uganda.

6. *Limitations & Future Research*

The author of this chapter had difficulties accessing literature about African feminism. Although Western African feminism has many interesting approaches, it appears that the West African scholarships I was able to access do not yet possess the complexity to explain everything that was observed in the study. This is a potential starting point for future research. Amolatar is a remote district of Uganda, and so far, the authors of this study are not aware of any research focus on power relations in Amolatar.

Elementary to GT is the constant comparative method which recommends collecting, analyzing and comparing the data simultaneously. This was only partly possible owing to constraints of resources. It was not in the scope of this study to conduct a second field trip or extend the field trip in 2018. Hence, it was not possible to explore more cases. This limitation should be taken into account when looking at the data evaluation.

It is recommended that future analysis of gender in remote villages of Northern Uganda conducts a multi-case study with a greater and more diverse sample size.

A limitation of interviews, in general, is the problem of social desirability bias referring to the impulse of human beings to answer questions not truthfully but by stating what is perceived as accepted by society (Stake 2006). Social desirability occurs particularly with questions on sensitive topics. What is understood as being acceptable is a social construct and depends greatly on the cultural context. Further analysis should consider social desirability.

Additionally, the cultural background of the farmers must be taken into account, even though the field trip was well prepared, and the researchers acted with great care. Probably there are still gender-specific and culturally-inflicted values and expected patterns of behavior that might impact on the interview situation. Therefore, it is recommended for future research to take this into account. A possible approach might be to be accompanied by someone who possesses specific cultural knowledge about the communities being researched.

Further, the interview questions had to be prepared in advance, and adaptation in the field was necessary to meet the interviewees' low level of English. The modified questionnaire might impact on the quality and complexity of the answers. For future research I suggest translating the interviews into the local spoken languages in advance and conducting the interviews face-to-face in the local language and afterwards translating the responses into English. There is a chance that the complexity of questions and quality of answers are fruitful for future research projects.

Moreover, it must be emphasized that this research project is not representative owing to time and space constraints as well as the tiny sample size of interviews and communities visited. The interviewees were selected using a snowball system. Hence the sample is a result of a selection process that depended on the network of the researcher. Therefore, the results are insufficient to make general statements beyond the situational and contextual scope of the villages in Amolatar that were researched.

7. Conclusion & Implications

The founders of HDI argue that farming as a business provides rural women with an opportunity to economically contribute to the household and is possibly be a first step towards changing the socially established understanding of gender roles (Interview B: 33ff., 173, 182f.; Speech 1: 10 ff.).

The founders of the HDI believe that, to support women to challenge the existing power asymmetry, two requirements must be met. First of all, men must be involved as supporters and, secondly, there has to be a change of mindset regarding women's and men's social status and gender roles in the community. This change in attitudes in relationship with the traditional concepts of gender roles is seen as a prerequisite for the success of HDI's work by the interviewees.

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Youth Migration, Employment and Policy Interventions: The Case of Uganda

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1. Introduction to youth migration and policy interventions

Youth is a pivotal stage of human development during which young people make the transition from childhood to adulthood and from dependence to independence. This transition (social, economic, biological) is essential for safeguarding, shaping and developing their human and social capital. It is during this period that young people make important decisions about their lives – particularly their ethical, social, economic, cultural, political and civic positioning and role – setting the stage for adulthood (United Nations 2014). Youth thus poses both challenges and opportunities.

While youth migration is an opportunity for many for career growth, self-employment and education, among other things, its employment challenges are evident globally (Suárez-Orozco, Darbes, Dias & Sutin 2011). Young people and their parents associate migration with the process of changing lives and attaining high educational attainment (Crivello 2011). In an Economic Report of Africa entitled, “Promoting high level sustainable growth to reduce unemployment in Africa”, the United Nations Economic Forum for Africa noted that African countries can pursue several short-term and long-term policies to achieve the needed structural transformation that generates high growth with increased employment creation. These policies should be based on a comprehensive development planning framework that embodies well-designed and implemented macro-economic and sectoral strategies (ECA, AU & UNFPA 2013).

A community is a social and psychological entity that represents a place, its people, and their relationships (Barnett & Brennan 2006). A community is the first entity that we encounter beyond our families. Community development is a process where community members come together to take collective action and generate solutions to common issues. Community development entails not only individual wellbeing but society's wellbeing, too, which involves economic, social, environment and cultural spheres. It is also a dynamic process that involves all segments of the locality, giving priority to young people. It is therefore important for youths to have clearly defined roles and opportunities which allow them to actively participate in their communities rather than having passive roles.

The relationship between youth and community building is key long-term involvement in community development efforts (Barnett & Brennan 2006). Community development ranges from small initiatives within a small group to large initiatives that involve the broader community. This has transformed and empowered communities through improving farmer's harvests, producing surplus food, increased sales of agricultural produce hence an increase in income, as well as poverty and eradication of hunger in the long run.

The macro-economic strategic actions operate within a socio-economic and demographic context for a given country. This situation for Uganda and its youth employment regime is discussed in this context. Uganda which currently has the second youngest population in the world with over 78% under 30, is second only to Niger's 83% (Uganda Bureau of Statistics 2016). The youth population in Uganda comprises both the educated/skilled and the unskilled living in rural and urban areas. In some regions such as Karamoja and Northern Uganda, young people have been affected by the conflict that has plagued the region for the last 23 years. Such experiences and challenges arising from the breakdown of the social and economic infrastructure have had a strong impact on their ability to access social and economic capital to acquire skills and create their own opportunities.

Numerous initiatives have emerged to solve youth unemployment; these initiatives tend to focus more on the level of neediness rather than first understanding different kinds of youths in various communities. Challenges faced by young people in terms of wages and self-employment have continued to increase in Uganda over the last two decades. As

higher institutions of learning consistently pour more graduates into the labor market, lower institutions also suffer greater pressure as a result of dropouts, confronting the labor market with triple shocks from various classifications of youth added to those who do not have any form of training or education. Graduates are encroaching on the jobs of those who have never been to school.

This chapter explores the phenomenon of migration by youths and the association with employment together with policy interventions that the government of Uganda has put in place. Statistical analysis of primary data is used from a cross sectional survey taken from a multidisciplinary study of youth employment and migration dynamics in Eastern and Southern Africa, which was carried out in Kenya, Malawi, Uganda and Zambia. The data collection was done at different times in different countries and this study utilizes data from Uganda. The study was a two-year study conducted between March 2017 and March 2019. For the purposes of this chapter, the Uganda data is used from 1,537 youths aged 18-35 sampled in the survey. In view of country and international variations in defining youth, the study used a definition that considered national interests while at the same being mindful of international frameworks. This definition took a broad age range, such as that of the Africa Charter, which defines youths as being persons aged 15-35 (With this definition, youths in a country such as Uganda who are taken to be persons aged 18-30 would be covered). The definition of a migrant in this study took a mixed/hybrid approach regarding the identification of migrants (and avoided taking a mutually exclusive position on sending or receiving households). On sampling size and weighting, we considered oversampling to take care of uniqueness (such as households headed by a woman or child). We also considered purposive sampling with regard to other attributes such as National Capital.

2. Hope Development Initiative

The Hope Development Initiative (HDI) was founded by Dr Agnes Atim Apea as a social program to empower women affected by the 20 years of war in Northern Uganda. The group that started with 20 women in 2008 later grew to over 10,000 members in 8 districts in Northern Uganda. Membership includes women, youths and 20% men. The initiative aims

to see farmers improve their harvests, liberate them from poverty and enable them to start producing surplus food for their neighbors. The initiative also includes Mama Rice, which is a rice production company that creates employment opportunities for people in Northern Uganda and improves nutrition. Mama Rice is now working to increase rice production capacity. The Initiative was begun as a cooperative with a strict focus on helping women. It also provides technical farming services and a guaranteed market. Alongside a stable income, HDI funds maternity wards to ensure the health and well-being of the whole community. The initiative has empowered women in Uganda by training them in rice farming, but profits are then invested in healthcare facilities to enable babies to be delivered safely, which helps to transform communities.

3. *Youth Migration*

Community building indirectly promotes social inclusion and equity in society. It is also a fundamental process because it requires people, groups and organizations to work together to build connections, understanding and confidence (Barnett & Brennan 2006). Therefore, through various community-building strategies, youths are able to become strong, trustworthy and hardworking which, in the long run, enhances the capacity of youths and their communities to achieve their goals and visions.

Young people dominate migration flows (Taran 2014). There is general consensus that migration is largely for purposes of employment and usually involves the rural to urban and peri-urban movements (ibid.). Employment for young people enables them to find their place in the world, earn a living and support their families (ibid.).

A report on labor market transition among youth in Uganda found that sixty-four (64%) percent of young persons aged 15-29 in Uganda were working in 2015. The “own-account” and “contributing family” workers categories (considered to be “vulnerable employment categories” represented 43 percent and nearly 28 percent respectively (UBOS 2015).

Box 3.1 indicates that most youths try their luck in bigger cities but there are some who attempt to access economic opportunities in trading centers nearer to them. Youth migration occurs in phases before they reach the final destination which is, in most cases, a larger urban area. Some youths start from trading centers as they gather entrepreneurial

skills then they move to a nearby town and finally to Kampala. This gradual form of migration is largely a consequence of youths' struggle for economic survival, which involves many attempts in different locations until a favorable one is identified. The acquisition of entrepreneurial skills by the youths in trading centers and small towns boosts their confidence to move to larger towns or cities. The results also indicate that migration from urban to rural was rare but occurs when the motivation is conducting business and the rural areas are sources of produce for marketing in the urban and peri-urban settings. Key informant interview findings indicate that some youths migrate from rural to rural settings. This mobility is common among pastoralist and agrarian communities that are largely driven by land shortages in their own localities. Box 1 shows the details.

*Box 1. Rural-urban migration,
gradual migration and rural-rural migration*

Youths are running away from agrarian economies to more advantaged financial districts. They move to these areas to look for jobs. Most entrepreneurship opportunities are in Kampala. Financial Institutions like SACCOs; it is easy to get capital (financial and material) and it is easy to generate and share ideas here in Kampala. There is also a lot of learning in terms of skills for business development while in an urban setting than when one is in a rural setting (Key informant, Internal Affairs).

...so, it is very common to move from a village setting to the immediate trading center. Once you have exhausted what you think could work for you at the trading centre, you move to the next level of urban setting. This could be your district town, then later to the bigger district/town in the region and finally they end up in Kampala. Typically, it is so hard to jump from Abim to Kampala; you almost end up on the street. But if you move from Abim to a trading center within Abim, there is a way you can take off from there, "KI Enterprise Uganda".

Actually, we have seen more youths coming from rural areas to urban areas, selling off what they already have like land, houses and they come to town to ride boda-bodas. Some start selling things on the roadsides because they are not yet well established... (Parliament official).

That is why we have more people from places like Kigezi moving beyond their traditional Kigezi region and settling in many parts of Uganda, "KI Enterprise Uganda".

Some people come here because they have friends who might have moved a while ago, so when they come, they have somewhere to stay and maybe a little guidance here and there (FGD with self-employed youth, Gulu).

Another thing, sometimes people hear of a border, so someone wants to come to Busia and they hear that that at a border there is a variety of jobs. That's why you see that people from various villages running to Busia (FGD with employed youth, Busia).

4. *Youth employment*

Youth, migration and employment are interconnected. The belief and knowledge that there are better opportunities in the urban and peri-urban settings was found to be a key factor explaining the migration of youths. Youth migration is one of the factors that explain unemployment (O'Reilly et al. 2015). Urban areas are a fertile zone for youths with business ambitions and those searching for jobs. The size of the town is not important, the employment and business opportunities and social amenities are far better than in rural areas. These amenities are some of the reasons why youth move from rural areas to reside in towns and bigger urban areas. Youths are engaged in a number of jobs including boda-boda riding, mobile money operations, restaurants, bar and lodge attendants (waiters and waitresses or as owners), frying chapatis, frying chips, retail shop attendants, running grocery shops, hairdressing, sports betting center attendants, car washing, meat roasting, selling boiled eggs, carpentry and joinery, tailoring, and hard (casual) labor such as bricklaying and working on construction sites, loading and offloading trucks. These are largely concentrated in urban areas. Box 2 shows some of the qualitative findings on this.

Box 2: Types of job

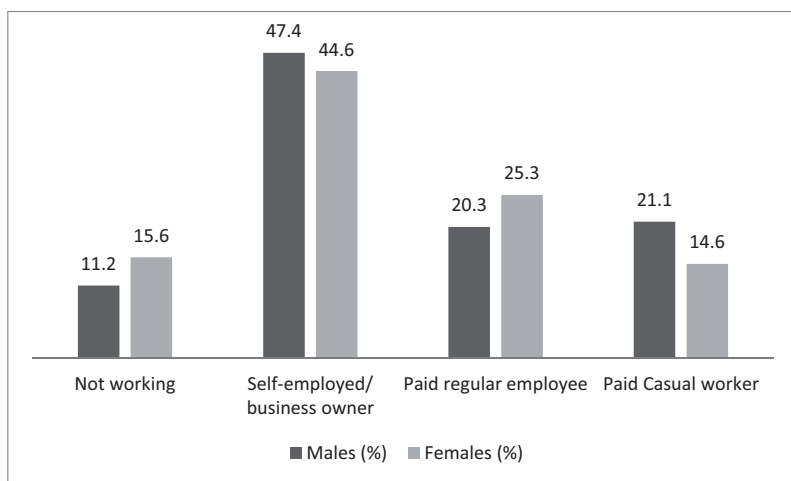
Youth work with companies that trade in selling cars across the Kenya-Uganda border (FGD with employed youth, Busia).

There are also youths who raise money by making bricks most especially in dry seasons like this and it helps them to raise capital to start their own businesses (FGD with self-employed youths, Gulu).

5. *Employment status of youths*

Figure 1 indicates that more youths were self-employed. Generally, there were more males in self-employment compared to females. Forty-seven percent of the male youths and about forty-five percent of their female counterparts reported that they were self-employed. Similarly, the percentage of male youths in paid casual work was higher than that of females. On the other hand, female youths dominated their male counterparts with respect to “not working” and being in “paid regular employment”. A quarter of the female youths reported that they were regular paid employees compared to twenty percent of the males who reported being in the same category. Male youths are generally more mobile than their female counterparts. This may be attributed to parental and family restrictions on female migration. It was reported that some girls are not allowed by their parents and families to leave home because of the fear that they may be going for marriage under the guise of seeking employment. This is different for male youths as society generally accepts them going to look for work, make their own futures and look after their families.

Figure 1: Gendered comparison of youths by employment status



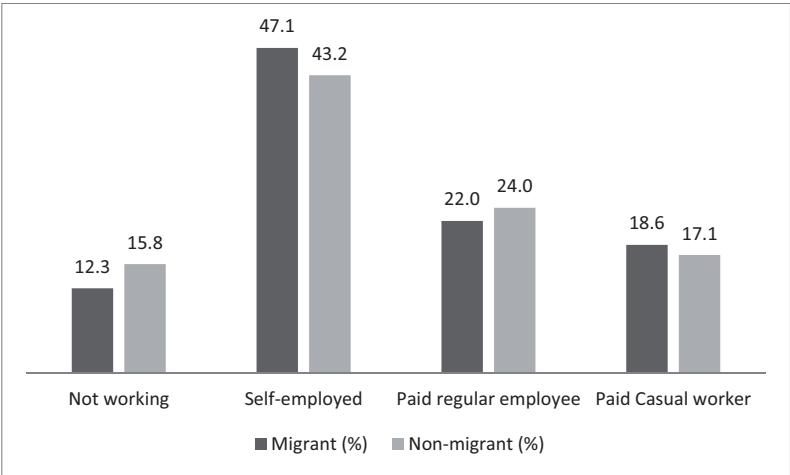
Source: YEMESA 2017; own representation.

6. *Employment status and migration*

The results indicate a different composition of employment categories by migration status.

In Figure 2, the results show that there were more non-migrants in the “not working” category compared to migrants (12.3% vs. 15.8%). This was also the case for the category of youths in regular paid employment as 24% of the regular paid employees were non-migrants compared to 22% who were migrants. On the other hand, the migrants had a higher proportion in the self-employed and casual worker categories compared to their non-migrant counterparts. The focus group discussion findings indicated that non-migrants are more likely to be favored in regular paid employment. In addition, migrant youths are more committed to work compared to their non-migrant counterparts; this explains why the proportion of non-working migrants is low compared to their non-migrant counterparts. It is evident that there is a disparity in formal employment, which is linked to local politics. Box 3 shows that national identification looking at migrant status is a key factor that is considered when recruiting employees.

Figure 2: Youth employment by migration status



Source: YEMESA 2017; own representation.

Box. 3: Migration status and employee recruitment

It (migration status) matters a lot. Nowadays for every job you look for, they will ask you for an LCI letter. In other words a recommendation from the village LC. And when a person is from Mbarara to Busia, he or she may not have it (FGD with employed youth, Busia).

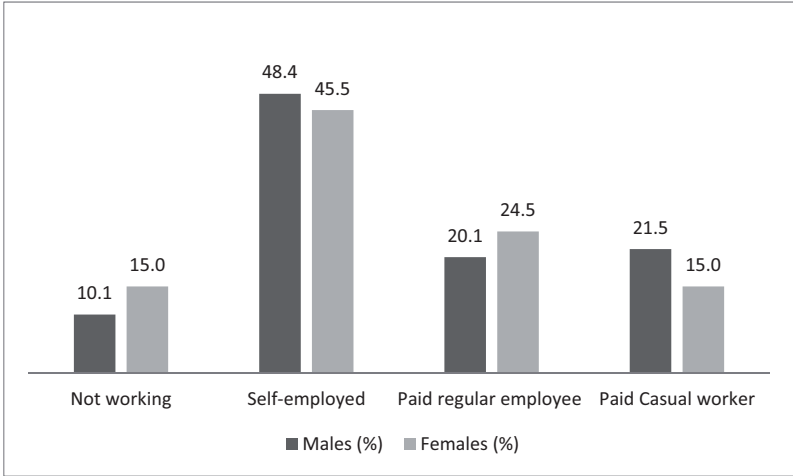
...when you come, let us say, from Mbarara or Kampala or from Kenya to Busia seeking a job, what we first consider is your National ID. If you possess one, we get to know your origin and your address. Then we may employ you but with a lot of suspicion. We then keep watching your behavior and this will determine how long you keep the job (FGD with employed youth, Busia).

I will speak based on my experience with the employees I have at the school. You find that the people who I employ from here (in this community) are constantly absent from school, they don't concentrate because they have other errands to run within the community unlike the immigrants whose homes are far (FGD with self-employed youth, Gulu).

7. Migrant employment status by gender

Migration differs by gender. In Uganda, migration and travel have been found to be more common among young women than young men (Schuyler et al. 2017). Furthermore, over time, outward-migration increased among youths and the primary reasons for migration included work, living with friends or family, and marriage (ibid.). The survey findings in Figure 3 indicate a disaggregation of migrant employment status by gender. The results show that 15 percent of female migrants were not working compared to 10.1 percent of their male counterparts. Similarly, 24.5 percent of the female and 20.1 percent of the male migrants were regular paid employees. On the other hand, 48.4 percent of the male and 45.5 percent of the female migrants were self-employed while 21.5 percent of the male and 15 percent of the female casual workers were paid casual workers.

Figure 3: Gendered disaggregation of migrant employment status



Source: YEMESA 2017; own representation.

Employment status was significantly associated with age, marital status, relationship to head of the household, father’s education, mother’s education, average household income at time of migration, international migration for work and pre-migration work. Table 1 reveals that generally, the highest age category (31-35) had the lowest proportion of the “not working” youth’s category as the majority (64.8%) youths in the category were self-employed.

8. Youth migration and employment

Youths comprise the largest numbers of both international and internal migrants in general. Youth migration is driven by both push and pull factors that operate between the places of origin and destination. Table 2 shows that 12.3 percent of youth migrants were not working. The table also indicates that 22 percent of the migrants were regular employees and 18.6 percent were paid casual workers. However, 47.1 percent (almost four times the proportion of those that were not working) were engaged in some form of self-employment. Youth migration is partly influenced by

Table 1: Youths' employment by selected characteristics

Characteristic	Employment status				Number
	Not working	Self-employed	Regular employee	Paid casual worker	
Age					
18-20	24.4	24.4	20.3	30.8	266
21-25	11.8	41.9	26.8	19.5	609
26-30	11.0	55.8	21.3	11.9	446
31-35	7.4	64.8	15.7	12.0	216
Gender					
Male	11.2	47.4	20.3	21.1	857
Female	15.6	44.6	25.3	14.6	680
Marital status					
Married	11.6	65.7	14.7	8.0	414
Co-habiting	9.8	56.4	16.7	17.2	204
Ever married	5.3	59.2	15.8	19.7	76
Never married	15.4	32.9	28.4	23.4	843
Relation to Head of Household					
Head of household	8.9	52.9	20.7	18.0	830
Spouse	16.3	63.1	14.6	6.0	233
Daughter/Son	20.2	31.8	28.8	19.2	198
Friend	17.2	19.0	22.4	41.4	58
Others	18.4	24.8	31.1	24.8	218
Formal education					
No education	13.2	47.4	18.4	21.1	38
Primary education	15.4	52.5	10.4	21.8	404
Secondary education	11.7	44.5	23.5	20.3	775
Vocational/University	13.8	41.9	35.9	8.4	320
Home					
Rural area	11.7	47.0	21.4	19.9	738
Small rural town	13.5	48.0	19.6	18.9	423
Municipal/large town	16.2	41.1	27.7	15.0	321
Large town/other country	12.7	49.1	29.1	9.1	55
Total (all youths)					1,537

Source: YEMESA 2017; own representation.

their ability to identify opportunities for employment and starting a business. Migrant youths are able to sense and tap into opportunities that local youths may not.

While youth migration is a global challenge, Table 2 indicates that a higher proportion of youths who either have not had formal training or are only educated up to primary level were self-employed compared to their counterparts with higher educational attainment. Search for employment, better jobs and opportunities for enterprise development are cited as key factors influencing youth migration. It is largely believed that youth migration is primarily motivated by finding employment (both formal and informal) and opportunities for better self-employment. Table 2 indicates that youth unemployment was higher among the proportion of self-employed youths, among those whose parents had a lower education (primary and none) and those who did not know the level of education attained by their parents. Box 4 contains some of the qualitative findings that explain why educated youths are more likely to be involved in migration.

Box 4: Education and youth migration

...somebody who went to school remembers the statement they were given when they were going to school that “go to school and study hard so that you get a job” (Key informant, Enterprise Uganda).

...you find the graduates refusing to go back to the village thinking that employment is only in the towns (key informant, Ministry of Trade).

I will tell you about mobile money, in fact I see most people like after graduating they see doing this other funny work as not favourable, so he gets like shs.500,000 and puts up a mobile money stall (FGD with employed youth, Busia).

Table 2 indicates that half of the migrant youths that were self-employed at the time of the survey reported that their households earned an average of two hundred thousand to four hundred thousand shillings at the time of migration from their places of origin. Regarding regular employment, 33 percent of the migrants from households that earned an average income of at least six hundred thousand shillings were in regular employment compared to a higher percentage of youths from households that had higher average household monthly earnings at the time of migration.

Table 2: Youth migrants' employment status by selected background characteristics

Characteristic	Employment status				Number
	Not working	Self-employed	Regular employee	Paid casual worker	
Father's education					
No education	21.7	51.1	9.8	17.5	143
Primary education	9.8	52.7	22.7	14.8	317
Secondary education	13.0	42.9	25.6	18.5	238
Vocational/University	11.2	39.2	29.4	20.3	143
Do not know	10.4	46.5	20.9	22.2	316
Mother's education					
No education	16.6	51.8	15.0	16.6	247
Primary education	11.6	48.9	24.6	14.9	362
Secondary education	11.5	40.2	27.3	21.1	209
Vocational/University	11.3	38.0	35.2	15.5	71
Do not know	10.1	48.1	17.5	24.3	268
Average Household monthly earning					
<200,000	12.0	46.3	20.6	21.0	533
200,000-400,000	12.9	50.6	20.8	15.7	536
400,000-600,000	14.3	42.9	21.4	21.4	154
600,000+	8.8	45.6	33.3	12.3	114
International work travel					
Ever travelled abroad	7.3	61.8	18.7	12.2	123
Never travelled abroad	12.9	45.4	22.4	19.3	1,034
Pre-migration work					
Ever worked	9.1	50.4	25.9	14.7	530
Never worked	15.0	44.3	18.8	21.9	627
Total (migrant youths)	12.3	47.1	22.0	18.6	1,157

Source: YEMESA 2017; own representation.

Half of the youths who reported having ever worked before migrating from their places of origin were self-employed. However, a significant portion of these youths were not working at the time of the survey. This

could imply reduce chances of getting a job or failure to get a job. It could also be because the migration could have been for other reasons although this cannot be conclusively explained here. The number of youths that had never worked before migration presented a higher percentage in the self-employed category but fifteen percent of these were not working at the time of the survey. Again, this may be attributed to their failure to get a job, to the collapse of a business or other reasons that may have motivated their migration.

9. *Gendered migrant youth employment*

Age, marital status, education, father's education, average household income, pre-migration work and relation to household work were significantly associated with both the male and female migrants. On the other hand, the mother's education was more important for female migrants' employment status, while international travel for work was more influential on the employment status of the male migrants. Tables 3a and Table 3b show employment status by selected characteristics of male and female migrants respectively. The results in Table 3a indicate that the male migrants aged 21-25 dominated all the employment status categories. Forty percent of the not working, thirty three percent of the self-employed, thirty eight percent of the regular employee and forty one percent of the male migrants were aged 21-25.

The results in Table 3a also indicate that marital status was associated with the employment status of the migrants. It is evident from the table that the never married migrants comprised the majority of the employment status categories. More than three quarters (76.9%) of the male non-migrants who were not working had never been married. Similarly, seventy one percent, sixty four percent and forty five percent of the paid casual workers, regular employees and self-employed respectively had never married. This could be related to the flexibility of unmarried young people to easily relocate. Never married people do not see so many challenges related to migration. The results in Table 3a indicate that most (81%) of the self-employed migrants were heads of their own household. About seventy percent (69.8%) of the migrants who were in regular employment were heads of their household. It is evident that migrants with secondary education formed the majority of the employment categories with

Table 3a: Employment status of male migrants by selected characteristics

Characteristic	Employment status				Number
	Not working	Self-employed	Regular employee	Paid casual worker	
Age					
18-20	26.2	11.3	10.1	26.8	102
21-25	40.0	33.4	38.0	41.3	236
26-30	26.2	29.6	36.4	21.7	186
31-35	7.7	25.7	15.5	10.1	119
Marital status					
Married	13.9	33.4	22.5	11.6	158
Co-habiting	9.2	17.7	11.6	14.5	96
Ever married	0.0	3.9	1.6	2.9	18
Never married	76.9	45.0	64.3	71.0	371
Relation to head of household					
Head of household	61.5	81.0	69.8	63.8	470
Spouse	1.5	1.0	0.8	2.9	9
Daughter/Son	10.8	4.8	6.2	8.0	41
Others	23.1	10.6	18.6	13.0	90
Friend	3.1	2.6	4.7	12.3	33
Formal education					
No formal education	4.6	2.3	3.1	2.9	18
Primary education	30.8	32.8	18.6	41.3	203
Secondary education	36.9	47.9	45.7	48.6	299
Vocational/University	27.7	17.0	32.6	7.3	123
Place of origin					
Rural area	52.3	51.1	56.6	60.1	349
Small rural town	18.5	31.5	21.7	22.5	169
Municipal/large town	24.6	12.5	17.8	15.2	99
Large town/other country	4.6	4.8	3.9	2.2	26
Father's education					
No formal education	21.5	16.4	6.2	15.9	95
Primary education	27.7	34.1	25.6	21.7	187
Secondary education	23.1	16.7	25.6	19.6	127
Vocational/University	13.9	9.7	17.8	13.0	80
Do not know	13.9	23.2	24.8	29.7	154

Mother's education					
No formal education	26.2	28.9	17.8	21.7	160
Primary education	36.9	32.8	34.9	28.3	210
Secondary education	16.9	15.8	17.8	18.1	108
Vocational/University	7.7	3.2	9.3	5.1	34
Do not know	12.3	19.3	20.2	26.8	131
Household average earning (Ugx)					
<200,000	36.9	41.8	45.7	55.1	289
200,000-400,000	32.3	35.4	28.7	26.8	205
400,000-600,000	24.6	12.9	13.2	10.1	87
600,000+	6.2	10.0	12.4	8.0	62
International work travel					
Yes	10.8	20.3	13.2	10.1	101
No	89.2	79.7	86.8	89.9	542
Pre-migration work					
Yes	32.3	51.5	52.7	41.3	306
No	67.7	48.6	47.3	58.7	337

Table 3b: Employment status of female migrants by selected characteristics

Characteristic	Employment status				Number
	Not working	Self-employed	Regular employee	Paid casual worker	
Age					
18-20	27.3	3.9	15.9	36.4	78
21-25	39.0	36.8	54.0	49.4	222
26-30	24.7	42.3	26.2	7.8	157
31-35	9.1	17.1	4.0	6.5	57
Marital status					
Married	36.4	47.9	15.9	7.8	166
Co-habiting	10.4	18.4	12.7	10.4	75
Ever married	5.2	9.0	5.6	7.8	38
Never married	48.1	24.8	65.9	74.0	235
Relation to head of household					
Head of household	23.4	39.3	35.7	41.6	187
Spouse	35.1	49.2	22.2	9.1	177
Daughter/Son	13.0	6.0	11.9	13.0	49

Others	23.4	4.7	25.4	32.5	86
Friend	5.2	0.9	4.8	3.9	15
Formal education					
No formal education	2.6	3.4	1.6	2.6	14
Primary education	36.4	31.2	11.1	20.8	131
Secondary education	41.6	47.0	57.1	62.3	262
Vocational/University	19.5	18.4	30.2	14.3	107
Place of origin					
Rural area	49.4	56.0	46.8	55.8	271
Small rural town	31.2	23.1	27.0	31.2	136
Municipal/large town	16.9	18.4	25.4	11.7	97
Large town/other country	2.6	2.6	0.8	1.3	10
Father's education					
No formal education	22.1	9.4	4.8	3.9	48
Primary education	16.9	26.1	31.0	22.1	130
Secondary education	20.8	21.4	22.2	22.1	111
Vocational/University	9.1	11.1	15.1	14.3	63
Do not know	31.2	32.1	27.0	37.7	162
Mother's education					
No formal education	31.2	16.2	11.1	14.3	87
Primary education	23.4	32.1	34.9	19.5	152
Secondary education	16.9	15.0	27.0	24.7	101
Vocational/University	3.9	7.3	10.3	5.2	37
Do not know	24.7	29.5	16.7	36.4	137
Household average earning (Ugx)					
<200,000	52.0	50.0	40.5	46.8	244
200,000-400,000	32.5	29.9	29.4	24.7	151
400,000-600,000	7.8	11.1	12.7	24.7	67
600,000+	7.8	9.0	17.5	3.9	52
International work travel					
Yes	2.6	5.6	4.8	1.3	22
No	97.4	94.4	95.2	98.7	492
Pre-migration work					
Yes	35.1	45.7	54.8	27.3	224
No	64.9	54.3	45.2	72.7	290

Source: YEMESA 2017; own representation.

48.6% of these in paid casual work, 47.9% in self-employment, 45.7% in paid formal employment and 36.9% in the not working category. This means that in most cases, it is youths with some level of education that are pushed to different parts of the country to try and find work. This is even worse for university and other tertiary institution graduates whose education makes them think about jobs that are largely situated in urban areas.

As expected, migrants from rural areas were the majority in all the employment categories. This could be because rural-urban migration is the most common form of migration in Uganda. The qualitative findings also indicated that most migrants originate from rural areas to urban areas as the urban areas are considered to have better opportunities for jobs, businesses and social services. Box 5 shows that, generally, the opportunities in urban areas are more appealing to the youths who then move away from the agrarian rural areas to take advantage of these opportunities.

Box 5: Reasons for rural-urban migration

Youths are running away from agrarian economies to more advantaged financial districts. They move to these areas to look for jobs. Most entrepreneurship opportunities like financial institutions are in Kampala which makes it easy for the youths to get capital (financial and material) and it is easy to generate and share ideas here in Kampala. You can also learn more in terms of business development skills in an urban setting than when you are in a rural setting (KI, Internal affairs).

Actually, we have seen more youths coming from the rural areas to the urban areas, selling off what they already have like land, houses and they come to town to ride boda-bodas. Some start selling things on the roadside because they are not yet well established... (Parliament official).

The level of education of the parents of migrants is also a factor associated with employment status. The education of the mother and father of the migrant presented a different contribution to the composition of the employment status categories. The results indicate that 27.7% of the male migrants who were not working reported that their fathers had attained primary education. This was also the case for thirty four percent of the self-employed migrants and 25.6% of the regular employees. However,

25.6% of the migrant youths in regular employment were those whose fathers had attended secondary education while 29.7% of the paid casual worker migrants did not know the education attained by their fathers. On the other hand, most of the migrants in all the employment status categories were those who reported that their mothers had attained primary education as their highest level. The results also indicate that most of the migrants in the employment categories were from households earning the lowest incomes. About thirty seven percent (36.9%) of the “not working” migrants, 41.8% of the self-employed, 45.7% of the regular employees and 55.1% of the paid casual workers were from households that were earning less than two hundred thousand shillings. Furthermore, 89% of the “not working”, 79.7% of the self-employed, 86.8% of the regular employee and 89.9% of the paid casual worker migrants had never traveled abroad for work. The results also show that 67.7% of the “not working” and 58.7% of the paid casual worker reported that they had never worked before migration. However, 51.5% of the self-employed and 52.7% of the regular employees were those who had worked before migrating to their new destination.

Table 3b shows that the female migrants aged 21-25 dominated the employment status categories of not working, regular employee and paid casual worker. About 4 in 10 of the female migrants who were not working were aged 21-25. Similarly, more than half (54%) of the “regular employee” and 49% of the “paid casual worker” female migrants were aged 21-25. Table 3b also shows that forty two percent of the self-employed female migrants were aged 26-30 while about thirty seven percent were aged 21-25.

The results also indicate that, regarding marital status, 48% of the not working female migrants had never married while 47.8% of the self-employed were married. In addition, 65.9% of the female regular employee migrants and 74% of the paid casual workers reported their marital status as never married. The never married young women are more flexible and may have fewer familial responsibilities. This probably explains why they dominated the employment status categories. Table 3b indicates that most of the female migrants who were in the “not working” and “self-employed” categories were spouses of the head of the household. For instance, of the not working female migrants, 35% reported spouse as their relationship with the head of household in which they were living, while 49% of the self-employed female migrants were spouses of the head of

household. The percentage of the women in the “not working” category could be linked to the fact that some women migrate for marriage reasons and thus primarily act as housewives. These migrants may also benefit from spousal support with regard to self-employment. It is also important to observe that 35.7% of the regular employee female migrants and 41.7% of the paid casual workers were heads of households. The results indicate that, in all the employment status categories, the majority of the female migrants had attained secondary education. Specifically, 42% of the “not-working” female migrants, 47% of the “self-employed”, 57% of the “regular employees” and 62% of the “paid casual workers” had attained a secondary education. About 33% of the self-employed male migrants had attained primary education. It was also reported that some youths (mainly those with lower than secondary education) usually sell their land to start boda-boda and other small-scale businesses that operate in the urban areas. This is seen in Box 4.

Compared with other areas of origin, rural areas contributed relatively large proportions of female migrants in all the employment categories; 49% of the non-working, 56% of the self-employed, 47% of the regular employees and 56% of the paid casual workers described their places of origin as being a rural area. It is also shown in Table 3.3b that as the place of origin became more urban, there were fewer migrants in the employment working categories. Again, this is another demonstration of rural-urban migration as the most common form of migration in Uganda.

Mother’s education was associated with the employment status of the female migrants. Fifty-two percent of the “not-working” migrants, 50% of the self-employed, 40.5% of the regular employees and 46.8% of the paid casual workers were from households that were earning less than two hundred thousand shillings. Most (over 90%) of the female migrants in all the employment categories were those who reported that they had never traveled abroad for work. The table also indicates that 64.9% of the “not working”, 54.3% of the self-employed and 72.7% of the paid casual workers said that they had never worked before migration while 54.8% of the regular employees had worked before migrating to the new destination.

10. Implications of youth migration and employment

Although youth migration is largely driven by the desire for employment it is both a challenge and an opportunity when it comes to finding employment. Some migrants do find opportunities in the places they travel to but some fail to find employment. The migration is largely driven by poverty in their place of origin and this may worsen if the migrants fail to find employment or other opportunities in the places to which they migrate.

11. National Youth Policy

The government of Uganda came up with an explicit and coordinated National Youth Policy to help address the developmental needs of the youth in a comprehensive manner. The goal of the policy is to provide an appropriate framework for enabling youth to develop social, economic, cultural and political skills so as to enhance their participation in the overall development process and improve their quality of life (MGLSD 2001). The policy notes that youth have been inadequately involved despite concerns about the problems that affect the youth and their increased gendered risks and vulnerabilities. The policy seeks to guide, harmonise, complement, enhance and promote the distinctive yet complementary actions and roles of all the stakeholders at all levels in youth development to enhance effectiveness of all efforts and also notes that the youths are powerless, most lack education and proper health care, they are unskilled with limited employment opportunities and options and lack control over resources and thus aims to create awareness on the youth needs and to define a place for the youth in society and national development (MGLSD 2001). It advocates for the mobilisation of resources to promote youth participation and integration in the mainstream of national development. While this policy outlines the key concerns of youths, there are rural-urban differences in access to information about the programmes and partnerships that the government proposes to set up with these being accessible to mainly the urban youth and not the rural youth which sometimes exacerbates problems of rural-urban migration, which is not only one of the major causes of youth unemployment but is also a consequence of the unemployment in the country. As one of its principles, the Policy seeks to promote the principle of equity in opportunities and in

distribution of programmes, services and resources by promoting equal access to socio-economic and employment opportunities that commensurate with ability, potential and needs of the youth (MGLSD 2001).

Although the National Youth Policy states that youths should contribute to social economic development at all levels, create gainful employment and take advantage of available education and training opportunities, the youth are marginalized by various employers including the Government during recruitment and hiring, due to lack of the relevant long-term experience that such employers require. Also, while the policy looks at education, training and capacity building as one of the strategic areas necessary for the fulfillment of its mission, goal and objectives, the policy is silent about the prospects for amending or reviewing the current Ugandan curriculum to reduce the widespread problem of a mismatch between the skills and knowledge of graduates and the labor market needs.

In terms of education, training and capacity building, the 2001 Uganda National Youth Policy sets supporting vocational training and establishment of internship and apprenticeship programmes in order to enable youths to acquire a range of skills and essential tools as one of its priorities. Indeed, vocational training has the capacity to solve the youth employment problems as it equips them with the practical problem solving and life skills that most formal education programmes do not provide.

The policy also provides for the promotion of functional literacy programmes and special training for youths who are illiterate and migrants including pastoralists, the internally displaced, refugees, street children and the disabled. This in itself is a good policy in as far as it ensures that all young people in the country have employable skills that they can utilize to start up various income generating projects but. there is the question of the adequacy of such programmes especially for the youth with disabilities.

The formulation and implementation of an appropriate National Employment Policy that, among other things, encourages the adoption of modern agricultural knowledge and provides young farmers with market information and agricultural extension services is also one of the provisions of the National Youth Policy. The policy advocates for the creation of a Youth Trust Bank in order to ensure that young people have access to low interest loans to start up and also maintain their businesses. While this is a good strategy to support youth enterprises, it lacked appropriate guidelines governing arrangements of this nature and is also devoid of

guidelines to ensure that the finance provided to such institutions is used for the right purpose.

In the National Youth policy, one of the mechanisms of dealing with youth employment problems, is advocating for career guidance but this mechanism has not been widely implemented by the line ministries who are among the custodians of this policy. As a result, many students continue to pursue studies without the right career guidance and thus education has created minimal employment opportunities. Consequently, the higher institutions of learning are producing more graduates that the market cannot absorb. Many priority target groups are mentioned in the National Youth Policy but there is no specific mention of “graduate youth” and “youths in vocational institutions”. Whereas the argument is that these are catered for in the “youth in schools/training institutions”, because of the unique nature of the challenges that these two groups face, each of them needs to be a priority in itself.

The Youth Policy recognizes that the trend of rural-urban migration by the youth in Uganda is largely driven by the search for better social services and amenities such as education and health services, the search for employment and/or business opportunities in the areas of destination. However, today many employers in the country still do not offer any form of health insurance to their employees. The salaries received by many workers, including young people, are too low to ensure that they access proper social services. The youth policy rightly notes that one of the major causes of unemployment and poverty in the country is the negative attitude by youth towards work, especially agricultural work.

12. The National Employment Policy

The national employment policy for Uganda lays down government objectives and processes for creating jobs and ensuring a better working environment for all workers. The policy recognizes that employment creation is central to the national socioeconomic development process (The Republic of Uganda 2011) and addresses the attainment of full employment coupled with decent work and equitable economic growth as one of the critical challenges facing the country. The policy also provides a framework to promote productive and decent employment and enterprise development, compliance with labour standards by employers, investors

and workers, social protection and social dialogue. The thrust of the policy is, therefore, the generation of productive and decent jobs for Ugandans. The policy encourages multi-skilling of the human resource, particularly the youth, entrepreneurship development for increased productivity and competitiveness which create a path to higher savings/profits and investments and the consequent creation of sustainable employment and economic growth. The policy outlines Vocational Training and Skills Training as a primary means of enabling young people to make a smooth transition from school to decent employment (The Republic of Uganda 2011). Just like in other parts of the world, fast growth in opportunities for permanent employment in the private sector remains the most effective route to sustainable poverty eradication in Uganda.

One of the main criticisms of Uganda's employment policy and systems still remains the lack of a minimum wage for all workers across the country. The policy puts employment creation at the centre of national policies, strategic plans and programmes but its silence on the minimum wage that employers should pay to the employees is a major bottleneck. Due to the absence of a minimum wage, many youths in employment are frustrated and therefore opt to quit their jobs because of high expenses vis-à-vis what they are paid at their respective places of employment and in other cases, they may work for months without being paid. The prevailing state of affairs discourages some unemployed youth from seeking employment and they thus deliberately choose not to engage in any form of employment.

13. Youth Employment Interventions in Uganda

In order to address youth employment, The Government of Uganda (GOU) has implemented various strategies including the Skilling Uganda Strategic Plan 2012-2022 as well as the National Youth Council – both of which provide a framework for youth engagement and employment. In addition, the Government of Uganda Vision 2040 strongly emphasizes skills and employment (Uganda National Planning Authority 2017). However, most of the initiatives are yet to gain ground in terms of full implementation and this has hindered young people from realizing their full potential.

With collaboration from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the Government of Uganda launched the National Strat-

egy for Youth Employment in Agriculture in 2017. One of the objectives of the Strategy is to ensure that Uganda's enterprising and innovative youth access proper incentives that help them unleash their potential and this is in line with the national youth policy. The United Nations country program is implementing the Youth Engagement and Employment (YEE) as one of the areas of intervention in Uganda. This intervention focuses on young people and empowering them for decision-making processes and targeting Uganda's development needs. Consequently, different United Nations agencies have been constituted into a forum for co-ordination of youth targeted interventions to accelerate the joint implementation of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) Action Plan and Delivering under the Sustainable Livelihoods.

Employment relations in Uganda are primarily governed by the Employment Act of 2006 which has a direct bearing on youth unemployment in the country. The Employment Act established the Labour Advisory Board. As per Section 22 (4) of the Act, the role of the board is to, among other things advise the responsible Minister on aspects of vocational guidance and counselling, the operation of the employment service and the development of the employment service policy as well as the formulation and development of a national policy on vocational rehabilitation. The Labour Advisory Board and its role are thus key to solving the problem of widespread unemployment in the country.

Since 1963, Uganda has been a member of the International Labour Organisation and on 2nd June 2005, the country ratified the R111 Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Recommendation, 1958 although the convention has not yet been adopted into domestic law. This recommendation requires every member state to formulate a national policy for the prevention of discrimination in employment and occupation. Also, the Government of Uganda ratified the Employment Policy Convention 1964 on 23rd June 1967. According to Article 1 of the Convention, each member shall declare and pursue, as a major goal, an active policy designed to promote full, productive and freely chosen employment. This is viewed as a stimulus for economic growth and development, raising levels of living, meeting manpower requirements and overcoming unemployment and underemployment.

14. Planned programme interventions and draft policies

It was reported that the government of Uganda, through its various departments, was drafting policies on young people's employment. The National Planning Policy was in the final stage of developing a policy on population to address issues such as investing in young people. Similarly, the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development has pointed to the National Apprenticeship Strategy and the National Informal Sector Strategy as key strategies proposed by the government to foster youth employment

In investing in young people, we are considering a long term approach which looks at the young people of tomorrow; we are putting in place the life cycle of the young people starting with early childhood development where we shall address their education, health needs until they are adults. We also look at their skills needs, employment needs, career needs and health needs until adulthood and that is the first young person we are looking at. The second group is those who are already young persons. Some of these are educated, they tend to have skills, but which are not good enough to appeal to employers. So, investing in those young people means assessing their skills vis-à-vis the market needs and then equipping them with those skills that the market needs at this moment (key informant, NPA).

15. Effectiveness of government policies

Although, the government policies exist, the key informant interviews revealed that there were few policies that specifically govern youth migration and employment. Most of the policies were general in nature and there was no specific mention of how such policies influence youth employment and migration. Some of the policies were The Micro and Small Enterprise Development Policy, the Employment Policy, the Prevention of Trafficking in Persons Act (2009) among others. Operation Wealth Creation (OWC), Youth Livelihood Programme (YLP), and Women Empowerment Programmes (WEP) emerged as the government programs that are directly or indirectly aimed at promoting youth entrepreneurship. YLP and WEP were said to have components of skills acquisition and development as well as providing seed capital.

We have the micro and small enterprise development policy through which we want to improve the skills of youth and women so that we can address gender issues in skills acquisition and employment. There is also a policy on agriculture where we are saying let the youth be involved where they are; we also have the cooperatives policy where we are calling for the involvement of youth both in the traditional and new age cooperatives (key informant, Ministry of Trade).

Heavy investment in infrastructural development was reported as a deliberate attempt by government to provide young people with employment. This is the case with the massive road construction projects across the country, dam construction, the standard gauge Railway and the oil and gas sector. This may not, however, create employment among the youth as some of the local youths report being omitted from project jobs. Discussions with youth groups hinted that the project implementers come with their own manpower. The youths complained that the existing policies frustrate their efforts to start businesses. On the other hand, some youths find it difficult to access bank loans due to high interest rates. In addition, banks were reported to be hesitant to lend to youths operating small businesses as they are considered to be sometimes fragile in nature and may be unregistered.

We don't have opportunities and these people who take contracts come with their people from wherever they are coming. At least the leaders should encourage or even compel them to largely use the manpower from here (FGD with employed youth, Arua).

They also over tax small businesses right from inception, so even when the business grows, and you are supposed to start reaping the rewards of your work that is when the URA also starts coming for taxes. So, the local business owners, unlike their counterparts the foreign investors, don't have any tax holidays (FGD with self-employed youth, Gulu).

...the banks have very high interest rates, so in most cases they are not a viable option to fund businesses. The repayment periods normally start after one month, but which business can start making profit after one month? (FGD with self-employed youth, Gulu).

One key informant from the Ministry of Gender shared that the other programme the government has considered involves entering into bilateral employment agreements for Ugandan youths abroad.

...we now look at finding employment for youths outside and we have frameworks that help 75,000 youths in the Middle East, UAE, Afghanistan, Qatar and other Arab countries. Bilateral and labor agreements are signed with Qatar, Jordan and UAE (KI, Ministry of Gender).

Other context specific programmes that support youth employment were identified during discussions with young people. In Busia and Gulu, a Community Development (CDD) Fund that targets youths in groups was identified. However, details about this fund such as the source of funds, coverage, target population, etc. did not emerge. In Arua, youths identified a programme under ACAV that supports young people who have trained in carpentry. They also cited one SNV project called YES, said to fund young entrepreneurs. Although no longer active, this programme targeted vulnerable households including those of youths by offering non-repayable funds.

...the government is also helping the youth with the CDD funds, they encourage the youth to form groups of around fifteen people and then you go the Community Development Officer. You fill in a form and identify an enterprise of your choice; this money is also non-repayable (FGD with self-employed youth, Gulu).

16. Knowledge and awareness of youth of existing policies and interventions

While a number of policies on youth employment exist, it is evident that many young people do not know about them. The youths in various focus group discussions demonstrated limited or no knowledge about the existing policies and programmes on youth employment. Box 3.1 shows some of the findings.

Completely No! Because even here at the Division, getting information is a hustle unless you come to the Division offices and even the offices are bad at giving the information. You find it very difficult to get info about employment. There are no gazetted areas like information desks where the youth can go (FGD with employed youth, Arua).

The Youth Livelihood Programme was the best known and popular programme with some reporting that they had benefited from it. It was however found that some youth demonstrated scant knowledge of the programme. The limited or even lack of knowledge among youths about the YLP programme has implications for their access to, and the success of, such a programme.

Knowledge about YLP

...arrangements are always there and I'm among the youths that benefited. We got money for youth livelihood and we are using it efficiently (FGD with employed youth, Busia).

We also have youth livelihood program (FGD with employed youth, Arua).

There are loans that the government gives youths who are in groups. That loan is interest free during the grace period of about one year. Thereafter, interest starts accruing (FGD with self-employed youth, Gulu).

...for me I have heard of the youth livelihood program but I don't know what it does and its location (FGD with employed youth, Busia).

I just hear the words like Youth livelihood program (FGD with employed youth, Busia).

I don't see people who belong there and there is no one you can ask. Maybe the program reaches the town people and for us who stay down there, I think there is really nothing. Maybe it's only for town dwellers (FGD with employed youth, Busia).

17. Conclusion

Various policies and interventions have been implemented but these have largely been focused on the general population. Even where some youth specific interventions existed, they were not well known by the young people and yet they are the target beneficiaries. This affects the effec-

tiveness of such interventions. Despite the viability of goals and objectives of youth and employment policies in Uganda, to deal with the existing unemployment challenges in the country particularly for the youth, the Government of Uganda needs to address the current problem of the high population growth rate in the country. With the fast rate at which Uganda's population is increasing, the current employment policy will not become an effective tool in reducing youth unemployment in the country. The increase in the population intensifies the pressure on existing economic resources and consequently affects the capacity of the economy to employ its large labor force.

18. Policy implications for HDI

Efforts are needed to ensure that policies provide specific and meaningful ways where the rights of young people are not infringed upon by the various stakeholders in the employment sector.

The Government of Uganda, through the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development, needs to play a more pro-active role in ensuring that financial measures that have been put in place to address the problem of youth unemployment are adhered to.

It should be noted that, while the policy looks at education, training and capacity building as one of the strategic areas necessary for it to fulfil its mission, goal and objectives, the policy does not look at prospects of amending or reviewing of the current Ugandan curriculum to reduce the widespread problem of a mismatch between the skills and knowledge schools are imparting and the existing needs of the labor market.

The national education curriculum should address issues of unemployment, including education focused on entrepreneurial skills, financial literacy, savings, and proper use of resources.

A standard recruitment procedure needs to be embedded in a given Government policy and should be strictly followed by both public and private entities. The procedures should ensure that all positions are advertised by employers and that these are offered on merit to the best candidate.

Sections of youth remain unemployed because, despite having the zeal to start up business projects that would generate income, they lack sufficient funds to facilitate these processes. This would encourage equitable

access to finances by young people who seldom have sufficient capital and assets to finance loans intended to build their business enterprises. In countries such as Malaysia, it has been realized that self-employment is a necessary tool in building sustainable economies with potential to absorb the existing labor force.

Future policy and programme interventions should also sensitize and educate young people so that they are aware of the existing policies and can easily benefit from them. The beneficiaries should know what policies are available and how they can be involved if these policies are to be effective.

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Creating Change from the Bottom Up: How does HDI Raise Civil Society in Rural Uganda?

Louisa-Madeline Singer

1. Introduction

According to the literature and practical experiences, Ugandan civil society has a long history of being threatened and restricted by the government (HDI member 1, personal interview, September 2, 2018; Bertelsmann Stiftung 2018; Fourie & Kakumba 2011; King 2015; Larok 2010; Moyo 2010). In the majority of the literature, civil society started in colonial Uganda and re-emerged in the 1990s when the government of Uganda introduced democratic reforms as a response to the state's legitimacy crisis and to policies by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank which aimed at introducing economic reforms and promoting democracy in developing countries such as Uganda. Even though, as a consequence of the reforms, the authoritarian Ugandan government claimed to open up a sphere for the consequently flourishing civil society, implementation was not taken seriously and civil society quickly continued to face challenges. The government reverted to an authoritarian leadership style and introduced a raft of regulations to restrict activities by civil society.

Yet, at the same time, there are many examples of successful civil society organizations. When, for example, Dr Agnes Apea introduced her female farmer's organization "Hope Development Initiative" (HDI) at the Transcultural Leadership Summit at Zeppelin University in 2017, she argued that HDI was a successful initiative in providing services, promoting societal transformation and social change (Apea 2018). What makes

HDI a particularly interesting case is that it not only operates in Amolatar, a district in rural Uganda, but that it appears to flourish and overcome these political challenges. For mainly historical reasons, the context for civil society in rural Uganda differs substantially from urban areas. For example, in Uganda's rural areas, associational participation tends to be low, economic, political and civil society participation differs and it is said to be "deeply shaped by a patriarchal culture" (Bertelsmann Stiftung 2018: 21). Especially in Amolatar, the home district of HDI, the traditional value system and hierarchical community system are said to have remained mostly intact, also due to the area's isolated position (HDI leader, personal interview, September 7, 2018). Furthermore, access to education and health facilities is limited and, even though economic activity at the subsistence level, poverty and hunger are declining, they are still at an alarming level in rural areas (Ugandan Bureau of Statistics [UBOS] 2014).

This strong rural-urban cleavage in civil society rose as a consequence of differences in the historical evolution of state-society relations because of colonial rule and customary traditions (Mamdani 1996). Therefore, in analyzing the case, especially Western scholars need to be cautious. Local scholars argue that in applying a Western concept of civil society to Uganda, thus distinguishing the sphere of civil society from the market and the state, civil society is considered as a post-colonial and predominantly urban phenomenon and risks failing to understand local civil society traditions (Datzberger 2016; Mamdani 1996; Moyo 2010; Omach 2016). As this chapter seeks to examine HDI and how it increases civil society in rural Uganda, the context needs to be understood. In order to critically reflect on the inherent Western perspective, civil society in rural Uganda is explored in its evolution from traditional cultural values and its characteristics today are empirically assessed. Therefore, the analysis is guided by a twofold question:

1. How is civil society in rural Uganda characterized?
2. How does HDI create change at the local level?¹

¹ "To create change" is formulated in a neutral way since due to the short research stay and period for familiarization with the research field the author is limited in gaining a comprehensive view and understanding of the context and dynamics within the district. Even though critical assessment is practiced, the perspective remains based on an informed Westerners view.

In order to answer these questions and to empirically understand civil society in rural Uganda, a qualitative case study has been conducted as will be outlined in the research design. To begin, traditional and African literature on civil society will be introduced. The first question will be approached by addressing traditional concepts, forms of engagement and processes in rural areas. Subsequently, the second question will give an empirical example and highlight the context of HDI, its interactions and how it creates change. This is followed by academic and practical implications, before concluding and raising awareness for critical reflections and mutual learning opportunities. Even though the Western concept of civil society is often applied to Uganda, this chapter emphasizes that it is inadequate for understanding its dynamics.

2. *Literature*

In the literature, civil society in Uganda is discussed but has many shortcomings. First, it is mainly derived from a European concept and Western worldview. The concept of civil society originated in Europe and evolved over time (Armstrong, Bello, Gilson & Spini 2011; Eberlei 2014; Kocke 2004). From this perspective, civil society is described as a conceptual sphere distinct from the market, state and family which is formed by voluntary, self-organized organizations. On the basis of values such as self-determination and tolerance civil society seeks to pursue common interests and claim democratic rights from the state (Strolovitch & Townsend-Bell 2016). This concept changed over time and was influenced by political, economic and social developments. Newer theorizations such as by Keane, Walzer & Putnam stress the ideas of freedom, pluralism and societal autonomy within civil society (Keane 1993; Kocke 2004). Nevertheless, Uganda has a different historical political, economic and social background with only short periods of democracy. The concept of civil society as a sphere distinct from the state, market and family which promotes democratic norms did not evolve naturally but was first introduced by its colonizers. In the 1980s, the term civil society was mainly framed by the IMF and World Bank to introduce and legitimate democratic reforms and a neoliberal agenda in developing countries (Bräutigam & Segarra 2007). While first, the concept gained a lot of practical and academic importance through the intense promotion of a “global civil society” in the develop-

ing world especially, it was later strongly criticized for maintaining post-colonial structures (Glasius 2005; Ziai 2010). In this perspective, promoting ‘good governance’, liberal reforms and building up a civil society introduces Western normative ideals. However, as societies still have to renegotiate the legacy of slave trade, colonialism and elite capture, the ideals are adopted on the surface but contradict communal life, as will also be shown later on (Datzberger 2016). In this regard, the literature neglects to look beyond Western traditions and apply a broader local definition of civil society.

Second, as a consequence of this, the starting point for civil society in Uganda is commonly seen as having been in colonial times, when the first industry groups were created (Fourie & Kakumba 2011; King 2015; Larok 2009; Moyo 2010; Okuku 2002; Omach 2016; Peterson 2016). In this tradition, civil society is commonly treated as being a sphere distinct from the market, the state and the family and is connected to democracy (Keane 1993). It is frequently argued that, with the establishment of the British Protectorate, civil society was born. Only “civilized” citizens – those who assimilated to the European lifestyle and value system, as opposed to the “natives” – were granted political rights and considered as civil society (Mamdani 1996). At this time, informal groups such as workers’ unions and business groups were created and dealt with labor practices and taxation (Wamucii 2014). Furthermore, church organizations originated in the last period of colonialism and accommodated informal groups at the local level (Wamucii 2014). Still today, social engagement and voluntary work is strongest within the “religious framework” (Bertelsmann Stiftung 2018: 20). Later, women’s organizations played an important role in overthrowing the state in 1962 and gave rise to a civil society after the colonial period (CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation 2006; Mamdani 1996).

However, the period of democracy was only short-lived and led to restrictions on civil society. The consequent decades were characterized by violent conflicts, ethnic tensions, military coups and brutal regimes (Quinn 2014). Despite the challenges, the weak roots of civil society and political opposition grew but remained threatened under the subsequent president, Yoweri Museveni. He banned political and civil society associations, pursued a strict single-party government, centered around the National Resistance Movement (NRM) and pushed Uganda into “the state’s legitimacy crisis” (Bainomugisha et al. 2017; Kew & Oshikoya 2014; Quinn

2014). To introduce a policy change, parliament restored the traditional kingdoms as cultural institutions in 1993, giving them the status of non-political civil society organizations (Bandyopadhyay & Green 2006; Peterson 2016). This change was also a response to increasing pressure by the World Bank and IMF, international donors and NGOs, leading to an opening up of the political system and public sphere for political pluralism and civil society participation in 2005 (Wamucii 2014). As a consequence, NGOs can generally “work freely and cooperate with foreign partners” (Bertelsmann Stiftung 2018: 12). However, many NGO laws were passed, manifesting the disabling environment and barriers to taking action (Larok 2010). To avoid security threats, many NGOs established a system of vertical relations and patronage bonds to survive as an organization and respond to patrimonialism-influenced politics (King 2015). Especially at the local level, NGOs are afraid of being too confrontational since the local governments closely report on them. Also, some use NGOs as a means of employment and prefer to be government contractors when it comes to service delivery (Fourie & Kakumba 2011).

Today, civil society organizations, mainly NGOs, are well established and important partners for the government in providing services and promoting development. A lot of cooperation takes place on social and economic issues. Today, a diverse set of civil society organizations fulfils a variety of functions and differ in their operational style and strategy. However, many NGOs are centered in Kampala and dominated by the urban elite (Armstrong et al. 2011). As a result, from a Western definition of civil society, focusing on urban or elite-owned types of civil society organizations is a third dominant focus in the literature. NGOs “emerged in the fields of development, human rights and charity work” and are either or both involved in service-delivery and advocacy work, the latter occurring mainly in urban areas (Bertelsmann Stiftung 2018: 18). Nevertheless, in rural areas, by contrast, other types of organization prevail, such as community-based organizations (CBOs) like “rural [...] mutual self-help groups” (Omach 2016: 81). As the LRA conflict devastated Northern Uganda and most international NGOs engage in rural areas, rural Uganda is not entirely ignored in the literature and in most cases treated as an empirical phenomenon (Catherine & Veneranda 2014; Omach 2016). Furthermore, local approaches highlight the changing face of civil society in Uganda’s history or argue that, in order to build up popular organizations, NGOs have to distance themselves from the liberal and de-politi-

cized paradigm (Datzberg 2016; King 2015; Moyo 2010). Nevertheless, civil society is still frequently approached from an urban rather than a traditional rural perspective, and rather top-down than bottom-up. This is, in particular, the case since, in Uganda, as a consequence of patrimonialism and elite capture, most civil society organizations are led by an educated, urban elite that is dependent on Western donors and their conditions (Bukenya & Hickey 2014; Catherine & Veneranda 2014; Datzberger 2016; Fourie & Kakumba 2011; King 2015; Larok 2010).

To conclude, this brief overview shows that civil society traditions in rural Uganda have a weak position in the literature. As criticized by Mamdani (1996), civil society, understood in the Western tradition, prevails and ignores any pre-colonial activity in local communities. Yet, civil society developed in several non-linear historical moments that shaped the relation between state and society. Furthermore, this historical evolution deepened differences between urban and rural areas – which were later renegotiated through patrimonialism, a form of politics that reinforced power relations around a dominant urban elite. Instead of focusing on the historical evolution of a civil society, understood as critically assessing the incorporation in the colonial state and ongoing dominance of a racist civil society, most scholars understand civil society as a normative, programmatic and ideological concept (Mamdani 1996). This view is supported by Datzberger (2016) who warns that normative conceptions, for example, risk ignoring political self-determination, creation of collective identity and political cultures at the local level. Accordingly,

“civil society in post-conflict sub-Saharan Africa has to be regarded as an empirical and not purely normative concept to enable local societies to come to terms with a colonial, postcolonial and conflict-shattered past” (ibid.: 81).

3. *Research Design*

For an empirical assessment of HDI and civil society in rural Uganda, a qualitative case-study approach is used. Case studies are used to focus on phenomena in a real-life context and when boundaries between the phenomenon and context are not clear (Baxter & Jack 2008; Yin 2001). An abductive approach is used, which means that basic categories are de-

rived from theory and serve as a starting point for demarcating the research field, but are complemented by new evidence from the field (Schwartz-Shea & Yanow 2012). This implies that, initially, Western categories such as civil society's relations with the state, market and family as well as its functions, processes and goals are still used but reconsidered on the basis of evidence from the field.

In order to gain a first overview of civil society in Uganda, desk research was conducted to theoretically understand the historical evolution of civil society with regard to international development policy and the national context. Publications and strategy papers of the Ugandan government, press chapters, books and reports from international, regional and local organizations provide an overview of current examples of civil society. Second, interviews were conducted during a 10-day research stay in Uganda at the beginning of September 2018 as part of the Transcultural Research Group. Expert interviews were conducted with board members and active members of the HDI, representatives of the state as well as of representatives of traditional structures. During the interviews, some challenges arose. The research group's arrival was celebrated by the communities and connected to the expectation of the group bringing immediate support to improve the interviewees' agricultural output. Furthermore, I realized that some English terms I used (such as "civil society", "NGO" or "change") were either not known or not understood. As I do not speak or understand Luo, the local language of Amolatar, and did not use a local translator, I was limited to speaking to interviewees with a command of English. Most of them were part of HDI's leadership structure and might have been pre-selected. This is important to be mentioned with regard to the reliability and validity of the research project.

4. *Results*

Before examining the potential of HDI to raise civil society in rural Uganda, a closer examination of the sphere in which it engages is required in order to critically distinguish values inspired by Western and traditional Ugandan perspectives.

4.1 *Characterising Civil Society in Rural Uganda*

Four categories are derived in order to characterize today's understanding of civil society in rural Uganda. Since non-Western traditions play an important role in the understanding of community and civil society, "traditional cultural values"² are first mapped. In order to understand structures and institutions, current forms of engagement as well as interactions and processes within the sphere are presented. Lastly, shifts in the economic and political sphere pave the way for changes within civil society as well, which are outlined and show an approximation of rural and urban forms of civil society.

4.1.1 *"Traditional Cultural Values" in Rural Uganda*

Before the dominance of European colonizers, civil society did not exist as understood today because of differences in the value system and societal, political and economic structure. Life was centred around the (extended) family, the community and the tribe (Onyango 2010). The family is the smallest and central unit in Uganda's traditional society. The self-definition through others and importance of kinship originate in the family structure, as, traditionally, being excluded from a family means that individuals are deprived of their right of existence (Onyango 2010). The families are composed of the village citizens who form the community. This term paraphrases the inclusiveness and solidarity within the village. Each community member is responsible for looking after the well-being of the others (Onyango 2010). Until today, life in the community is guided by the principle of unity and mutual trust.

There is little economic activity besides subsistence-farming because of the community's dependence on it. Everyone is supposed to contribute to the good of the community, and not to work for personal achievements or moral implications. Prosperity, satisfaction, justice and fairness are principles that bind the community together. Both men and women are supposed to work hard in a shared environment, but gender roles are strict in the hierarchical, patri-lineal community. Men are supposed to open the

² This term is derived from the work "Ugandan Traditional Cultural Values" by Onyango (2010) and will therefore be used here, too.

land, do the hard-physical labor and handle the income as opposed to women, whose task is to look after the garden, weed, harvest, cook and educate the children (Apea & Göller 2018). Girls are considered less valuable than boys and are traditionally married off very early (HDI leader, personal interview, September 7, 2018).

Traditionally, the community gathers around the mango tree for public deliberation and to make decisions. Mango trees are very important for communal life. They mark a physical space where the community meets, discusses and makes decisions (HDI leader, personal interview, September 7, 2018). Yet, as a sign of gender imbalances, men usually sit on chairs at the front and women on mats behind them (Apea & Göller 2018). Nevertheless, despite the hierarchical system based on mutual respect, unity is the key feature of how decisions are made (HDI member 1, personal interview, September 2, 2018; HDI member 2, personal interview, September 2, 2018). Major changes usually take time to develop.

Hence, traditional society is guided by a distinct value system which partly prevails until the present day. Traditionally, there was no state to guarantee rights and be responsible for the individual because this task was performed by the family and community (HDI leader, personal interview, September 7, 2018; HDI member 1, personal interview, September 2, 2018; HDI member 2, personal interview, September 2, 2018). Any economic activity was done by the family and remained within it. Until today, self-help schemes and community-based organizations exist and dominate civil society functions (Bainomugisha et al. 2017; CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation 2006). They differ from Western advocacy-based traditions of civil society, and can be seen as a first approach to depicting civil society in a different light.

4.1.2 Forms of Civil Society Engagement

Civil society organizations are motivated to pursue goals of public interest and to serve the community. Traditionally, the value system is based on collective benefit rather than personal gain (Onyango 2010). This expresses itself in community-based institutions which can take the form of community-based organizations and cooperatives. They are difficult to distinguish between and mainly operate in rural Uganda. CBOs are based on, and strongly linked to, their members (Fischer 2006). Traditionally,

they serve as a safety net and unit for pursuing common interests, though in a rather informal way. Both have their roots before colonial times and further developed as trade increased, such as through rural cooperatives for export crop growers. Furthermore, credit and saving societies, burial-funding associations and self-help farmers' groups are common types of CBOs (CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation 2006; Omach 2016). Through offering "cell-phone based mobile-money service" (Bertelsmann Stiftung 2018: 24) they provide access to microfinance to the rural poor and thereby "contribute to social cohesion at the local level, based on mutual trust and reciprocal support" (Bertelsmann Stiftung 2018: 20). King (2015) stresses the potential of savings-based finance, a federated structure, shared identity and associational solidarity. These characteristics originate in the community's marginalization and can lead to successful political capacity building by CBOs.

Also, in rural Uganda, local and international NGOs are present. They mainly operate in the field of service delivery and civic education. Yet, communities tend to be critical of the role of civil society and NGOs. Several interviewees expressed their dissent with the work of NGOs, which they perceive as greedy and corrupt because of the structure of their loan-system (local political leader, personal interview, September 2, 2018). This supports results from studies which show that, through attracting members, some NGOs create dependency on the community's financial situation and undermine solidarity (King 2015). Another example shows how an NGO was chased away because it did not involve the community in its project. It approached a community to offer them tap water and expected to relieve the women from the long walks to collect water. However, the NGO ignored the structural roots of what they considered as the main problem:

"The community didn't want it. Why? Because in our culture, the women do not have time to talk to their fellow women, to discuss, to have time. The only time they have is when they are walking long distance to go and collect water. Now these people never consulted the women. They left their tapped water near the trading centres, and then they went for the other ones they brought home" (HDI leader, personal interview, September 7, 2018).

This example shows that communities need to be involved and respected if NGOs want to be successful. Therefore, the next passage pays attention

to processes and communication with the community, government and within civil society.

4.1.3 Interactions and Processes With(in) Civil Society

Civil society interacts with citizens to stand in for their rights and pursue common interests for the benefit of, at least, parts of society. Yet, approaching citizens and communities is not always easy. To reach them, personal contact is very important as is the use of different media. Whereas in urban Uganda, social media and the internet are mainly used to mobilize people, personal visits and meetings prevail in rural Uganda (Bainomugisha et al. 2017; Willems 2014). This is due to the isolated position of communities, their lack of infrastructure and access to news and information. This isolates rural civil society groups from urban civil society groups because of the disconnect resulting from contrasting use of communication techniques.

Nevertheless, this does not affect the ability to interact with civil society members and political leaders in rural Uganda. Studies show that CBOs have the ability to influence local governance and raise resources to finance political processes. They “circumvent [...] local brokers, patrons and decision-making processes by engaging with international or district-level actors” (King 2015: 751). They engage intensely with the parish level and usually have many members in leadership positions. Despite their relevance and potential for civic participation in rural areas, their impact is estimated to remain limited for reasons of limited access to funding, infrastructure and education in mainly rural areas (HDI leader, personal interview, September 7, 2018).

Interestingly, with the system of local commissioners, the state introduced a system of government representatives at the local level, which is meant to perform the same tasks as civil society is allowed to do: providing services and monitoring policies. There are five levels, reaching from the village level (LC1), to the parish (LC2), sub-county (LC3), local council (LC4) and to the district level (LC5). The names of the councils lower than district level vary depending on their location in rural or urban areas or municipalities. Local Councils perform functions in the political, financial and legal field and engage in in the planning and monitoring of development and service delivery processes (Bainomugisha et al. 2017).

Also, a Resident District Commissioner was established to directly represent the president in the district. This reform thus connects the Western type of democracy with the revival of Uganda's traditional system. It aims at increasing access to government structures, participation in the political process and a two-way-communication (Bainomugisha et al. 2017). If civil society members are well trained, they can exert a good level of influence. Education is therefore important in stimulating civil society participation in areas with limited capacity to participate in the state and the market.

Nevertheless, skepticism about cooperation between civil society and local governments prevail, given the low capacity of local governments, high levels of corruption and the difficulty to involve all political leaders (Muhumuza 2010). Yet, despite mutual suspicion, local governments recognize the strength of such organizations, their closeness to the ground-level of the population, capacity to mobilize and their resources. Also, civil society is generally aware of the need for a good relationship with the government (NGO leader, personal interview, September 3, 2018). The key requirement for actors of civil society in rural Uganda in particular is thus not to work in isolation. It is important for them to acknowledge what the government has tried to do and to see themselves as a partner. Cooperation is thus a central part in civil society's interaction with the government, especially if the organization engages in service delivery. To promote change and raise criticism, especially when doing advocacy work, actors must try to not be too confrontational in order to be successful and have an impact (NGO leader, personal interview, September 3, 2018).

4.1.4 Changes in the Sphere for Civil Society

Despite a prevailing lack of trust in political and legal institutions as well as intolerance regarding diverse political opinions, changes occur in civil society participation in rural Uganda (Bertelsmann Stiftung 2018). Growing corruption, inequality, urbanization, population growth, increasing access to communication technology, infrastructure and education are challenging the dominant party, the National Resistance Movement (NRM). This results in increasing adoption of modern, urban forms of civic engagement such as advocacy work. Furthermore, typical Western

civil society functions are catching up as compared to service delivery and community service. Political activists are becoming increasingly vocal in the field of human rights, gender issues and anti-corruption, to name but a few.

Nevertheless, despite the gap between rural and urban Uganda still being marked, this remains a mainly urban phenomenon. Even though civil society organizations are increasingly involved in the field of agriculture, voluntary involvement in associations and participation in civil society is still observed to be lower than in urban areas (Bertelsmann Stiftung 2018). In rural areas, self-help, the provision of daily services and community services centered around kinship networks still prevail and shape civil society, supporting the argument that the historical evolution of state-society relations is relevant for the rural-urban divide (HDI leader, personal interview, September 7, 2018; NGO leader, personal interview, September 3, 2018; Mamdani 1996).

4.2 Hope Development Initiative: Creating Change at the Local Level

After having demarcated the context for civil society in rural areas, the case of the Hope Development Initiative (HDI) will now be introduced. The focus will rely on contextualising HDI in order to map processes and interactions with its stakeholders as well as its potential for creating change in the community and civil society.

4.2.1 Context of HDI

HDI is a civil society organization which operates in the field of agriculture in rural Uganda. It defines itself as a “female farmers’ organization” and was founded by Dr Agnes Apea (after her studies in the United Kingdom and many years of political activism) and twenty other women in 2010. It seeks to empower female rice farmers in rural Northern Uganda to gain financial independence, connecting leadership development with economic development and social empowerment. Its work consists in the distribution of seeds, the realization of agricultural training, the availability of production plans, supporting measures to access the market and

financial support. Its objective is to foster development in rural Uganda through the empowerment of women in agriculture. HDI mainly operates in Amolatar District, a rural and isolated area in Uganda that is not really comparable to other regions (head of international political foundation, personal interview, September 6, 2018). Only recently were a ferry and power generator established, these being major infrastructure developments for the district to which HDI largely contributed.

HDI considers itself as a hybrid of CBO, NGO and cooperative. It faced legal difficulties to register as an NGO since it makes little profit with their organization but does not qualify as a business neither. HDI has a large membership base since it operates within a whole district (HDI leader, personal interview, September 7, 2018; HDI member 3, personal interview, September 1, 2018). HDI's CEO Apea – who was also appointed Chair of the Local Government Finance Commission – has the main responsibility for the organization. A small team supports her with administrative work in the city. In the district, she employs a group of women who are in charge of the mill, the store and in reaching out to the communities. They are mainly women in (pro bono) political leadership positions, such as chairpersons and publicity managers. HDI's structure reflects the society, where participation is encouraged and civil society overlaps with the state as part of the political sphere which is represented by the local government structure.

HDI follows a “community-driven or a needs-based [...]” approach (HDI leader, personal interview, September 7, 2018). Yet, it can neither be fully classified as community service, nor service delivery and civil society functions but is a blend of these functions. The initiative is based on the pillars of farming and female empowerment to make women financially independent through farming. They are supposed to gain self-esteem and leadership skills “to stand up for themselves [...] and mediate the dynamics of a group” (Apea & Göller 2018: 96). This aims at reducing inequality and poverty, increasing the awareness for literacy and knowledge and developing the district (Apea & Göller 2018). The function of HDI can thus be defined as a hybrid of community service and service delivery, which includes raising awareness for civil society functions.

4.2.2 *Processes and Interactions with HDI's Stakeholders*

The Hope Development Initiative is engaged in many processes with the community, government, civil society and international donors. The relationship to the community is practically equal to that to HDIs members. Even though, in the beginning, some community members were hesitant to register, their neighbour's success story motivated them to participate too. Not only could they sell rice at a higher price, but also invest in education and health (HDI member 1, personal interview, September 2, 2018; HDI member 3, personal interview, September 1, 2018). They were also inspired by Apea's leadership, whom they honour for being close to their lives, for respecting and supporting them.

The women name her "Imat Ocere" (meaning Mama Rice in the local language Luo) which shows how profound the relationship between her and the community is. In their eyes she is a role model who is educated, financially independent and has the chance to travel to other countries. They even nominated her as a candidate to the Parliament and are very proud of her appointment to the Chair of the Local Government Finance Commission because she is shown to be one of them. As pointed out, community-orientation is very important in Apea's approach to leadership. When she approached the communities for the first time, she had a set of ideas how to make a better living for the community:

"And I thought about maybe they want to make bread and start selling by the roadside. No: 'We want to do farming. That is what we were born to know, that's what our grandparents did it, our mothers did it. We are not going to school, we don't know how to read and write. So it is the hope that we want to use'" (HDI leader, personal interview, September 7, 2018).

Today, she first asks what the community needs and wants to do. This approach is uncommon in Uganda and is little respected by any other non-community-based institution. Also, the programmes she carries out do not only originate from the community, but also remain there (HDI leader, personal interview, September 7, 2018). For example, the leaders who are trained by HDI return to serve as political or community leaders. Furthermore, HDI helps them "owning it as their own NGO with having their own leaders and doing their own things with their own community" (HDI leader, personal interview, September 7, 2018). They respect Apea

for her motivation, which is not political but aims at developing the community and creating value at grassroots level (local political leader, personal interview, September 2, 2018).

HDI enjoys good relations with the government at all levels. Unlike at the beginning, when the Local Commissioners were suspicious of HDI's activities, today, they are supportive of them. HDI is mentioned as a prime partner for the government in the field of wealth creation. The store manager observes that when the government "bring[s] new seeds to the district, they first sponsor the HDI members [...] [who] are given the first priority" (HDI member 3, personal interview, September 1, 2018). Whenever guests or visitors come, the Local Commissioners and RDC ask to be informed. Their trust in HDI has strongly increased since many HDI members have become part of the local leadership structures and women's councils. According to Apea, it helped to have the government approve the work of HDI and to improve community mobilization.

Apart from the government, HDI also cooperates with other civil society actors in the communities such as with religious leaders who are important for "for mobilization, but also to create awareness and also the mindset" (HDI leader, personal interview, September 7, 2018), and with traditional cultural leaders. Since HDI opposes the traditional value system and hierarchy, their support is important in gaining and maintaining the membership base. For example, when Apea called the women to meetings, men were suspicious. They saw in her a stranger who indoctrinates women with bad Western thoughts. Together with the traditional leaders they came up with a compromise:

"We agreed that we were a 100% female organization, but husbands may be involved in the meetings. For them, this was a success because, in their values, they had to affirm their manhood as head of the household, which was exactly what they were given seemingly by this compromise. For the women it was an improvement in status as their efforts and independent work were now officially recognized by the community, which also transformed their role as women in the community." (Apea & Göller 2018: 99)

Apea thus decided to involve all actors who were relevant to the community in HDI processes in order to be sustainable.

4.3 *Creating Change in the Community and Civil Society*

According to HDI's members, the initiative is changing the community. Children are not dropping out of school any longer and even study at the renowned Makerere University in Kampala. New houses have been built and turned into permanent constructions. The members' mindset has changed, and instead of considering farming as subsistence agriculture they have started to see it as a business (HDI leader, personal interview, September 7, 2018). Also, motorized bicycles have been introduced as forms of transport for women. Thus, not only the financial situation but also gender equality has changed. Women have become more self-confident and have been encouraged to speak up. One member reported that, together with other women, they were developing a project to build a poultry farm. They were approaching different people to ask for support and learning how to develop and implement projects (HDI member 4, personal interview, September 1, 2018). In this regard, the initiative seems to be fulfilling its aims and be successful in transforming life in the communities.

However, not only has the community changed, but also the concept of civil society. In Apea's understanding of civil society – which she integrated in HDI – civil society does service-delivery and empowers the community at the same time. It is neither distinct from the state, nor the market and the family, as traditionally proposed in Western conceptions on civil society, but embedded in all spheres. The difficulty to legally qualify as either an NGO or business reflects the singularity of HDI and shows how Western conceptions prevail in the state structure.

In the interviews it further seemed that HDI's members in Amolatar do not separate their role in HDI from their political and private functions. Instead of openly challenging and raising criticism, HDI aims to change society from the bottom and within. It applies a needs-driven approach and promotes self-esteem and leadership skills. It does not promote democracy per se but implicitly raises democratic values such as freedom of speech, self-determination, civic participation and leadership skills. Because it is connected to development and economic empowerment, HDI is not distinct from the economy but, as well as being a civil society organization, also acts as a market actor. HDI closely collaborates with political structures, community and its members whom it seeks to empower and integrate in the market. In this way, it succeeds in impact-

ing the community, creating value and flourishing as a civil society organization in a restricted environment. Even though HDI started off as a top-down project with normative ideas on how to promote development, it has shifted its approach towards raising a civil society that is rooted in community structures.

5. *Implications*

First, this chapter has theoretical implications as it questions the transferability of Western concepts and ideas to varying contexts, thereby contributing to the body of critical literature. Since societal, political, economic and historical conditions differ substantially from the West, the idea of civil society based on individual freedom, tolerance and self-determination is too narrow and makes the adaptation of the concept necessary. Instead, civil society was rather perceived as a sphere in which self-organized organizations are formed to articulate and pursue common interests, self-help and provide services for other citizens in collaboration with the state. This research project has shown that, even though the world is increasingly interconnected and interdependent, it cannot be assumed that Western basic concepts can be generalized and applied as normative principles, such as upon which principles societies are organized and whether and how civil society should operate.

Second, there are practical implications for NGOs and other civil society actors operating in non-Western countries. Because of the historical legacies of colonialism, Uganda's state is structured differently and requires a renegotiation of the state-society divide (Datzberger 2016; Mamdani 1996). In order for civil society organizations to be sustainable, their efforts must come from within the community, and any attempt to treat civil society in a normative way, linking it to dominant Western paradigms, should be treated with caution (Datzberger 2016). HDI's strategy, for example, is to include all levels of government and let the community decide. This approach to civil society fosters change from within the community and sustains it through leadership programmes, supporting sustainable income from agriculture and fostering participation in governmental structures. Instead of imposing ideas or implementing projects in opposition to state authorities, it proposes seeing civil society differently, namely operating in unity under the mango tree.

Nevertheless, since HDI only targets women whom it seeks to empower, a few questions remain. First, it should be asked how members are selected and how empowerment programs are structured, putting stronger emphasis on the content of HDI. In order to assess the 'success' of changes, several factors should be assessed that are not included in the analysis. For example, it should be analyzed who benefits from HDI, in which way and what the long-term consequences are. Since the desirability of such questions are difficult to judge from an outsider's, Western-influenced perspective, this chapter does not allow for such a conclusion. In this regard, it remains questionable whether HDI will also succeed in including men and non-members in this new civil society and in transforming the mentality of the community in the long term, or whether it will end in another neo-patrimonial, elite-captured project. Hence, a clear evaluation of HDI and a recommendation of its approach goes beyond the capacity of this research.

6. *Conclusion*

The analysis has shown that civil society traditions in Uganda differ from the Western concept but also differ within the country itself. Therefore, if civil society organizations and international NGOs in particular apply these principles to rural Uganda, they are likely to fail. Mutual trust, unity in decision-making and cooperation are central principles that guide life in rural Uganda. HDI adapted its structure, processes and functions to this context and integrates its members in market and political structures. By working in partnership with communities, local governments and cultural leaders it becomes successful in mobilizing people, raising a new civil society and creating change at the local level.

Extrapolated to a global level, taking this perspective into account might lead to better results, offer opportunities for critical reflections on culture and transculturality as well as leading to more fruitful cooperation and understanding in a global world. It should thus stimulate reflection on how cultures view one another, how dominant concepts are simply transferred without questioning the structural context and whether the results offer mutual learning opportunities. Mango trees do not grow everywhere, but other kinds of trees do.

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Development Status and Development Measures by State and Private Players such as the Hope Development Initiative in Amolatar, Northern Uganda

Marius Hupperich

We spoke and acted as if, given the opportunity for self-government, we would quickly create utopias. Instead injustice, even tyranny, is rampant.
(Julius 'Mwalimu' Nyerere, 1st President of Tanzania)

1. Introduction

Uganda as a multi-ethnic country is currently facing many challenges in the field of infrastructural development, corruption and governance. Landlocked and surrounded by other, mostly conflict plagued, developing countries, there are also external factors which have an impact on development efforts in Uganda.

Since independence in 1962, the country and its population has gone through various military regimes, civil wars and decades of cruelty and deconstruction. While the latest armed conflict, the insurgency with the Lord's Resistance Army under the leadership of Joseph Kony, officially ended in 2008, the affected northern region of Uganda as well as its neighboring districts are still exposed to the aftermath of the conflict.

With a large variety of players active in the field of development co-operation, there are governmental and NGO activities as well as various international corporations and bilateral and multilateral collaborations

throughout the country. This paper examines the development efforts of governmental and private players through the example of the Hope Development Initiative (HDI) in the Amolatar District as well as Northern Uganda and compares the different approaches in improving the lives of the population.

After an overview of Uganda's history since its independence, the current societal, political as well as socioeconomic challenges of the country, particularly in the Amolatar District and Northern Uganda, will be presented. Subsequently, the efforts and approaches of the various organizations will be described and analyzed. Finally, the paper ends with a summary as well as an outlook for the topic.

Due to the format of this project it is not possible to cover all the literature that has been published on the subject and players and organizations active in this field. I have tried to include all the relevant literature concerning the subject of this paper, yet there are many more sources that could not be included.

2. *Method*

This research project is based on a qualitative-inductive study conducted in Uganda in September 2018. For the data collection, several semi-structured expert interviews were conducted in different regions of the country. The use of qualitative methods makes it possible to present various perspectives of social players on the challenges and successes of political and social development as well as development cooperation and thus to gain a more detailed insight. Language and educational barriers in particular have prevented the use of extracts from data collection, in particular from expert interviews. The unabridged interviews can be found in the appendix.

The aim of this research project is to provide an overview of the potential challenges and successes of political and social development as well as development cooperation in Amolatar. It is not intended to be a general statement. Due to the difficulty of accessing quantitative data and insurmountable obstacles in the collection of own data, it was decided not to use a quantitative research method.

3. *Overview of the modern history of Uganda*

As early as the 19th century, the influence of foreign powers, such as the Arabs, in the country increased thanks to trade relations. At that time known as kingdom Buganda, the peak of regional power was reached in the middle of the 19th century and then rapidly declined until the end of the century due to the massive influx of European missionaries and envoys from Europe's major powers (cf. Ingham & Kiwanuka 2019). By entering into contracts with the British forces in the country, the various kingdoms and tribes tried to extend their power, which resulted in a number of brutal civil conflicts and the increasing strength of British influence in the country. This was followed by French and German attempts to gain control in 1892.

Since its independence from Great Britain in 1962, Uganda has been the scene of various civil wars and years of cruelty and dictatorship. While the leadership under Milton Obote led to the founding of the Republic of Uganda as well as independence from the Commonwealth, the nationalization of companies, expropriation of landowners and dissolution of kingdoms such as the kingdom of Buganda led to internal unrest and dissatisfaction among the population.

Followed by economic turmoil, the increase of political suppression and the call for re-elections, the then military chief Idi Amin plotted a coup and put himself in power. The ensuing period was marked by war crimes against the country's own people which, in addition, resulted in the destruction of infrastructure as well as international isolation. During the reign of Amin from 1971 until his exile in 1979, an estimated 250,000 people were murdered and over 60,000 Asians were expelled from the country, further aggravating the economic situation (cf. Byrnes 1992: 203f.).

As a result of the Uganda-Tanzania war waged under Amin, there were short changes of government until the first democratic elections since independence in 1962 took place on December 10, 1980, which resulted in Milton Obote becoming President. The following years saw the formation of more and more rebel groups, of which the Uganda National Liberation Front (UNLF), which had contributed significantly to the fall of Amin, and the National Resistance Army (NRA) under the leadership of today's President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, were able to gain significant influence and power. The violent suppression of the rebel groups led

to growing dissatisfaction among the population as well as the progressive destruction of the already weakened national infrastructure. After an army coup in the summer of 1985, the former military chief Tito Okello took over the government and entered into negotiations with the NRM. The breach of the peace agreement led to the invasion by the NRA and the rebel leader Museveni had himself sworn in as the new head of state on 29 January 1986 (cf. Datta-Mitra 2001: 3).

However, the following years were also marked by violent conflicts. The Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) under Joseph Kony began a struggle against the government in the north of the country. The reintroduction of the kingdoms in 1993 generated strong support for Museveni and the ban on political parties, through the adoption of a new constitution in 1995, consolidated his position, leading to a clear victory for Museveni in the first democratic elections in 1996. While the country stabilized politically, the LRA involved northern and central Uganda in numerous raids and attacks, which left the region in a state of civil war until 2005. The Lord's Resistance Army insurgency caused massive destruction and many people were forced to flee their homes. While the conflict has shifted since 2008 to neighboring regions such as South Sudan, Central African Republic or the Democratic Republic of Congo, Uganda still suffers from the wartime destruction. The ongoing conflict and the temporary displacement of over a million people has also had a strong impact on agricultural productivity in the region so that this sector, which employs 78% of the country's labor force and accounts for 90% of export earnings, is still suffering the consequences today (cf. Dagne 2011: 12).

4. Current development status and challenges in Uganda

Since its independence, Uganda has faced and is still facing political crisis and humanitarian disaster. Often linked to each other this chapter portrays the current situation and challenges in the political sphere as well as from the societal and development perspective. While there are regional disparities within the country, especially regarding infrastructure, Uganda and the Amolatar District will be presented separately to show the deficits faced by rural regions within the country.

4.1 *Political Sphere*

While Uganda, as a presidential republic, is officially a multi-party system, the country currently suffers from widespread corruption, suppression of opposition and is rated as a hybrid regime on the verge of dictatorship (cf. Tripp 2010: 4f.). Particularly with regard to development processes and bilateral and multilateral development cooperation, these problems pose a major challenge and have a negative impact on progress. This chapter presents the political structure as well as possible resulting challenges regarding development efforts in Uganda and the Amolatar District in particular.

4.1.1 *Uganda*

As one of the most decentralized countries in the world, Uganda consists of a rising number of districts with partial rights of self-government and has more than 20 different ministries.

Uganda's local administrative and government structures are coordinated by five different Local Councils (LCs). At the lowest, administrative-political level, the LC1 administers and represents the local population of a village, which usually consists of several households and has a population of 200-1000 people.

The next highest administrative unit is the LC2, which unites different villages into one parish and is composed of a chairperson and a committee consisting of the respective chairpersons of LC1. The main tasks are the implementation and control of public services in this 'municipality'. At the LC3 level, the parishes in the region are united and managed by a chairman and a committee. Similar to the level below, its tasks are the administration of health, education and development affairs as well as representing the interests of the NGOs active there.

The next highest administrative level is that of county, which is composed of the various sub-counties of LC3. The LC4 chairpersons are elected members of parliament. The highest local administration is that of LC5 at the district level, which consists of a chairperson and a standing committee. Various departments are responsible for health and education matters, environmental measures as well as partial financial self-administration. While the country was divided into 23 districts after Museveni

came to power, it now has over 80 (cf. Commonwealth Local Government Forum 2018: 259-262).

While the increased promotion of decentralization has led to a strengthening of local self-government, it has also significantly paralyzed efficient decision-making due to increased bureaucracy (cf. Rauch 2009: 4). Furthermore, Uganda is still considered one of the most corrupt countries in Africa and one of the 40 most corrupt countries in the world (cf. Transparency International 2019). Due to the high degree of self-government and the high rate of corruption in authorities and administration, growing decentralization also increases the risk of misappropriation of funds and slow processes.

In addition to the high rate of corruption, the pronounced restriction of freedom of the media and the press is also a major problem in Uganda. Uganda ranks 117th out of 180 in the annual press freedom ranking of the NGO Reporters Without Borders (cf. Reporter ohne Grenzen 2019: 5). The suppression of the opposition and the appearance of irregularities during presidential elections are also omnipresent. The opposition politician Kizza Besigye was repeatedly arrested during the election campaign for the 2016 presidential elections, so that he could not participate in campaign events. Also, a few days before the elections, access to social media and mobile money, a widespread payment system and substitute for banks, was blocked (cf. Jalloh 2016).

4.1.2 Amolatar District

Located about 150 kilometers north of the capital Kampala, the Amolatar District lies on a peninsula surrounded by Lake Kyoga and is mainly accessible via the northern region of the country. With a population of 147,000 people, Amolatar is one of the least populated districts in the Northern Province and part of the Lango sub-district (cf. Uganda Bureau of Statistics 2017: 29). Figure 1 shows the position of the Amolatar District in Uganda.

The Amolatar District was created in 2005 from a division of the Lira District, whose eponymous town is the economic centre of the region. The Lango sub-region, of which Amolatar is one of eight districts, is classified by the PRDP as a region directly affected by the civil war. While the conflict, especially in Lira, had one of its epicenters, Amolatar

was not affected by direct fighting (cf. Government of Uganda (GoU) 2007: 30).

Nevertheless, the conflict had an enormous socio-economic and social impact on the region. The unregulated influx of internally displaced persons put such a strain on the already inadequate infrastructure that large part of it collapsed. Schools were misused as accommodation and the existing sanitary facilities were rendered unusable by overloading (see Personal Interview A).

Although the Peace, Recovery and Development Plan on Peace and Conflict in Northern Uganda (PRDP) also included the Amolatar District in the reconstruction, the investments in infrastructure promised at the time were largely not made due to funding problems (ibid.).

Figure 1: Position of the Amolatar District in Uganda



4.2 *Societal and development sphere*

In addition to the country's political and administrative challenges, Uganda faces many social and societal problems. While some regions have made substantial progress in recent years, other regions remain virtually excluded from the positive development (cf. Nuwagaba & Muhumuza 2016: 39f.). The current social and societal situation in Uganda and explicitly in Amolatar will be presented in order to be able to understand the focal points of current development policy and to point out the need for action in the various fields.

Although there is currently no uniform definition for states categorized as developing countries, almost all states have similar characteristics which, according to the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, are defined as follows (cf. Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung, n.d.):

1. insufficient food supply for large parts of the population
2. low per capita income
3. poor health care, resulting in a high infant mortality rate and low life expectancy.
4. poor educational opportunities
5. very high unemployment
6. a generally low standard of living and a disproportionately unequal distribution of wealth.

4.2.1 *Uganda*

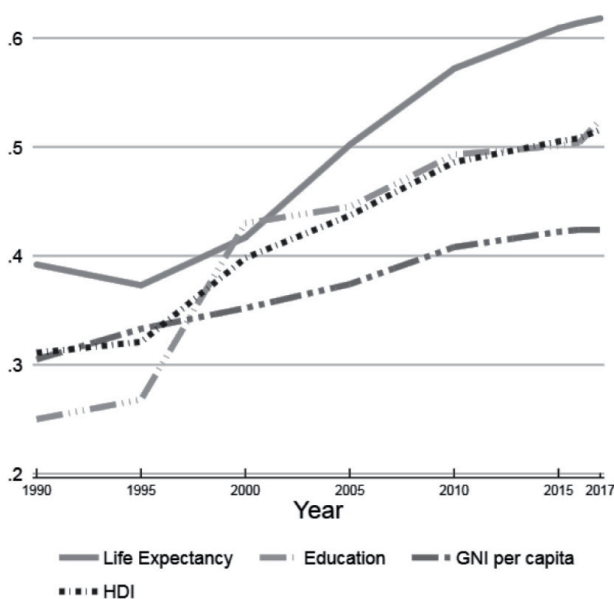
Uganda has all the above characteristics and is one of the least developed countries in East Africa. The Human Development Index, which is made up of three different values and four indicators, offers the possibility on a scale of 0 to 1 to make a rough assessment and rank countries according to their level of development. Here 1 represents the highest and 0 the lowest development. With an HDI of 0.516, Uganda ranks 162 out of 189 and Germany 5 with 0.936 (cf. United Nations Development Programme 2018: 22-29 A). As can be seen in Figure 2, the level of development

since HDI has steadily improved since the 1990s and the values in the field of education have more than doubled.

Nevertheless, Uganda continues to face serious underdevelopment and, with an average of 0.537 for sub-Saharan Africa, Uganda remains below the average for the overall region (cf. United Nations Development Programme 2018: 3 B).

One of the most important indicators of a country's level of development is the employment rate of the working-age population in the respective economic sectors (cf. Hemmer 2002: 11f.).

Figure 2: Level of development in Uganda (since 1990)



Source: United Nations Development Programme 2018 B.

While highly developed countries usually have an employment rate of less than 3% in the agriculture sector, in Uganda almost 30% of the workforce is employed in agriculture (cf. “Africa: Uganda – The World Factbook – Central Intelligence Agency”, n.d.).

Nearly 70% of the population is currently younger than 24 and Uganda has one of the youngest populations in the world. This extremely pronounced population pyramid thus poses immense challenges in the education sector as well as for the labor market, which has a youth unemployment rate of 14.8%. Although GDP has improved slightly in recent years, now standing at \$2,400 adjusted for purchasing power, one in five Ugandans still lives below the poverty line (ibid.).

Looking at the average life expectancy of 56 years, many of the causes for this low life expectancy can be found in the figures for health care and related social aspects. The birth rate is the fifth highest in the world with an average of 5.62 children per woman and less than 40% of the population have access to contraceptives. This leads to a mother's mean age at first birth of less than 19 years and, together with a physician density of 0.09 physicians/1,000 inhabitants, this poses major health risks and exacerbates the infant mortality rate (ibid.).

The blatant infrastructure and supply problems are also reflected in the figures concerning access to sanitation and other basic needs. An estimated 21% of the population have no access to clean drinking water and over 80% of Ugandans have no access to adequate sanitation (ibid.).

4.2.2 *Amolatar*

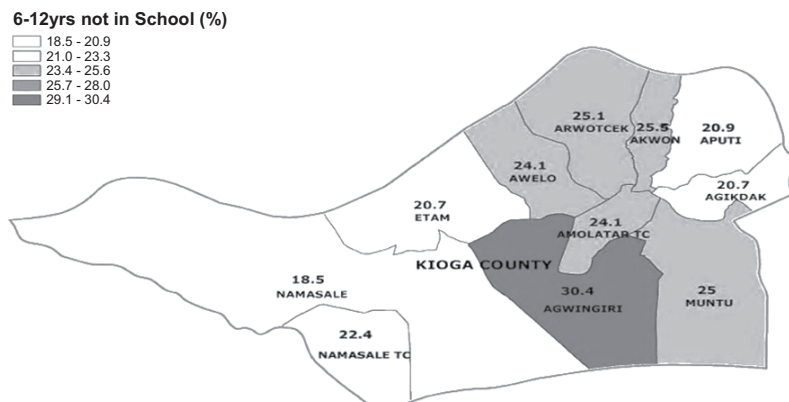
The Amolatar District is one of the structurally weakest districts in Uganda and faces many infrastructural and social challenges.

The region's poorly developed industry, in which 85% of households live from agriculture, is also linked to the high levels of youth and child labor in the Amolatar District. Two thirds of young people and children between the ages of 10 and 17 already work and thus make a significant contribution to the income of the main households (cf. Uganda Bureau of Statistics 2017: 3-6).

Figure 3 shows the percentage distribution of the population aged 6-12 years who do not attend school in the Amolatar District. The graph shows that, in Amolatar, more than one in five children between 6-12 years of age does not attend school and, in some parts of the district, the figure even rises to more than 25% (ibid.: 10).

The poor situation on the local labor market, as well as desolate educational provision, means that only every tenth inhabitant has a secondary school qualification.

Figure 3: Population aged 6-12 years who do not attend school (Amolatar District)



Source: Uganda Bureau of Statistics (2017: 10).

There are also major problems with health care in the region. The district does not have its own hospital and half of the residents live more than five kilometers away from the nearest public health facility. While such a distance is usually not a problem in Western countries as traveling is not an issue, in Amolatar almost no household owns a car and only 70% has a bicycle (ibid.). Poor health care and decades of conflict in the region are also reflected in other indicators, including the fact that almost one in ten children has lost at least one parent and less than three percent of the population is over 65.

A further indication of the development status of the region is provided by the various indicators from the Housing Conditions Department. The National Population and Housing Census of 2014 shows that four out of five households live in shelters that do not have permanent walls. Hygiene conditions are also extremely precarious, reflected in the fact that only 1.2% have access to running water and almost every sixth household has

no access to a toilet facility at all. Although half of the population obtains most of their information from the radio and 12.5% use their telephone as their main source of information, less than one in ten households has access to electricity (ibid.: 24ff.).

All in all, this means that 99.4% of the population in Amolatar does not live in adequate housing (ibid.).

5. *Development strategies*

To place development policy and its measures in the context of the work of governments and NGOs, a corresponding definition is needed. Dieter Nohlen defined development policy in his book *Lexikon Dritte Welt* as the sum of all measures and means used to promote and improve social and economic development in the countries concerned (cf. Nohlen 2000: 224).

Furthermore, the four main objectives of sustainable development can be defined as follows:

1. reduction of social disparities and social justice using poverty-reducing conditions as an example;
2. economic promotion and cooperation as well as the growth of capacity with a focus on poverty reduction;
3. political stability, characterized in particular by democracy and equality, the promotion of human rights and peace;
4. protecting the environment and natural resources (cf. Nuscheler 2004: 76);
5. These ideas and goals have led to the development of various development strategies, of which the two most widely used as well as those used in Amolatar are presented below.

5.1 *Strategy of unbalanced growth*

The strategy of unbalanced growth is a development strategy developed by Albert O. Hirschman and is the antithesis to the theory of balanced growth. Contrary to the theory of balanced growth, which argues with the

simultaneous construction of industries based on complementarity relationships, his strategy relies, among other things, on trickle-down effects (cf. Grimm 1979: 94). Hirschman argues that by investing in individual industrial sectors, a concatenation process can be created that can theoretically produce an infinite sequence of further investments in associated pre-processing and processing plants in the relevant region.

The goal of the unbalanced growth strategy is thus to create a vertical deepening of work processes. The theoretical consequence is that the domestic creation of prefabricated goods reduces dependence on imported goods, since local resources can be used for production (ibid.: 95f.).

The theory is particularly criticized because the high initial investments disproportionately promote one single industrial sector, which can lead to large regional development differences within a country.

Furthermore, the strategy assumes that domestic economic agents behave rationally and promote a sustainable development process by creating new imbalances. This assumption is, however, rather unlikely, especially in developing countries with a high rate of corruption and the need for a state corrective function (ibid.).

A Pareto Optimality in Uganda could be the investment and effective use of the cotton and textile sector. According to the unbalanced growth theory, investment in cotton cultivation and processing would, in the long run, lead to processing enterprises such as textile factories, suppliers and related industries. This, in turn, would lead to the establishment of further enterprises and, through the economic strengthening of the region and the resulting tax revenues, would result in an improvement of the regional infrastructure and general living conditions.

5.2 *Basic needs strategy*

The aim of the basic needs strategy in development policy is the participation of the population and thus the creation of independence from aid goods and other development measures to satisfy basic needs. The core areas of the measures are to be found above all in the agricultural sector as well as in craft trades and small industries. This is intended to achieve a sustainable growth target in the long term and the target of distribution is the focus at the outset (cf. Lachmann 2006: 303f.).

This “help for self-help” thus promotes the emergence of local markets and the economic strengthening of the region. The resulting dynamic in turn promotes further positive processes such as the health of the population through better nutrition or the financial opportunities brought about by education and training (cf. Prochnow 2016). An example of this could be foreign aid for the construction of drinking water supplies or the creation of the necessary infrastructure for a local market and the processing of agricultural products. While the initial aid merely provides the basis for the use of this infrastructure, the construction, maintenance and upkeep of the facilities are carried out with local funds from the affected population and local government.

The governments of the countries concerned criticize this approach because they fear that it will hinder the process of industrialization due to the focus on agricultural subsistence farming and corresponding infrastructure for basic services rather than on the expansion of economically lucrative industries (cf. Lachmann 2006: 303f.).

6. *Development measures*

The following chapter outlines the various development cooperation measures and tools and presents the variety of different stakeholders involved.

Furthermore, the different efforts in Uganda and Amolatar are described and possible, measurable results in the district are presented.

6.1 *Overview*

While in the 1950s development was still equated with economic growth and strength, the increase in per capita income was also seen as an automatic improvement in other social areas. It was only when measurable progress failed to materialize in the 1960s that the focus shifted to the development of administrative and political areas. This resulted in the Basic Needs Strategy, which has been the focus of development cooperation since the 1970s. The growth of social environmental awareness in the 1980s led to ecological factors finding their way into the principles of sustainable development (cf. Kevenhörster & van den Boom 2009: 19f.).

The core dimensions of sustainable development can be divided into the following elements (cf. Boccolari 2002: 9f.):

- the sustainable satisfaction of basic needs and improvement of the general quality of life;
- the survival of humanity and quality of life beyond biological survival;
- the creation of a social and structural-economic model which optimizes the economic and social benefits while not jeopardizing the future potential of the economy;
- stability of the natural capital stock as well as the possibility to make a living from it in the future;
- positive socio-economic change, which has no negative influence on the respective social and ecosystem systems;
- measures and strategies that protect the capital stock of resources and the environment so that the quality of life of future generations is guaranteed.

6.2 Types of player

In development cooperation, a basic distinction can be made between two different players: Governmental organizations and related activities as well as non-governmental organizations. Furthermore, with the World Bank and regional development banks, development authorities such as EuropeAid, transnational organizations with a civil society background such as Amnesty International or Transparency International, other supranational players are active in the field of development cooperation. Third countries continue to be mostly involved in development activities, but almost exclusively act as donors and coordinate efforts through cooperation with implementing organizations, most of which are non-governmental Organizations (cf. Kevenhörster & van den Boom 2009: 55).

7. *Development measures in Uganda*

In Uganda, all the aforementioned types are represented with various projects. Especially after the end of the LRA conflict, many NGOs and state institutions began to become active in the country and to plan and initiate projects. This led to the city of Gulu in northern Uganda being the second largest NGO city with branches and offices worldwide after New York City in 2011. This led, among other things, to a rapid rise in the price of basic goods and services and made Gulu the most expensive city in Uganda (see Personal Interview B). While the Ugandan government, in cooperation with international donors, has mostly planned and implemented infrastructure projects and economic development measures, smaller NGOs in particular focus on measures aimed at improving the living conditions of the local population.

The development measures of the government and NGOs will be presented below. One example of an active NGO in the Amolatar District is the Hope Development Initiative, which is presented in the following chapter.

8. *Development measures in the Amolatar District*

Despite its geographically central location and agriculturally favorable conditions, the Amolatar District is less promoted by development endeavors than other sections in the region. This is reflected in the comparatively low presence of NGOs and official government presence in the region. Although the Amolatar District is officially part of the Peace, Recovery and Development Plan on Peace and Conflict in Northern Uganda, and should therefore benefit from financial and reconstruction measures, only a few government promises have been implemented so far (cf. International Alert 2013: 22f.). However, compared to other regions, non-governmental organizations are also active on the peninsula with only a few projects.

The development measures of the government and NGOs are presented below. One example of an active NGO in the Amolatar District is the Hope Development Initiative, which is presented in the following chapter.

8.1 Private organizations (HDI)

The Hope Development Initiative is a non-governmental organization founded in 2010 in the Amolatar District with the aim to strengthen the local population, especially female farmers in the region. Led by Dr Agnes Atim Apea, a network was created to enable farmers to cultivate and sell rice cooperatively and to enhance the living conditions of the local population through various infrastructure projects.

The work of the HDI is strongly based on the principles of the Basic Needs Strategy, which follows the “Help for Self-Help” principle. By creating the appropriate infrastructure for a local market and processing agricultural products, independence from foreign aid is achieved.

8.1.1 Measures taken by the HDI

The work of the Hope Development Initiative can be divided into two major sub-areas:

1. further training of local farmers in rice cultivation and the provision of appropriate seeds;
2. creation of a local infrastructure for the further processing of the products by means of a warehouse with its own mill.

Although more than 85% of the population in the Amolatar District is engaged in agriculture and predominantly subsistence farming, rice cultivation and sales were meaningless before the start of HDI’s operations, despite significantly higher yield prospects (cf. Uganda Bureau of Statistics 2017: 26).

The reason for this was the lack of knowledge about the cultivation of grain and unoptimized seed, the lack of a local market and opportunities for further processing. This forced the farmers to take their yields more than 120 kilometers to Lira Town for further processing and sale and made cultivation practically uneconomical (see Personal Interview A). HDI has created a local market by setting up a central institution that guarantees farmers it will purchase the rice they produce and process it further in a rice mill purchased specifically for this purpose (see Personal Interview C). As well as the relatively high climatic resistance of the

seeds, the initiative cites the significantly higher profit margin on sales compared with other products such as sweet potatoes, corn or plantains as the reason for using rice (*ibid.*).

As already mentioned, the work of the initiative aims in particular at strengthening the position of female farmers. The aim is to break down patriarchal structures and strengthen the position of women in society. Women in Uganda are more than twice as likely to be unemployed, and 34% of the agricultural land belongs to men, with only 40% belonging to men and women. The serious gender inequality is also reflected in the numbers of women exposed to sexual violence. In 2016, 23% of women between the ages of 15 and 49 in rural areas suffered sexual violence (cf. Ministry of Gender Labour and Social Development 2019: 10-29). By strengthening women's economic independence and creating an associated community, efforts are being made to improve gender equality.

While the guaranteed purchase of rice creates economic security, not all profits are paid out to farmers. By obliging you to pay part of your income as a social reserve, you will be able to pay the children's school fees and any health care costs.

Thanks to the economic strengthening of the local population, the overall economy in the region has also improved. As a result of the strengthening of local trade, filling station was opened in the main town of the same name in the Amolatar district, thus significantly improving the mobility of the population.

However, HDI has also provided substantial support for development measures outside agriculture. For more than 53% of the population, radio is the main source of information and the most common movable asset in a household (cf. Uganda Bureau of Statistics 2017: 24f.). The Hope Development Initiative saw this as the basis for establishing its own radio station for the district. This will enable the local population to obtain regional information given that there are no daily newspapers or otherwise propagated local news. At the same time, various radio formats enable the rice-growers to be part of a forum for the exchange of concerns and information by means of radio phone-ins (see Personal Interview C).

8.2 *Government*

While many of the government's development measures depend to a large extent on international donors, the government mostly act as sole executor. The government pursues different goals from those of most NGOs and promotes various projects, particularly with regard to the region's digital and transport infrastructure.

As outlined in the report, *Assessment of Development Results: Evaluation of UNDP Contribution of the United Nations*, there are many donors in Lango Region. Nevertheless, according to the UNDP, many promised approaches fail due to a lack of coordination between the various development programmes.

In particular, the lack of qualified personnel and resources for implementation after the strategic planning of programmes and projects is criticized (cf. *United Nations Development Programme 2009: 43*). Uganda's companies, which often have only limited technology at their disposal, often have difficulties in this respect, so that external service providers are required to implement the projects. As a result, there is a mix of international donors, government organization and coordination as well as private, external implementation. This increase in the number of interfaces increases the risk of corruption and planning errors as past investigations have shown (cf. Okiror 2018).

A further problem with the implementation of development measures in Uganda is the large number of different programmes that the government is developing together with the various donors and local government representatives.

8.2.1 *Measures taken by the Government*

As mentioned before, the government has launched a number of programmes and initiatives designed to improve the country's various levels of development. In addition to various local, temporary or event response support programmes and development measures, the government also periodically issues multiannual sectoral plans for the different areas of development (cf. "Sector Development Plans", n.d.). These plans, published by the National Planning Authority, include the business areas of the individual ministries, plans to improve accountability as well as a

Legislature Sector Development Plan. In the following, two of the most relevant development programmes and their measures will be presented.

8.2.2 Peace, Recovery and Development Plan

The Peace, Recovery and Development Plan is a trans-regional Programme that was launched in 2008 in response to the civil war in northern Uganda, which officially ended the same year. It aims to rebuild the affected regions in the northern provinces of the country. While PRDP I (2009-2011/12) and PRDP II (2012-2015) were two coordinated programmes that build on each other, these are listed below as a single programme. Here, other countries act as international donors that significantly support the programme and the associated projects. The four strategic objectives of the program were (cf. Office of the Prime Minister – Government of Uganda 2011):

- Consolidation of State Authority
- Rebuilding and empowering communities
- Revitalization of the economy
- Peace building and reconciliation

The main results of the programs indicated by the Office of the Prime Minister were as follows (cf. “Northern Uganda Rehabilitation”, n.d.):

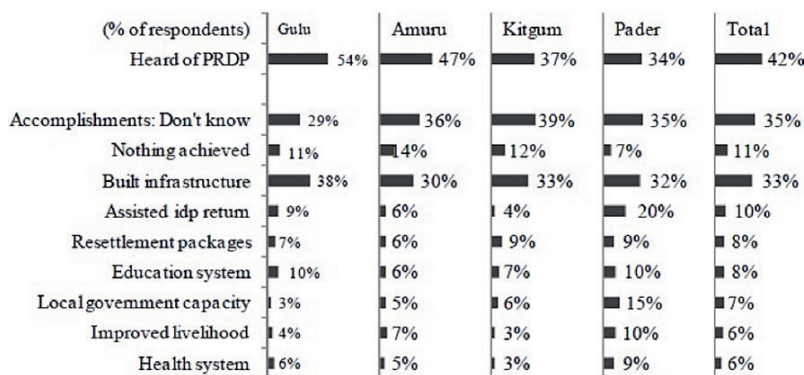
- Procurement and delivery of 15,000 cattle (heifers and bulls) to the four sub-regions of Northern Uganda.
- Procurement of five tractors to support agricultural mechanization.
- Procurement and distribution of 600 bicycles and 200 bicycle repair sets for selected youth and religious leaders.
- Completed solar installation works in 53 houses of Acholi chiefs.
- Procurement and distribution of 131 motorcycles to selected youth and religious groups.
- Procurement and distribution of 1250 ox ploughs for youth and women’s groups to support commercial agriculture.

While it is not possible to identify all projects due to a lack of data and insufficient visibility of the measures associated with the programme,

various surveys, such as the survey from the University of California at Berkeley which measures the perception and influence of the PRDP on the local population in the respective regions, have nevertheless been able to measure the impact and resonance of the programme. However, this also shows that the presence of the government and the promotion of the development programme are not perceived by the population. More than two years after the start of the programme and the associated development measures, more than half of the population in the respective regions had never heard of the PRDP and even those who knew the programme, could only define 44% of the government as the responsible player (cf. Pham & Vinck 2010: 20f.).

Figure 4 shows that the inhabitants of the four representative districts are insufficiently informed about the programme and do not associate any development projects and improvements in development with the work of the government.

Figure 4



Source: Pham & Vinck (2010: 21).

The general security situation in northern Uganda has improved considerably since 2007. Four out of five respondents said they felt safe at night and 90% of the population reported a sense of security when seeking water sources or firewood (cf. Pham & Vinck 2010: 2). While the security situation in the region has fundamentally improved, major socio-economic challenges remain. There have been no changes in income since 2007.

Furthermore, it is noted that the main needs of the population have shifted from the desire for peace and security to the desire to satisfy basic needs. Disputes also persist and 20% of respondents said they have experienced one in the past six months. This reveals many local political problems, including the distribution of land due to internal refugees. A solution for a possible incentive creation, so that fugitives can return to their homeland, could not be found by the PRDP (*ibid.*).

While the majority of the local population is satisfied with the work of the national government, dissatisfaction with the local government is all the more evident. Here, 72% of respondents stated that the authorities would not offer help to families in need and more than two-thirds saw no support in improving infrastructure (*ibid.*: 3f.).

8.2.3 *Sub County Development Programme*

The Sub County Development Programme for Amolatar District was launched in 2006 under the Economic Development Strategy (EDS) and aims to reduce poverty among the population and strengthen the local economy (cf. Uganda Bureau of Statistics 2011: 2ff.) The measures are based on the basic needs strategy and aim to promote the satisfaction of the basic needs of the population by strengthening the local economy. In order to improve the local infrastructure and implement the EDS to reduce household poverty, the following objectives were set (*ibid.*):

- Establishment of the Community Information System (CIS)
- Increasing access to Rural Financial Services (RFS)
- Improving Productivity
- Improving Marketing and Trade
- Improving infrastructure, and
- Improving local standards of Physical Planning and Development.

The core element of the programme is the establishment and implementation of the Community Information System. This should enable monitoring of the effectiveness of the activities by the government, NGOs and other players in the field of poverty reduction (*ibid.*: 2ff.). Furthermore, it should be possible to collect data which will enable better planning and

coordination of projects and measures. Even before the first data was collected, the system was suspended in 2009 because seven districts, including the Amolatar District, lacked the financial resources to implement the system (*ibid.*).

Due to the low level of awareness, many respondents made false statements as they were worried about suffering financial disadvantage as a result. The programme was also promoted via media channels to which most rural residents have no access and are therefore not covered by the system and cannot participate in any decision-making processes. This again highlights the problem already mentioned, namely that incorrect implementation and coordination of programmes due to a lack of skilled staff or financing problems often occurs even before the programme content has been implemented and thus has no positive impact on the living conditions of the local population (*ibid.*).

9. *Limitations*

As mentioned above, in Northern Uganda in particular, a vast number of international aid organizations are represented and, in addition to the aforementioned organizations and government measures, there are currently over 1300 registered and active NGOs in Uganda (cf. "NGO Bureau", n.d.) This work is intended to give an overview of the development status of a region seriously affected by the civil war and to illustrate the development work of NGOs and the government on the basis of case studies.

Due to the format of this work, the time constraints and the limited resources available, it is not possible to summarize and analyze the entire topic in one work. In particular, access to reliable data and other surveys from such a structurally weak region limits the possibilities for evaluating existing measures and projects and thus complicates any benchmarking. The interviews conducted were often marked by language and educational barriers, which affected the outcome and made it even more difficult to collect information on this district, which was only available by analogy. German authorities such as the GIZ, which operates its own center for the evaluation of its projects, also face these same challenges.

10. Conclusion

More than ten years after the end of the LRA conflict, Uganda still faces many challenges. In addition to the weaker economy in the north of the country, the conflicts in the neighboring states and the resulting streams of refugees into the region pose many problems for policymakers.

The country's highly decentralized administration, inadequately trained civil servants, a high rate of corruption and long-standing mismanagement paralyze the government's often laudable visions and programs for Uganda's development. This can also be seen in the implementation of the government's development programmes, which often fail because of organisational problems and give the population the feeling of being abandoned.

NGOs such as the Hope Development Initiative show that grassroots level measures to strengthen basic needs can also contribute to strengthening gender equality in society beyond the mere socio-economic aspects. Thanks to the collective cultivation of rice, it has also been possible to improve the social position of women. Moreover, creating a local market for agricultural products, constructing a petrol station and a radio station has also benefited the local infrastructure.

These aspects raise the question of which development measures and the associated programmes represent greater added value for the population. While the government is laying the theoretical foundations for successful development cooperation with more and more programmes, most of the population benefits insufficiently from prestigious projects such as the construction of highways and rail networks if these cannot be used by the majority.

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The New Normal? Farmer Groups, ICTs, and Empowerment in Apac District, Lango Region in Northern Uganda

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1. Background

There is a growing focus on farmer groups in Uganda as a window for both economic and social transformation by both government and non-government organisations (NGOs). Farmer groups are either formal or informal groups for production and marketing of farmer cooperatives and farmers' savings and credit cooperative societies (SACCOS) (Adong 2014). Most literature attributes farmer groups to NGOs and these can be men or women-only groups or mixed farmer groups (Nakazi, Aseete, Katungi & Ugen 2017; Sun 2013; Coulter 2007). Farmer groups are recognised as the smallest units of farmer organisations but are able to bridge institutional gaps in access to extension services, and are prevalent among smallholder farmers (Ekepu, Tirivanhu & Nampala 2017; Kimaiyo et al. 2017). In most countries, farmer groups favour a community approach in the dissemination of agricultural extension services to group members (Kelly 2014; David, Franzel, Hildebrand, Irani & Place 2004).

Agricultural extension services are a process of receiving scientific research and knowledge for application in agricultural practices through farmer education (Uganda National Bureau of Statistics 2012).

Farmer groups can thus be powerful economic engines for helping farmers tap into local and international markets through upgrading subsis-

tence farming to commercial farming status (Cordaid 2015). To be able to achieve economic transformation though, farmer groups have to enhance their members' ability to build agency through collective action and organisation, access input such as seeds, technology, equipment and fertilisers, pool labour for certain tasks as well as engage in cooperative marketing (Uganda National Bureau of Statistics 2012; Murisa 2011). Collectives of this nature are more successful when they compliment intensification and bulking of substantial quantities of produce and are therefore incorporated in the design of agricultural programmes (Adong 2014; Coulter 2007).

Studies reveal that farmer groups provide peer mentoring and encourage technology use in such a way that members continuously use the technology (Kitetu 2005). Success of farmer groups in taking up new technologies hinges on the degree of social harmony within the group, homogeneity of members, group capacity, pooling strategy, number of links the group has with funders, as well as the type of the group itself whether it is supported or not (Gotschi, Njuki & Delve 2008; David, Franzel, Hildebrand, Irani & Place 2004). Since they are usually village-based, farmer groups normally have a membership that has ethnic homogeneity, with married women less likely to be members than single, divorced and widowed women due to restrictions on mobility, subordination and dependency (Gotschi, Njuki & Delve 2008). In fact, the conclusion from this study was that mixed farmer groups had higher trust than women-only groups, as women-only groups have a lot of conflicts. Another study posited that, regardless of their status, women are more likely to be members of the farmer groups since they are based on specific geographical locations and tend to mobilise neighbours (Kitetu 2005).

Farmer groups have been noted for several achievements. In some countries like Zimbabwe, farmer groups engaged government for support services as well as defending newly acquired land (Murisa 2011). In Mozambique, farmer groups not only improved group investments but also access to leadership positions and social capital, especially for men (Gotschi, Njuki & Delve 2008). In Kenya, farmer groups that are largely women oriented have been found to examine new ways of delivering extension services and increasing women's participation in productive agriculture (Kitetu 2005). This is what this chapter focuses on in its assessment of farmer groups, empowerment and the use of mobile phones and radios in agricultural production. To achieve empowerment using

mobile phones and radios, members of farmer groups have to overcome several challenges including thin markets for produce, isolation from larger farmer organizations and unions, as well as conflicts borne out of labor pooling strategies (Gotschi, Njuki & Delve 2008).

2. *Historicising Contemporary Farmer Groups in Northern Uganda*

Attempts to historically locate farmer groups in Uganda have been made by some scholars such as Kyazze (2010), who argued that farmer groups can be traced back to 1900 when the British advocated for cooperatives. The British subsequently passed an ordinance to that effect in 1946 and a Cooperative Societies Act was passed in 1962. However, literature about some societies in Uganda indicates that farmer groups predate the colonial era and were embedded in the socio-economic production systems of communities like the Langi in Northern Uganda. The Langi used reciprocal labor, including both men and women, to great effect, and they referred to this as *wang tic* in the local language (Ebong-Opyene 1996).

During the colonial period, group activities were organized around the “beer party” system locally called *puro kongo*, named after a local brew, *kongoting*, usually brewed by women (Agong 2008). The *puro kongo* farming group was used to recruit workers, mobilize farmers to dig for neighbours who had brewed, encouraged exchange of farming knowledge and had a leader known as *adwong pour* (ibid.). Both men and women had explicit gender roles and responsibilities. Women harvested most of the crops and were in charge of post-harvest handling, management of small gardens, while men and their wives participated in land preparation, planting but controlled land, and family decisions on income (LANDac 2016; Agong 2008; Ebong-Opyene 1996; Curley 1973). The alternative to this arrangement was polygamy, which was viewed as a source of labor by having many wives and children (Amone 2014). However, the traditional reciprocal labor systems fizzled out during colonialism because the colonialists had sustained them using force and thus they were not popular in post-colonial Lango (Ebong-Opyene 1996). In the post-colonial era, the government-controlled marketing of cash crops through cooperatives and farmers were required to join existing cooperatives or form new ones (Nakazi, Aseete, Katungi & Ugen 2017).

It was the advent of humanitarian agencies during the decade long Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) war that reawakened the spirit of community-level group work though all the groups did at this point was provide food (Namuggala & Mulumba 2014; Jaggwe 2011). The groups would provide social protection and psychosocial support to women during the war and therefore, it was a requirement for women to join groups during the insurgency in order to access food. The involvement of women in food provision for families altered gender relations by disempowering men, diminishing their authority over productive resources and taking on casual jobs like women did (Lehrer 2009). Women, however, maintained most of their gender roles, and added new commercially viable alternatives like casual labor provision, on top of picking food for their families (Namuggala & Mulumba 2014; Lehrer 2009). During the post-conflict period, the implementation of programmes like the Northern Uganda Social Action Fund revamped the rich history of working with groups including farmer groups (Adong 2014). The assumption is that groups are more efficient and cost-effective, which leads to the empowerment of members (Kyazze 2010).

In Uganda, where 99.4% of smallholder farms use traditional, rudimentary and obsolete technologies coupled with a weak extension system (Candia, Mugenyi & Kavuma 2011), the government instituted the National Agricultural Advisory Services (NAADS) programme to plug the gaps (Okoboi, Kuteesa & Birungi 2013). Through the 2001 NAADS Act, extension services moved from a public to a decentralized public private partnership model with the aim of attracting poor men and women into demanding and adopting improved technology and farm management (National Agricultural Advisory Services Programme 2013). The NAADS programme was supposed to assess the functionality and capacity of farmer groups encourage farmers to form new ones and demand technology and extension services for particular enterprises selected by the farmer groups. Thus, many groups were able to link up with markets, conduct demand-driven monitoring and evaluations of advisory services and their impacts on the preferred enterprises (Benin et al. 2007). However, men dominated leadership positions in the NAADS farmer groups, which limited women's participation in decision-making processes despite acquiring farming skills (Driciru 2008).

With support from government policies, the traditional reciprocal system and NGO efforts, Northern Uganda farmers have been organized into

farmer groups to ease access to extension services (Dalipagic & Elepu 2014). This is aimed at benefiting the farmers during the post-war recovery period, given the added advantage of plenty of unopened land that can lead to further agricultural development (Mugonola & Baliddawa 2014). Many of these farmer groups, to which 52% of the men and 47% of the women aged over 15 years belong, also encourage Village Savings Loans Associations (VSLAs) locally known as *bolcops* to act as credit sources for farmers (Dalipagic & Elepu 2014). Farmer group sizes in the region vary from 15 to 30 members (Dalipagic & Elepu 2014; Catholic Relief Services 2007). Many are simple community-based organizations (CBOs) that have no financial audits or file tax returns (Techel & Wanda 2014).

In early 2003, as the conflict scaled down, mobile phones were introduced to farmers in Apac District (Nicholl 2007). Despite the many changes that were taking place, agricultural production was unchanging as old problems that had dogged farmers such as low/fluctuating prices, lack of transport, lack of agricultural information, lack of storage facilities and post-harvest technologies as well as inefficient extension services still existed (Weih, Okoboi, Janowski, Omony, Taiwo & Bisase 2005).

It became apparent that improvements in access to input, increase in productivity, and access to markets had to be information-enabled for both men and women to benefit (Ogbeide & Ele 2015). Nevertheless, women could not afford their own mobile phone handsets and the few that had them relied on gifts from non-governmental organizations (NGOs) (Wamala 2010; Nicholl 2007). Due to the lack of personal mobile phone handsets, women were more likely to borrow them from neighbours or husbands who could refuse to share with their wives (Nicholl 2007). Clearly, men dominated the new technology. Radios, too, were dominated by men, sitting with them on the porch as women cooked or taking them to bars leaving their families unable to listen to the evening programs (Nicholl 2007). In other instances, men would carry the radios as they headed to towns and, in a show of status and ownership among their fellow men would rest the technology between their legs as they converged in the town centers (Wamala 2010). However, the advent of the Women of Uganda Network (WOUGNET) support to women-led farmer groups under Kubere Information Centre (KIC) changed the story as mobile phones and radios were introduced to organized farmers in groups (Wamala 2010; Nicholl 2007).

In 2005, WOUGNET initiated a project, 'Enhancing Access to Agricultural Information and Communication Technologies' to serve this purpose. The project intended to provide key agricultural information on production, input, weather forecasts and markets (Jorgensen 2010). Initially, the project targeted 12 women groups in Apac District in the sub counties of Akokoro, Apac, Bala & Akalo. There were at least three women groups per Sub County with 30 members, all women and farmers. At the start of the project, each of the 12 groups, all led by women, was given a mobile phone and a radio cassette player (Auma 2016; Asingwire & Okello 2011). Some households had radios but access was a challenge as this was a masculine technology to the extent that some men would take their radios wherever they went (Jorgensen 2010).

The reason for the cassettes was because, at the time, radio coverage was very poor, the signal was weak, and the threat of the Kony insurgents was still rife (Heloise 2007). Agricultural programmes on the radios would be recorded and a copy of the programme made available to each of the groups by their leaders. Thus, women would meet on Tuesdays every week, listen to the recorded programmes, and discuss the agricultural information to help those who may not have understood the content. The audio recordings would fit into the women's time, as they would not have to sit around and wait for a programme to come on the air. They would listen in at leisure and thus the broadcast would not interfere in their domestic activities. Competition with the men, who had been favored by the programming, was reduced. However, this limited women's access to radio information to only recorded agricultural programmes and they missed other crucial life information about family, politics and health. The women farmers would also generate information by posing questions and seeking clarification on key farm information issues (Asingwire & Okello 2011; Heloise 2007). The same information would be recorded and relayed to the agricultural extension officers who would address them and the cassettes would then be sent back to the group. These women also had an opportunity to appear on the radio to talk about agriculture, which clearly helped them break into the masculine public space. This new arrangement further reconfigured gender relations.

3. *Conceptualising Empowerment within Community Building*

Community building draws from the ability to mobilise individuals, collective assets and community residents to address critical issues, sustain community members' participation, expand their capacity and promote positive connections between individuals, groups and organisations within communities (Bullen 2007). The aim of community building is to promote consciousness in addressing social and economic problems through community engagement. According to Austin (2005), there are three critical levels to community building. The first level is comprehensive collaboration by building networks, coalitions and social capital. The second level is strength-orientation that allows for community mobilisation, aggregation of community assets, views, knowledge and wisdom. The third and last level is building local power by building strong institutions. This is an empowerment level that builds a sense of community through social cohesion, supports self and collective reliance as well as agency.

Empowerment essentially enables women, as individuals or as a group, to challenge existing power structures and relations that subordinate them in a bottom-up strategy, to question oppression and deprivation, to have influence and to be heard (Hanmer & Klugman 2016; Porter 2013; Kaur 2010). Empowerment is the capacity to make strategic and meaningful choices by those who have previously been denied this capacity but in ways that do not merely reproduce, and may indeed actively challenge the structures of inequality in their society (Kabeer 2017). The aim is to enable those previously denied, the ability to make strategic life choices to acquire such an ability to inspire collective action and decision-making (Eerdewijk, Wong, Vaast, Newton, Tyszler & Pennington 2017; Kabeer 1999). Empowerment is a social rather than an individual process of change in the family, community, market and state arenas which transforms power relations (Eerdewijk, Wong, Vaast, Newton, Tyszler & Pennington 2017; Cornwall 2016). The process of change is geared towards changing gender relations by building critical consciousness (Cornwall 2016).

In terms of agricultural information needs, technological access addresses informational needs, making access to information a powerful resource in its own right that is buttressed by the old cliché 'knowledge is power' (Uphoff 2012). This knowledge empowers both individuals and groups (Alsop & Heinsohn 2005). Information is provided and gained by

an empowered person, which leads to informed decisions and onward transmission of the same information to other people in an empowered way (Khwaja 2005). Command of such informational needs leads to social empowerment that is understood as the ability to gain access to new and useful knowledge (Lennie 2002). Empowerment can be social, economic or technological. Social empowerment leads to development of skills, confidence, competence and abilities in group communication and interactions, which leads to improved social networks, and support of women in rural and urban areas (Eyben, Kabeer & Cornwall 2008; Lennie 2002). Empowerment focuses on the capacity of men and women to participate in, contribute to, and benefit from growth processes on terms which recognise the value of their contributions; respect their dignity and make it possible for them to negotiate a fairer distribution of the benefits of growth (Eyben, Kabeer & Cornwall 2008). The other result is technological empowerment that requires access to information, knowledge, skills and resources which leads to women having the confidence and competence to use technologies and enjoy their benefits (Lennie 2002).

Empowerment thus challenges relations of power and institutional structures, which gives individual women or groups of women a voice and agency in confronting dependency, deprivation, coercion, manipulation and control (Kabeer 2016; Cornwall 2016; Hanmer & Klugman 2016; Porter 2012; Kaur 2010). Empowerment also expands the horizons of what people imagine themselves being able to do in a dynamic way, with nuanced negotiation, accommodation and compromise (Cornwall & Edwards 2010). Therefore, the ability to evaluate empowerment lies in looking at the changes in women's lives from their own perspectives and priorities or by looking at the changes in patriarchal relations of unequal power relations between women and men (Kabeer 2017).

The link between community building and empowerment is thus symbiotic in nature, allowing communities and individuals, especially women, to gain meaningful voice and agency to socially and economically transform themselves as well as the communities in which they live. In Lango, Northern Uganda, this has been realised by various post-war organisations including Hope Development Initiative (HDI) and WOUGNET/KIC. Like HDI, WOUGNET/KIC support community building through the formation of farmer groups, each with 30 members to which husbands are encouraged to be a part. Unlike HDI, which has over 11,000 members with Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLA), WOUGNET has fewer

members who mostly rely on mobile phones and radios for agricultural extension for its members, who grow a variety of crops (Mpiima, Manyire, Kabonesa & Espling 2019).

4. *Methodological Note*

This study was carried out in Akokoro Sub County and Apac Municipality in Apac District using qualitative approaches. Five farmer groups were purposely selected because of their reliance on both mobile phones and radios for agricultural informational needs through the value chain of agricultural production (Mpiima, Manyire, Kabonesa & Espling 2019). The five farmer groups were; Bed Igen women farmers group, Obanga Atwero Mot Mot Atwero farmers group, Gen Rwot farmers group, Oribcan women farmers group and Ibabang Kwo women farmers group. These groups were all formerly supported by WOUNNET, a national Civil Society Organisation (CSO) and Kubere Information Centre (KIC). KIC provides ICT support to women's groups in Lira, Oyam, Kole, and Apac District in Northern Uganda. KIC sought to work with farmers organized in groups. A total of 129 interviews were conducted with individual men and women belonging to the five farmer groups. There were 34 men and 95 women. This was followed by five focus group discussions that had a range of 11 to 13 members. Two of the FGDs were for women only, one for men only, while two FGDs were mixed. Ten purposely selected key informants drawn from the District leadership and agriculture oriented NGOs also participated in the study. These included the Coordinator, Operation Wealth Creation, the District Agricultural Officer, the District Veterinary Officer, the District Production Officer, the Apac Municipality Extension Officer, the WOUNNET Programmes Officer, Radio Apac Station Manager, one Divine FM Radio presenter and two Apac Radio Station presenters. A review of the body of literature informed the various sections of the chapter.

5. *The Early Years of KIC with the Farmer Groups*

WOUGNET adopted the farmer group model when it founded KIC in order to improve women's access to agricultural information in the Apac and Lira Districts. KIC provided mobile phones and radios to the farmer groups, through the group leaders, who were all female (Mpiima, Manyire, Kabonesa & Espling 2019). The challenge with the mobile phones at the time was the poor mobile telephone coverage in the District as well as in the affordability of handsets. Women were generally poor and could afford neither the cost of the mobile phone handsets nor the cost of airtime. At the time, mobile phones had been new and favoured the rich – they thus had a masculine connotation to them (Wamala 2010). Therefore, for women to access mobile phones they needed support. KIC provided a single mobile phone handset to group leaders. The group leader would contact the agricultural extension workers, agricultural experts, and KIC staff for agricultural information via text message (SMS), a beep or a call. Sometimes, the agricultural experts would be required to speak to the whole group. 'Conferencing' used to be done by placing the mobile phone on loudspeaker (Asingwire & Okello 2011). KIC thus averted the impact of poor telephone networks, and they managed the challenge of low education levels or no education at all among women by using the groups' practice of open knowledge sharing using conferencing. Access to the phone was aimed at enhancing the ability of the group members to earn more from their agricultural activities and improve their rights, especially in access to agricultural resources.

Text messages (SMS) were used for gathering information on pests, prices, climate change and everything that was relevant to agriculture and sent through the mobile phone. Each group had one phone. The phones were also to help the farmer groups link up with potential buyers that had been identified by KIC staff. After harvest, the farmers would gather their produce and sell using the prices provided by text message.

Another function KIC played was providing books on agriculture for farmers to borrow, some of which were donated by the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA). If some information was not yet at KIC, the CTA would be called and they would send the information. The books contained data on poultry keeping and maize growing among other enterprises. KIC also used this opportunity to conduct agricultural training.

The project initially faced patriarchal challenges as men did not appreciate the fact that it targeted their wives though they were not included, a fact that resulted in episodes of violence against the women. With training and encouragement by WOUGNET, men started attending dissemination workshops alongside their wives and some eventually became members. Violence against women therefore fell as a result. Since the project was donor funded, inbuilt mechanisms for sustainability were included (Asingwire & Okello 2011). By the time of this study, the groups existed without direct support from WOUGNET/KIC yet still used the same model KIC had introduced. What had really changed was the official co-option of men into the groups by women. Up to 10 men were allowed into the farmer groups. Some were part of the group leadership, which previously was all female across all the groups. All the groups involved in this study had male group members although their numbers were far lower than those of the females were. With the split of Apac District into two, only five groups remained in Apac, while the other six were in the new Kole District. The farmer groups operated in the context of local gender relations (Agong 2008) however; they shared the same approach as the national policies by mainly focusing on women. The use of a more Women in Development (WID) leaning approach looms large even though government committed to the Gender and Development (GAD) approach.

6. The Five Farmer Groups

This section is informed by interviews with the group members. Located in the Apac Municipality, Bedi Igen farmers' group was started much later than the other groups, in 2007. Twelve women with the enticement of porridge as a business started it. It only turned into a farmer group in 2010 just when KIC was about to be wound up but supported them and taught them how to use mobile phones and radios for agricultural information. The husbands of the 12 women supported them with ideas from the start, even though they were not members. Men would come and sit in on the Thursday meetings as the women met. It was during the planting seasons that the meetings were reduced to two to allow members to concentrate on their gardens. One meeting was held on the first Thursday of the month and the other on the last Thursday of the month. The

meetings would help the group members plan and share any agricultural information received through radio and mobile phone communications. The group credited 2015 as the year in which they typically went into commercial farming with a group farm of 10 acres of land. By 2017, the group had expanded to 86 members, 50 of whom were farmers, while 36 were engaged in non-agricultural activities such as catering. Of the 50 farmers, 15 were male and 35 females. Leadership was democratic, with mandates of two years. Like other groups, membership changed as members left and others were inducted into the group. Known for having many Uganda People's Congress (UPC) members, this group had not received a lot of support from the local government due to what they called politics but got a lot of support from NGOs. This turned out to be the most progressive farmer group with a store, a savings scheme, and permanent houses for all its members except six. They also had built a structure to house a grinding mill at the behest of government but the mill was never delivered.

Obanga Atwero-Mot Mot Atwero was the remotest group in Akokoro Sub County from Apac Municipality. It was officially located in Apoi Parish but with some members located in Abedi Parish, Apac Sub County. Obanga Atwero-Mot Mot Atwero was a borderland farmer group that started as a women-only group but men joined in 2015 after women noticed that they were not so involved in areas like planting and marketing. With 10 men and 29 women, the leadership was democratically elected. The group met on Sundays and this acted as the day for collecting members' contributions to the savings scheme. Each member contributed 1000 shillings minimum or 5000 maximum. Savings had been one of the biggest changes in a group that initially concentrated on crop production. The money would be given to a member at the end of the month or loans that were accessed by group members. The group also had an orphanage and each member was supposed to make a contribution of 200 shillings every term to support the orphans. Each member also made a contribution of 300 shillings for the welfare of the group each Sunday. It was from the 300 shillings that members could make withdrawals at any time free of charge if were sick or had other similar problems.

Gen Rwot Women farmer's group was located in Akokoro Sub County, about two to three kilometers from the main road to Apac Municipality and near the ferry landing site. The group evolved from an earlier group called Dii Cunyi in 2003 with 25 people (both men and women). Dii

Cunyi was a women-only group, but they needed to attract men and thus rebranded with many of the original members joining the new farmer group that included men. By the time of the study, the group had 8 active men and 13 women. The main reason for starting the group was to harness reciprocal farm labor with a thought of having a joint group garden at some point to generate money for sharing. In the initial years, the group met on Wednesdays, but has since shifted the meetings to Thursdays. The meetings aimed at sharing agricultural information as broadcast on radio and any emerging issues in farming. Members were nominated to handle information sharing in each of the meetings. Group members had received training from NGOs, especially KIC, as well as from government. When the qualitative data was gathered in early 2018, the group had just received some bulls for ploughing from the District production office. Many members first used a mobile phone in 2005 when KIC distributed a mobile phone and a radio to farmer groups. Gen Rwot had existed longest among all the groups and survived with a democratically elected leadership that served for three years. This leadership also took charge of the group savings scheme to which members contributed a fee that was agreed upon periodically. They possessed a joint farm as well as a demonstration garden by the roadside.

Ibabang Kwo Women farmers group started in 2007 with 30 members, who were all women with most being widows. The aim was to help one another improve parenting, increase agricultural production and improve financial management. The idea of allowing men to join was brought up in 2015 and subsequently 5 men joined. The number of female members has since dropped by five. The group is located in Akokoro Sub County, about seven kilometres from the main road to Apac Municipality, halfway from the ferry to the Municipality. Members hold two meetings: on the first and last Thursdays in the month. It is in these meetings that group members share agricultural information from either radio or mobile phone. The group also has a group garden where all members contribute labor and proceeds are shared when produce is sold. The group previously used the earnings from the group garden to buy and distribute goats and pigs to members. Members were obliged to report the status of the animals to the group, especially if they were sick, if they sold an animal or if it died or had young. The group-encouraged reciprocity where members offered labor to each other's gardens and this was extended to

marketing if members deemed it fit. Group leadership was a two-year term through a democratic process.

Oribcan was originally located in Apac Sub County but with the creation of the Apac Municipality, some members ended up in the Municipality, while others are in Apac Sub County. It started in 1998 with 15 women at the behest of some white visitors. At that time, the women had different handicraft skills such as knitting and weaving of mats and bags, pottery, making local stoves out of clay, which are fixed onto walls in the kitchen or outside of the house (also known as '*keno amwona*'). Slowly, the group became interested in agriculture and began to grow pineapples, mangoes, oranges, pines, eucalyptus, and avocado. The leaders of the group at the time were taken to Masindi District for specialized training in citrus farming and they were offered the seeds for the above fruit with a promise of a market that never materialized. However, it was a good experience that also saw the group members receive savings and financial management skills.

In 2013, men joined the group, as they, too, wanted to share the benefits of group membership. Currently, the group comprises 6 male members and 41 female members. However, men reportedly never used to attend trainings and to date, they did not turn up when called for training sessions. Most times, they thought that they knew the topics being covered. Members usually met on Tuesday at 2:30 pm for about 20-30 minutes. Occasionally, the group rented land for farming and the money from the proceeds was shared when the produce was sold. Leadership was for two years and was elected democratically.

7. *The Nexus of Farmer Groups, Mobile Phones, Radios and Empowerment*

Lango region has two seasons with drought conditions that affect crop production (Jaggwe 2011). In fact, in 2017 when this study was conducted, the region had experienced over a year of no rain, which adversely affected productivity. To circumvent these severe conditions, Oribcan women farmers group resourcefully used radios and mobile phones to ensure year-round production.

“I was listening to the radio when a woman from a certain farmers’ group in Kole District said that they used swamps to cultivate throughout the dry season. It is not something we had thought about. So we called the radio station, they linked us with the group, and we started growing crops in the swamps during the dry season. We have crops all year round and sell to town dwellers when they have no vegetables. We mostly grow boyo¹, small tomatoes, yams and bananas there. When it gets so dry, we irrigate a little as you can see [see photographs below].”(Interview with a male farmer, Oribcan women farmers’ group, February 2017).

A male member of Oribcan women farmers group uses jerrycans to irrigate a garden in Barowelo ward, Atik Division, Apac Municipality



Source: The researcher.

¹ Boyo is a Langi word that refers to a local vegetable

The farmer groups also ensured competitive prices for members by encouraging group marketing of individual produce, as well as yields that were attained from the group farms. Group marketing has the advantage of cushioning women against excessive financial demands from their husbands, since they could not know how much was due to the wife from the group sales unless the husband was also a member of the same farmer group.

“The way you see us here, we got the idea to start the group from the radio. We also learnt to sell our produce together as a group. We even built a store for our group. We usually bring our produce for sale to the store while the produce meant for home consumption is usually left at home.” (Male farmers’ FGD, Bed Igen women farmers’ group, March 2018).

Findings revealed that women were more secure on the land than before they joined the farmer groups. Much information about land rights was broadcast on radio that many female farmers then used to secure their tenancy.

“In the past, women were usually told: ‘You did not come here with any land’. But now, after all these radio debates and discussions, things are changing and women are treated better. A piece of land that belongs to a man also belongs to his wife. Government laws have also helped us in a way that before, a man could sell off any land but now he must get his wife’s consent and signature. We discuss these things in our groups and luckily, some husbands are part of the groups. However, women are still not allowed to sell that land. It is also important to note that, these days; even the children are involved before family land is sold.” (Female farmer FGD, Bed Igen women farmers’ group, March 2018).

Another perspective on this was from a male respondent who attended the Oribcan women’s FGD as follows:

“The land where a man and a woman are married belongs to both of them. For example, family land is shared between the wife and the husband. One can garden on one side and manage the produce while the other does the same but both of them own it. There is no need to buy two different plots of land, for the woman and the man as that can create misunderstandings in the family. The husband and wife are supposed to work together as a team to expand the land for their children

and that is how it is nowadays. It is only in families that are broken that you will find a woman buying her own land for herself.”

Farmer groups like Bed Igen, Oribcan, Gen Rwot and Obang Atwero had group farms. Gen Rwot had a demonstration farm as well, from which members of the group and other community members could be helped with farming skills. Some of the proceeds from the joint group farm were invested in the group savings schemes of those groups.

“We have a group farm. We are renting eight acres of land for this purpose. Produce from this land is sold to help the group. Each member also has his or her own garden. Produce from the personal gardens is taken to the store to help members get to market, which is good and benefits us all.” (Male farmers FGD, Bed Igen women farmers’ group, March 2018).

Farmer groups further provided an avenue for access to input like seed, oxen and ox-ploughs for those that could not afford to buy them. Bed Igen women farmer’s group, for instance, had 18 ox-ploughs which members would use in turn so as to reduce the burden of labour and also be in time to plant when the rains come.

Membership of farmer groups had provided outstanding members and group leaders, who were mostly women, with an opportunity to appear on radio talkshows. In the process, women’s identities in the communities radically changed and they became respected and knowledgeable community members on agricultural matters. Ruth, a former chairperson of Oribcan women farmers’ group, appeared on two talkshows that were promoting a type of cassava called Maci 14 and its benefits for farmers. She was happy with the appearances but was even happier when people started calling her either to thank her or make enquiries about the information she had shared on the radio talkshow. Sarah, too, as chairperson of Gen Rwot, had appeared on several talkshows. Initially, KIC used to select her for the talkshows to conduct trainings on radios. Six members of Gen Rwot had been chosen for expert training so that they could also train other community members on radio and she did well. On one talkshow, she taught listeners how to plant maize by telling them to plant two seeds per hole and use 60cm x 75cm spacing. This advice yielded results for many farmers, which made her proud. She subsequently opened a one acre demonstration farm on her land for the benefit of other

farmers. Another woman, Jenny, said that the ability to train different farmer groups empowered her. She had trained farmer groups in Chawente and Kwania, both sub counties in Apac District. These groups still called her on the phone so that she could train them.

Being part of farmer groups increased the mobility of the members, especially the women. Women that previously had no respect in the community are today celebrated and assigned tasks way beyond their own communities to go and talk to fellow farmers in other Districts as long as they distinguish themselves in their groups, communities and on radio talkshows. One female farmer from Oribcan women's group emphasised this as follows;

“Once I was sent to Masaka, Lira and Gulu to visit and train farmers. I learnt a lot, for instance, in Masaka, I learnt how I could improve fish farming and thus I constructed another pond, I learnt how to spray and how to grow bananas.”

Farmer groups were also found to cultivate social relationships as well as ease work in the gardens. This was possible through the weekly meetings, but also through the reciprocal labour that was provided by the group members. Apart from working on the joint farms, group members provided labour to their group members in turns. This eased work and made it enjoyable. A female farmer from Obang Atwero women farmers' group had the following to say about farmer groups;

“Working in groups makes work easy. You go to someone's garden and complete work at once but when alone, you can take a week or more. We only take half a day instead of a whole day. It also reduces the costs of hiring labour.”

The other advantage of the farmer groups was the ability to directly communicate and relate with ‘big’ people in the District, the NGO world and beyond the District. Women as leaders have met many important people either as leaders or group members over the years.

“My wife has been empowered since she has communicated with big people from the District and the NGOs. I also feel proud as a husband when my wife conducts trainings because other wives are always seated at home and cannot even speak up in public but when it comes

to my wife, you find big people looking for her.” (Group member who is also a husband to a group member, November 2017).

Farmer groups were also useful when it came to providing assistance to group members with health issues as seen in the box below. Some of the health ailments required a lot of money and the group members could not individually afford treatment. This led to the intervention of the farmer groups in some of the cases.

Justine was a 54 year old married female group member of Bedigen Women’s Group. She was sponsored by her farmer group to have a life-saving goitre surgery at Lacor Hospital in Gulu District in 2016, a journey of about 130kms. At the time, her family could not raise the required amount of money to pay for the surgery until the farmer group voted in favour of covering her hospital bill, without which it would have been impossible to have the surgery. In total, 200,000 shillings was spent on x-rays and the operation was 600,000 shillings. The husband could only afford other essentials needed in the hospital. The intervention of the farmer group saved her life and reduced the financial strain the goiter had placed on her family.

Justine’s scar



Source: The researcher.

It was also revealed that farmer groups enhanced the feeling of independence for both men and women farmers due to the relationship they had built within the farmer group through knowledge sharing, collective harvesting and the savings groups.

8. *Discussion*

Empowerment as part of community building within the groups that use mobile phones and radios manifested itself both socially and economically. Farmer group social capital was evident in the ability to mobilise resources and make them available to individuals in the form of loans, payment of hospital bills, or funeral expenses in case of death. In all these cases, the empowered group disburses funds based on individual need without discrimination but, in the process, also opens doors to both the men and women to have more capital to work with as well as regain good health when hospital bills are met. This is consistent with Coldwell (2007a) who extols the virtues of farmer groups in alleviating economic, social and psychological hardships for farmers or engaging in what Kabeer (1999) referred to as building collective solidarity.

Furthermore, the agency of the farmer groups is evident in leveraging common assets and knowledge through group farms or collective renting of land. This importance of groups was also underscored by Namuggala & Mulumba (2014) as social protectors and psycho-social support givers, which seem to have continued way after the insurgency ended. The support of farmer groups reduces the patriarchal control of the husbands over the wives' proceeds and incomes, exponentially increasing their independence in terms of activities like selling produce, earning incomes and deriving other benefits, including making use of reciprocal labour provided by group members. It is a form of silent resistance to patriarchy and women use the groups to circumvent/subvert patriarchal control. It is a woman's choice to give more to farmer groups and less to individual farms if her position as a beneficiary is suppressed by a spouse. Farmer groups are therefore very powerful bargaining tools for the women in the public arena as well as increasing individual assertiveness in private as argued by Kabeer (1999). It goes without saying that the groups take a lot of power over joint produce and incomes but, unlike a private household

garden, the rules are clearer in a group for both men and women than, say, in a husband-wife, where distribution is more unpredictable.

Also of importance is the collective aspect of farmer groups. The farmer groups embody the aspirations of male and female farmers. They also offer a cushion from patriarchical excesses in the household. In instances where a female farmer finds herself unable to ward off a spouse who is using her finances without her consent, she has a fallback position with the group that has a group farm, joint harvest and joint income sharing at the end of the season. Loans are also available from the group savings and loan schemes. The farmer groups have also been used to save the lives of members by paying hospital bills. Farmer groups have also shown great capacity for adaptation to climate change and land scarcity. Oribcan Women's Group utilises swamps to keep the group members productive throughout the year by growing yams, *boyo*, a popular local vegetable, cassava and maize, whose crops are sold to earn income for the group members. Farmer groups therefore cushion members from the negative side of the droughts, which includes poor harvests, so that the food security and the financial position of the group members is not compromised.

In one case, Bed Igen Women's Group paid for life-saving goitre surgery for one of its female members in Lacor Hospital, Gulu District. This is the kind of group social protection refereed to by Namuggala & Mulumba (2014) and Coldwell (2007). This is by no means agricultural but highlights an unrivalled social aspect of the farmer groups that builds a sense of community. It exemplifies control in ways unanticipated by the farmers. The farmer group steps in to address an immediate health threat to a member, pays hundreds of thousands of shillings and no refund is demanded at all. This interest in the welfare of members makes it worth belonging to the group and abiding by the group rules for both men and women. On the other hand it reduces the socio-financial stress on individual members, especially women, whose economic status is not as sound and broad as that of their male counterparts. Because of the social welfare, the group controls the loyalty of the members and this may partly explain the survival of the farmer groups long after KIC support ended.

Economically, both male and female farmers have increased their earnings although male farmers still earn more than their female counterparts. In line with expanded incomes, the farmers have expanded their land sizes though, again, male farmers' farms have expanded more than

those of the female farmers. It is evident that ICT use breaks gender power relations domestically and within the community, with women increasingly using agricultural information and incomes to participate more in decision-making and also able to control the income from agricultural production. Where they previously struggled financially, female farmers control incomes from produce by keeping the money on their mobile phones as mobile money, while some choose to bank with village savings and loan groups. This affirms Kabeer's (2005b) findings in Tamil Nadu which indicated that an increase in the use of micro-finance to grow incomes increases women's voice as well as their decision-making within households. Female farmers' choices were visible in mobile money transactions, building of permanent houses, increase in household assets like solar panels, television sets, motorcycles and bicycles. Women have also been able to pay boarding schools fees for their children alongside their husbands. The ability to control income has improved female farmers' voices, conditions and social positions within their households and communities.

9. Conclusions and Research Implications

This chapter highlights the efforts that are being made by different NGOs to better the lives of rural farmers belonging to farmer groups in Uganda using diverse approaches to achieve a similar goal. There is therefore a need for a broader forum by the different NGOs or farmer groups to have a larger cooperation framework through which they can push for a minimum level of knowledge-sharing at management and farmer group level. This would benefit farmers, increase sharing of good extension practices and maximise the positives from working together. It is clear that if farmer groups formed a broader cooperative or a strong joint farmers' forum with other farmer groups in the district and region, they would become even more powerful players in the agricultural sector.

The chapter highlights the importance of sending messages about gender to the general agricultural information so as to improve gender relations, achieve more equitable participation of both male and female farmers in decision-making, earnings and control of incomes after marketing produce. This reduces conflict between spouses, enhances their

knowledge about agricultural production and increases productivity for the farmer group members.

The chapter also reveals a need to build sustainability within communities in terms of the provision of information technologies to farmers. The selection for this study of farmer groups whose support from an WOUNET/KIC had long expired, was deliberate in order to check if it is possible for farmers to maintain the use of technology and organisational infrastructure built by NGOs. This choice was informed by the fact that the government has a focus on two institutional levels into which this study feeds. The first one is to strengthen NGOs to deliver agricultural extension services, and the second is to group and empower farmers, especially women, youth and PWDs, to effectively call for agricultural services and participate in agricultural extension processes. The clamour for male farmers to join farmer groups is evidence that male farmers, too, need this kind of agricultural extension service, and evidence shows that both male and female farmers increased their earnings through the use of technology provided by the farmer group for agricultural information.

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Best Practices in Promotion of Women's Sustainable Livelihoods: A Case of the HDI Rice Programme in Amolatar

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Abstract

This paper examines the outcomes of the HDI Rice project in Northern Uganda on efforts to enable sustainable livelihoods for female farmers in central Uganda. Anchored on the Canadian Women's Foundation (CWF) sustainable livelihoods framework, the paper contends that the design and implementation of development programmes, as well as the structures and processes through which these programmes function, can either provide opportunities or constrain farmers' efforts to forge sustainable livelihoods. The paper argues that the HDI Rice project in Northern Uganda implemented a multifaceted programme that bolstered female farmers' five core assets and successfully created conditions that empowered hitherto marginalized female farmers to make viable and sustainable livelihoods, reduce vulnerability to GBV and enhance their quality of life overall. The paper contends that the HDI project is a best practice case in helping farmers to have sustainable livelihoods and recommends that the model be adopted and utilized in other areas to enhance women's economic empowerment in a manner that reduces vulnerability to GBV and other problems that marginalized women face in the agricultural sector.

1. *Introduction*

Background

Agriculture is the backbone of Uganda's economy, employing 70% of the population, and contributing half of Uganda's export earnings and a quarter of the country's gross domestic product (GDP). Most of the agricultural farms are made up of small land holdings with just a few isolated commercial farms (World Bank 2018; Lukwago 2010). Female farmers in Uganda are responsible for as much as 70-80% of the country's agricultural output; contribute 80% of the country's farm labor; are responsible for up to 90% of food processing, fetching water and fuel; handle 80% of food storage and transport; 90% of the work of hoeing and weeding; and 60% of harvesting (FOWODE 2012; MOFPED 2004, 2008; Commonwealth Secretariat 2001; Blackden 1999). Despite this immense contribution, female farmers in Uganda experience much discrimination; lack control over decisions regarding farm outputs to which they have contributed immensely in terms of labour; are denied access to own incomes from household farm labour, etc. Further, female farmers in Uganda own less than 11% of agricultural land; control less than 30% of the earnings from the sector; have little control over decisions regarding use of farm income; have limited access to resources, information and credit; and constitute the highest percentage of the rural poor, landless squatters and the marginalized (FOWODE 2012; ITAD 2008; MOFPED 2004; Commonwealth Secretariat 2001).

Amolatar district is located in northern Uganda in the Lango sub-region. The region is very fertile, and the most common economic activity is farming, although some men engage in fishing too. Women in particular constitute over 80% of the labor in agriculture in the region and are responsible for the bulk of farm-related activities from cultivation, planting, weeding, harvesting, transportation, drying, and storage. Sale of the produce, however, is left to men in the households due to cultural norms that place men in control of decisions regarding household resources; patriarchal norms and inheritance rights that lock women out of ownership of key productive resources like land and livestock; as well as other factors including distance to markets, and illiteracy which deprives many women of the opportunity to sell their output and control incomes derived from it. This has resulted in a situation where many female farmers

are deprived of control over their own income and are thus fully dependent on men for a livelihood and for sustenance (Anena & Ochen 2017; Akumu et al. 2005).

Efforts by many NGOs and humanitarian agencies to implement Women's Economic Empowerment programmes (WEE) in the region and ensure women have their own sustainable livelihoods have, however, not been very successful over the years in creating the kind of social transformation necessary to give women more control over the assets essential to having sustainable livelihoods. The women-only projects have historically been viewed as disruptive of the Lango social hierarchy, and an attempt to disempower and emasculate men. Many men in Lango communities thus view such WEE initiatives with a great deal of suspicion and are averse to supporting such programmes. Indeed cases abound of men grabbing output from WEE programmes to which their wives belong, and cases of GBV abound, resulting from men's attempts to reassert their authority as controllers of household income, including income accruing to their wives from WEE programmes (Anena & Ochen 2017; Mugisha 2006; HRW 2005, 2003; Akumu et al. 2005). Suffice to say, most of these WEE projects have not resulted in more secure or sustainable livelihoods for women, since their control over household resources is largely compromised through traditional norms that place men in a position of relative power and authority over the women.

The Hope Development Initiative (HDI)

Hope Development Initiative, a Ugandan women's empowerment and development NGO has been implementing rice farming projects for WEE and promoting sustainable livelihoods in Uganda's northern district of Amolatar. The aim of the project is not just providing female farmers with sustainable livelihoods, but also addressing the gender inequalities that are so deeply engrained in these communities, as well as reducing women's vulnerability to Gender Based Violence (GBV). The HDI Rice project started in 2010 with just 20 rural women but has grown to include over 11,000 women by 2018.

HDI's theory of change is that WEE programmes need to be structured in a manner that engages men in gender awareness, positive masculinity, and GBV reduction sessions to address gender inequalities, give

rise to positive masculinity, and reduce women's exposure and vulnerability to GBV. The project theory argues that integrating a component of addressing gender inequalities in WEE programmes ensures women have more control over their economic activities and are more likely to control key decisions essential for promotion of sustainable livelihoods, which, in turn, enhances women's wellbeing and community development in general. HDI acknowledges that men's violent opposition to WEE often results from social perceptions that WEE and the associated women's financial independence, are a threat to men's masculinity and social standing. Indeed, studies indicate that many men feeling threatened by the changes in women's economic power from various livelihoods programmes, lash out against women, to reassert their power and social status. This leads to grabbing of women's livelihood projects by spouses, and exposes more women to physical, social, emotional, economic and sexual forms of violence that puts their lives at risk (see for instance Hughes et al. 2015; Goetz 2001; Goetz & Sengupta 1996). Addressing these insecurities by men and overturning the negative social norms in favor of gender equality, helps foster greater control over own livelihoods projects by women and enhances their motivation to invest and expand their livelihood options, knowing that they have control over the output.

Problem

Female farmers constitute over 80% of the agricultural workforce in rural Uganda and as such make a tremendous contribution to the success of agricultural development programmes in the country (NAADS 2011; 2003). However, their capacity to forge sustainable livelihoods is dependent on sound programmes which address gender inequalities, and which facilitate equitable access to assets and capability enhancing opportunities for having sustainable livelihoods (IFAD 2011; Kabeer 2009, 2005). While there is much literature on the status of agricultural productivity in Uganda, very little documentation about successful WEE programmes exists, which leaves many agencies reinventing the wheel or repeating similar mistakes instead of adapting available best practices in promotion of women's sustainable and secure livelihoods. This paper documents the best practice example of the HDI project, offers learning points, and provides new insights for the promotion of sustainable livelihoods for women.

Objectives

This study documents the strategies adopted by HDI's rice project to promote sustainable livelihoods for women and showcases the outcomes of HDI's projects in this regard. The specific aims of the study were:

- To document the HDI initiatives approach for WEE and promotion of sustainable livelihoods.
- To document the effects of the programme on core assets of women in the community
- To provide recommendations for the promotion of sustainable livelihoods for women in a manner that produces better outcomes for women's socio-economic wellbeing

Theoretical Framework

Several studies (see for instance Yakuz 2010; Spieldoch 2007; Peterson & Runyan 1999), show evidence that gender ideologies determine access, utilization and control over different processes, structures and resources that are vital for production, household economic and social wellbeing as well as for sustainable livelihoods. Gender ideologies in many patriarchal societies also espouse unequal power relations that impede women's access to, and control over, various resources, with negative implications for the security of women's livelihoods and socio-economic wellbeing in particular. WEE programmes must employ strategies that improve women's access to secure livelihoods and economic resources, alleviate their extreme responsibilities with regard to housework, but most importantly raise social awareness through effective programmes of education and mass communication on gender equality issues and the importance of removing barriers to women's progress (Anena 2014).

The sustainable livelihoods framework adopted for this paper asserts that individuals and households need to have access to five core assets that are essential for viable and sustainable livelihoods. These include financial, personal, social, physical and human assets (Anena 2014, Murray & Ferguson 2010, 2002, 2001; Ashley & Carney 1999). Financial Assets include earnings, money and financial security; Personal Assets include self-confidence, self-esteem, and motivation; Social Assets in-

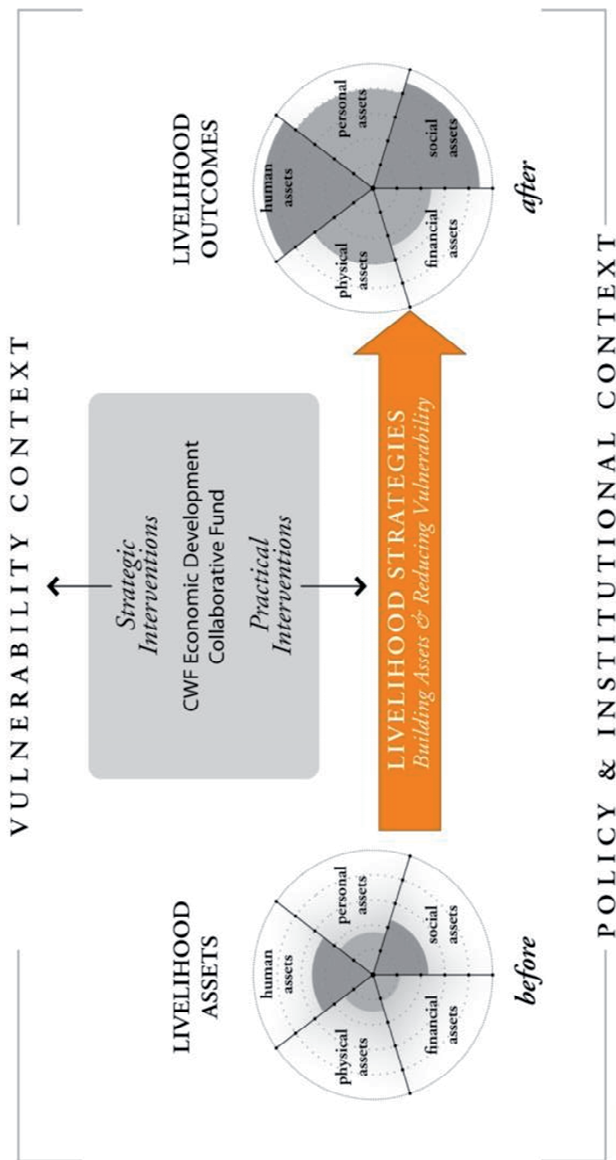
clude social connections, networks, support systems and contacts that can be drawn upon to enhance/develop other assets; Physical Assets include natural resources like land, forests, marine/wild resources, water, and services required to build a livelihood (affordable transport, good road network, access to information, processing facilities, etc.); Human Assets refers to skills, knowledge, and education (Scoones 2009, 1994; Kollmair & Gamper 2002; Norton & Foster 2000; Ashley & Carney 1999). In order for a livelihood to be considered sustainable there must be an enhanced ability of beneficiaries to deepen and broaden core assets over time. This allows a broader range of activities to be pursued, as well as providing scope for substitutions between asset categories (Ellis & Bahiigwa 2003).

Based on these arguments from different authors, it is clear that the design and implementation of WEE programmes, as well as the structures and processes through which these programmes function, can either provide opportunities or create constraints for women's efforts to forge sustainable livelihoods from available assets (Murray & Fergusson 2010, 2002, 2001; Bingen 2000; Ashley & Carney 1999). Figure 1.0 below illustrates that such programmes must expand the assets bases of individuals to enable them to expand their livelihoods options or deepen existing ones and enhance their quality of life.

From the foregoing discussions and the illustration in figure 1, one can argue that the role of different development interventions like HDI's rice project must be to enhance the asset bases of beneficiaries, and thereby boost their livelihood outcomes. Access to, or control over, productive assets determines a female farmer's productive capacity and output levels as well as the level of vulnerability to food insecurity, gender-based violence, and other external shocks. It is known that factors like existing gender ideologies, norms, values, practices, social relations, and institutions at different levels have the capacity to regulate men's and women's levels of access to various assets essential for viable livelihoods.

As such, to ensure that female farmers are able to have sustainable livelihoods, they must be empowered to expand and use the five core assets bases including tapping into a network of social relations to access and make the most of available opportunities, information, goods, and services (Long 1992, 2002; Giddens 1984; Kabeer 2005; Kasente 2005; FOWODE 2012). This, therefore, necessitates the implementation of gender-sensitive and responsive programmes that can boost female farmer's control over the five core assets essential for sustainable livelihoods.

Figure 1: The role of programme interventions in the promotion of sustainable livelihoods outcomes



This study sought to document the effects of HDI's rice project on female farmers' levels of control of, and gains from, the five core assets identified as being essential for a sustainable livelihood.

Methodology

The study adopted an analytical design to understand the HDI programme's theory of change, the implementation modalities and effects on livelihoods enhancement and GBV reduction. The study was largely qualitative with use of descriptive statistics to support or show trends with regard to the issues under investigation. The fieldwork was carried out in the Amolatar district of northern Uganda in 2018. This is an area with a high number of women engaged in agriculture and also has a high number of women experiencing GBV (UDHS 2016). It was thus deemed appropriate to provide data on the effects of the HDI project on women's livelihoods, sustainability options and reduction of GBV vulnerability.

The study utilized a number of data collection methods including in-depth interviews, key informant interviews, case studies, and focus group discussions (FGDs). For the in-depth interviews, women and male (beneficiaries of the HDI programme) were purposely identified and selected through HDI records. A total of 50 people (30 women and 20 men) were interviewed using in-depth interview guides. Six case studies of female HDI beneficiaries were documented from the unique experiences unearthed during data collection. In addition, a total of six FGDs were held (two with HDI members, two with female community members and two with male community members) to articulate their general perceptions on the effects of the HDI rice project on women's capacity to forge sustainable livelihoods, and on changing social mindsets about women. In order to protect the confidentiality of the respondents and for their own safety, real names have not been used in this report.

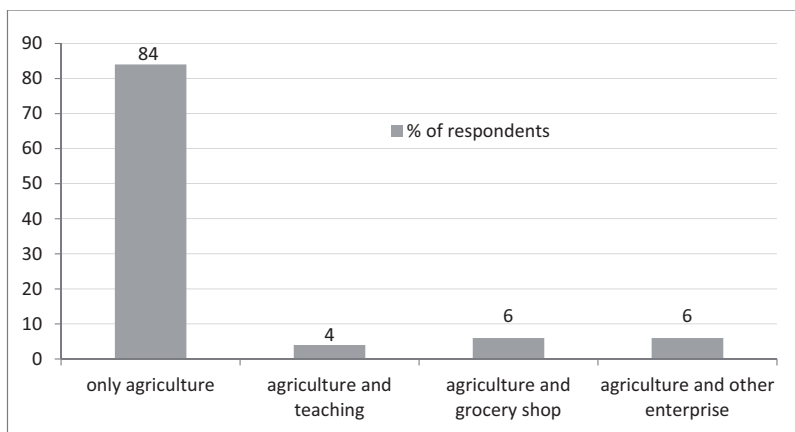
2. The Study Findings

2.1 The Context

Cultural norms and women's status in the study area

The findings indicate that over 80% of households in Amolatar depend entirely on agriculture for sustenance. The remaining households noted that they rely on agriculture heavily but also have alternative sources of income as shown in the table below.

Figure 2: Sources of Livelihood



Source: household interviews.

Focus group discussions with community members who were not a part of the HDI project, showed that women in Amolatar generally have less access to credit and are largely dependent on men for finance. The discussions noted that social norms in the region deny women land ownership rights and, as such, women do not have access to security that can be used to acquire credit. This weakens women's investment capacity and keeps them heavily dependent on male relatives and spouses.

The FGD participants also noted that, while women can manage food-related finances at the household level with independence, the authority

to make decisions on household assets like land and livestock remains with the men, regardless of the contributions the women made towards the purchase of these assets. Some FGD participants, however, noted that in some cases, the men monitor food-related expenditure and become violent when they feel the expenditure exceeds acceptable figures or if they suspect that the wives are diverting food money towards other needs that they deem as non-essential. This mirrors findings from the Save The Children foundation (2015), that noted that women tend to have very minimal say regarding household resource allocation in rural households. They note further that this tends to increase their vulnerability to destitution and also GBV, since they do not own the assets, they have worked so hard to generate. In the event of divorce, they are sent away empty handed.

The FGDs also noted that women in the region generally lack social capital and often work individually on their own farms with their children, and sometimes spouses, helping with the farm labor.

In the public arena, women are perceived as passive participants, compared to men who take on more decision-making roles. The FGDs with community members also revealed that women's voices are largely ignored in communal meetings, with men's priorities influencing decisions made at the community level. Women's participation in such public discussions was also noted as being curtailed by their multiple roles which limits their mobility and time to participate in community decision-making affairs. Further, it was noted that the more financially stable a person was in the community, the more power and influence they held in community meetings and gatherings. While men already had such power owing to their favored social position, those men with more assets and livestock or land tended to also have greater influence. Owing to social norms that deny them power and deny them rights to asset inheritance or control women generally also tend to have mobility and information constraints that result in fewer opportunities to access business information and opportunities to expand their contacts and asset acquisition capabilities. This leaves many women with less power and influence in community discussions that affect them. These findings mirror the findings from several other studies that note that social norms and expectations surrounding women's roles often hinder women's levels of participation in society and benefits therefrom (World Bank 2015; Save the Children Foundation 2015; ADB 2015).

The FGDs also noted that women generally have less access to farm mechanization and other extension services, including improved seeds and advisory services that could enhance their farm yields. Their lack of control over household resources and community expectations surrounding women's place in the household also does not make it easy for women to access and use such services even when they are single. The discussions noted, for example, that female-headed households have significantly less access to agricultural tools and machinery, such as hand tractors, water pumps, threshing machines, and rice mills, compared to male-headed households. The discussions further noted that men have better access to seeds and fertilizers compared to their female counterparts owing to the fact that they have access to information and that they control household resources. These findings are also shared by other studies that note that technology in many rural communities remains largely accessed by men much more than women, making it more difficult for women to expand productivity in agriculture compared to their male counterparts (NAADS 2001, 2003; FAO and National Institute of Statistics 2010; World Bank 2015).

It was further noted in the FGD discussions that, due to gender norms in the study areas, and generally because of their higher literacy rates, men often take charge of dealing with buyers and collectors for cash crops, such as rice, while women sell secondary crops such as home-grown vegetables. Nevertheless, it was also noted that when secondary crops provide significant amounts of income, the men usually take over their production and sale further laying credence to the argument that men control household resources regardless of women's contributions. These findings are similar to other findings from the World Bank, showing that, in many cases, women lack control over sale of farm outputs and hence their rights to income and assets ownership is often curtailed (World Bank 2015).

The findings above therefore indicate that overall in the Amolatar district, female farmers generally fare worse than their male counterparts due to limited access to land, labor, and other productive resources. Further, their limited decision-making power at household and community level also often left them with less capacity to influence decisions in their favor, implying that they rarely benefitted from resource allocation outcomes of decisions made at household or community level. Furthermore, the low level of literacy, the lack of control over household assets, and

the limited savings also meant women lacked access to credit, and agricultural extension services, while their limited mobility reduced access to business and market-related information that could help expand or deepen their investments in the sector. As such, their earnings compared to that of men were reportedly consistently low and, where the earnings rose again, the spouses tended to assume control over their earnings resulting in limited motivation on the part of female farmers to expand investments beyond household sustenance. The fact that GBV was used as a means to enforce male control over women, women's mobility, and women's earnings only made it more difficult for female farmers to access or expand levels of access to the five core assets and have viable livelihoods. These problems were noted in the FGDs as significant barriers for female farmer's capacity for sustainable livelihoods.

2.2 HDI's rice project:

Efforts to enhance women's capacity to have sustainable livelihoods

In realization of the numerous barriers facing female farmers despite their tremendous contribution of labor to the men's agricultural output, HDI designed their rice project with multi-faceted components that were aimed at addressing the multiple problems and barriers that women were experiencing in Amolatar. The HDI project mobilizes women into farmer groups of 30 members each. In addition, the women are encouraged to bring their spouses or other male relatives for the training sessions organized by HDI. At these sessions, the group members and their spouses are trained on various topics, including best practices in rice farming – management of high yielding rice varieties, spacing, farm management, proper drying and storage; given extension advice; taught financial literacy to enhance financial management and farming as a business etc.

The project also distributes good quality, high yielding, disease resistant and marketable rice seeds, provides extension services and support to farmers, and offers farmers other services including use of mechanization for ploughing and threshing/milling the rice. In addition, the farmers are connected to markets and prices are stabilized through bulk sales controlled by the HDI. This is intended to give farmers better earnings and reduce risks of low earnings from distress sales and exploitation by unscrupulous businesspeople. The HDI female members and their

spouses are also taught gender dynamics – the dangers of gender inequalities and how they negatively affect household development and wealth creation; positive masculinities; the importance of sharing household resource allocation decisions; the importance of non-violent conflict resolution; etc. Women in particular are taught how to negotiate in their own interests, how to promote their own interests using covert or overt measures depending on the context and, through participation in the group sessions, also took part in self-esteem building and confidence building exercises.

The aim of these sessions is not just to build farmers' capacity to grow rice but also to boost their capacity to earn and benefit from their efforts. Realizing that negative patriarchal norms and spouses with deeply entrenched biases were the biggest barrier to women's progress in the area, HDI incorporated gender awareness and mindset change messages in their training sessions to encourage mindset change among male spouses but also to bolster women's power in the home. These changes were intended to be achieved by targeting women with enhanced self-esteem development, agency enhancement, and promotion of shared decision-making in the home. This helped improve women's relative power in the household and improved their capacity to negotiate for better resource allocation outcomes in the home. The project also helped create positive masculinities by showing men the error of the current stereotypes around masculinity, but also by targeting men with mindset change messages and encouraging them to see the value in their wives and the potential gains to be enjoyed by treating wives as partners instead of slaves.

The HDI arrangement of organizing women into farmer groups is also a way to address the socio-cultural domain of empowerment by building women's social support networks and empowering them with a network of friends on whom they can rely for social support, advice, and sharing of developmental ideas. Beyond that, however, HDI used the group structures to promote voluntary savings and loans possibilities for women to enable them to accumulate savings and access loans from the farmer group for the purpose of boosting their livelihoods. Through the Voluntary Savings and Loans Associations (VSLAs) the groups provide opportunities for members to access credit that was previously very difficult for women to get from banks and financial institutions due to lack of credit and general fear of loans. This was envisaged as a way to help individual female farmers expand their asset bases, commercialize agricul-

ture, diversify and increase incomes and improve their quality of life. The groups also serve as opportunities for the members to learn from each other and exchange developmental ideas.

The participatory nature of the programme was also structured in a manner that was assumed to offer spaces for women and other marginalized groups to exercise their agency and use that agency to influence decisions at group level and later transfer their new-found negotiation skills to the household and to community level decision-making.

As members of HDI, the female farmers are able to benefit from HDI's strong negotiating position and hence sell their produce to HDI at a favorable price. This assures them of a ready market for their produce but also assures them of good prices and eliminates the risk of exploitation by unscrupulous buyers. HDI negotiates with buyers on behalf of the farmers, helping to reduce exploitation by buyers. HDI has also positioned itself as a programme that protects farmers from farm gate sales and emergency sales of farm output at low prices by offering farmers access to credit from their VSLA and also providing the option of buying rice harvests at good prices even before they mature in the fields. This has helped protect female farmers, who are liable to distress sales, to earn the correct value for their produce and be protected from unscrupulous buyers who often take advantage of their plight.

HDI's offer of tractor hire to members at a subsidized rate has helped many female farmers open up larger plots of farmland for rice cultivation and cultivation of other crops too. Traditionally, opening up land is a male role and many women used to rely on men to help them open up the land, which would delay planting since many men would first focus on their own farms before helping their wives or other female relatives needing help. Needless to say, the late land opening had adverse effects on the female farmers' crop yields and the acreage they could cultivate. With the introduction of HDI's tractors, land opening became easier, and hence more female farmers have expanded productivity and acreage, resulting in higher yields per acre and more incomes.

From the above discussions, it is clear that HDI has significantly addressed the key obstacles that female farmers faced in Amolatar. However, it is important to use the CWF framework to examine the extent to which the programme has addressed the core assets building capabilities for female farmers and how this has directly translated to improving their quality of life. The next section examines each of the five core assets in

relation to what HDI has done and how that has affected the female farmers.

3. *Effects of the HDI Rice Project on Female Farmers' Five Core Assets*

Financial Assets

Based on the CWF Sustainable Livelihoods Framework used as a theoretical framework for this paper, financial assets include access to various sources of income that can be invested in new business ventures or used to boost existing ventures (Murray & Fergusson 2001, 2002, 2010; Ashley & Carney 1999) and includes own income, salary, loans services at affordable interest rates, remittances, among other things. Financial assets are expected to help beneficiaries boost their investment capital to deepen existing enterprises or expand and diversify sources of income to reduce vulnerability to external shocks and increase socio-economic wellbeing and provisioning (Anena 2014). The HDI programme has enhanced women's financial assets through creation of voluntary savings and loans associations. Each farmer group on the project is composed of 30 women who are the key members although their spouses are also allowed to be part of the group and have the opportunity to contribute finances to the savings association and also benefit from the small loans provided. Every week, members are expected to bring a small amount of money that they can afford and to save it with the group. Every member has the opportunity to borrow up to five times the amount they have saved at any given time. Considering the fact that women in Amolatar are traditionally denied opportunities to control household resources and assets that can be sold to earn income or used as security to access bank loans, being part of the VSLA has greatly helped boost their access to credit at low interest rates, which would otherwise have been impossible.

In addition to accessing credit from the group, the female farmers have been able to invest and thereby enjoy economic gains that were hitherto difficult due to limited or no access to credit. The findings show that there were significant changes realized by female farmers, most of whom were able to reinvest in agriculture (80%) or diversify their businesses and invest in other ventures apart from agriculture (20%). Of the 20% who ventured into starting up secondary businesses from which to earn

additional income, 30% had established small second-hand clothing businesses; 25% were selling alcohol in the community, which is a very lucrative trade; and the remainder were selling different kinds of food in their local markets. All these were own enterprises in which they fully controlled the income.

The credit opportunities have also enabled the women to open up and cultivate larger tracts of land using tractors. Traditionally the farmers relied on hand-held hoes to dig up land and primarily relied on male labor to do the back-breaking work. The tractors have enabled women to stop relying on male labor and their financial access to credit under the VSLA arrangement has allowed them to hire the tractors and pay cash or pay later after harvest if they do not have ready cash to hand. All the HDI respondents spoken to insist that this has been a huge factor in enhancing their earnings and reducing their workload.

This confirms the theoretical underpinnings of the Sustainable Livelihoods framework that building core assets empowers beneficiaries to deepen and widen their livelihoods and thereby ensures sustainability of livelihoods and reduces vulnerability. Due to livelihoods deepening and widening income, can be picked from one venture and used to boost and revitalize other enterprises thus ensuring the sustainability of these enterprises and fostering household wellbeing (e.g. Murray & Fergusson 2001, 2002, 2010; Ellis & Bahiiga 2003; Ashley & Carney 1999).

Personal Assets

The CWF sustainable livelihoods framework defines personal assets as including, among other things, values and beliefs, self-confidence and self-esteem and motivation (Murray & Fergusson 2001, 2002, 2010). These attributes empower an individual to have the confidence to take risks, assert his/her views and defend his/her interests in group or household level negotiations regarding resource allocation. The findings show that, under the HDI rice programme, the group structure and training sessions aimed at boosting self-esteem helped to raise female farmers' levels of self-esteem, self-confidence, and assertiveness as well as empowering them to use these skills in their engagements at household level and in farmer group discussions and negotiations as well as at bigger gatherings. These gave them the opportunity to articulate their concerns at these levels

and defend their interests, thereby resulting in more favorable resource allocation outcomes. Some were able to hone their leadership skills through practice at group level and a few female farmers were able to boost their leadership skills at the group level and, later on, joined politics at different levels of their communities.

The programme also sought to change social mindsets related to women in the community by targeting men with mindset change and attitude change regarding women, women's rights issues, women's contribution to the home, the importance of sharing decision making and control of household resources, etc. In the HDI farmer meetings, gender related issues like unequal power relations between men and women, perceived gender roles and how these negatively affect women and entire households, were openly discussed and, within a short period of time, many of these male spouses started changing their attitudes upon realizing that negative cultural norms that deny women opportunities are not only unjust but also not developmental. For instance, in many Ugandan societies, women are not supposed to speak, argue with or contradict their husbands, or, for that matter, what other respectable men in the community say (e.g. Plan Uganda 2011; UWONET 2011). Indeed, as shown in FGD discussions, social perceptions of what a "good" woman should and should not do or say also limited opportunities to negotiate and openly argue for women's interests to be met, especially in the public arena. These concerns were raised in HDI farmer group meetings and the male spouses began to relinquish more power and authority in their homes to their spouses. Furthermore, spouses changed their behavior, resorting less to GBV as a means of conflict resolution.

Interviews with the female farmers in the HDI groups, whose spouses also attended the farmer group meetings, indicated that the number of incidences of GBV in the households had greatly reduced and their homes were more peaceful. About 90% of the women who were members of the HDI groups said they were no longer beaten by their spouses since the spouses had joined the programme. For example, Sarah had this to say:

"I never knew what peace was before my husband agreed to attend the HDI meetings. My house was a hornet's nest where you enter knowing any minute you will be in sharp pain all over your body. My husband used to batter me for the fun of it. Any small thing he would slap me or kick me...in his words, the beatings were to show me that am just a

woman married into the clan and he is my controller. A friend of mine encouraged me to join HDI to start earning my own money since my husband controlled all household money and never used to give me a penny. I joined the group secretly and in the first harvest I got my share of money. I was ecstatic. I bought myself nice things which he promptly burnt saying I had got them from a man. I encouraged him to come and sit in on the meetings with other community men...he agreed after a while and since then, I have had a very enjoyable marriage. He changed completely. The beatings stopped, he started giving me more freedom and more money to run the home. Our kids are healthier too because they eat better and perform better at school..." (Sarah, member of HDI)

These views were shared by 90% of the HDI members interviewed. They all concurred that the sessions they jointly attended with their spouses were an eye opener that helped change the mindsets of their spouses and reduce incidents of GBV in their homes. These views were confirmed by the spouses who attended sessions in the groups too.

Discussions with the men who attended these trainings revealed that they understood the mindset change messages and appreciated these messages and began to appreciate the role their wives played in their lives much more. One of the men, Geoffrey had this to say:

"...in my culture, a woman is married with lots of dowry and this makes us treat them as property of the clan. She is not a full member of her husband's clan and yet she contributes a lot to the welfare of the clan by giving birth to children, contributes a lot to farm productivity and general maintenance of the clan members not just her husband and children....I used to be so strict, my wife had no voice in my household, but now we make decisions together and I have seen a huge change in her since then. Our productivity has increased because she feels appreciated and puts in more effort. Moreover, I ensure that she has an allowance from every enterprise she participates in...our marriage life has greatly improved too...there is more happiness in my home..." (Okello – male respondent and spouse of an HDI member)

However, not all the outcomes were so positive. In 10% of the female interview respondents who were members of HDI, it was noted that their spouses refused to be part of the programme and, as such, resisted the messages of gender equality and peaceful coexistence with their wives. These men, who refused to attend the trainings, were very rigid and tried

to dissuade their wives from joining the HDI groups. Indeed, their wives attended the trainings in secret and had own secret gardens unknown to their spouses. The wives of these men therefore noted that they still experienced a lot of difficulty with their spouses, who tried to grab every income source they had, and controlled all household decision-making because they did not attend the HDI trainings. The interesting thing to note in these cases, however, is the level of personal empowerment that the wives attained. Despite the difficult situation they faced, they developed covert methods of resistance, used savings to set up rice gardens unknown to their spouses and quietly earned their own income and bought personal assets without their spouses finding out. For example, Annet a member of the HDI group, had this to say:

“My husband is very rigid and unwilling to change from traditional ways of viewing women. He confiscates all money and controls how much I should get, which is usually very little. I joined the HDI, earned my first income from the group and used it to set up my personal garden of rice, which is doing tremendously well. I have never had so much money before. When the kids are sick, I no longer ask my husband, I just take them to hospital. When he asks, I tell him that I took the child to the government facility which is free, but the truth is government facilities lack medicine. My children are all in school, but he has no idea which schools they attend. I placed them in boarding schools, and they are doing very well with the money I earn from the rice project. The project has taught me how to handle a difficult spouse, I give him respect and make him feel like I could never do anything behind his back. When I want a dress, I ask him for money or ask if I can sell a hen to buy a dress and make him feel like a new dress for me would make other women see him as a very generous man...you see, he has a huge ego. He can never refuse but he is stingy and gives very little. So, I top up what he has given with my own income and I tell him I got the dress at a bargain price. My life has improved so much, I am a happy woman.” (Annet, member of HDI)

Clearly, there have been big changes not just in the women's levels of self-esteem and self-confidence, but also in the values and beliefs of the women and their spouses in 90% of the cases at least. These are huge strides that show the value of engaging men and targeting them with mindset change messages. It also shows that targeting men with mindset change messages is key to reducing GBV vulnerability in such communi-

ties, but also to opening up opportunities for women to have more sustainable livelihoods and enhanced control over gains from these livelihoods, leading to better quality of life for the women and their households.

Social Assets

Based on the CWF sustainable livelihoods framework, social assets include social connections, networks, support systems and contacts that can be drawn upon to enhance/develop other assets (Murray & Fergusson 2001, 2002, 2010; Ashley & Carney 1999). The HDI group structure can be seen as a form of social asset building block that farmers were empowered to tap into and gain from to boost their livelihoods. The groups were intended to provide women with opportunities to access credit, exchange developmental ideas, farm and market jointly to reduce exploitation by buyers, jointly lobby for specific enterprises to be provided through HDI, etc. This has helped individual female farmers expand their asset bases, commercialize agriculture, diversify and increase incomes and improve quality of life. Indeed, through the HDI, female farmers have been able to rent or buy farmland on which to cultivate their rice; more than half have also introduced other crops like beans and groundnuts. This new capacity to own land, is a huge achievement since, traditionally, women only had rights to use family land but did not control the decisions regarding the land or the proceeds from it even if they did do all the productive work that generated this income. By empowering women to access credit and purchase their own land, HDI has been able to overturn one of the biggest impediments to women's empowerment – lack of control over productive assets. This has, in turn, enabled women to gain control over the proceeds from their farms as they are no longer farming rice on clan land, which was the justification for their spouses to control farm output.

Additionally, the women have been able to organize themselves into groups and jointly sell directly to traders or sell through HDI, which sets the prices and negotiates with traders from a stronger position compared to individual female farmers (*FGD with HDI members*). On their own, many female farmers are vulnerable to exploitation by traders, and likely to sell at extremely low farm gate prices owing to illiteracy, emergencies, etc. but as members of HDI, they are able to access emergency loans or

be paid before the harvest to settle emergency needs. This has greatly helped reduce their vulnerability to exploitation and secured their earnings (*interview with HDI Manager*). As such, female farmers have been able to earn higher income for every kilo of rice they sell, compared to other farmers. HDI buys from the female farmers and sells to the traders or supports the female farmers to export to South Sudan and other areas with good profit margins, thereby leading to improved incomes and better quality of life generally (*individual interviews with HDI members*).

The participatory nature of the programme offers spaces for women and other marginalized groups to exercise their agency and use that agency to influence decisions at group level. This capacity building has been transferred to household level, where female farmers, members of HDI, have been able to enhance their negotiation skills with their spouses, resulting in better resource allocation decisions within their homes (*individual interviews with HDI members*). The enhanced awareness of rights issues during the discussions has also empowered more female farmers to proactively seek to protect their rights and interests in the community either as individuals or as support networks that protect each other's interests. It was, for example, noted that one of the members was constantly being battered by her spouse for very trivial reasons. The group members went to speak with the spouse to try and make him change his ways. The next day he battered his wife again and the group members descended on him, beat him and took him to the police as a habitual wife beater. He was threatened with court action and imprisonment and has since stopped battering his wife (*FGD with HDI members*). This shows the power of networking and enhanced gains obtained from the social networking and support structures developed through the HDI programme.

Physical Assets

The CWF framework identifies physical assets as natural resources including land, and services required to build a livelihood like affordable transport, good road networks, access to information, processing facilities, etc (Murray & Fergusson 2001, 2002, 2010; Ashley & Carney 1999). The study findings presented above indicate that access to physical assets essential for farming, for instance, land access, has greatly improved for female farmers who were members of the HDI programme. For example,

the region generally is synonymous with multiple barriers to women's land ownership, including cultural norms that deny or limit women's inheritance rights; limited resources to purchase own land; limited educational opportunities, as well as limited access to paid jobs and incomes to purchase land, among others (Anena & Ochen 2017; Nayenga 2008; Rugadya 2007a, 2007b).

The findings show that, through the HDI programme, many of these barriers have been overcome. For example, through access to credit at group level, many women were able to purchase land and pay their loans as soon as they sold their produce. Further, through incomes earned from the sale of rice, the female farmers were able to pay for more land and generally expand their asset bases. In FGDs with community members, it was also established that the only women who owned mobile phones were women belonging to the HDI project since they could afford to purchase the phones and maintain the phones too. This also implied more access to information since the phones kept them connected to information sources via radio or phone calls; however, the women were also able to earn income through hiring out the phones to community members who needed to make calls. This not only increased connectivity to information sources but also helped boost incomes because of improved access to market price information, improved access to market links and communication with remote buyers, as well as use of their phones as income generators.

The increased access to land and increased earnings from rice projects implied that deepening investments in agriculture or expansion from subsistence to commercialization became the norm for female farmers on the HDI project. One family in particular has been constantly identified as role models in the community and has become a point of reference for other households. The lady, Betty, joined HDI and the husband expressed interest in joining the programme too. Within a year they had expanded their rice farm from one acre (which was the woman's plot originally) to five acres which included all the land the man owned plus two additional rented acres. The couple invested their earnings back into the farm, but also set up a grocery shop, which is currently the biggest shop in the village. From having no means of transport, the couple first bought a bicycle then upgraded to a motorcycle within a year. The husband uses the motorcycle to earn more money as a motorcycle taxi service. He handed over the bicycle to his wife and she can now fetch water and firewood more

easily using the bicycle or take sick children to hospital if her husband is not available. Generally, this has greatly eased her burden of work and time spent doing her multiple tasks. They both sit at their shop in turns and have built up a huge clientele. The couple have never reported any cases of GBV since they both joined HDI and are now a role model for other couples in the community. One community member said in reference to the couple

“HDI has brought so much progress in this couple’s life – Betty and Jimmy. We have been observing them with keen interest. This Jimmy is a young man but in just two years he has achieved much more than we older men. This has inspired us to send our wives to join HDI too so that we can also have some progress in our lives.” – (Ogwang, community member)

The general consensus with other participants in the FGD is that Jimmy has become a role model in the neighborhood and many men want to join HDI because they want to benefit in the way Jimmy’s family has benefited. The key words used by community members during the FGD, in reference to Jimmy’s household, included – *“progressive”*, *“peaceful”*, *“role model”*, *“eye opener”*, *“exemplary”*, *“developmental”* etc. This showed the extent to which the couple were admired and seen as examples of what a good home is supposed to be like. In this case the HDI model not only provided progress in this young family but gave hope and aspirations to other community members to improve their lives and become more stable and peaceful.

FGDs with community members indicate that women in the area largely experience poor access to information due to limited mobility caused by spousal restrictions, gender roles and responsibilities for child-care, as well as social stigma associated with women who move around. Similarly, World Bank (2000, 2006, 2009) and Ilahi (2000) reveal that social constraints to women’s mobility and access to information can be a major hindrance for female farmers’ opportunities to diversify their livelihoods. The respondents in this study noted these constraints are a major cause of exploitation by buyers of farm produce, since they routinely force the women to sell at low farm-gate prices, hence affecting their earnings and income diversification efforts (*community FGDs*). Through HDI, however, women’s access to credit has empowered them financially; the HDI members all own phones that also have radio applications

and this enables them to access information and contact buyers directly, allowing them to sell at better prices. Further, the membership of HDI enables them to sell as one unit using HDI as the negotiator and hence allows them to know the right price and stick to that price if buyers come directly to their farms. As members of HDI, they also get information on market prices shared with them through HDI administrators. Information including extension advice, market prices, market opportunities etc. are easily accessed through the groups. This has helped HDI female farmers expand their productivity but also deepen their investments in other enterprises, which is not the case with non-members, who find it difficult to access this information.

Human Assets

Human assets according to the CWF include access to, or controlling, some useful skills, being employable, and being in good health. This includes having access to education opportunities, skills development opportunities and good/affordable healthcare services (Murray & Fergusson 2001, 2002, 2010; Ashley & Carney 1999). Human assets also include being employable in order to have other reliable sources of income like salaried employment, etc. The findings show that the HDI Rice programme made efforts to link farmers to different services including functional adult literacy (FAL), and also offered training and extension services to boost farmers' skills in agriculture, as well as enhancing their agency by boosting their self-esteem and confidence through training sessions that targeted them and their spouses. These skills-building initiatives not only strengthened female farmers' capacity to expand productivity on the farm, but also enhanced their awareness of their rights and their readiness to speak up at household level and community level to defend their interests. These in turn have been instrumental in building female farmers' capacity to expand their incomes and control household resources, which has translated into more investments, more secure and sustainable livelihoods, deepening and widening of livelihoods and, finally, improvements in quality of life and reduced incidences of GBV. For example, Joyce a member of HDI reported:

“...when I joined HDI, I was terrified of what my husband would say. Men in the community spoke ill of the programme and many were against it. I was among the first women to join. Today, my husband never misses a single session. We go to the meetings together. He treats me much better than he used to and trusts me with more responsibility because, through the sessions, I have learnt to read and write and learnt to assert myself and defend my rights. This made him see my strengths as a businesswoman and as a wife and mother to his children. He now entrusts me with money that he used to rush and keep in the bank. I am group leader and I sit on the executive of HDI. I have been approached by women in the community who want me to stand as a women's representative in politics at local council 5 level. This is a big sign of the respect and trust that the community has for me. All this would not have been possible without HDI” – (Joyce, member of HDI).

These views mirrored similar feedback from other women who stated that, prior to joining HDI, they were afraid to speak in public but now they can articulate their concerns boldly and even in the presence of men. For example, Jessica notes that the skills acquired through various HDI training sessions have empowered her tremendously. She notes:

“I now speak in community meetings and men actually listen... this could not have happened before I joined HDI...I was so timid. This newfound strength of character and public speaking has helped me expand my sources of income, assert myself and what I want in negotiations with my husband and in community meetings. This has also enabled me to win some tenders and helped me earn extra income” – (Jessica HDI member).

These views and findings support the CWF assertion that to build sustainable livelihoods, one must build five core assets, one of which is the human assets – skills that individuals can use to assert their interests and deepen or widen their livelihoods (Murray & Fergusson 2001, 2002, 2010; Ashley & Carney 1999).

4. Conclusion

As seen from the above discussions, the HDI rice project not only met the needs of beneficiaries, but also created the necessary conditions that empowered the beneficiaries to overcome inherent cultural, institutional

and social norms that create gender and wealth-related imbalances. The findings show that so many gender-related barriers existed in the community but that by using a multifaceted approach that engaged men in the community, targeted them with mindset messages and attitude change in favor of positive masculinities, women were able to enjoy a better environment at home that allowed livelihoods to deepen and widen in a secure and sustainable manner.

It is noted that not only were the gender related sessions transformatory in nature for both males and females, but also the agricultural skills building sessions translated into practical adoption of recommended modern farm technologies by the female farmers interviewed, and thus positively impacted on their earnings and quality of life as well as their ability to diversify their livelihoods and overcome external shocks. The findings also reveal that the agricultural advisory and support services had a notable impact on the crop output, farm production, and income of the farmers in the study area, thereby fulfilling the HDI programme's aspirations of achieving increased food and nutrition security as well as farm incomes and farm household wellbeing. It is also noted that the female farmers were able to enhance their levels of self-confidence and agency, participation in decision-making, as well as diversifying their options for making a living. This is testament to the CWF Sustainable Livelihoods framework's assertions that the more programmes are designed in a multifaceted manner that empowers beneficiaries to expand their core assets, the more likely they are to tap into available opportunities and prosper. As such, focusing on expanding these core assets and engaging men as allies in breaking down the barriers affecting beneficiaries' accumulation of these core assets, is at the core of what WEE interventions must emphasize. This paper contends that the HDI approach of engaging men in gender transformatory training sessions and empowering women to build their five core assets is an approach that other agencies can adopt to ensure more successful WEE interventions that result in positive and sustainable outcomes for women.

Recommendations

1. There is a need to implement gender analysis prior to programme design and implementation as well as to incorporate conscious consideration of class and power imbalances when designing programmes
2. Addressing social attitudes, norms and practices about women and women's place in society relative to that of men is very important. This entails engaging men in sensitization sessions targeting mindset change and promotion of positive masculinity as well as more equal decision-making and resource allocation at household and community levels
3. There is need to support female farmers to deepen and broaden their livelihoods by strengthening access to information on markets; strengthening links with other farmers; building capacity for joint price negotiation to strengthen farmers' voices and incomes; strengthening access to farm mechanization and extension services etc. in order to boost the commercialization of agricultural livelihoods and gains from agriculture.

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Part III
Culture

(Organizational) Culture, Identity and Cultural Change in the case of the Hope Development Initiative

Cara Thielen

Abstract

Processes of identity-building are said to be mainly defined by cultural settings. However, also organizations as collective actors can exercise a strong influence on individuals and their beliefs and behavior. In this paper I argue that if the identification processes are influenced on a larger scale and communicated messages of innovative kind are internalized and applied collectively, organizations can initiate actual cultural change. For this endeavor, my research focuses on the Hope Development Initiative in Amolatar, an initiative that aims to empower women economically and culturally, resisting the prevailing patriarchy. To contextualize this initiative, basic concepts of culture, identity, organization as well as cultural change and innovation are introduced to facilitate theoretically profound discussion. It is found that by properly conceptualizing the knowledge and trainings provided as well as by implementing the innovations introduced to the members in accordance with their cultural setting organizations can have an actual influence on cultural identity.

1. Introduction

“Industrialization produces pervasive social and cultural consequences, from rising educational levels to changing gender roles.” (Inglehart & Baker 2000: 20) The extent to which traditional values persist in the face

of economic and political changes remains contested though data clearly indicates that industrializing trends are often accompanied by higher levels of education and rising income levels. Thereby changes in the cultural sphere can be achieved such as “changes in gender roles, attitudes toward authority and sexual norms; declining fertility rates; [or] broader political participation” (ibid.: 21). These developments can be ascribed to the decreasing dependence on nature and an emancipation from its boundaries. Materialistic ideologies are introduced to the post-industrial societies where individualistic self-expression becomes crucial. Preindustrial societies, by contrast, tend to rely on traditional patriarchal and relatively authoritarian structures, emphasizing religion and the importance of the family. Overall, the attitude towards innovation is protectionist and rather hostile. Pointing out these general differences Inglehart and Baker acknowledge that cultural change is path-dependent, however, industrialization does predict certain trends and future adaptations (ibid.: 21ff.).

Proceeding from this framework, the following research deals with the role and function of organizations in the context of cultural change. Organizations are an important component in the interplay between single persons and the sociocultural sphere and they have an impact on the people who are involved with them. Towards society they function as interest groups for individuals. This pooling of voices incorporates social and cultural power depending on the organization’s size (Preisendörfer 2016: 177ff.). Societal participation and belonging mainly functions by means of organizing and becoming involved in already existing organization whereas the membership in organizations communicates social attitudes (ibid.: 190).

Within an organisational body members start to identify with the organisational culture, which then results in the entrenchment of an organisational identity (Hatch & Schultz 2005: 121). The identification process of an individual is constantly proceeding and never completed, since new impressions are integrated, and old patterns are abandoned (Hall 1994: 195f.). Thus, for the sake of this research, I assume that by providing identity propositions that members incorporate in their identification process, the individual identity can be influenced by an organization. It is furthermore anticipated that by influencing the members’ identities, cultural change can be initiated. In my research I focused on the exploration of the Hope Development Initiative (hereinafter referred to as HDI) in Uganda which gradually introduces economic innovations that exhibit

certain industrializing traits. The overall aim of this initiative is not only to fight poverty and bring economic wealth to local communities, but, above all, to tackle the striking gender inequality (Apea 1: 2).

Deriving from these assumptions the following hypothesis is proposed: *By introducing organisational innovation and by influencing its members' identities the Hope Development Initiative has the potential to initiate cultural change with regard to its inherent purposes.*

2. Methodology

Empirical evidence is provided in the form of semi-structured interviews, as well as two speeches given during the same time period, collected during the previous research trip to Amolatar, Uganda. Together with two speeches held in the same time frame as well as a telephone conversation which happened nine months after the trip, they constitute the empirical evidence. The majority of interviews were conducted with the founder of the initiative, Dr Agnes Atim Apea, who also gave the aforementioned speeches. Unfortunately, a significant communication barrier to the people in the villages became evident during the stay in Amolatar, which made conducting interviews with the people in the villages almost impossible. Two other interviews were conducted with an employee of the initiative and a gender expert from the Makerere University in Kampala.

3. Culture and Identity

3.1 Culture

Generally, culture is all-encompassing. Nearly everything can be explained from a cultural perspective (Lüddemann 2019: 1). Thus, the concept of culture is one of the most highly contested when it comes to definition, and its use inflates for the description of various phenomena (Hall 2002: 95).

“Culture, this acted document, [...] is public [...]. Though ideational, it does not exist in someone’s head; though unphysical, it is not an occult entity” (Geertz 1973: 10). The basic assumption is that culture is a phenomenon that holds together a collective by means of a common share of values, convictions and beliefs (Vester 2009: 37). This cultural glue works

as a subconscious and impersonal mechanism in the background which manifests itself in its surface concretisations. These are necessary to make culture identifiable and tangible. Deep and surface structures do not face each other dualistically but mark an important moment of the nature of culture in their interplay (Lüddemann 2019: 59).

A collective's culture thus consists of a set of guidelines of knowledge and beliefs that help that culture to operate in accordance with the expectations and demands of other members (Geertz 1973: 11). Equipping members with the respective tools for interpretation, culture determines discourse. Due to its processual and self-reflective character culture is self-constitutive. Thanks to permanent self-critical revision, it intrinsically combines collective memory and collective innovation (Lüddemann 2019: 4ff.). Using this definition smaller groups such as organisations can also be characterised through their own culture. Peculiarities of sub-cultures or regional variations of a broader culture, are not necessarily, however, can be logically derived from it. This assumption leads to the notion of an intracultural diversity (Lipp 2014: 101f.). In the field of cultural anthropology culture is usually conceived as the general way of living of a people or tribe. Besides from traditions and norms culture here especially focuses on the practical dimension of procedures and manners (Vester 2009: 40).

3.1.1 Production of meaning

At the very core of culture stands the production of complex meaning. "The concept of culture [...] is essentially a semiotic one. Believing [...] that man is an animal suspended in webs of significance he himself has spun, I take culture to be those webs, and the analysis of it to be [...] an interpretive one in search of meaning" (Geertz 1973: 5).

The emphasis on semiotics, the science of signs, needs further elaboration. Understanding a sign as an object that conveys a message and points to something, the message needs a recipient who interprets it. A sign is furthermore only meaningful in relation to other signs and as a part of the webs of significance. These webs can be understood as codes that provide a framework or procedural system assigning meaning to the signs it organises. "When studying cultural practices, semioticians treat as signs any objects or actions which have meaning to members of the cul-

tural group, seeking to identify the rules or conventions of the codes which underlie the production of meanings within that culture.” (Chandler 2007: 147f.) Accordingly, with regard to culture codes manufacture traditions and norms when they are successfully sustained in communication patterns and thus are a substantial part of culture (Posner 2008: 42).

As a result, communication is an integral part of culture and, in an oversimplified fashion, culture appears where people communicate with each other through a common system of codes. “The act of communication does not necessarily create the raw material from which these shared cultural norms are drawn. But [...] repeated acts of communication shape those raw materials into the ultimate form that a culture takes.” (Conway & Schaller 2007: 107f.) Culture can thus be defined as an ensemble of factors and codes that constitutes a society’s world of knowledge and provides meaning as a dynamic framework. This framework also contains instructions on how issues are supposed to be framed (Hansen 2003: 4ff.).

While dealing with general topics, which are preserved in the collective cultural memory, culture does not directly specify the content, although it does set certain standards and basic attitudes. Topics, their perception and their inherent meaning and magnitude are culturally linked to each other as well as being, to a certain extent, pre-determined (Lüddemann 2019: 5). However, culture is perceived as a pluralistic phenomenon, which loosely amalgamates social processes, movements and streams (Lipp 2014: 98f.). Hence, it is dynamic, variable and open to socio-cultural change. Culture marks the major pillar of human social practices that only persists in its continuation. Continuity is guaranteed by combining collective memory and the anticipation of innovation and development. The parallelism of stability and flexibility is thus warranted (Lüddemann 2019: 5ff., 35).

3.1.2 (Cultural) Identity and Identification

While culture happens on the macro-level, identity is its manifestation on the meso and micro level. In the course of this manifestation it is incorporated in the interplay of deep and surface structures described by Lüddemann (2019: 59). In this understanding of culture the subject is not autonomous but is constituted in the values, symbols and meanings mediated by its culture. Some approaches term this communication of the

individual with its culture as cultural identity. The steady interaction with the cultural world surrounding the human being, including the various identity propositions, essentially modifies the core of individual personality. Due to the internalization of central values and norms the constructivist nature of cultural identity connects the individual and its culture. More contemporary approaches stress that identities become increasingly fragmented and that they are less consistent and homogenous. The process of identity-building or identification in which cultural identities are designed is becoming more complex (Hall 1994: 182).

Talking about the process of identification it must be added that it is never completed. In a subconscious process, as Hall argues, identity is always revised and re-defined and is thus permanently under construction. Through identification the individual tries to satisfy its desire to create the final image of how its environment should perceive it (*ibid.*: 195f.). Naturally, within one culture individuals have a common share of intrinsic structure and experience. However, crucial to the process of identity-building is also the notion of difference and otherness and differentiating from certain things that become subordinate to one's preferential identity. A precondition for a dominant identity is thus the subaltern other. This kind of dominance is necessarily in itself fragile in itself since it is subject to the self-revising process of identification described above. By implication, the subaltern has a certain degree of destabilizing and fragmenting power over the dominant (Grossberg 1996: 89f.).

Rutherford furthermore stresses the continuous nature of identity as it marks the conjuncture of the past with present relations. This not only includes culture, but also the economic and political sphere. Thus, he points out that external factors influence identity, too (Rutherford 1990: 19f.). Within this continuity, the structure of differences is dynamic as is the way they are dealt with. As "the products of historical and ideological forces" categories of difference and subordination are created. "By assembling the heterogeneous possibilities of meaning [...] into fixed dichotomies, binarism reduces the potential of difference into polar opposites." (*ibid.*: 21f.) The struggle of identification lies within the recognition of self and other. In addition, the endlessness of this process combined with the inherent traces of past and future produce contingent complexity. Identification is also characterized by the discursive search for borders between the self and other and the reconciliation of the result with non-discursive circumstances (*ibid.*: 24ff.).

Castells defines identity as the sources for signification, meaning and experience for a human being. The construction of identity in this perspective integrates collective memory as well as geographical factors, individual hopes and wishes as well as various machineries of power. Single or collective actors use these resources of identity and restructure them according to cultural and social determinants. This process is located within the spatio-temporal frame (Castells 2017: 6ff.).

3.2 *Contemporary Approaches*

In the current age the view of culture and identity has changed dramatically. A culture can no longer be seen as a closed entity. The globally interwoven processes and transnational superimpositions provoke the divergence from the idea of a homogenous, non-intertwined culture (Bachmann-Medick 2008: 89). Hybridity and homelessness determine identities more and more and raise awareness of the importance of an inter- and transcultural dialogue (ibid.: 97).

Multiple cultural contacts due to globalisation are the fundament for the research in cultural concepts of hybridity, meaning the notions of, for example, inter- and transculturality. Interculturality generally recognizes cultural differences while it assumes that cultural exchange takes place. Within this way of thinking, different researchers apply different understandings of how much blending is actually happening. While the internal universality of culture remains pristine (Wimmer 1990: 61f.), the success of intercultural communication is essentially determined by the degree of compatibility of the cultural communicators (Hansen 1995: 179). The concept of transculturality was essentially defined and coined by Wolfgang Welsch, who abandoned the idea of cultural insularity. Transculturality “is to be called transcultural in so far as it passes through classical cultural boundaries. Cultural conditions today are largely characterized by mixes and permeations” and thus by the influence of other cultures. The gap between the own and the foreign is diminishing (1999: 197f.). Cultural borders increasingly turn into zones of contact and exchange instead of remaining ramparts of separation (Lüddemann 2019: 6). The application of the cultural context within related disciplines can be observed within Wieland’s notion of transculturality. Regarding it as a resource, cultural awareness is conceptualised as a precondition for global and local eco-

conomic success. Transculturality here is rather thought of as a perspective and thus incorporates a normative moment (Wieland 2016: 19).

3.3 *African Communities*

Unlike the approaches presented above, in African thought the concept of community is crucial to the idea of cultural identity. “The term ‘community’ entails the existence of people in a complex environment that includes their physical settings, past and future, and spirituality.” (Tarus & Lowery 2017: 305)

A philosophy that has gained relatively much attention in this field is the philosophy of Ubuntu. In short, in this school of thought collectivity and individuality are directly connected and stand in symbiotic relation to each other. It is the community members who constitute the defining cultural entity (Moyo 2016: 75). The value ascribed to the lone individual is low and it is doubted that a person can be defined on this psychological level. Everyone is defined by their membership in the community, so that the communal world is paramount (Menkiti 1984: 171). While the idea of self-identity prevails in the western thought “[...] in the African view it is the community which defines the person as person, not some isolated static quality of rationality, will, or memory.” Accordingly, belonging to a certain community as the major identity-defining institution is crucial to identity (ibid.: 172f.).

It follows that community in the African sense cannot be equated with the western idea of a community. While the latter generally regards a community as a group constituted of several human beings of relatively little cultural authority, the indigenous community in Africa is inherently organic and culturally decisive. In practice this also means that African communities are very focused on duties and requirements. Individual rights and freedom are significantly less important. Referring to cultural identification it follows that the cultural surrounding is essentially more dominant than all other factors¹ (ibid.: 179f.).

¹ Communities are not to be equated with culture itself. They assume the form of villages in rural areas and thus exist within one culture. Minor local variations between certain communities are possible.

4. *Organisation*

Within sociological research, organizations are defined as social entities located at the meso-level. As such they serve as a link between the individual and society which implies a relation of exchange and mutual influence between the three levels. Since the concept of society is very abstract and only tangible in a limited fashion contact with organizations determines the individual's experiences with society (Preisendörfer 2016: 177f.).

Organizations are characterized by formal structures and rules, formal membership, and as collective entities, they present a unified appearance to their environment (Titscher, Mayer & Mayrhofer 2008: 26). Social structures such as enterprises, parties and foundations are types of organizations. They each feature a goal and a purpose to structure their work and to direct it specifically (Vester 2016: 109). For these purposes organizations employ means to organize and control randomness and variance. Each organisation is confronted with the question as to how structural properties, procedures and resources are combined in the most efficient way to ideally fulfil its purpose. By creating an organisation the distinction between the interior and exterior is facilitated which implies the existence of borders (Schnurr 2016: 234ff.).

For a further definition Bea and Göbel introduce three terms. The process-oriented term of organisation approaches organisation as the creation of order. By conscious and targeted structuring, a binding order occurs that reduces complexity and rationalizes procedures. This also includes the establishment of hierarchies and division of labour. Secondly, resulting from this organisational process the term of the organisation itself emerges. As a system of rules, it serves as an instrument to reach a defined goal or fulfil a purpose. This also includes informal rules and organisational culture. Thus, this instrumental term of organisation also encompasses some implicit premises about which tactics and strategies should be adopted or not (2019: 26ff.). Finally, the term institutional organisation supposes that every firm, association or party can also be labelled as an organisation. Hereby Bea and Göbel refer to a degree of being established where structures become institutionalised. An organisation in this sense is an ensemble of rules and members designed intentionally. The institutional organisation has features such as certain internal rules, formalised membership, clearly defined boundaries, the possi-

bility of leaving and joining the organisation. The members are united in following common purposes and goals (2019: 28f.).

4.1 Membership and Organisational Environment

Just as in identity-building processes drawing borders based on difference, i.e. the distinction between self and other, is crucial for any organization. Inclusion and exclusion produce affiliation which is a basic requirement for every autonomous institutionalized organization (Preisendörfer 2016: 62f.). The notion of membership serves as a point of reference that is a feature of organizations. A clear line between organization and environment can be drawn that enables one to differentiate between members and non-members. Members are connected through their involvement with the organization and their common ambition for the organization's goals and purpose (Bea & Göbel 2019: 28).

Some theories suggest that members completely abandon their autonomy within the organisational context and totally commit themselves to this rule. In the case of an employer for example the submission of the individual is limited to working hours. Accordingly, the submission of the individual is partial and temporary as well as targeted since it is related to the individual's specific position and role within the organization (Preisendörfer 2016: 63). The clear borders of organisations begin to become distorted with the introduction of the stakeholder view which recognizes various types of commitment, interest and aspiration. Customers or suppliers have a relation to the organisation and are given a role, however, they cannot be regarded as members. Furthermore, every person can be a member or stakeholder of several organisations that each provide the individual with a defined role and function, while the type of organisation determines how crucial membership is for the individual (Titscher et al. 2008: 27ff.).

The phenomenon of multiple memberships and its epiphenomenon of partial commitment described above indicates that members are always part of both the organisation itself and its environment. The surrounding world of the organisation is many times more complex and this external world shapes the organisation. Thus, the organisation will become more complex itself. Complexity and sophistication, however, are also determined by the organisation's size and not only by its environment. More-

over, organisation and environment influence each other mutually as well as interdependently. Decisions made within the organisation have an impact on the surrounding world (ibid.: 41).

The organisations' objectives and actions are essentially defined by the region's potential, requirements and demands. They must be able to interpret and assimilate the information given to them correctly in order to be able to translate it efficiently into value creation. Communicational manners represent the organisational identity to the specific economic and social environment to which it belongs. A successful organisation must be capable of finding the right way of dealing with its environment. Larger regional effects do not emerge by the mere presence of the organisation but by the way they interact and activate potential competences. Socio-economic developments in a region can be essentially moulded by the way these reciprocal relationships are shaped (Correia & Brito 2016: 692ff.).

4.2 Organisational Culture and Identity

The organisational culture is recognized as one of the crucial factors that determines how people act in organisations. In accordance with the drafts about culture above an organisational culture contains values, traditions, and norms at the inner and most fundamental level. Naturally, the organisational culture is embedded in the broader culture provided by its environment and, to a certain degree, is also derived from it. The organisation itself can thus be interpreted as an autonomous, cultural manifestation that develops its own specific cultural traits. "The pattern of cultural elements that emerges is essentially a learned and shared set of responses to the organisational environment, tasks and problems." (Sinclair 1993: 64) One of the tasks of the management of an organisation is the management of symbols and meaning by shaping of the outer layers of organisational culture (ibid.: 64ff.).

This approach refers to the related concept of organisational identity. By organising the respective organisations "make themselves known as a particular type of social actor. Thus, organizational identity referents can be thought of as the institutionalized reminders of significant organizing choices" (Whetten 2006: 224). By the notion of institutionalization the enduring nature of organisational identity is highlighted. Accordingly, short-lived phenomena or trends within an organisation are unlikely to be

become embedded in the identification process. In comparison to cultural identity, organisational identity is more constructed and can be directed intentionally to a certain degree since crucial actions are preserved in the future identity. It does not depend on the natural selection that conditions cultural identification (ibid.: 224ff.).

Hatch and Schultz define organisational culture as a tacit understanding of the organisation's nature while contextualizing it to produce meaning. By contrast, organisational identity is described as a textual phenomenon deriving from the contextual culture, explaining what the culture implicates and serving as a means to instrumentalise the emergent cultural framework (2005: 122). Thus, organisational identity provides essential guidance during strategic decision making (Whetten 2006: 226).

In this operational understanding, organisational identity is much rather thought of as a communicative construct than the organisation's concrete fundament and core. It is insofar communicative as it emerges, becomes visible and is shaped in the process of communication, as Herkle (2011: 112) states. Since the members communicate with internal and external stakeholders as the organisation's agents, organisational identity results from the collective communication process, which does not emerge as a mere sum of thoughts and statements but a genuine product of identity-building processes. It follows that although organisations generally are more static than the overall cultural framework, which is due to their borders, the interplay between organisational culture and identity is dynamic (ibid.: 113ff.).

Organisational identities happen collectively, but also determine individual identities. This implies that they are comparative and relational. "Organizational identification occurs when employees perceive oneness with an employing organization and feel that they belong to it" and can differ in intensity. Internal and external influences thus shape the identification process of organisations. The interplay with the environment before also plays an important role (He & Brown 2013: 9ff.).

5. *Change*

"Clearly, human cultures are not static. Not only do political attitudes and norms change, but societies develop new technologies, many of which dramatically influence how people work and live [...]." (Varnum & Gross-

mann 2017: 1) Broadly, cultural change can be defined as the changing of norms, ideas and behaviours of a group over time. This notion includes a change in the topics discussed and a different cultural outcome as a result of this changing process (ibid.: 2).

5.1 Dynamics of Culture and Identity

Necessarily the structure of identity is open to new influences as an important condition to facilitate change and history (Hall 1994: 184, 195). The identification process is always fictional since it happens first in people's minds, but its discursive potential must not be neglected. New identities condense in interpersonal communication and pave the way for determining a culture's future paths (Hall 1996: 4). At the same time patterns or overarching logics are derived from identity-building processes. Culture is not the only determinant here since economic and political circumstances or events also influence identity (Rutherford 1990: 19).

To be able to distance oneself from otherness the other has to be recognised first. "But what it [the other] is need not be defined in transcendental or essential terms; what it is can be defined by its particular (contextual) power to affect and be affected." (Grossberg 1996: 94) The aspects of power and agency are important in this matter. Since differentiation plays a role in the identification process, otherness automatically gains power over the subject. The degree of power that environmental aspects have is set in an implicit hierarchy. Since here one could technically divide between identity and non-identity, there are still uncertain features that the individual might be able to identify with to a certain extent. This grey area can be regarded as a supplement to the identity core while it is also a space of resistance and identity-related decision-making (Rutherford 1990: 21ff.). "Identity then is never a static location, it contains traces of its past and what it is to become. It is contingent, a provisional full stop in the play of differences and the narrative of our own lives" (ibid.: 24).

5.1.1 *Communication*

It has been stressed that discursiveness creates an interaction between the self and the other as well as of the self with self while searching for the other. Not only for culture and the emergence of new identities, but also for cultural change does communication play pivotal role. Certain features of culture can be explained with the existence of cognitive mechanisms that are shared within a human population. These cultural phenomena of socially shared representations, i.e., knowledge or beliefs, are called stereotypes. Stereotypes persist over time since they are not entirely static and so their function in relationships between the stereotyped and the stereotyping group changes as well (Lyons & Kashima 2001: 373f.).

Besides stereotypes, “many other fundamental components of culture emerge as a consequence of – and are sustained by – [...] repeated acts of communication [that, the author] shape those raw materials into the ultimate form that a culture takes” (Conway & Schaller 2007: 107). The influences that one person perceives are always a conglomerate of strength, immediacy as well as the number of communications. In detail this means that the potential of an influence differs depending on how much and by whom the information is sent, the availability of sources and how much contradicting information is available (ibid.: 109f.). Cultural stereotypes facilitate the successful transmission of the information as coherent and logical narratives since they are understood easily (Lau, Chiu & Lee 2001: 354). Within communication processes the conveyed message can either confirm or deny the cultural stereotypes. The common ground of shared stereotypes is an important condition for the successful imparting of new information so that a mutual understanding of a novelty can be achieved more efficiently. As a result, the communication and sense-making of stereotype-consistent information is much easier and needs significantly less elaboration than inconsistent information (Lyons & Kashima 2001: 374ff.).

Cultural development is successful in sequential self-organisation. Communication itself is not enough because culture first requires consolidation in the form of shared beliefs, traditions and customs. This consolidation might also involve the reduction of diversity; however, this is prevented by clustering (ibid.: 352). Clustering, the second component, concerns the spatial dimension. “[...] clusters of attributes [...] show consensus at a regional scale but are discriminable when one steps back to examine

the broader population from a global perspective.” (Conway & Schaller 2007: 111) The communicators are always limited by their reach. As a result, culture-like clusters emerge that produce slight variations from the broader culture. Finally, there has to be a correlation as a precondition for cultural change or the emergence of new culture. Correlated bundles of differences must be identified. In other words, the emerging culture has to be capable of producing identity (ibid.: 111f.).

5.2 *Innovation*

Change from an organisational perspective is often referred to as innovation. Structurally, innovation is ascribed to the producing of something new that diverges from the existing and that is applied in a socio-cultural context. This includes all steps from invention, development and implementation to application. A structural innovation is thus necessarily accompanied by structural change (Besio 2018: 107f.). Furthermore, innovations are intended and planned. As complex processes they are managed, distributed among the relevant target groups and reflected on regarding knowledge and actions (Hutter, Knoblauch, Rammert & Windeler 2015: 33). In other words, an innovation is a self-referential and recursive way of solving problems. Although innovation is managed it always brings with it uncertainty and unpredictability. It remains unclear when the innovation will yield its complete scope and power, which itself is not totally foreseeable. Furthermore, it is never clear which measures are adequate for a problem and which new problems might be evoked by the introduction of the innovation in question (Staples 2017: 4f.).

Knowledge and discourse as well as actions, institutions and social systems become instruments in the act of initiating and designing innovation processes. Especially discourse is crucial to the reflections on innovation to legitimise and give meaning to new developments. In this light, cultural institutions exert influence alongside with relevant organisations (Hutter et al. 2015: 34ff.). Organizations are predestined to producing innovation since they incorporate a certain analytical distance from their social and cultural environment. The capability to produce innovation depends on the organisation’s structures and access to resources (Besio 2018: 19f.). Organisations are powerful social actors that evaluate each other’s innovations and decide upon whether or not to integrate them into

their own operations. This, on the one hand, implies a competition between organisations and, on the other hand, implies, too, that innovations can lead to the abandoning of old structures (ibid.: 108).

The question as to whether or not an innovative idea is successful is questioned by the notion of the idea's habitat. This is defined as a set of environmental cues which prime people's attitude towards an idea and how relevant it is deemed. Accordingly, the success of an idea is determined by the prevalence of the respective habitat. The more associated cues exist in the environment the more efficiently can people retrieve memories associated with the innovation and "[...] the success of cultural ideas will vary with fluctuations in their habitat." However, some habitats tend to persist more than others (Berger & Heath 2005: 196ff.).

5.2.1 *Organisational Learning*

The concept of organisational learning refers to learning processes happening through communication at the group and organisation level. "All learning takes place inside individual human heads; an organization learns in only two ways: (a) by the learning of its members, or (b) by ingesting new members who have knowledge the organization didn't previously have." (Simon 1991: 125) These learning mechanisms help organisations to adapt to changes in their environment and to facilitate internal change by selectively adopting new routines. New ideas originate in the minds of single persons who spread their individual knowledge to enhance the organisational knowledge. In the communication process of new and innovative thoughts, this shared information is amplified and streamlined until it becomes institutionalized. "Organizational learning creates necessary conditions for the strategic renewal that balances continuity and change at the level of organization." (Bratianu 2015: 288)

It follows that the availability of knowledge is a precondition to learning. The active participation of members and their cognitive capabilities connected to accountability are considered complementary and benefit the organisational progress (Edmondson & Moingeon 1998: 25ff.). Facilitating innovation based on organisational learning can only be accomplished with constant education and re-education. The task of re-educating will continue "[...] unless the educational climate of the enviroing society changes so that it begins to produce graduates already indoctrinated with

the desired goals.” (Simon 1991: 127) This scenario is more likely if turnover is low and the organisational knowledge and memory can grow and stabilise (ibid. 127f.).

6. *The Hope Development Initiative*

The Hope Development Initiative (HDI) operates in the Ugandan district of Amolatar. As a social enterprise it is neither a business nor an NGO, but a hybrid construct that features characteristics of both types of organisation. This means that the HDI does business to address social and cultural problems (Apea 4: 5).² Founded in 2010 the idea was to establish a different approach to aid and development. Dr Agnes Atim Apea started a project that focuses on supplying local farmers with rice seeds and the knowledge to encourage them to improve their economic situation by farming and selling rice. Her approach was to empower the communities to help themselves and identify existing potential. At the same time the HDI focusses on the objective of female empowerment and the reduction of gender inequality (Apea 1: 2).

6.1 *Brief History*

The northern part of Uganda, to which Amolatar belongs, witnessed a brutal conflict that only ended in 2006. As Apea describes it, this conflict destroyed huge parts of the cultural self-confidence. Before the conflict the communities were characterised as very hard-working. During the years of war very disempowering mechanisms set in that “made them feel very useless [...] and somehow, I think they gave up in life” (Apea 1: 81).

In 2010 the HDI was initiated as a project within the scope of the founder’s PhD research, but soon developed into a long-term program. The goal was to find a way of empowering women economically in order to contribute to the post-conflict recovery. In the discussion with twenty other

² The personal communications which are interviews or speeches and which form the basis for the empirical evidence are cited as follows: (Name of communicator, number of source: number of paragraph). The phrase ‘personal communication’ is only used the first time one source is used.

women about how this could be achieved it became clear that farming a profitable crop was promising. Evaluating the conditions of Amolatar, rice turned out to be the only possible cash crop (Apea 3: 50; Apea 4: 6). Rice is considered a very luxury product only eaten on special occasions such as Christmas. Initially, one of the greatest problems was to convince the local authorities and traditional leaders of the potential benefits of their approach, but also the communities themselves regarded the new ideas very critically. The approach was considered inappropriate and out of place (Apea 1: 11ff.). After the initial investments in a rice mill and a tractor the cultivation of rice started in January 2013. The first success stories spread across the communities and the number of memberships began to grow. In 2018 the HDI had over 10.000 members (Apea 1: 4ff.). With the continuous expansion a second mill and a second tractor were purchased. As a consequence of entering the local markets customers from Kenya and South Sudan, too, were attracted. The whole journey was accompanied by the search for the much-needed funding from several organizations. Money is not only needed to improve the necessary infrastructure but also to provide constant training measures for the farmers (Apea 1: 7).

6.2 *Local Conditions*

To understand the setting in which the HDI operates it is important to see the bigger picture. There are many different tribes within Uganda that differ from each other by distinct cultures. They have their own languages, special eating and cooking habits, their dressing differs as do ceremonies for marriages or burials (Anena 1: 6ff.). This results in significant tribalism across the country (Okino 1: 93). While there are strong ties within cultures and communities there is less of a national culture and identity: “With the community, maybe there is one thing that binds them together. But it is not very common on the whole country in a national way.” (Okino 1: 11) Each culture has its traditional leaders who still have considerable influence on the people, however, they are not allowed to run for an office, so they do not possess political power (Anena 1: 97, 109). While the HDI is active in the political district of Amolatar the tribe is called Lango.

Most of the people in Lango, the Luo, are Christian. Religion and the Church play a very important role and most decisions are guided by Chris-

tian values (Anena 1: 149). Generally, respect for traditions is considered paramount. Part of the high importance of the community as an identity-defining moment is the adherence to its norms and rules. Especially the role of traditional and religious leaders is crucial since their word is regarded as superordinate. A similar respect is given to the elderly (Okino 1: 30).

Amolatar is very remote. As a consequence, the people there are not exposed to new trends or modern standards. There is only very little cultural contact with other tribes of Uganda as is the case in the bigger cities. Many of the people living in the local communities have never been to Amolatar Town, the district's main village. Furthermore, there are only few role models who could serve as an inspiration. As a result, a relative shyness about innovation can be observed (Okino 1: 28). Additionally, illiteracy is a very common phenomenon. In Amolatar less than thirty percent of the people can read and write. The resulting lack of awareness and knowledge poses many challenges. Combined with the lack of exposure it is nearly impossible for the communities to develop creative and innovative ideas (Apea 4: 12; Okino 1: 28).

6.2.1 Gender

The issue of gender inequality deserves special attention since it lies at the very core of the HDI. The people in Amolatar still stick to a very traditional division of labor and roles between men and women. Concerning work in the fields women do most of the work, while the men's tasks stop at the ploughing of the ground. The woman is in charge of taking care of the household, including the collection of firewood and water, cooking, cleaning as well as taking care of the children. The physical work is supposed to be mostly done by women. By contrast, the men gather in the afternoon to play games, drink together and wait for food to be served. A traditionally male task would be to sell products on the markets (Anena 1: 46ff.). "The traditional view of a man is household head, leader, politician, the key decision maker, both at household level as well as at the community level, the authority, the dominant person in any given home. The position of a woman is one of subordinate, voiceless." (Anena 1: 72) In sum, this traditional division of roles burdens the woman more, while

the patriarchal system grants the man the total amount of power and control (Anena 1: 48).

Legally men and women are equal in Uganda, however, cultural institutions overrule the constitution (Anena 1: 22, 69). There are several policies focusing on gender, but the implementation is inadequate (Apea 3: 18). Accordingly, in practice women have barely any rights. Regarding the farmland, the women naturally have access to it, since they are the ones mostly taking care of it, however, they do not own it “because land ownership always follows the male lineage.” This is also the reason why they cannot control it (Anena 1: 31).

Furthermore, there is a huge gap in education. Most girls and women are illiterate, because female education is not considered a priority. Schooling is expensive and the majority of families can only afford the school fees for one or two of their children. The parents will then decide to send the sons to school and not the daughters. In the few cases where girls are given access to school education they often have to drop out after only a few years. This kind of undervaluation is also mirrored in the expectations on women to give birth to boys. A woman’s value in the community decreases when she has more female than male children (Anena 1: 32ff.).

6.3 Purpose and Strategy

Part of the HDI’s purpose is to cure the state of post-conflict traumatisa-tion by encouraging the people to enter into business and to build on the opportunities for female empowerment. As an aftermath of the conflict, nowadays many people beg in the streets instead of working. This dis-empowerment especially touched the prevailing understandings of virility, and women got their chance to claim more rights and some parts of the power that the men had lost (Apea 1: 85).

At the same time, the predominant lethargy is to be interrupted and reversed. The culture of self-reliance that prevailed before the conflict is to be reinforced without strengthening the patriarchy again. Unlike many NGOs, the HDI does not want to offer help, but rather show the communities their own potential and what can be achieved. The agricul-tural opportunities surrounding them are vast, but most people do not make use of them properly. The communities “got so much resources, so much wealth that just needs to be packed” and sold (Apea 3: 86).

Deriving from the conditions described above the core idea of HDI is to empower women economically to improve their cultural and social situation. By providing the seeds and the knowledge the circle of poverty is to be interrupted. By farming and selling the rice the members of HDI are supposed to earn money and enhance their economic position (Okino 1: 5). As Apea explains:

“I thought if these women can do their farming and make money, this money is going to help them if they want to access justice. If their husband beat them, they will have money to go and report the case to police. If they’re sick and they’re pregnant and want to produce and have a healthy baby they will have money for transport to go to the health facility. If they have money, they will send their girls to school. So, in a way I thought this money thing will help to address all these women rights issues [...]” (3: 15)

This also includes training the women to determine their own destiny to a further degree and become part of the leadership structure at the community and family level. The initiative is trying to produce and educate a new generation of leaders that are more sensitized to the gender debate (Apea 3: 38, 40). To empower the women it is also necessary to include the men into the work. The women’s husbands should witness their progress to naturally grow with them and internalize the induced change (Apea 1: 14ff.).

For this purpose, it is especially important to cooperate with the communities and listen to their needs and demands. The advantage HDI has over NGOs from abroad is that it was founded from within the communities. Naturally there is an inherent sense for the culture and the framework and scope it provides. For HDI the key is to be culturally and socially sensitive and improve those areas that need improvement from the people’s perspective. The decision to farm rice was carefully and strategically explored, since it was the people’s priority by that time. Thus, HDI’s approach can be regarded as community driven (Apea 3: 46, 48).

6.4 Operations and Services

Throughout the year, and depending on the season, different services are provided. Before new members can be included into the business of growing rice they are trained and taught how to farm rice. At the begin-

ning of the season each member is mobilized which means that they are being called upon to begin with the farming procedure. The farmers have to buy the seeds from the HDI, however, if they do not have enough money available the initiative grants them a microloan which is repaid with the subsequent profit they make. After they have received the seeds, and these have been planted the initiative offers so-called 'extension services' that focus on supporting the processes such as weeding and harvesting. Especially the provision of a tractor to help the farmers plough is important at this stage. As soon as the rice has been harvested it is milled and cleaned. Afterwards, the HDI buys the rice from the farmers and sells it for them under the brand name Mama Rice, a name that refers to Agnes Atim Apea, for a higher price so as to create a profit margin (Apea 2: 4ff.). The point of sale is the crucial moment in female empowerment. The women are advised either to accompany their husbands or even come alone so that they become involved in the transaction. "Because when the husbands come alone, they keep the money [...]. So, we make sure that, at the point of sell where they're receiving the money, the women bring the money themselves." (Apea 2: 16)

6.4.1 *Trainings*

A main pillar of HDI's actions in the communities is the trainings for the women in terms of rice on the one hand and in terms of culture and gender on the other. Due to the lack of proper funding, however, huge training structures cannot be provided so that the existing training measures cannot involve all members with the desired intensity (Apea 5: 12). Although the people in the villages have always been farmers, rice is not a traditional product. Thus, the HDI is confronted with the reality of the lack of knowledge about growing rice as well as modern farming techniques. When the first tractor was bought "it was like a big elephant in the middle of nowhere (laughs), and nobody had ever seen a tractor, they had no idea how it was going to work." (Apea 1: 5)

The agricultural trainings cover the whole value chain from supply to consumption, while also many specific sub-topics are addressed. Seasonal conditions, growing practices and production are subjects that are discussed and taught there (Okino 1: 19). Furthermore, knowledge about how to run a farm is conveyed as well as about business and leadership

skills. In addition to farming issues there is also training that focuses on the cultural circumstances. Since the people in Amolatar often lack references to alternative living situations it is important to raise awareness. Gender-related topics are discussed, and the women are familiarized with the HDI's main purpose of female empowerment (Apea 2: 30).

The training and integration of the men in the communities forms an important part of the HDI's activities. They are included in three different ways. First, the husbands are invited to join the meetings of the women so as not to create the feeling of exclusion. Secondly, the HDI has established a role-model program. In this program about a hundred men who are considered to have an exemplary attitude talk to their fellow men and teach about certain best practices. They are said to have adopted the HDI's values and support their wives in the household and in the field while the women are involved in decision-making and are generally more respected (Apea 1: 15). This method has proven especially successful. Since men will not change their behaviour on female advice, men engaging with fellow men and training them is a fruitful strategy (Apea 1: 3). Thirdly, by including traditional and religious leaders, who are naturally all men, the patriarchal institutions are becoming part of the HDI to create awareness of the magnitude of the processes that are being induced (Apea 1: 15).

6.4.2 *Infrastructure*

Another component of HDI's actions is improving local infrastructure. The communities are not dependent on, for example, electricity to survive. However, introducing the right amount of modern infrastructure contributes to gradually adjusting to contemporary standards and is supposed to help the people in the communities to develop themselves (Apea 1: 110). This also helps to facilitate the HDI's goals, although this is not directly part of the organisation's purpose. A very important achievement was the building of the radio station which is the first one in the whole district. This radio station is the only source of information and, at the same time, a quick and efficient way to pass on information. Previously, it was necessary to travel to the next bigger town, which is a two-hour drive away (Okino 1: 21). The radio is especially crucial for the initiative to mobilize the farmers at the beginning of the season as described above (Apea 2: 46).

Apart from the easing of communication also education and health problems, too, have been addressed by building a school and a hospital for example. As described above illiteracy and the lack of education are pressing issues in the communities as is health care. Maternal health poses a great problem, women bleed to death giving birth to their children in the bushes. HIV rates are high and also affect children (Apea 5: 18ff.). By building a school girls are supposed to be given the chance to obtain access to education. Partnering with several organisations HDI was able to acquire funding for this kind of project in order to contribute to the improvement of the overall situation (Okino 1: 22).

Further infrastructural projects involved the building of a petrol station which is important for the tractors and for general mobility. Since the success of the business meant money transactions became more relevant, banks were brought to the district. Previously, money had been carried in cash to the next city. Also, the building of a generator to provide the communities with electricity is an important milestone. All these infrastructural projects are part of the greater vision to modernize the local villages and facilitate business operations (Apea 1: 19ff.).

6.4.3 *Membership*

To become a member of the initiative the farmers simply have to express an interest and pay a mandatory membership fee. If the applicant is not able to pay the fee immediately membership is still possible. While the fee can be paid later it is crucial that the aspiring person is able to farm and produce (Apea 2: 18ff.). Membership is restricted to women. Men benefit only indirectly as affiliates and are not allowed to actively participate in the structures or become members themselves. Membership fees paid by men are not accepted (Apea 2: 24).

Part of the membership in HDI is the participation in the network that the initiative has created over the years. In every community there is a group of HDI members who support each other. The connection and personal bonds between members turn out to be stronger than those among non-members or members and non-members (Apea 2: 40).

Non-members are only secondarily included into HDI. Access to the various benefits such as HDI's trainings and other services like the tractor, is usually tied to membership. Anyone who is not a member of the

organisation does not get access to the trainings and to the seeds. To a certain extent information on the farming of rice and the work of the HDI is provided, however, the initiative has enough appeal and is not reliant on advertising the benefits of a membership (Apea 2: 26, 48). The initiative is gaining new members constantly. While in summer 2018 it had around 10,900 members, a year later the number of members has grown to 11,900 (Apea 2: 56, Apea 4: 11).

6.5 Achievements and Future Goals

Striking a balance since the initiative started in 2010, by now the HDI's work is meanwhile accepted and appreciated in the communities. Although there remains a lot of work to be done, first changes in terms of gender inequality can be recorded (Anena 1: 52). For the women the membership in the HDI is very beneficial. By becoming part of the organisation women are given the chance to network. The woman "has an opportunity to leave her home and was sitting in the meeting. And at these meetings they learn a lot, they are exposed to a lot of information not just about agriculture, but even social advice." While men naturally have these networking chances when they sit together in the afternoon this is a special situation for the women, because they are usually occupied with their duties (Anena 1: 38). The differences between members and non-members are increasingly significant. Women participate more at the community level and are increasingly able to voice their opinions. Bringing the women together and granting them a space to participate has improved their leadership skills (Apea 2: 34).

The initiative's success can also be seen in the shift of priorities. In 2010 the women neglected the original idea of improving the schooling system to first focus on economic empowerment. Now, that their economic situation is more stable, issues such as schooling are increasingly in the centre of attention as well as other issues such as like mobility (Apea 3: 54).

Many of the areas that need improvement are related to the lack of money. Among other things the problem of personnel has to be solved. While the engagement of the farmers is crucial for the initiative to work, especially for the business side more technical expertise is needed. Although some technical people are currently working for the HDI, the level of expertise is not yet sufficient. Furthermore, the farming infrastructure

has to be improved. Two mills and two tractors cannot accommodate the needs of 11,900 members and the trainings has to be adapted in case the production should become more advanced and technical (Apea 1: 39). To fight drought an irrigation system would help to solve many problems (Apea 5: 31).

Another problem is that the farmers do not exploit their potential completely. While the area could produce 1,500 kilograms of rice by hectare current yields are actually only 800 kilograms are yielded in reality. The organisation is not making enough money and has too low margins to sustain its business and to become self-sufficient (Apea 1: 9f.). The bottom line, hence, is that the HDI must become profitable to not rely on the funding from third parties any longer and to implement ideas faster. While social and cultural aspects have been in the focus in recent years “now the business, the company aspect of it is really becoming a challenge, the sustainability is becoming a challenge, because we are not making as much money to sustain the business” (Apea 1: 11). To pursue this goal a store was opened in Lira, the next large city from Amolatar, in January 2019, to sell the rice after the cleaning. This store serves as an important tool to increase turnover and thus self-sustainability as well as to expand to the neighbouring countries (Apea 2: 58ff.).

The vision for the future is to bring the HDI to a point where it functions as a fully-fledged organisation that has a competent team, with Mama Rice being a well-known brand name. This includes efficient and productive working behaviour by the members, empowering themselves and earning their own money (Apea 1: 48).

7. *Discussion*

In the following the initial thesis that organisational innovation and influencing cultural identity can initiate culture change is discussed in the light of the theoretical body above.

7.1 *The HDI in the cultural and organisational framework*

Since parts of organisational culture and identity are always predetermined by the culture of the surrounding environment one precondition

for successful organisational operations is proper dealing with the organisational environment. Operating in Amolatar, the HDI is active in a region where it has vast possibilities. Being part of the culture and knowing the prevailing traditions Apea and her fellow founders were able to build on their home advantage. As stated above the cultural surroundings provide the framework for interpreting and determining the discourse. Since neither female empowerment nor farming rice had been part of the communities' culture before, the discourse around this innovative idea had to be initiated first. Naturally, the people in the villages could not understand the idea initially and neglected it.

Convincing the local authorities was an important step in the fight for acceptance and legitimized the existence of the organisation. Given the conditions of the African community, the respect for traditions is paramount and especially the word of local leaders has a lot of weight. With its new idea the HDI wants to increase the intracultural diversity by promoting to change to some of the traditions. Furthermore, the idea of HDI was able to grow because of the careful evaluation of the communities' needs at the beginning. The thought of farming rice was embraced because it suited the cultural needs at the time. Earning money and farming a cash crop was prioritized.

Culture has a continuous nature by combining collective memory with new developments and innovation and thus matching flexibility and stability. Building on the cultural habitat and employing stereotypes in the communication is a crucial precondition for a successful innovation. As Apea states herself, the community-driven approach is one of her keys to success and one which helps her fulfil the purpose of the organisation (Apea 2: 44; 3: 46). Since the interpretive patterns are predetermined by cultural codes sticking to the prevailing codes is important. The HDI, appearing as the main communicator and signifier of the initiated innovation and change, produces meaning by deviating from the norm in cultural and economic terms.

The HDI fits the formal requirements of an organisation. Concerning the three organisational terms introduced earlier, first, the HDI organises the agriculture by managing the farming of the rice. Working and farming procedures are designed and arranged to benefit efficiency and productivity, while the required knowledge is provided during the training. This also includes shaping and re-shaping the organisational culture and identity. From the cultural perspective, these actions lead to an economic

mobilisation of the local communities, however, this form of organisation is limited to those who are members of the organisation. The second type of organisation arises from these structuring activities as the set of rules that is employed to fulfil the HDI's goal and purpose. Thirdly, the HDI can be regarded as an organisation itself and thus has institutional character. It exhibits clear boundaries, membership and affiliation are clearly differentiated while members pursue their common goal in accordance with its rules.

7.2 The HDI and Organisational Innovation

As the only organisation in the region that does similar work the phenomenon of multiple membership potentially does not exist. With no competitors the HDI has a monopoly when it comes to economic and cultural influence. As a consequence the HDI is the only organisation offering an organisational culture and identity of this kind.

The borders of HDI are insofar clear as the differentiation between members and non-members is easily defined. Only women can become members and only those who have committed to paying the membership fee at a certain point may become members. Entry barriers are considered to be low which is also reflected in the continuously increasing number of members. However, the women's husbands are connected to the organisation as affiliates automatically since their involvement is a crucial part of the HDI's model of female empowerment. Thus, they are also stakeholders who contribute to the blurring of the organisation's boundaries, since they become part of the innovation process. The limited provision of services to other non-members adds to this.

Considering the definition of innovation, the HDI can be regarded as the only major innovative force in the region. As a social enterprise, the business side has been reformed and built up. The HDI is responsible for the structuring of the whole rice-producing value chain. From providing the seeds to selling at the markets and in the store this process significantly diverges from the initial procedures. The HDI has introduced a much higher level of organisation to farming by treating it as an industry that requires planning and strategy. While the people have always farmed they have never conducted farming on such a large scale.

The innovative power of HDI is also reflected in the improvement of the infrastructure. Major purchases have been made that are deemed necessary to run an efficient business. The tractors and mills represent a level of industrialization that would not have been acquired without the organisation's investment. Also the radio station, the petrol station as well as the school and hospital are major achievements that have contributed to the vision of modernizing the communities.

Public discourse is crucial to successfully implementing an innovation. Since discourse is, in large parts, determined by the existing cultural institutions which, in the case of the Luo, are very conservative and patriarchal, the training is relevant. The economical and infrastructural innovations have only little legitimation within the prevailing cultural codes, which is why these have to be questioned and re-defined. A new ideational habitat has to be conceived that fits the innovations introduced. Thus, the agricultural training is crucial for the economic success of HDI. In addition, creating awareness among the women and teaching them about gender and their legal rights is equally important for initiating general discourse. Also in this sense the HDI can convey the relevant knowledge with preferential training programmes without interference from competing organisations thanks to its monopolistic position.

As it has already been stated most services are limited to members. Members participate in technical trainings, members are granted access to the tractors and the seeds and members are supported during the farming process. As a consequence some amenities are provided to women exclusively and men can only have access to them because of their wives. Considering the patriarchal conditions in Amolatar this is a novelty that has given the women an unknown kind of power. It is the first time that gender relations become organised and that women have structurally been given preference over the men. Most importantly this kind of advantage is tied to money which, in the theory of the HDI, has the power to shift the gender relations in favour of women.

7.3 The HDI and its Identity-Building Features

The trainings are not only central for the implementation of innovations but also for the identity-building mechanisms that HDI has triggered. Participating in trainings means differences are created. By raising aware-

ness of gender inequality and the cultural superiority of the men as well as through the provision of concrete knowledge about farming the members learn a lot on an organisational and individual level. The willingness of the women to actively engage in the entire program benefits the progress of the organisation itself as well as the women's cognitive capabilities. This helps them to recognize critical and problematic situations in their daily lives. Raising awareness can be accompanied with teaching about prevailing cultural stereotypes.

Thanks to its huge innovative potential and its exceptional position the HDI can be regarded as a culturally deviant organisation in the sense of Simon. "Among the costs of being first [...] are the costs of instilling in members of the organization the knowledge, beliefs, and values that are necessary for implementing the new goals." (Simon 1991: 128) This implies that organisational learning and unlearning can facilitate deviation from the given cultural conditions. But furthermore, this means that by creating an organisational culture and identity the HDI can actually facilitate the cultural deviation of its members.

The HDI has a far-reaching influence on its members' identities. Besides from the knowledge about farming the cultural knowledge taught and the creation of awareness unleash a power over the individual identity whose extent and scope. The issues discussed concern the macro-level of culture and society and thus exceed the figurative boundaries of the HDI which, as an organisation, operates by definition on the meso-level. However, since this training is done within the HDI it is automatically part of the HDI's specific culture and identity. Consequently, the HDI produces a regional cluster to which its influence is restricted. The submission of each member is neither partial nor temporal, since the identification process which the organisation initiates is not limited to the member's role in the organisation. It follows that the HDI has huge power over its members by constructing an organisational identity that has this kind of impact on the individual identity. In practice this power must be put into perspective since identity-building processes take time.

Reconsidering the identification process described above, identity is continuously reshaped in the constant communication of the individual with his or her environment. Since the HDI has influence on the cultural sphere through its trainings and educational efforts it intervenes in the identification process. Over the course of time the members internalise the identity-propositions whereas with the HDI having a real impact on

the cultural identity. This especially concerns the shift in the gender relations. Thanks to female empowerment, the people in Amolatar are witnessing dynamics that are not congruent with their traditions. Due to the lack of innovation and new impressions identification most likely stagnated and the same cultural identities and roles were reproduced. With the sudden creation of otherness and difference the HDI has triggered a process of re-identification that makes individual identities more complicated and, at the same time, fragments them due to the creation of uncertainty.

The HDI has made a lot of effort to legitimate itself. Since in Amolatar the local authorities are the crucial decision-makers close cooperation with them signals legitimacy. While resisting the patriarchy is at the core of the initiative, nobody is categorically excluded. Although men cannot become members they are involved in the concept and receive special training. Due to the low entry barriers the whole organisation appears very integrative. In this sense HDI aims to transform the local socio-cultural conditions. From an organisational point of view the women of HDI benefit from the institutionalisation of their interests connected to this proposed identity. As Preisendörfer states, organisations help individuals to organise their beliefs and demands in order to create stability and sustainability, while constituting a legitimate, legal person of reference (2016: 190). Thus, HDI appears as an agent for its members' interests.

It remains critical, however, to what extent the organisational environment is affected. The boundaries of HDI become indistinct due to the notion of affiliates. Although men are not members they are integrated in the service structure. Furthermore, as husbands they directly benefit from the economic success of their wives. That the HDI has a certain influence on its environment becomes clear if one considers its growing membership numbers, a further reflection of HDI's appeal.

7.4 Initiating cultural change

The processes of organisational learning, innovation and identity-building form a major part of the overall change that the HDI has initiated. However, the final component is cultural change via communication. Besides the cultural surroundings also interpersonal communication, too, can have a very important impact on identity-building, facilitating the condensing of new identities. This is guaranteed through the trainings. But also the

network effects that arise due to the growing solidarity in the context of the organisational culture benefit exchange among members. Thus, strength and immediacy of the communicated contents are secured, while the number of potential communicators increases with the growing number of members.

Here it must be stressed that cultural change is a long process. Although difference is important, the distinction between good and bad and identity and non-identity is necessarily the result of a process that cannot be coerced. First successes of the HDI's actions are noticeable in male and female behaviour at the community level. The women are increasingly able to voice their concerns and participate in the decision-making processes. Their communicating behaviour is more proactive and the way they practice their leadership skills shows the benefit of bringing them together and creating a network (Apea 2: 34).

To clarify the different stages of cultural change it is helpful to introduce four terms. The ambient culture is not an integral part of a culture since it is located outside of its boundaries. Members of a culture are acquainted with the counter-cultural, however, it is rejected as too opposing. Peripherally cultural traits are recognised as part of the culture, but are not considered as central. By contrast, the substantially cultural is regarded crucial for a culture and its identity. Cultural change happens when the borders between these categories become distorted (Posner 2008: 58f.).

The aim of the HDI is to gradually shift traits of the ambient cultural to a substantial part. Especially at the beginning when the local authorities had to be convinced the ambient culture, with regard to female empowerment, was slowly deconstructed and turned into the counter-cultural that was rejected as such. With the growing numbers of members and affiliates and the first successes the counter-culture developed into the peripherally cultural while the overall goal remains to enshrine the ideals in the substantial culture. The success of HDI thus consists in dismantling the ignorance of feminism. By starting to reject it the process of reflecting started and semiotic codes are constantly produced to put the new phenomenon in relation to the core. Difference is created. The fact that new members continuously join HDI and seek the knowledge they are teaching is a proof of the idea's progress through the spheres. The codes for what is culturally accepted are slowly assigned. Along this process old codes are unlearned so that behaviour in accordance with old codes and old patterns is rarer.

8. *Conclusion*

The aim of this research was to test the hypothesis whether the HDI can have a real impact on its surrounding culture by the introduction of organisational innovation in combination with the penetration of the identification process of its members.

Studying the Hope Development Initiative, its inherent innovative purposes are twofold. From the business side growing rice is the main focus. Industrial elements have been introduced to the region that were not at all familiar to the people in the communities. Through the efficient farming of rice as a cash crop, economic wealth is to be brought to the region. The truly innovative moment of this goal is the fact that this change has been and still is essentially conducted by women. By organising their interests and by gathering to become a collective actor power relations have been shifted successfully. Here, the HDI functions like a cultural lobby for women that represents their interests and fights for their rights while men do not have a comparable organisation. By including the men in the processes an escalation of this fight has been prevented. Thus, from a strictly organisational point of view the women are superior, while, culturally, the patriarchy persists to which the organisation subordinates.

By educating the members in trainings a renewed identification process has been triggered. Due to the huge deviation from the core culture that the HDI is trying to achieve, the actual internalising of the new values takes time. What currently is currently being achieved is the introduction of a grey area. It is most likely that the majority of members and affiliates still identify with the traditions and norms around patriarchy. By offering alternatives and conveying new information and knowledge in the training completely new experiences are created. Differences are slowly introduced from the cultural and economic point of view. It follows that innovations possess an identity-building moment themselves. Thus, bringing innovation and implementing it successfully on the condition of a respective habitat can initiate the identification process that will lead to cultural change in the long run. The growing membership numbers represent the accomplishment of this challenge.

The change in the power and gender relations is mirrored in the statement made by Apea that giving the women money will help them tackle some of their problems. Money can be understood as a symbol for the women's growing power. What the members of HDI witness is a change

of codes within their cluster that has been initiated by themselves. By producing rice they are producing meaning and significance for themselves. By raising and bringing home money, they are able to emphasize their role and importance and to truly empower themselves. The HDI becomes the framework within which women can emancipate themselves from being a property and thus also from certain conditions determined by the community. In the hierarchy of the identity-building process the superordinate is slowly subordinated. In accordance with these findings the initial hypothesis can be verified. By introducing organisational innovation and by influencing its members' identities the Hope Development Initiative does have the potential to initiate cultural change regarding its inherent purposes. If the HDI continues its work and steadily attracts more supporters I am convinced that it has the potential to succeed in spreading its organisational culture to the people and in so doing bringing about cultural change in the long run.

The presented research can be understood as a starting point for further study and investigation. Basic mechanisms and ways of functioning have been revealed, however, the complexity of the Hope Development Initiative calls for a variety of ensuing research opportunities. For example, the more recent approaches to the concepts of culture can be applied. Although there are only very few cultural contacts in Amolatar the HDI itself can be regarded as an element of transculturality. Regarding the examined grey area as hybridity, transcultural contacts happen on an intra-cultural basis which paves the way for highly interesting research.

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Culture, Self-Identity and its Effect on the Economic Empowerment of Women

A Case Study on the Hope Development Initiative

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1. Introduction

This chapter contributes to a bigger research project: "Transculturality and community" conducted by Trans-cultural Research Group whose aim was to explore what the Hope Development Initiative (HDI) project contributed to the economic empowerment of women. The chapter examines the effect of HDI initiatives on the culture, identity and economic empowerment of women using a case study concerning the rice value chain. The research analyzed the gender dimension of the rice value chain, specifically focusing on how the project influenced the cultural gender classification of roles, self-identity of women; cost effectiveness of rice production and the economic empowerment of women.

2. Background and Statement of the Problem

Golla et al. (2011) argued that there is increasing recognition that economically empowering women is essential to realize women's rights and to achieve broader development goals such as economic growth, poverty reduction, health, education and welfare. The authors further argue that

economic empowerment is one of the most powerful routes for women to achieve their potential and advance their rights. After over 20 years of insurgency in northern Uganda, the Uganda government declared northern Uganda as free from insurgency. The internally displaced people were resettled in their respective traditional communities. The returnees did not have any skills, education or experience in agriculture, which was the only activity through which they could earn a livelihood. Besides, their homes had been destroyed either by war, or due to the long period of desertion and the fact that the majority of houses were mud and wattle and grass thatched. The government provided a basic resettlement package that included a blanket, basin, hoe, saucepans, plate jerry can, mosquito nets, mattress and some food and initial seeds. This package was inadequate to start a new life. Women in Uganda faced gender discrimination in economic and social spaces, specifically when it came to the ownership of property, gender-based violence, among other human rights. Culture was the pathway to gender discrimination (UBOS 2017). According to its chief executive officer, HDI is a business minded cooperative that came to the rescue of women. HDI initially worked entirely with women but later men joined its membership too. This was from the realization that, after their return from the internally displaced camps, there was limited food and economic activity. HDI intervened to support and empower women to fight these challenges by helping them generate income to support themselves and their families with a view to rebuilding their lives. Today, HDI has 10,900 members focusing on rice farming as a source of food and income for a livelihood. In 2012, HDI in partnership with the United States African Development Foundation (USADF) implemented training programs for women in rice growing. In addition, HDI received technical assistance in the form of tractors. These tractors were rented out to farmers on credit and the costs were offset from the revenue when the women eventually sold their produce to HDI. Similarly, HDI provided the women with seeds. USADF supported HDI to procure a rice mill to process its rice, thus adding value and saving time.

HDI built on the existing cultural norms with respect to gender role classification and division of labor, access to resources within the household and intra-household decision making that made women vulnerable to men. Aware of these cultural norms in the region and the fact that majority of the returnees were smallholder farmers, HDI used the existing knowledge and skills base to start its intervention. Since HDI member-

ship was primarily women plus their husbands, the lead farmers were women well known to the village and possessing leadership and mobilization skills. The following services were extended to its members on credit; tractors hire services, fertilizers, insecticides, herbicides, seeds, business skills training and agricultural education.

Through negotiations between HDI and the returnees, rice was introduced in Amolatar District as the best choice of crop. It would be a major cash crop that would replace soya bean and millet, served as a food crop and had a ready market. However, the returnees continued to grow the traditional cash and food crops including cassava, sorghum, sim-sim and maize and soya beans. From a broader perspective, statistics in Uganda state that out of 72 percent of the Uganda population employed in the agricultural sector, 77 percent were women and 63 percent were young people (NPA 2015). Uganda ranked 73rd out of 102 countries on the OECD's Social Institutions and Gender Index (SIGI), which measures discrimination against women in social institutions according to formal and informal laws, social norms, and practices (OECD 2015). According to the 2016/17 UNHS, more than half of Ugandan enterprises (54%) relied on their own savings to meet their business needs, with local group borrowing being used as a second best alternative (16%). Micro deposit-taking institutions and formal banks together accounted for only 11 percent in overall borrowing for the expansion of businesses. Only 19 percent of borrowing was done by urban enterprises from the formal banks yet the urban areas had many such banks. Startup capital was identified as a great impediment to many that wished to start a business of any form. The limitations surrounding access to startup capital included lack of collateral, especially among small and medium-sized enterprises. The national survey further pointed out that, overall, lack of finances, demand for goods and services and inputs accounting for 26%, 22% and 12% respectively, were the main constraints of household enterprises. This accounted for sixty percent of all possible constraints in all the regions in Uganda. A key aspect to note was that three percent of those owning household enterprises were not interested in expanding beyond their current size as they revealed that this was the desired size of business.

According to UN Women and World Bank (2016), Ugandan female farmers have lower access to productive resources and services compared to male farmers. Uganda's agricultural productivity was 13 percent, translating into losses of 1.6 percent of agricultural gross domestic product

(GDP), or about USD58 million, and to losses of 0.42 percent of total GDP, or nearly USD67 million, including the multiplier effects of benefits to other sectors in the economy. The UNDP-Uganda Country Gender Assessment October, 2015 pointed out several underlying or systemic issues that were mutually reinforcing and had a defining influence on the state of gender equality in Uganda. These included the disconnection between law and practices, rapid population growth, socio-cultural norms and patriarchal attitudes and the persistent overburdening of women. The same source noted that Uganda had a very positive legal framework but poor and effective implementation or enforcement of gender-positive laws. Women's legal status was precarious, their capacity as economic agents was limited, and their rights were not effectively guaranteed. Attitudes, beliefs and practices were still deeply entrenched throughout the country, creating imbalanced power relations between men and women. This caused a negative impact on women's agency, their human capital development, and their ability to contribute equitably to Uganda's growth and prosperity.

Uganda suffers from a persistent high level of sexual and gender-based violence that translates into lost workdays and lost economic capacity, with detrimental effects on families and society at large. They constitute the majority of the agricultural labor force and shoulder a disproportionate burden of unpaid "care" work in the household, including child and elder care, and provisioning of food, fuel, and water. The national statistics on gender-based violence stood at 10,548,000 and 10,812,000 for 2014 and 2015 respectively, recording a percentage increase of 2.5% (UBOS 2017). The same source reports that cases involving sexual intercourse with a child below the age of eighteen stood at 18,507,000 and 17,812,000, showing a decline of -3.76%. Other cases of violence reported included threatening violence, which stood at 16,902,000 and 15,326,000, aggravated assault, 8,210,000 and 10,065,000 and finally child neglect, which was 9.248 and 9.800 for the same period. Although not disaggregated by sex, most victims are female. This implies that women face trade-offs in culture, self-identity, and empowerment against competing uses of resources and time. This made it unlikely that efforts from government and non-governmental organizations would bring about tangible desired changes in terms of the empowerment of women. The research analyzed the gender dimension of the rice value chain, specifically focusing on how the project influenced the culture and self-identity of

women; cost effectiveness of the rice production and women's economic empowerment.

3. *Literature review*

Culture and Development

In most cultures, women perform different tasks to men depending on their socio-economic structure, the number and the gender of people in the family and the nature of professions in which they are engaged. In South Asian society, for example, women are generally domestic workers, not employees. In Pakistan male gender roles are different, especially in traditional societies where each sex is expected to perform different roles according to different criteria. These roles are unwaveringly established by historical, religious, ideological, ethnic, economic and cultural factors. Men are expected to work outside the house, earn a living and support a family. Women, on the other hand are judged based on their physical appearance and ability to look after a home, their husbands and children. Women are expected to take charge of all domestic chores such as cooking, cleaning, marketing, fetching water or fuel, washing clothes and utensils, entertaining visitors, overseeing celebrations of events or religious ceremonies in the house, among others (William 2005).

The author further noted that the social and cultural context of Pakistani society was predominantly patriarchal. Men and women were theoretically divided into two separate worlds. Home was defined as a woman's legitimate ideological and physical space, while a man dominated the world outside the home. Women's mobility was strictly restricted and controlled through the system of ideology, sexual segregation, and violence against them. Women lacked social value and status because of the restriction to their roles as producers and providers in all social roles. Sons were preferred to daughters due to their productive role and allocation of household resources in favor of sons. Male members of the family were given a better education and were equipped with skills to compete for resources in the public compared to the female members, who were imparted with domestic skills for good motherhood and wifery. The lack of skills led to limited opportunities in the job markets. The social cultural restrictions limited women's chances to compete for resources in the

public arena. This situation led to the social and economic dependency of women and was a basis for male power over women in all social economic relationships (Shahla 2002).

Culture and Empowerment of Women

Knights & Richards (2003) and Rashid Menhas et al. (2013) traced the excessive approaches and immorally established thoughts of female subordination in Pakistan. It was noted that Pakistan followed the patriarchal family system. The man was the head of the family, although above 50% of population were female. The authors report that women in Pakistan faced many social and cultural challenges to live a good life and to have their deserved rights. The female population was socialized to take up more junior places in public than men. Males and females were considered to have different characteristics and personalities. Women were further considered to have different physical and cultural features that made them different from men. The communally and socially built ideas, attitudes and expectations that community held regarding the roles of both sexes in society were seldom neutral. As a result, femininity stereotypes pervaded male–female relationships influencing the ways in which men and women were expected to behave and the ways in which their behavior was interpreted, thus women’s empowerment was curtailed.

Factors that Affect Women’s Economic Empowerment

Harvey (2004) refers to empowerment as a process involving a sequence of some steps through which people become aware of their rights and come to know and defend their rights. Smith & Ross, (2006) expands on Harvey’s (2004) argument that these terms imply self-strength, control, self-power, self-reliance, own choice, a life of dignity in accordance with one’s values, being capable of hostility to defend one’s rights, independence, own decision-making, being free, awakening, and the capability to alleviate a lack of money.

It is noted that lack of job opportunities and profitable skills, low-paid and low status jobs and sexual harassment are barriers to socio-economic empowerment (ADB 2000). The author further noted that societal values

contradict the viewpoint of women's development. These values confine the classification of women's development within specific boundaries and society. Women's contribution in making their families strong both economically and morally is considered as a part of other innate duties. This role is seemingly less demanding and less appreciated by their families. Freedom to work for women, as men do, is not accepted by men as heads of households. This prevents women from becoming their competitors. The major reason is the insecurity of society. Men restrict women from moving outside the home to earn their livelihoods even though they would like to do so. It is argued that patriarchal values fixed in local traditions and culture predetermines the social value of each gender. There is an artificial divide between production and reproduction, created by the ideology of the sexual division of labor that places women in reproductive roles as mothers and wives in the personal space of home. Men are placed in a productive role as breadwinners in the public space. This leads to low investment in resources for women by the family and the State. The ideology of veiling, negative social biases, and cultural practices, for example, the concept of honor for a woman being linked to women's sexuality; restrictions on women's mobility and the internalization of patriarchy by women themselves exacerbates this phenomenon and this becomes the basis for gender discrimination and disparities in all spheres of life (ADB 2000).

The situation in rural areas is different from that in urban areas. Women in rural areas lag behind in all aspects of their lives compared to their counterparts in urban areas. They work in fields along with men and do all the household work but despite all the sacrifices and contribution they make, they have no rights, have no share in anything and their lives remain the property of men, who are dominant members of society. What is core is that they are deprived of education and economic opportunity due to the cultural conservatism and patriarchal attitudes of society. With no education, women are fully dependent on their men and therefore cannot raise their voices against any injustice done to them (Sheikh 2005).

According to Eyben (2008), many cultural and social norms create a situation where women and girls are discriminated against. Women are usually restricted to performing household duties and are not expected to be providers. Inheritance usually passes from father to son. This is one of the avenues that keep men economically more empowered, even when household wealth is generated as a family. The author further notes that

women's empowerment goes hand in hand with gender equality. This equality must focus on women's rights not only as human rights but also for sustainable development. Empowerment essentially entails power-sharing to redesign possibilities as well as options and act upon them. This power enables people to have the courage to do things they never thought themselves capable of doing. That power comes from working alongside others to claim one's rightful entitlement (Masiaga & Namusonge 2013).

Masiaga & Namusonge investigated the cultural practices that influence socio-economic empowerment of women in Kuria, west Sub County. It was noted that traditional and cultural values were used to define the role of women in that society. The common cultural practices that influenced socio-economic empowerment of women were female child labor, wife inheritance and their identity as cultural practices that affect women's socio-economic empowerment in this community. Patriarchy was another common phenomenon where male chauvinism and dominance frustrated women's pursuit of socio-economic empowerment. Men in Kuria sub-county would always act as focal points for perpetuation of female injustices always controlling and determining what women around or under their authority did and ensuring that no wealth could be acquired by the woman without the husband or father's knowledge. My experience points to the fact that sometimes women are used by men to perpetuate injustices to fellow women even when they did not understand what they were doing!

According to the World Bank (2001) empowerment is one of the key elements of poverty reduction. The Bank's argument is that social justice is an important aspect of human welfare and is intrinsically worth pursuing; and that women's empowerment is a means to other ends. CIDA's (2014) Guide to Gender-Sensitive Indicators highlights the economic empowerment indicators as a state that involves changes in employment/unemployment rates of women and men; changes in time-use in selected activities; greater role-sharing by household members in unpaid housework and child care; equitable salary/wage differentials between men and women; changes in percentage of property owned and controlled by women and men (land, houses, livestock) in favor of the disadvantaged, across socio-economic and ethnic groups; average household expenditure of women/men headed households on education/health; individual ability to make small or large purchases independently; percentage of available credit, financial and technical support services going to women/men from government/non-government sources. The author further identified the

following as social empowerment indicators; numbers of women in local institutions (women's associations, consciousness raising or income generating groups, local churches, ethnic and kinship associations) relative to project area population; numbers of women in positions of power in local organizations; the extent of training or networking among local women, as compared to men; control of women/men over fertility decisions including number of children, desirability and method of abortion and mobility of women/men within and outside their residential locality as compared to men. It was argued that women, especially poor rural women, feel empowered through two areas, namely, greater economic stability and greater self-respect among others.

Culture and Development

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The author further noted that the social and cultural context of Pakistani society was predominantly patriarchal. Men and women were theoretically divided into two separate worlds. Home was defined as a woman's legitimate ideological and physical space, while a man dominated the world outside the home. Women's mobility was strictly restricted and controlled through the system of ideology, sexual segregation, and violence against them. Women lacked social value and status because of the restriction to their roles as producers and providers in all social roles.

Sons were preferred to daughters due to their productive role and allocation of household resources in favor of sons. Male members of the family were given a better education and were equipped with skills to compete for resources in the public compared to the female members, who were imparted with domestic skills for good motherhood and wifery. The lack of skills led to limited opportunities in the job markets. The social cultural restrictions limited women's chances to compete for resources in the public arena. This situation led to the social and economic dependency of women and was a basis for male power over women in all social economic relationships (Shahla 2002).

The Theoretical Framework

This theoretical framework was based social economic concepts of culture, self-identify, self-empowerment, economic empowerment and women's economic empowerment from the development perspective. Accordingly, Fearon (1999) defined culture as a set of communally and socially built ideas, attitudes and expectations that communities hold about roles in society. These may result in lack of job opportunities, profitable skills, low-paid and low status jobs and sexual harassment. These values may further confine one's classification within the boundaries and within society, thus defining one's identity as a person and/or in relations with other members of that community. One's identity determines their ability to demand rights and privileges, build ones' character and self-image and thus self-identity. Self-identity is therefore the conscious recognition of oneself as having a unique set of qualities that make one believes that s/he is different from other people. This may enable one to become or disable one from becoming self-empowered. Self-identity is further defined by one's commitments and identifications that provide the frame of horizon within which one tries to determine, from case to case, what is good, or valuable, or what ought to be done, or what one endorses or opposes (Taylor 1989). The OED (1989) simply puts it that self-identity is one's feelings about one's self, character, goals, and origins.

According to CIDA (2014) self-empowerment is a process which involves a sequence of steps through which people or persons become aware of their rights and know how to defend these rights. Harvey (2004) and Smith & Ross (2006) argue that self-empowerment as a process entails

building self-strength, control, self-power, own choice, self-reliance and a life of dignity in accordance with one's values. One is capable of hostility to defend one's rights, independence, own decisions, being free, awakening, and capability to generate income. Rashid Menhas et al. (2013) adds that empowerment implies the transformation of structures of subordination, through radical changes in law, property rights, control over one's own labor, bodies and the institutions that emphasize and complement male authority.

EGWOW (2011) argues that empowering women involves inspiring women with the courage to break free from the chains of limiting belief patterns and the societal or religious conditioning that have traditionally kept women suppressed and unable to see their true beauty and power. CIDA (2014) notes that through the empowerment process, a person raises their standard of health, economic condition and education, considerably improves their standard of living and becomes economically empowered. The same author further defines economic empowerment as the capacity of women and men to participate in, contribute to and benefit from, growth processes in ways that recognize the value of their contributions, respect their dignity and make it possible for them to negotiate a fairer distribution of the benefits of growth. This process increases access to economic resources and opportunities including jobs, financial services, property and other productive assets, skills development and market information.

From the above synthesis, it can be conceptualized that women's economic empowerment is a process presupposing the existence of initial conditions that are prejudicial, oppressive and hinder them from achieving their full potential. It is assumed that culture is central in the process of women empowerment/disempowerment. Culture operates through the patriarchal structures, constituted with norms and beliefs that may discriminate by gender and also empowers men to act as a pivotal center of oppression for women. These norms and beliefs may or sometimes may not have a legitimate foundation for their practice.

Methodology

This study employed mostly qualitative research methods integrated with descriptive statistics. Data was collected using an interview guide, obser-

vations and the intuition of the researchers. This design was appropriate as it provided the researchers with an opportunity to explore and decipher information and meanings directly from the targeted population. The respondents were adult men and women above the age of 18 registered with HDI in Amolatar district. They were residents of Abalo Dyang village, Akwon Parish, Akwon Sub-County in Amolatar District. They were willing to participate in the group discussions. The total number of respondents was 45, including 25 women and 20 men. The focus of the discussion was related to HDI, the millet and rice value chain. This was in addition to individual interviews with key informants including local women leaders participating in the HDI rice project activities, officials working at the rice mill and local district government officials.

The analysis took into account the fact that the rice that was produced was for both home consumption as well as a cash crop. Therefore, rice for household consumption was taken into consideration, as part of the output. It was noted that local people did not keep farm records, so the cost estimates were not an accurate representation of costs and benefits, although they provided a vivid understanding of the cost effectiveness of the rice project. The unit of analysis was one acre of land. Cost effectiveness was defined as the relationship between monetary input and the actual monetary outcome of the rice harvest per acre.

The millet value chain was used as the baseline for the situation before the intervention of the rice project to compare the profitability of the rice that was being introduced. Millet was chosen because it had a similar labor demand structure with the rice crop. The cost structure of rice production process per acre according to HDI was eight hundred thousand (800,000) Ugandan shillings (Ugx) per acre. This included; hire of a tractor, planting weeding, harvesting, drying and transport between farm and home and market.

The estimated output per acre of threshed rice according to the farmers was between one thousand two hundred kilograms (1,200) and one thousand five hundred kilograms (1,500). The farm gate price for unprocessed rice was one thousand Uganda shillings (1,000) per kilogram. The market price for rice after milling was three thousand five hundred (3,500) and four thousand five hundred (4,500) Uganda shillings per kilogram for second and first grade rice respectively. However, this costing structure by HDI did not include other incidentals like the initial slashing of land, the land rental and activities that were likely to be hired out. Once in-

cluded, the cost structure for the farmers would rise to nine hundred and seventy-nine thousand Ugandan shillings (979,000). On the other hand, the estimated yield per acre of millet was between (700-800) kilograms, and the market price of threshed millet was one thousand Uganda shillings (1000) per kilogramme. It was further noted that most of the activities along the millet value chain were done by family labor. The detailed results follow in the next section.

Results and Discussion

Culture and Gender Classification of Roles: – It was observed that the gender role specification did not change significantly after the introduction of rice. The only activity that was introduced was that of chasing birds. Most activities for rice and millet growing continued to be done by women while men supported where it was “necessary”. The men supported women in sowing, weeding, bird chasing when the children were in school, harvesting and milling. The rest of the activities were done by women. Some the activities that the men participated in were strategic in nature, for instance, rice milling was done by men, but feedback indicated that after milling, the men sold the rice and could not account for the funds. This resulted in unfair sharing of benefits from the rice income, although it increased pressure on time use, as women had to follow up with men at the rice mills for fear of unfair distribution of benefits as one woman and man narrate.

“... his would be the time of marrying second, third ... wives because the money was available. Women are considered cheap labor for men”

said one woman.

“... Money can disorganize men. Someone can even marry another wife”

said Peter Odur.

Men participated in harvesting for fear that their women would sell the crop from the fields. This also implied that women had a response feedback mechanism to the unfair sharing of benefits. This further implied an absence of trust between spouses when it came to household resources and was likely to lead to domestic violence if one partner knew what the other was doing. Through the intuition of the researchers, it was

noted that the activities men participated in were of interest to themselves, or for personal visibility and strategic importance. Men participated in bird chasing when the children were in school and when women were busy with household chores for the family. However, bird chasing was an activity that was viewed by society as requiring less energy and was therefore more feminine in nature. The introduction of rice placed an increased demand on female labor and time use as shown in Table 1 and resulted in an increase in gender-based violence in some cases. This result was similar to what was reported in UBOS (2017) about the rising cases of gender-based violence in Uganda and such violence was more common during harvest seasons and Christmas season. The results further suggested increased workload for the women by more than double, and a breakdown of trust between spouses based on unfair sharing and use of outcomes from rice income. This was similar to Hitomi, Hazel. Malapit's (2018), study on women's time in domestic work and agriculture's effect on women's and children's dietary diversity in Bangladesh, Nepal, Cambodia, Ghana, and Mozambique. In addition, Masiaga & Namusonge (2013) also observed that this unfair distribution of resources and time use was the fulcrum for men to control and determine what women around or under their authority do, ensuring that no wealth could be acquired by the woman without the husband or father's knowledge.

Further analysis showed that the introduction of rice feminized the millet crop as a source of food. More families took to rice consumption which, in their view, was as good sustenance compared to millet, which was considered inferior to rice. In Mozambique, women working long hours in agriculture were negatively associated with women's dietary diversity score in non-poor women, but is positively associated with poor women's dietary diversity and poor children's minimum acceptable diet (Hitomi, Hazel & Malapit 2018). This result could have implied improved dietary diversity among the minimum acceptable diet of children in rice-growing households.

Table 1: The Changing Gender Role Specification and Unit Cost per Activity, M = Men; W= Women; and C=Children

Activity	Millet			Rice			Average Cost of Rice Prod. per Unit
	Gender Division of Labor			Gender Division of Labor			
	M	W	C	M	W	C	
Initial slashing of the land (Clearing shrubs)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	50,000
Renting land	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		100,000 per acre
Opening of land	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		80,000
Secondary ploughing using a hoe	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		35,000
Sowing		✓		✓	✓		80,000
Weeding		✓		✓	✓		80,000
Bird chasing				✓		✓	30,000
Harvesting		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	80,000
Processing (Threshing)		✓	✓		✓	✓	5000 per bag
Drying		✓	✓		✓	✓	80,000 per acre
Bagging			✓	✓	✓		100 per bag
Milling		✓	✓	✓	✓		100 per kilo
Selling	✓			✓	✓		3500 second grade and 4500 first grade
Output	✓			✓	✓		1,200-1,500 Kgs per acre and 700-800 Kgs of millet per acre.

Source: Own representation.

Cost Effectiveness of Rice Production

It was noted that all rice farmers did not keep records; and some activities were done by the household members, although they attracted an implicit cost (a commission) when hired out. These included harvesting, threshing, drying, milling, bagging and selling. This made it difficult to come up with a true cost/ benefit analysis for both rice and millet production.

In terms of first grade rice, the gross revenue ranged between three million one hundred and fifty thousand Ugx (3,150, 000) and three million six hundred thousand (3,600,000) Ugandan shillings per acre. For second grade rice, this would translate to revenue between two million, four hundred and fifty thousand Ugx (2,450,000) and two million, eight hundred thousand (2,800,000) Ugx per acre. At farm gate prices this would translate into revenue between seven hundred thousand Ugx (700,000) and eight hundred thousand Ugx (800,000). The millet crop fetched 700-800 kg per acre, which translated into between seven hundred thousand and eight hundred thousand Ugx (700,000-800,000) per acre at the price of one thousand Ugx (1,000per kg. Simple arithmetic showed that, given the same production cost estimates and the same labor demand; rice had a better return than millet, other factors remaining constant. However, one man narrates otherwise;

“I used to keep records in my head. But I do not want to keep records to remind me if it is a loss...I threw them away when the rice was affected by drought”

said Peter Odur.

From the study perspective, the introduction of rice resulted in increased incomes for households although it feminized millet as a source of income and food for the family. Golla et al. (2011) reported notes that when a woman is able to control and share in resource use and to define and make choices, she was better able to advance economically. Therefore, the rice project could have provided better chances for economic empowerment of women, other factors remaining constant. However, this would have provided women with an opportunity to participate more on millet, since millet was left for the women as men took control of the rice. This would imply an improvement of household income and some level of economic empowerment for women.

Gender and the Allocation of Benefits

It was noted that both women and men sat, discussed and agreed on how to allocate their resources. It was further noted that they allocated their proceeds between household demands in order of priority. These included, buying cows to support them in farming, sending children to school in-

cluding girls and boys buying more land, buying motorcycles to ease transport needs, purchasing household utensils and for some, it was also used for marrying more women or and buying mobile phones. From the perspective of the study, it was observed that to some extent, there was joint intra-household decision-making, although, when it came to marry other spouses, it was reported that this was decided by the male spouse alone. The result suggested that, although some level of women empowerment was observed, women were still taken as property for men; they constituted part of the portfolio within the household and more so as a tool to ease some of the labor requirements, thus being seen as a source cheap labor, and therefore men “married” women as soon as there was some windfall income. It was observed that all men who participated in the study had mobile phones, while only six women in the group interviewed had mobile handsets, another indicator of unequal distribution of benefits between men and women and / or the continued patriarchal practices among the communities. The mobile handsets were used for communicating with friends and relatives, receiving, keeping and sending mobile money and listening to the radio stations. There was no evidence of using mobile phones for business interests such as searching for rice markets. This result corroborated to Eyben (2008) proposition that unfair distribution of resources was one of the avenues that keep men economically more empowered even when the household wealth was generated as a family.

Self-Identify and Women’s Economic Empowerment

The introduction of rice led to some changes in women’s rights in public and in their individual rights. Women started owning land in their own right as title holders through private purchase of land, although land in this region, and in Uganda as a whole, land was inherited from parents and women did not have rights to either inherit land or become an heir to the family (the only route to inheriting land). This was a shift from tradition was an indicator that women were progressively earning ownership rights to land, one of the main factors of production in Uganda. From the study perspective, this increased one’s status in society, increased ones self-confidence and was a departure from cultural norms.

Families were now able to take their children (girls and boys) to school without discrimination; however, most of the girls interviewed had dropped out of school as early as primary four, five and six. Early marriage was pointed out as the reason for this condition. UBOS (2017) put national enrolment for boys in primary level at one million, two hundred and eighty four thousand (1,284,000) and one million, four hundred and fifty seven thousand (1,457,000) for 2015 and 2016; and six hundred and seventy five thousand (675,000) and seven hundred and sixty five thousand (765,000) for girls and boys for the same periods respectively. Although this represented a national challenge of keeping girls in schools, the region was ranked third in the dropout rates coming after the central and western regions. It should be noted that education is fundamental for self-identity, empowerment and decision-making.

Although CIDA (1994) reported that it was very difficult to measure changes in women's mindsets, through intuition and observation, it was obvious that women were gaining agency (power within themselves) to discuss issues that affect their lives. For example, women were able to present and discuss issues in the presence of men without fear and the men would listen attentively. Before, it was a taboo for women to talk in public or sit on chairs or sit in front of a gathering where men were discussing "issues". This was contrary to Knights & Richards (2003) finding that illustrated that among the women population of Pakistan. The authors noted that women were being socialized to take up junior places in public spaces compared to men as the society established these junior places as being of people with low status / importance and therefore for those people in-attendance during meetings. However, in the case of widows and households headed by females, women consulted someone they trusted before they took major decisions as one of the women narrates.

"...I consult someone I trust someone who can support me"

said Dora Auma.

This was a signal of agency within the women under the HDI project, considering that, before the rice project, single women and widows could not mix very well with other people except relatives. Overall, this result implied that intra-household decision-making had improved for most households that were living as couples, an indicator of women's ability to negotiate for better deals for themselves and the family. This accordingly was observed as a precondition to women's economic empowerment.

Women's Economic Empowerment

As earlier reported, the farmers did not have storage facilities. They stored their rice in their homesteads, which were made of mud and wattle, making it hard to maintain international and local market standards, and thus reducing their bargaining power for a better price in addition to increasing the risk of loss in case of fire. To circumvent this scenario, farmers sold their produce shortly after harvest to middlemen. The harvest time was usually when the prices were lowest. Most farmers sold their harvest to HDI as they took it for hulling only if they so wished, otherwise there were other markets by traders from Kampala city and Kenya. This made rice a tradable product. The rice price was determined by supply and demand although these markets were not competitive as there were fewer buyers than sellers. The prices fluctuated depending on the volume and quality of harvest but, in most cases, to the disadvantage of the farmers as some of the voices reveal.

“...The drought affects our farming and harvests. The selling price is still very low. We are cheated”

said Aboko Ambrose.

Furthermore, the farmers did not own tarpaulins for drying and threshing the rice. This affected the quality of the harvest and this translated into low prices. It was noted that women's gender roles reduced their time to search for markets compared to men. This presupposed the need for women to come together and bargain with HDI (as the patron) to organize the rice market and in so doing, obtain a fair price. Through observation and the intuition of the researchers, it was deduced that woman had access to household income as stewards, but the income was controlled by the male spouses as some of the narratives reveal.

“...Producing rice made me build a house. ...I bought land, ...bought cows, and ...household items. My children are in school including the girls. ...I paid dowry for my son and I was able to take my children go to school”

said another man.

The researcher noted in one narrative that

“...when the household sold the rice, the women keep the money. If the man wanted some money, he would then ask the woman. However, it becomes difficult sometimes. It may result in violence if the man kept asking for the money because the women would sometimes not release the money”

said 72year old Jacinta Etop.

The above notwithstanding, there were challenges in rice growing including getting enough rice seeds, as the supply from HDI was sometimes inadequate to meet farmers' needs; the limited pieces of land that forced farmers to use the same piece of land over and over again and the environmental impact of rice growing as it was grown in swamps.

4. *Conclusions and Recommendations*

The research assessed HDI activities on the culture, self-identity and economic empowerment of women. It specifically focused on how HDI intervention affected the culture, self-identity and women's economic empowerment in the Amolatar district. The study used primary data generated through discussion, observation and intuition by the researchers. This was sourced using an interview guide with questions related to culture, self-identity and women's economic empowerment. The general result indicated a decreasing trend of culture as a precursor to women economic empowerment. The trend shows increasing participation of women in intra-household decision-making and men increasingly participating in the rice value chain activities, mostly in activities of their own interest as heads of household, personal visibility and strategy. It was further noted that the introduction of rice increased demand for female labor and time use and thus increased the workload for the women. Further analysis indicated the existence of unequal distribution of benefits between men and women to the advantage of men.

The introduction of rice feminized the traditional crops, for example, the millet crop as a source of income as well as a food crop. More families took to rice consumption which was a good source of sustenance compared to millet, which was considered inferior to rice. Households had less food insecurity as some of the rice produced was kept for household

consumption during the slack periods. Both men and women became aware of their rights as individuals in the home and community and this led to improvement in intra-household decision-making. It was noted that the cultural barriers between men and women reduced as men participated more in the rice value chain than previously in the millet value chain. It was further noted that although joint intra household decision-making was observed, the results also suggested that women were still taken as property for men, more as source of cheap labor and therefore bought as soon as there is some windfall income available.

From the perspective of self-identity, families were now able to take their children (girls and boys) to school without discrimination, although most of the girls interviewed had dropped out as early as primary four, five and six. It was further observed that this was a national challenge, although education was imperative to women economic empowerment. On the positive side, female spouses were following their spouses to the rice mill to ensure that the rice funds were not mis-appropriated: a further indication of some level of empowerment of women.

The main challenges included obtaining inadequate rice seeds for planting; limited pieces of land that forced farmers to use the same piece of land over and over again for rice production; organized marriages after the rice harvest season, and the challenge of bird chasing, which would sometimes led to girls and boys withdrawing from school to chase the birds off the rice in the gardens, which would eventually lead to children abandoning school and, for the girls, possibly to early pregnancies. Households had less food insecurity as some of the rice produced was kept for household consumption during the slack periods. Both men and women became aware of their rights as individuals in the home and community. It was observed that the cultural barriers between men and women had reduced as men listened to women through the discussions which had never happened before.

Overall the HDI project came at the time when it was most needed; it has made several contributions to women's lives in terms of enhancing their self-identify, reducing the oppressive culture, women can own property in their own right reflecting increased agency and economic empowerment among women. However, women are yet to effectively control their own income, which continues to be controlled by the male spouses as head of household. This and the issue of girls dropping out of school, increased involvement of children in rice production at the expense of

school attendance needs to be addressed. Women should be more visible in sharing the benefits from rice, just as there is a need for farmers to come together and draw up a bargaining strategy for a fair price with HDI.

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