



# Adolescent girls and gender justice: Understanding key capability domains in Uganda

Revised country report

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# Contents

	<b>Acknowledgements</b>	<b>ii</b>
	<b>Contents</b>	<b>ii</b>
	<b>Tables, figures &amp; boxes</b>	<b>iv</b>
	<b>Abbreviations</b>	<b>v</b>
	<b>Executive summary</b>	<b>vii</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Conceptual framework</b>	<b>2</b>
2.1	Social norms, attitudes and practices	2
2.2	Capabilities, entitlements and gender justice	3
2.3	Analytical domains	3
<b>3</b>	<b>National context and perspectives</b>	<b>6</b>
3.1	Laws, policies, practices and persistent inequalities	6
3.2	Key capability domains and vulnerabilities for adolescent girls	9
<b>4</b>	<b>Field study design and setting</b>	<b>15</b>
4.1	Study aims and processes	15
4.2	Methodology	15
4.3	Site selection and district settings	16
<b>5</b>	<b>Key findings from the field research</b>	<b>21</b>
5.1	Household and family domain	22
5.2	Education domain	29
5.3	Economic domain	36
5.4	Physical domain	42
5.5	Psychosocial domain	53
5.6	Political and civic domain	57
<b>6</b>	<b>Change or continuity? Gender relations over time</b>	<b>61</b>
6.1	Changes in girls' capability domains	62
6.2	From grandmother to granddaughter: changes lived and observed	65
<b>7</b>	<b>Emerging conclusions and implications for policy and research</b>	<b>66</b>
7.1	Key findings and recommendations	66
7.2	Crosscutting themes and conceptual issues emerging from the research	70
7.3	Considerations for further research and policy review	72
	<b>References</b>	<b>74</b>
	<b>Appendix 1: Key concepts</b>	<b>80</b>
	<b>Appendix 2: List of respondents by category of tool and study site</b>	<b>81</b>
	<b>Appendix 3: Research instruments, FGDs</b>	<b>83</b>
	<b>Appendix 4: Research instruments, IDIs</b>	<b>93</b>
	<b>Appendix 5: Research instruments, life history and generational pairing</b>	<b>98</b>
	<b>Appendix 6: Research instruments, intra-household case study and participatory exercises</b>	<b>101</b>
	<b>Appendix 7: Research instruments, KII guides</b>	<b>107</b>
	<b>Appendix 8: Life histories and intergenerational pairings, results</b>	<b>111</b>

# Tables, figures & boxes

## Tables

Table 1: Capabilities framework and gender justice for adolescent girls.....	5
Table 2: Data collection tools and techniques .....	15
Table 3: Household division of labour in Mayuge district.....	18

## Boxes

Box 1: A statistical profile of adolescents in Uganda, with details on study district regions .....	8
Box 2: From policies to practice – challenges in girls’ education.....	11
Box 3: Upstream and downstream challenges in adolescent sexual and reproductive health programmes .....	13
Box 4: Health and education services in Lemwiyaga field site sub-country .....	20
Box 5: Culture and the commoditisation of girls.....	24
Box 6: Norms and practices around household decision making and authority .....	27
Box 7: Mistreatment by stepparents .....	29
Box 8: Why educate girls? .....	30
Box 9: Poverty, bride price, early marriage and limitations on girls’ education .....	31
Box 10: Aisha, a 17-year-old girl mother who completed her schooling.....	33
Box 11: Experience of sexual advances at school .....	34
Box 12: Girls excluded from inheritance of land and property in Mayuge .....	37
Box 13: Some share for girls in land and property in Sembabule .....	38
Box 14: Common economic activities of young people in the two study districts .....	39
Box 15: Motoni, a resilient entrepreneur .....	41
Box 16: Experiences of first menstruation .....	45
Box 17: Gendered risks of HIV .....	47
Box 18: Kyankazi’s story .....	50
Box 19: Naimaso, a 15-year-old girl battered into unconsciousness by her father .....	51
Box 20: Interest in broader national political process .....	58
Box 21: Girls’ leadership qualities .....	59
Box 22: Restricted mobility as a factor in limited participation in community activities .....	60
Box 23: Case study of intergenerational change, Mayuge .....	65

## Figures

Figure 1: Conceptual framework.....	4
Figure 2: Map of study districts .....	17

## Abbreviations

AAMP	Area-based Agricultural Modernisation Programme
ABEK	Alternative Basic Education for Karamoja
ACFODE	Action for Development
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
ARV	Antiretroviral
ASFR	Age-specific Fertility Rate
BEUPA	Basic Education for Urban Poverty Areas
CDP	Community Development Programme
CHANCE	Child-centred Alternative, Non-Formal Community-based Education
COPE	Complementary Opportunity for Primary Education
DFID	Department for International Development
DHS	Demographic and Health Survey
EASSI	Eastern African Sub-regional Support Initiative for the Advancement of Women
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
FHRI	Foundation for Human Rights Initiative
FIDH	International Federation for Human Rights
FLEP	Family Life Education Programme
FOWODE	Forum for Women in Democracy
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HMIS	Health Management Information System
HURINET	Foundation for Human Rights
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IDI	In-depth Interview
KI	Key Informant
KII	Key Informant Interview
LC	Local Council
LGDP	Local Government Development Programme
LWF	Lutheran World Federation
MICS	Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey
MoES	Ministry of Education and Sports
MoFPED	Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development
MoGLSD	Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development
MoH	Ministry of Health
MoLHUD	Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development
NAADS	National Agricultural Advisory Services
NDP	National Development Plan
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
ODI	Overseas Development Institute
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PIASCY	President's Initiative on AIDS Strategy for Communication to Youth
PLE	Primary Leaving Examination
PLHIV	People Living with HIV
RDC	Resident District Coordinator
SACCO	Savings and Credit Cooperative
SIGI	Social Institutions and Gender Index
STD	Sexually Transmitted Disease
UAC	Uganda AIDS Commission
UBoS	Uganda Bureau of Statistics
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNDP	UN Development Programme
UNFPA	UN Population Fund
UNICEF	UN Children's Fund

UPE	Universal Primary Education
US	United States
USAID	US Agency for International Development
USE	Universal Secondary Education
UWESO	Ugandan Women's Efforts to Save the Orphans
UWONET	Uganda Women's Network
VHT	Voluntary Health Team
WHO	World Health Organization
YES	Youth Entrepreneurship Skills

# Executive summary

*‘For us girls, what are we expected to do? It looks like we are not liked in many places including home. Look at the boys – they are allowed to build themselves huts and forever stay at home. Yet for the girls [...] it’s like everybody wants us to get out of the way. Tell me what’s wrong with being a girl?’ (Mixed group of adolescents focus group discussion, Mayuge).*

## Overview

This study explores the complex ways in which adolescent girls’ capabilities are shaped and/or constrained by gender-discriminatory social norms attitudes and practices in two rural communities in Uganda. Fieldwork undertaken in Mayuge (East Central region) and Sembabule (Central I region) employed qualitative methods to elicit information, perspectives and experiences from adolescent boys and girls, community members, district officials and national stakeholders on critical domains of adolescent capability development. These domains derive from a conceptual framework which establishes the basis for identifying discriminatory social norms, attitudes, laws and practices that may limit girls’ potential and accentuate vulnerabilities in the household and family, education, economic activity, physical integrity, security and health, psychosocial wellbeing and political/civic participation.

Drawing on current thinking around gender justice and entitlements, the study also explores the features and characteristics of service provision, legal frameworks and support structures established around these key domains. Research methods included focus group discussions (FGDs), key informant interviews (KIIs), intergenerational life histories, case studies and participatory mapping exercises, along with a review of available literature at national and district levels.

## Key findings

The study shows that, despite an enabling legal and policy framework capable of addressing adolescent girls’ vulnerabilities as they prepare for crucial transitions to adult roles, they still face a myriad of challenges. Discriminatory social norms, attitudes and practices are compounded by conditions of poverty and lack of quality service provision to constrain overall opportunities and development. It is clear that policies seeking to empower adolescent girls and enhance their capabilities would need to tackle these vulnerabilities in an integrated manner.

- **Household domain:** Household and family structures and processes severely constrain the development and full realisation of girls’ capabilities. The unequal gendered division of labour within the household burdens women and girls with most of the ‘care’ work, thus limiting their capacity to engage in and benefit from other activities, including education, training and productive labour. Practices such as bridewealth payments contribute to early marriages and effectively turn girls into commodities, passing from ownership by fathers to ownership by husbands. ‘Compound’ families and family break-up were also seen to create situations of particular vulnerability. Lack of voice and decision-making roles in household and family affairs is characteristic for girls, who, in the patriarchal models of family that are most common, are doubly vulnerable on the basis of both gender and generation. Violence within households – including gender-based violence – is also traumatic for girls.
- **Education domain:** Despite progress made to enhance girls’ educational attainment over the past decade, especially through policies of free education at primary and secondary levels and particular programmes to enhance opportunities for girls, significant challenges remain. Factors such as biased gender ideologies; the role and status of women and girls in the family, clan and community; negative attitudes towards girls’ educational abilities; teenage pregnancy and early marriage; gender-insensitive school environments; and the impact of HIV and AIDS on households continue to undermine opportunities for girls to develop their capabilities through education. Findings from field research show that the sociocultural norms and setting and school environmental factors work in synergy to undermine the ability of adolescent girls to realise their full potential in the education capability domain. What happens in the home, including cultural expectations of girls’ roles and lack of support for girls’ education, deeply affects performance and persistence at school, as do gender-insensitive school environments.
- **Economic domain:** Girls and young women are confronted with key limitations on opportunities to develop and benefit from their economic capabilities. Such capabilities are compromised at

the outset by property inheritance customs that favour boys and men. Exclusion of girls and women from ownership of and control over critical productive assets such as land and livestock renders girls and women vulnerable and economically insecure, a situation that translates into diminished agency and increased dependence on and subordination to men for economic survival. This is in spite of a favourable land policy and other positive national legislation in place. Other challenges include parental underinvestment in girls' education, limited opportunities for vocational training, limited access to credit facilities, exploitation of children's labour and high rates of participation in unremunerated domestic care, which is considered 'natural' for girls and women but exacerbates time poverty. Further vulnerabilities arise from restrictions on mobility that exclude older girls from certain economic occupations and hazardous working conditions that leave them open to sexual exploitation.

- **Physical domain:** Both the physical/bodily integrity and security and the sexual and reproductive health rights of adolescent girls are severely compromised by a combination of challenges rooted in patriarchal norms of male control over female bodies, and the primacy placed on women's reproductive roles. These contribute to perpetuating such practices as early and/or forced marriage, early and frequent pregnancy and various forms of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV). Access to justice is severely constrained and protection limited. Indeed, a girl who has been raped is sometimes expected to marry her rapist – if the bride price offered is enough, a *de facto* continuation of the traditional practice of marriage by abduction. There seem to be few 'safe spaces' for girls who face violence in homes, in schools and in between. The study also reveals adolescent girls' ignorance of critical reproductive health issues and extremely limited access to adolescent-friendly health services and quality maternal health care, contributing to overall poor reproductive health outcomes and heightened vulnerability to HIV and AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases (STDs).
- **Psychosocial domain:** A sense of psychosocial wellbeing is important for girls as they grow into adults and develop their capabilities to the fullest. This can be brought about in part through a sense of security and value created through supportive networks. While such networks do exist for girls in the study areas, some of whom spoke of friends, families and others as people to whom they could turn when needing help or comfort, it is an area that could undoubtedly benefit from deeper attention. Girls expressed a variety of worries and concerns – about their bodies, their relationships, their lives and their futures – and it is not at all clear that such concerns are being addressed through established patterns of adult–child communication and interaction. Formal counselling services are rare and access to these very limited.
- **Political and civic domain:** Participation of girls and boys in networks beyond the household through community meetings or decision making in the civic domain is very limited. Adolescents are neither recognised nor expected to participate, as they are considered too young to contribute to what is considered an adult domain. Nor do they have much scope for participation in adolescent-specific clubs or associations, which are very rare in the communities visited, although some avenues for youth participation are offered through churches or mosques. Particular gender-based limitations on girls' participation arise out of still deeply entrenched ideologies of 'public' and 'private' domains, whereby women and girls are restricted to the latter. Scope for participation and leadership is greatest in the school setting, but even there limitations are encountered, particularly by girls, whose 'shyness' may limit participation. One notable element that has entered into adolescents' lives is the mobile phone, which allows them to expand their networks of association, although a number of community members expressed negative opinions about this.

### Changes in social norms and practices

The bulk of the field research highlighted the weight of gender-discriminatory norms and practices on the lived experiences of adolescent girls; however, intergenerational interviews and historical timelines highlighted a number of significant changes that appear to be taking place within the different capability domains. Such changes are most evident around education, but also appear in some of the other domains. While such changes do not yet appear powerful enough to fully transform adolescent girls' opportunities for capability development, and there remain clear signs of continuities and persistence in discriminatory practices, they do indicate that the situation is not static.

### Policy implications

Interventions at the household level are rare in the communities studied. Recommendations for potential programme approaches would include communications efforts around gender equality in the

household to break down existing stereotypes; information campaigns around the reforms foreseen in the marriage and divorce bill that is currently being promoted and both information and enforcement of laws on early marriage; introduction of labour-saving technologies to cut down on women and girls' 'time poverty'; and expansion of crèches to relieve some of the burden of care for younger siblings.

Key recommendations on measures to enhance education for girls derive from well-known global good practice that seeks to address barriers at the level of both supply and demand: investing in 'girl-friendly' school infrastructure, including separate latrines and appropriate sanitation and hygiene to address issues of menstrual management; eliminating gender-stereotypes in school texts; investing in female teachers and mentors, and training and supervising all teachers on gender-sensitive teaching/learning and classroom management techniques; providing incentives to parents to send daughters to school (including, for example, take-home rations, fee reductions/abolition; provision of uniforms, conditional cash transfers); developing appropriate policies and programmes to allow pregnant school girls and girl mothers to continue schooling; offering more 'second chance' alternatives; and implementing specific measures to ensure girls' retention through secondary, including, where appropriate, scholarship support or boarding facilities.

Expanding access to and opportunities for quality vocational and technical training for adolescent girls is a critical priority to enhance their economic capabilities. Support for productive activities and decent employment for young women is also critical, including through gender-sensitive measures that take into account their dual productive and reproductive roles. Rural development programmes should include specific measures to support and enhance women's agro-pastoral activities and contributions to the household economy. Support for appropriate income-generating opportunities for young mothers – particularly those on their own – is particularly important. The dynamics of marriage and family practices in particular around inheritance and *in vitro* transfers of assets need to be further understood as a backdrop to measures seeking to expand young women's access to assets.

Far greater efforts are needed to insist on the bodily integrity of adolescent girls and young women, to encourage girls to remain in school and delay marriage, to expand access to quality sexual and reproductive health information and services and to combat prevailing norms and practices of male violence. Measures to reinforce laws against gender-based violence and to bring perpetrators to justice are also crucially needed.

Mentoring by adult women (female teachers; district or sub-district development staff; non-governmental organisation (NGO) service providers; community leaders; others) could be promoted around different issues and at different venues, along with peer-to-peer counselling and support services. Special outreach services and support may be needed for adolescent mothers or for adolescent girls with babies. Community dialogue processes designed specifically to take adolescent girls' views and concerns into account could be helpful in providing a conduit for interaction with caring adults. Girls' clubs and other forms of female solidarity systems could also be established and/or reinforced.

Further investment in the development of adolescent girls' capabilities for civic involvement, leadership and decision making is sorely needed, as are initiatives to expand and strengthen social networks and engagements. A focus on adolescents, as opposed to youth, would help ensure younger age groups are not neglected in this important domain. Schools offer potential for encouraging adolescent girls' leadership and decision making; to do so they must create an enabling environment to nurture girls' voice; identify role models of positive, assertive women; strengthen and expand school clubs; and provide guidance on options to explore outside of school. For adolescent girls who are out of school, appropriate groups and associations could be established to support them in their various activities and encourage their participation in community affairs. Issues surrounding the restricted mobility of girls and young women should be addressed through community dialogue and bolstered with positive examples of the benefits of participation in networks outside the home.

### Considerations for further research and analysis

The report offers, in its concluding chapter, a number of potential themes for further research. The following are some of the crosscutting themes that link particularly into conceptual issues that might help reframe the focus.

- **Household as a foundational domain:** The family and household (and the sociocultural and economic norms and practices therein) emerged from the research as a 'foundational domain'

from which multiple limitations arise. A much more nuanced and complete understanding is needed of the diverse types of household and family experiences, their change and persistence over time and the potential – beyond calls for ‘stronger families’ – for gender-transformative structures to emerge.

- **Cultural definitions and understandings of adolescents:** The study communities defined life trajectories for girls in a number of different ways – not always, or even usually, in terms of age, but more often in terms of physical characteristics (particularly the budding of breasts) marking the debut of womanhood that would be fully defined (irrespective of age) by either marriage or pregnancy. It is important to more fully understand such cultural categories and their implications for adolescent girls’ and young women’s potential for participation in ‘youth’ programmes, which, more often than not, would seem to exclude them as a category.
- **Interconnected nature of capability domains:** Girls’ experiences in the different ‘capability domains’ take place in a fluid and interconnected manner that our analytical categories have not yet fully captured. This is perhaps inevitable, but should alert us to the importance of maintaining a ‘holistic’ vision of ‘the social’, of seeking to understand the interconnectedness of different domains and of being open to yet further dimensions that need to be taken into consideration for a fuller understanding of girls’ lived experiences.
- **Reinforcement and enactment of social norms through institutions:** It is important to identify and understand social norms, attitudes and practices at play not just at the household or community level but also within specific institutions, such as schools, health centres, justice services and the like, which can be seen to both embody and operationalise these norms – reproducing in a variety of settings some of the broader patterns of gender-discriminatory norms and behaviour within the community at large.
- **Gatekeepers:** Analysis of study findings brought to the fore patterns in some of the processes being observed in terms of the opening-up or closing of opportunities for adolescent girls. It is important to identify and understand all those (individuals or institutions) who enforce or reinforce barriers to girls’ empowerment based on discriminatory norms and ideologies as gatekeepers of various sorts and, moreover, to begin to conceptualise some of the norms and ideologies themselves in that function (e.g. the threat of male violence – kept alive in the enactment of violence by individual boys/men as well as by behavioural patterns of humiliation or intimidation – operating effectively as a barrier to girls’ mobility and entry into public domains).
- **Contextualised understandings:** One of the main themes emerging from the research is that context matters. It is important for any real understanding of sociocultural norms, attitudes and practices to ‘go local’ and build understandings from the ground up. Poverty and wealth; urban/rural setting; geographic locality; ethnicity and religion; and individual household characteristics may all matter in terms of the specificity of lived experiences of the influence of sociocultural norms, attitudes and practices on the development and exercise of capabilities. Care must be taken, therefore, in both research and policy, to uncover the dimensions that make a difference, in order to understand them more fully and more fully support those that offer positive potential for gender justice and the empowerment of girls.
- **Change processes and drivers:** Intergenerational pairings and life histories served as useful tools to capture some of the dynamics of change as experienced by girls and their families. But wider community dialogue processes around changing social norms would undoubtedly further enrich such findings and provide more contextualised understandings of broader social trends in a particular community, district or region, while other historical research methods and a broader and deeper literature review on historical change processes more globally would help shed more light on the basic drivers of change or specific causal factors behind the changes experienced. A key challenge remains in attempting to identify, distinguish and assess the relative weight of factors affecting adolescent girls’ capabilities arising from changes in the social norms themselves; from the overall context socioeconomic context of communities; or from service delivery characteristics.

# 1 Introduction

Mainstream development actors are increasingly recognising the value of investment in adolescent girls – and there has been remarkable progress over the past two decades in some areas (particularly in education). However, on other issues, including early marriage and pregnancy, maternal mortality and gender-based violence, as well as expansion of opportunities for adolescent girls to strengthen and exercise voice and agency, there have been very limited inroads into achieving meaningful change. It is critical, therefore, that broader poverty reduction and development frameworks do not simply ‘add girls and stir’ in terms of existing approaches, but rather integrate a more nuanced understanding of gender discriminatory norms, attitudes and practices and related change pathways. To enhance the capabilities and potential of adolescent girls, we need fresh thinking, policy approaches and programmatic action that involve sustained treatment of gender and childhood as a specific site of exclusion and discrimination and an understanding of girls in relation to life-course and intergenerational poverty dynamics.

This study is part of a multi-country exploratory research programme undertaken by the Overseas Development Institute (ODI) and supported by the UK Department for International Development (DFID), which is working with national research teams to develop an initial understanding of adolescent girls’ experiences in selected capability domains, as well as the extent and limitations of data and knowledge on these in relation to formal and informal laws, norms and practices.<sup>1</sup> The aim is to uncover the pivotal role gender discriminatory laws, norms and practices play in depriving girls of the opportunity to achieve their full potential and, at the same time, to identify potential openings for positive change and gender justice.

The overall premise of the work programme is that discriminatory norms, attitudes and practices play a far more important role in limiting girls’ potential than is generally understood. In its successive stages, the work programme will seek to enhance the effectiveness of global efforts to reduce the alarming number of desperately deprived girls and young women and improve their wellbeing and capabilities by addressing discriminatory laws, norms and practices. The ultimate aim is to provide fresh insights to help improve development outcomes for adolescent girls (with a focus on the poorest and hardest to reach), break intergenerational poverty and provide a catalyst for change, the returns of which will ripple through wider society. The theory of change underpinning our programme posits that the empowerment of adolescent girls will in turn catalyse change for communities, the broader society and the economy.

Adolescent girls stand at the critical juncture between childhood and adulthood. Childhood, adolescence and early adulthood are capital in determining life-course potential. There is growing recognition that investing in gender equality and empowerment at this stage of the life cycle is essential to poverty reduction and human development. Such investments are seen as crucial not only to improving the life opportunities of the girls themselves, but in paving the way for enhanced opportunities for their families and entire communities. Investment in girls’ education, for example, has been documented to bring about a host of other positive development outcomes and economic returns; educated mothers will, in turn, insist on stronger investment in their daughters’ education. Economic empowerment and appropriate preparation for civic and political roles at this stage of life are also seen to be critical to other forms of progress and gender equality among adults. Yet this key period remains for many girls and young women one of deprivation, danger and vulnerability, resulting in significant limitations in agency and critical development deficits, often with life-course consequences.

This study on Uganda analyses the findings of field work on the situation of adolescent girls in communities in two ‘hard-to-reach’ districts where poverty levels are high and social indicators are weak. It comes at a time when both government and development partners are beginning to realize the importance of investing in adolescence from a policy and programme perspective, as well as from the point of view of strengthening the evidence base to make adolescents more visible in development planning processes. Demographics in Uganda, where adolescents make up over half of

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<sup>1</sup> Other countries in the multi-country research are Ethiopia, Nepal and Vietnam, selected to represent a diversity of geographic and socio-cultural settings.

the population, make these issues particularly important and timely. A recent analysis of national survey data on the adolescent age group (10-19 years) reveals alarming proportions of adolescents living in poverty, deprived of full educational attainment and – for girls – impelled into early marriage or pregnancy, with sexual and reproductive health indicators showing high levels of vulnerability (Population Council, 2012). More elusive data exist to indicate high levels of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), while current national debates about reforms to laws regulating marriage and divorce reveal deep resistance to changing discriminatory practices at the household and family level, a phenomenon our research notes as a foundational dimension of girls' lives.

The remainder of this report sets out the conceptual framework for the study (Section 2); sets the scene by providing an overview of the national context, which draws on a preliminary literature review, key informant interviews at national level and a national stakeholders' meeting (Section 3); outlines the methodology and provides details on the research sites (Section 4); presents the key findings from the study at field level in each of the different capability domains (Section 5); reviews evidence of change over the generations (Section 6); and offers some emerging conclusions, comparisons and potential policy and research implications (Section 7).

## 2 Conceptual framework

### 2.1 Social norms, attitudes and practices

There is increasing recognition of the force and persistence of underlying **norms, attitudes and practices** and an acknowledgment that such factors have far greater influence than is generally appreciated in shaping developmental outcomes. Norms, attitudes and practices are part of the wider 'cultures' that inform multiple aspects of our behaviour and societies. Importantly, culture is not an untouchable and permanent fixture. Rather, it is always in flux and contested, constantly being shaped by human interaction (Rao and Walton, 2004). Indeed, this malleability is a vital aspect of the transformative social change required to enable equitable development and social justice. Such change has been seen in many societies, and is central to inclusive policies and action. Nevertheless, some cultural norms and practices can endure across time and space by adapting to new contexts, including demographic, socioeconomic and technological changes.

Gender-discriminatory norms, attitudes and practices often appear particularly resistant to change and are considered key drivers or determinants of gender outcomes in education, health, political representation and labour markets (Branisa et al., 2009; OECD, 2010). In the case of gendered experiences of adolescence, seminal work by Mensch et al. (1998) emphasised that adolescent policy and programmes must 'peel away the many layers of control over girls, challenge discriminatory familial and community norms, and confront male attitudes and behaviours that are damaging to girls. In doing so, they must also "invent" a value for girls by counteracting customary perceptions of girls (and the legal frameworks that often support them) and by promoting the "novel" concept of girls' rights and capabilities apart from reproduction'.

A recent attempt to apply the Social Institutions and Gender Index (SIGI) categories developed by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) to an analysis of adolescent girls and young women in order to identify the role of discriminatory norms in perpetuating poverty and deprivation highlighted, among other things, the need for a framework that can adapt itself to discriminatory social norms linked to both age and gender (Jones et al., 2010).

This evolving framework is in turn underpinned by thinking about the intimate linkages between discriminatory norms, practices and group perceptions of social identity, themselves driven by collectively agreed on understandings and belief systems surrounding group membership (such as gender, age, class, ethnicity, religion) and power relations (whether they be patriarchy, age-based hierarchies, capitalist modes of production etc.). The resulting norms, values and attitudes can have positive, neutral or negative effects; in their negative form, they can be discriminatory in nature. This discrimination results in exclusion and restricted opportunities to develop capabilities, the outcomes of which are unrealised potential, limited development and disempowerment. According to this framework, the overarching aim of policy and practice is to address both the manifestations – or outcomes – of discriminatory norms, values and attitudes and the driving forces that underpin and perpetuate them.

## 2.2 Capabilities, entitlements and gender justice

The conceptual framework that serves as the basis for our research draws on the **capabilities approach** that has emerged out of Amartya Sen's (1999) theory of 'development as freedom', and has been further elaborated and refined by others to guide thinking around human development, poverty, inequality and social justice. This approach posits development as a process of expanding 'freedoms' or 'capabilities' that improve human lives by opening up the range of things a person can effectively be and do.

The concept of capabilities as embracing sociocultural entitlements to **inclusion and participation** has been applied to notions of poverty as 'social exclusion', defined as a combination of deprivations that stem from reduced capacities. This has contributed to the multidimensional definition of poverty, with important implications as well for understanding and assessing gender inequalities (Alkire, 2008; Fukuda-Parr, 2003; Sen, 2000).

The capabilities approach is sensitive to a range of inequities and discrimination that are important in women's lives, and it has the scope to delve into complex issues that constrain women's life choices, including discriminatory political processes, social institutions and norms that need to be tackled head-on. Through the work of feminist thinkers such as Martha Nussbaum, the capabilities approach has been used as a potent tool for construction of a normative concept of social justice and the promotion of 'gender justice' (Nussbaum, 2000; 2003; 2011).

An **entitlements approach** informed by a rights perspective considers the range of key economic, sociocultural and political entitlements fundamental to a transformative approach to development and the achievement of social justice. The evolving notion of **gender justice** may be one way of combining the capabilities approach and rights-based approaches for adolescent girls around issues of their social, economic, political and individual 'entitlements' and the measures needed to ensure such entitlements can be claimed and activated in practice (Goetz, 2007; Mukhopadhy, 2007).

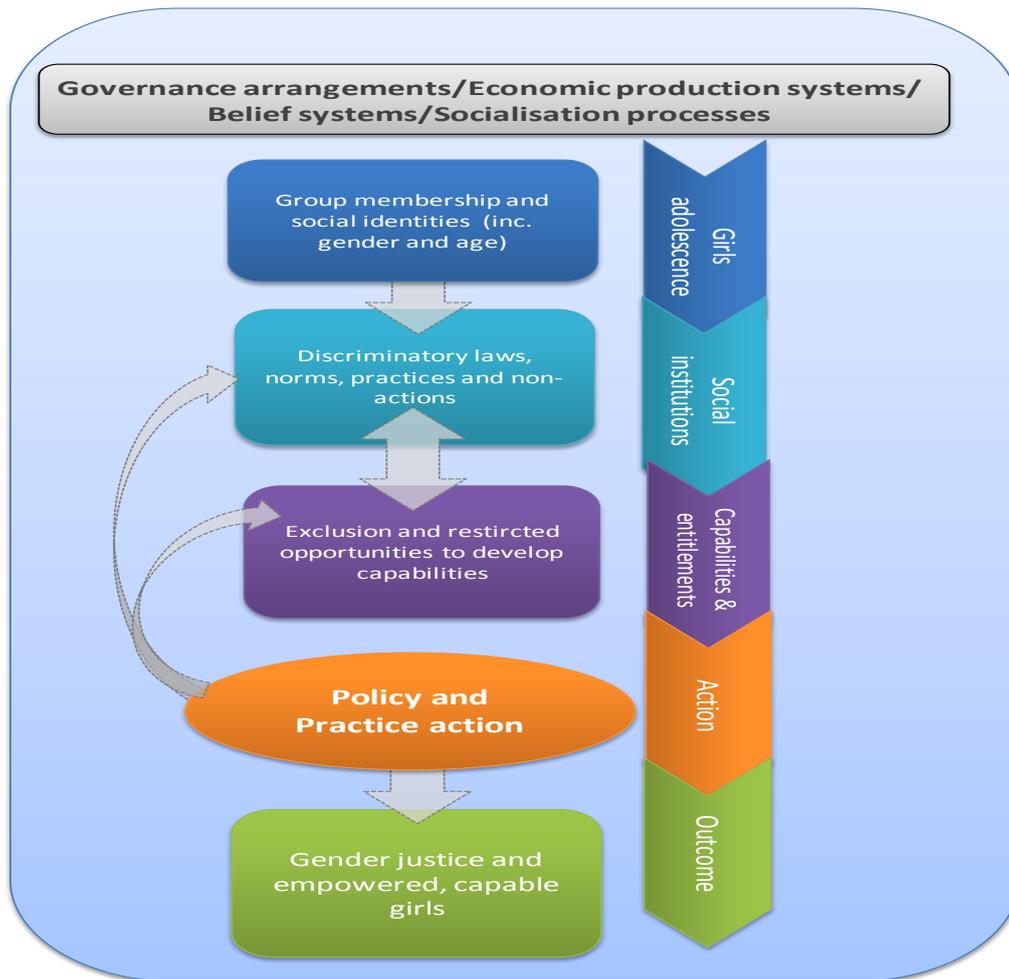
In expanding such a concept to embrace gender justice as the basis for promotion of capacity enhancement for adolescent girls, the way is paved for consideration of adolescent girls as citizens with rights and entitlements that need to be accorded and claimed through an enabling environment structured within the larger social units of which they are a part.

While strengthening capabilities in various domains is critical for human development as a whole, eliminating gender discrimination in the evolution and exercise of such capabilities is essential for gender justice in particular. For this reason, it is important to conceptualise adolescent girls as evolving citizens to whom rights and entitlements accrue, and to consider, therefore, the full range of actors at various levels – including family, community and state – who bear responsibility for creating the enabling environment and providing the services required to nurture and enhance these capabilities

## 2.3 Analytical domains

In seeking to understand how the development of capabilities is restricted and how discrimination functions, we need to go beyond recognition of the compromised capabilities themselves to understand the forces driving discriminatory laws, norms, attitudes and practices. This discrimination results in exclusion and restricted opportunities to develop capabilities, the outcomes of which are unrealised potential, limited development, disempowerment and, ultimately, a lack of social justice, and, particularly, what we and others term 'gender justice' (see Figure 1).

**Figure 1: Conceptual framework**



Integrating capabilities with both entitlements and rights provides a useful analytical entry point and contributes to the development of a conceptual framework linked to gender justice. It can help guide research into, and policy action regarding, the underlying social norms, attitudes and practices that either foster or inhibit the development of girls' evolving capacities and potential. Such an approach has the additional advantage of linking both 'being' and 'becoming' along a continuum that posits Sen's 'development as freedom' as a means as well as an end.

As Table 1 illustrates, the framework also leads to specific actions that enhance entitlements and capabilities. Drawing on the literature discussed above, the framework identifies six capability domains for attention: educational; economic; physical and bodily integrity; psychosocial; political and civic; and household and family relations.

**Table 1: Capabilities framework and gender justice for adolescent girls**

Vulnerabilities to overcome	Norms and practices compromising capabilities and leading to exclusion	Non-actions compromising capabilities	Entitlements that underpin gender justice
<b>1. Educational domain and capability</b>			
<b>Situation: Restricted opportunities for capability development through education</b>			
<b>Goal: Capability to access and make the most of quality educational and vocational training services</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Poverty and parental underinvestment in daughters</li> <li>Pregnancy and early marriage causing school dropout</li> <li>Gender-insensitive school curriculum, teaching/learning processes and environments</li> <li>Gender-based violence, lack of safety and security</li> <li>Gender impacts of HIV and AIDS</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gender and identity-based school exclusion based on son bias</li> <li>Unequal care burdens</li> <li>Lack of choice in time use</li> <li>Violence in school/ community</li> <li>Gender inequalities in teaching/learning processes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Non-provision/ implementation of education services</li> <li>Non-provision of quality child care</li> <li>Non-provision of reproductive health services to prevent early pregnancy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Education</li> <li>Health care</li> <li>Leisure time</li> <li>Vocational and technical training opportunities</li> </ul>
<b>2. Economic domain and capability</b>			
<b>Situation: Limited access to economic opportunities, productive resources and assets</b>			
<b>Goal: Capability to secure and have use of assets (land, inheritance, credit) and to prepare for/be supported in equal participation in productive activities so as to promote economic security</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Limited vocational training and labour market preparation/ opportunity (including access to credit)</li> <li>Unpaid household labour and 'time poverty'</li> <li>Exploitative child labour</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Limited access to assets</li> <li>Unequal inheritance, bridewealth/dowry systems and property rights</li> <li>Exclusion from labour markets and decent work</li> <li>Occupational discrimination – hereditary employment</li> <li>Child labour leading to exclusion from schooling</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inequality, non-provision/ implementation of inheritance laws</li> <li>Weak implementation/ enforcement of labour laws</li> <li>Weak access to justice</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Income-generating opportunities</li> <li>Productive assets – land, credit, technology</li> <li>Vocational and technical training opportunities</li> <li>Decent work</li> <li>Information/ awareness</li> </ul>
<b>3. Physical domain and capability</b>			
<b>Situation: Lack of security, vulnerability to violence, lack of physical autonomy, poor health</b>			
<b>Goal: Capability to enjoy physical security, bodily integrity and access to good health care, including access to reproductive as well as mental health services</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SGBV</li> <li>Limited control over physical body (safety/mobility)</li> <li>Limited control over sexual health and fertility</li> <li>Poor reproductive health</li> <li>Restricted mobility</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unequal quality and provision of care (son bias, including female foeticide/infanticide)</li> <li>Limited authority in family</li> <li>Early marriage</li> <li>Harmful traditional practices</li> <li>Socially accepted notions of 'masculinities' re violence</li> <li>Gendered norms of 'honour and shame' underpinning ideologies of male control over female bodies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Limited safe spaces/protective services</li> <li>Limited access to justice</li> <li>Non-provision of health and reproductive health services</li> <li>Non-enactment or enforcement of national laws consistent with international norms</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Life</li> <li>Adequate food and nutrition</li> <li>Bodily integrity</li> <li>Care and protection (nurture)</li> <li>Good health and access to health care</li> </ul>
<b>4. Psychosocial domain (emotional and mental wellbeing)</b>			
<b>Situation: Feelings of isolation, oppression</b>			
<b>Goal: Capability to develop emotional intelligence, a secure sense of personal identity and fulfilling and supportive relationships</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gendered sociocultural stereotypes</li> <li>Internalisation of negative attitudes</li> <li>Mental ill-health</li> <li>Lack of mechanisms and support to cope with stress</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stereotyping of female roles</li> <li>Restricted mobility</li> <li>Restricted access to education</li> <li>Limit on private roles</li> <li>Restrictions on association</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Insufficient legal protection</li> <li>Insufficient counselling services/support systems</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inclusion in decisions that affect self</li> <li>Freedom of association</li> <li>Supportive and nurturing social life</li> </ul>

### 5. Political/civic domain and capability

**Situation:** Limitations in political and civil liberties, agency, gender justice and citizenship

**Goal:** Capability to i) voice needs/ demands and assert accountability for rights vis-à-vis decision makers at community and local government levels and beyond; ii) network and organise in safe and supportive environments among peers; and iii) develop and exercise leadership skills

- |  |   |   |   |
|--|---|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Restrictive citizenship laws and practices</li> <li>Public/private ideologies and restricted mobility/agency (participation in peer groups, leadership opportunities)</li> <li>Lack of access to justice</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Control/surveillance</li> <li>Restricted mobility</li> <li>Limit on public/private roles</li> <li>Limited authority in family</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Non-provision/ implementation of information</li> <li>Non-provision/ implementation of justice services</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Voice/representation</li> <li>Group membership</li> <li>Association</li> <li>Mobility</li> </ul> |
|--|---|---|---|

### 6. Household and family relations domain and capability

**Situation:** Gender inequalities in family relations and household roles and responsibilities

**Goal:** Capability to manage, sustain and benefit from nurturing relationships and equal care and provisions from adults within natal family structures (and as young married adults within new families)

- |   |  |  |   |
|---|--|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inequality in marriage relationship</li> <li>Unequal household roles, care burdens, decision-making power, position and status</li> <li>Limited access to adequate care and nurture</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gendered public/private ideologies</li> <li>Gendered household division of labour</li> <li>Discriminatory family and marriage codes/practices (bride wealth and dowry; limited marriage choice; early marriage; polygamy)</li> <li>Son bias</li> <li>Restricted mobility</li> <li>Limited authority in family (natal and marital)</li> <li>Lack of choice/time use</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of adequate provision of child care</li> <li>Insufficient legal protection</li> <li>Limited information</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reform of marriage and family laws</li> <li>Inclusion in decisions affecting self</li> <li>Parental rights</li> <li>Voice within the family</li> <li>Access to adequate nurture and support from adults in caregiving roles</li> </ul> |
|---|--|--|---|

Note: This is an evolving framework and has been adapted for use in each country.

## 3 National context and perspectives

### 3.1 Laws, policies, practices and persistent inequalities

#### 3.1.1 Legal and policy framework for gender and adolescents

Uganda's commitment to transforming the lives of girls and young women is well articulated in the 1995 Constitution, which prohibits discrimination of all forms at all levels of development and provides for the protection and promotion of women's rights and other marginalised groups (in Chapter 4) (Republic of Uganda, 1995). The Constitution further provides for affirmative action for women and other marginalised groups to redress existing imbalances. Affirmative action has been integrated into other laws, namely, the National Women's Council Statute (amended) (2000) and the Local Government Act (1997), especially in the civic and political arena.

Uganda's National Development Plan (NDP) 2010-2014/15 recognises gender inequality and inequity, negative attitudes, mindsets, cultural practices and perceptions as some of the most binding constraints on national development and promotes affirmative action in all spheres (Republic of Uganda, 2010). The NDP is in line with the Uganda Gender Policy of 1997 (reviewed in 2007), and the National Youth Policy (2001), which together highlight the need to address the plight of disadvantaged and marginalised youth and promote gender equality, including the elimination of gender discrimination and violence (Republic of Uganda, 2001).

A number of sectoral plans, policies, legal provisions and programme initiatives promote gender equality and the capabilities of girls and young women. Interventions are underway to improve access to and control over productive resources (land and credit); implement affirmative action; create training programmes; protect against all forms of exploitation; expand access to education and skills building; protect against physical and bodily integrity through the promotion of sexual and

reproductive health rights; promote women's participation in politics and civic affairs; and promote mutual and respectful household, marriage and family relations. In this last instance, reform of discriminatory marriage practices is currently being proposed through a new Marriage and Divorce Bill aimed largely at offering more protection to women and girls.

A number of specific policies, programmes and interventions also focus on young people. These include the Graduate Venture Capital Fund, the Non Formal Skills' Training Programme for Youth, provision of agricultural inputs to youth and innovative efforts to elicit young people's views and enhance civic participation through communications initiatives such as U-report.

### 3.1.2 Gaps between policy and practice

While legal provisions, policy frameworks and programme initiatives appear conducive to addressing gender inequality and promoting adolescent development, implementation and enforcement are weak, and the allocation of both human and financial resources is inadequate (FIDH and FHRI, 2012; MoGLSD, 2009). A number of national stakeholders and key informants (KIs) involved in our study highlighted continuing gaps between policy and practice. Moreover, current laws are fractured and piecemeal (FIDH and FHRI, 2012), and sometimes meet with considerable resistance: passage of the proposed Marriage and Divorce Bill, for example, is faltering around clauses pertaining to cohabitation, polygamy, co-ownership of matrimonial property (particularly land) and marital rape.

Inconsistency in national definitions of youth, young people and adolescents complicates policymaking in their favour. The National Adolescent Health Policy, for example, classifies 'adolescents' as those between 10 and 19 years of age and 'youths' as those between 15 and 24, with 'young people' covering both age groups (10-24). The National Youth Policy, however, defines 'youths' as those aged 12 to 30 years, while the Constitution considers 'youths' to be between 18 and 30, with all those under 18 legally considered children. Within these various categories adolescents may fall between the cracks, and their specific vulnerabilities and needs may be overlooked.

Moreover, generic youth policies do not always address specific gender issues, while national gender policies may overlook the specific needs of adolescent girls (Population Council, 2012). One of our KIs noted that youth programmes were not always reaching girls because 'youth' is identified primarily as a male category from local sociological perspectives: *'Adolescent girls are either girls or – if married – mothers and hence women, and so are not considered for inclusion in such programmes.'* National stakeholders confirmed this, pointing out that some programmes target youths aged 18-30 years, thus leaving out many younger adolescents (Bantebya and Muhanguzi, 2012b).

### 3.1.3 The weight of gender discriminatory norms and practices

Gender discriminatory norms, attitudes and practices remain major obstacles to attainment by girls and young women of their full potential in different capability domains. Some KIs highlighted the strength and persistence of these forces in shaping gender relations in unequal ways, contributing to heightened vulnerability for girls across different capability domains.

One national feminist activist contended that, *'Patriarchy and its multiple and evolving forms provide the fundamental framework patterning the lives of women and girls. If we are really going to look at adolescent girls, we need to understand the deep roots of patriarchy.'* She noted how this permeated everything in Ugandan society – family, politics, religion – and was being reinforced and reshaped all the time, for example through patronage politics and the introduction of new elements into marriage ceremonies, whereby the bride is expected to kneel before the groom. Gender equality activists are meeting enormous resistance and backlash, crystallising at times around issues of 'culture', which itself is being recast in the image of patriarchy.

Some national stakeholders observed that, in some communities, religion is used as an excuse to justify the cultural norms and practices that have an impact on the capability development of adolescents. It is therefore important to examine the 'fusion' between culture and religion (Bantebya and Muhanguzi, 2012). Others, however, cautioned against automatically casting 'culture' in a negative light when it comes to gender issues: *'There is always that tendency – we always look at culture as our enemy, the direct opposite of rights, which is not always true. There are some cultures that are positive [...] We can also change culture because culture is dynamic [...] [Moreover,] the majority of Ugandans live their lives according to cultural norms and values [...] So let's work within culture, let's not look at it as the enemy.'* Many identified poverty itself as the overarching problem. One noted in particular that poverty was acute in both urban and rural areas, and its different dimensions needed to be taken into consideration as part of the context of local lives and local gender

patterns. Still other KIs pointed to the importance of strengthening the evidence base to bring visibility to adolescent girls as a basis for policies. *'One of the biggest challenges is in advocacy to increase attention/prioritisation of adolescent issues including in both policies and programmes, as well as in data collection, analysis, information and statistics.'* The importance of this was underscored by the conviction that, *'Investments [in adolescents] are key to breaking the intergenerational transmission of poverty.'*

### 3.1.4 Persistent inequalities

Although Uganda ranked 29th out of 135 countries on the 2011 Global Gender Gap Index, with a score of 0.7220 (1 being the goal), its score on the Gender Inequality Index is high (0.577), placing it at 116th out of 146 countries. Uganda's SIGI rating has been persistently low, estimated at 0.383802 (2012)<sup>2</sup> up from 0.187178 (2009).

Recently analysed survey data on adolescents aged 10-19 year, who make up over half (56.1%) of the population in Uganda (Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBoS) 2012), provides a more precise picture of gender vulnerabilities for this age group (see Box 1).

#### **Box 1: A statistical profile of adolescents in Uganda, with details on study district regions**

Recent survey data on adolescents aged 10-19 years in Uganda highlight a number of key vulnerabilities for both older and younger adolescents, for girls in particular, and for specific regions of the country, including the two study site regions: East Central region (Mayuge) and Central I region (Sembabule).

Overall, 38.5% of adolescents in Uganda (43.3% in rural areas) live in households in the two poorest quintiles. Nearly a third (31%) of adolescents are living in poverty in East Central region and 15.8% in Central I region. Nearly a fifth (19.2%) of all adolescents in Uganda live in households where the head of household has no education (21.4% in East Central region, 17.3% in Central I region) and a fifth (19.4%) are also living in households without either parent (24.1% in East Central region and a staggering 37.9% in Central I, the highest level of all regions in Uganda).

While around 95% of both boys and girls aged 10-14 years in Uganda report attending school at some time during the current school year, this drops to just 58.2% of girls aged 15-19, compared with 72.6% of boys in the same age group. In the poorest quintile, some 70.8% of girls aged 10-14 years and 64.5% aged 15-19 have never been to school. Around a third of girls aged 15-19 years in the two regions (35.7% in East Central, 33.3% in Central I) have been to school but are not currently attending.

Across Uganda, a fifth (20.5%) of the minority of girls aged 15-19 years who are attending school combine work with school (compared with 47.7% of boys attending school), and over a quarter of girls in this age group (26.9%) engage in work only (compared with 27.7% of boys). In East Central region, 22.5% of girls and 51.1% of boys aged 15-19 years combine school and work while 24% of girls and 19.3% of boys engage in work only. In Central I region, 5.5% of girls and 46.6% of boys combine school and work, while 18% of girls and 46.3% of boys engage in work only.

Around 44.4% of girls and 34.9% of boys aged 15-19 years in Uganda have already had sexual relations. In East Central region, 50.1% of all adolescents aged 15-19 years have had sexual relations, 18% of which is classified as high risk. In Central I region, these figures are 45.5% and 16.2%, respectively. Adolescents with no education (56%) are more likely to have had sex and to engage in high-risk sex (16.6%). Among adolescents aged 15-19 years who have ever had sex, half of the boys (50.4%) reported using a condom at last sex compared with just 27.5% of the girls. Condom use rises by wealth quintile and education.

Some 40% of women aged 20-24 years in Uganda were married by age 18 and 10% by age 15. Rates of child marriage are particularly high in East Central region: around 88% of adolescents aged 10-14 and 15-18 years live in communities where women aged 20-49 were married by age 15 and 18. In Central I region, two-thirds of adolescents aged 10-14 years (67.5%) and half of adolescents aged 15-19 live in communities where women aged 20-49 were married by age 15 and 18. Of the girls themselves, over a fifth (22.2%) of girls aged 15-19 years were either married or had been married (24.6% in East Central region and 14.3% in Central I region). Some 17.4% of adolescent girls aged 15-19 years in Uganda have given birth, rising to 28.2% of girls with no education; regional rates are 23.5% in East Central region and 15.4% in Central I region.

In a new adolescent girls' index being developed by the Population Council and other partners, Uganda falls in the middle of cross-national rankings in East Africa on multidimensional adolescent vulnerability. Girls aged 10-19 years in Uganda are found to have:

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<sup>2</sup> <http://genderindex.org/country/uganda>

- Higher than average vulnerability at the individual level (based on indicators related to education, marriage, pregnancy, engagement in high-risk sex and living with parents or not);
- Higher than average vulnerability at the community level (based on indicators of early marriage and illiteracy for women aged 20-49 years, which are seen to reflect a 'negative social climate for tomorrow's adults');
- Lower than average ranking at the household level (based on indicators of household access to water and sanitation and education of household head).

According to these measures, multi-level vulnerability among adolescent girls aged 10-19 years was 20.6% in East Central region and 23.1% in Central I region. In both regions, multi-level vulnerability was slightly higher among girls aged 10-14 years than among girls aged 15-19.

Source: Population Council (2012); statistical data from latest Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) and Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS).

## 3.2 Key capability domains and vulnerabilities for adolescent girls

### 3.2.1 Household and family domain

Marriage in Uganda is one of the key social institutions that defines one's status in society, and it is defined by patriarchal norms (Otiso, 2006). Marriage and family relations thus remain mired in discriminatory practices guided by out-dated laws that are not consistent with constitutional provisions.<sup>3</sup> Within the household space created through marriage and kin relations, girls and young women continue to experience oppression and discrimination (FOWODE, 2010). As one of our KIs noted, *'It is not about understanding the girls themselves, but understanding the context in which they live, because social norms guide the socialisation process. Within the first seven years of life, girls are already indoctrinated into the idea of being subject to men. This starts in the household and is reinforced in the community.'*

According to a number of studies conducted across the country, patriarchal patterns of behaviour undermine the dignity of women and girls through practices such as the payment of bride price, child/early/forced marriages, polygamy and widow inheritance (FIDH and FHRI, 2012; FOWODE, 2010; Nordic Consulting Group, 2008; Otiso, 2006; UNFPA and MoGLSD, 2009). Such practices undermine the dignity, freedom of choice and agency of adolescent girls and young women, and inhibit their capabilities. The bride price system, characterised by one of our KI as *'selling girls for profit'* is seen to be particularly harmful to adolescent girls' capability development – leading parents to withdraw their daughters from school in favour of early marriages as a conduit for gaining wealth. The practice persists in spite of bylaws against it, and contributes to a type of commoditisation of girls and denial of rights. As a local man put it to one of our KIs, *'How can a bull in my kraal claim to have rights?'*

In patriarchal societies such as those most common in Uganda, son bias is common, as male children are valued for the continuation of family lineage and support in old age, because girls join other families on marriage (Otiso, 2006). This contributes to inheritance patterns favouring males. Clan 'totems', which embody common sayings or expressions of a clan's identity, are rife with discrimination against women and girls. Household decision making is also largely the prerogative of males, as decision making overall is generally a male domain across Ugandan society (ibid.). This extends to men having control over income earned by women from their own enterprises or labour, limiting women's asset accumulation which is particularly problematic as women can rarely own land in their own right and cannot generally access credit without their husband's (or father's) permission.

Distinct gender roles define patterns of behaviour within households, and sociocultural stereotypes about the division of labour abound, in spite of massive gender awareness efforts by various stakeholders. Several studies highlight the unequal gender division of labour within the household, where girls and women take on the bulk of domestic work while men are considered the breadwinners, owners of resources and providers of shelter (Blackden, 2004; Nordic Consulting Group, 2008; Otiso, 2006). Consequently, women suffer time poverty that limits their mobility and engagement in productive activities outside the home, and they have little leisure (Otiso, 2006).

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<sup>3</sup> Marriage Act CAP 251 (1904); Customary Marriage Act CAP 248 (1973); Divorce Act CAP 249 (1904); Marriage and Divorce of Mohammedans Act (1906); Marriage of Africans Act (1904); Hindu Marriage and Divorce Act (1961); and Succession Act CAP 162 (1906).

### 3.2.2 Education domain

With the introduction of Universal Primary Education (UPE) in 1997 providing for free access to education for all children in government-aided primary schools, enrolment of boys and girls has increased over the years and contributed to closing the gender gap. Enrolment of girls and boys is currently estimated at 50.1% and 49.9%, respectively (UBoS, 2012). The gender disparities are, however, more visible at post-primary level. At secondary level, the data show that, in spite of the introduction in 2007 of Universal Secondary Education (USE), which grants every child who passes primary leaving examinations (PLEs) with a composite score of 28 or below (4 is the best and 36 is failing) the right to a free secondary education, girls' enrolment (46.6%) remains below that of boys (53.4%) (ibid.). The government and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) have instituted a number of non-formal school programmes to cater to the needs of children who have missed out on formal education.<sup>4</sup> According to the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES, 2009), over half the students in these programmes are females (54.6%), although a significant proportion drops out before completing the cycle.

The literacy rate for persons aged 10 years and above has been estimated at above 70%, with women's literacy (66%) well below men's (79%) (UBoS, 2010). This brings to the fore the persistent gender disparities in education despite the policies in place. Such disparities are attributed to sociocultural attitudes and practices that privilege male children's education over that of female children, thus leading to low parental investment in girls' education (FOWODE, 2011; Kakuru-Muhwezi, 2006; Kwesiga, 2002; Nordic Consulting Group, 2008; Perezniето et al., 2011; Tumushabe et al., 2000). Other constraints include the discriminatory gender division of labour in the household (Blackden, 2004; Huntington, 2008; Jjuko and Kabonesa, 2007; Kakuru-Muhwezi, 2006; Perezniето et al., 2011); lack of learned professional women as role models (FIDH and FHRI, 2012; Kwesiga, 2002; Tumushabe et al., 2000); late age of entry into school combined with practices of early marriage (Grogan, 2008; Tumushabe et al., 2000); pregnancy as a key cause of dropout (FIDH and FHRI, 2012; Muhanguzi et al., 2011); family instability (Atekyereza, 2001; MoES, 1998); and restricted movement of girls and women (UNFPA and MoGLSD, 2009b). While societal attitudes towards girls' education and women's status in general are reported to be changing positively (Nordic Consulting Group, 2008), the pace is slow.

Other factors that hinder girls' participation in education are associated with the school environment. These include lack of schools (particularly secondary) close to homes and lack of or inadequate educational facilities (FIDH and FHRI, 2012; Huntington, 2008; Nordic Consulting Group, 2008; UNFPA and MoGLSD, 2009b); lack of sanitary facilities – particularly problematic for post-pubescent girls dealing with menstrual hygiene issues (Huntington, 2008; Perezniето et al., 2011); sexual harassment and abuse from male students and teachers and from others on the way to school when long distances must be travelled (ACFODE, 2009; Jjuko and Kabonesa, 2007; Jones and Norton, 2007; Kakuru-Muhwezi, 2006; Mirembe and Davies, 2001; Muhanguzi, 2011; Muhanguzi, et al., 2011; Ndyanabangi et al., 2003; Perezniето, et al., 2011); and negative gender stereotyping in the curriculum, instructional materials and teaching/learning methodology, including negative/biased teacher attitudes towards girls, inadequate career guidance and corporal punishment (Kwesiga, 2002; Tumushabe et al., 2000).

Financial and material resource constraints linked to poverty at the household level limit girls' education capabilities through limited access to scholastic materials and other essentials such as school lunches, uniforms and sanitary supplies. Resource constraints also influence parental choice on who should go to school and the age at which children, especially girls, begin schooling (Atekyereza, 2001; Grogan, 2008; Kakuru-Muhwezi, 2006; Tumushabe et al., 2000). In cases of resource scarcity, the boy child is given priority and the girl is either married off or remains at home (Kakuru-Muhwezi, 2006; Perezniето et al., 2011; Tumushabe et al., 2000). Some girls who are sent to school without adequate resources are reported to engage in risky sexual relationships with teachers and 'sugar daddies' in exchange for basic necessities (Huntington, 2008; Jones and Norton, 2007; Kakuru-Muhwezi, 2006). The quality of some UPE schools is so poor that many parents will try to afford to send their children to fee-paying schools; this is less likely for girls. Studies further highlight inadequate enforcement of education laws and ineffective implementation of policies (Ahikire and Madanda, 2011; Jjuko and Kabonesa, 2007); inadequate allocation of resources to girls' education

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<sup>4</sup> These include Complementary Opportunity for Primary Education (COPE), Alternative Basic Education for Karamoja (ABEK), Basic Education for Urban Poverty Areas (BEUPA) and Child-centred Alternative, Non-Formal Community-based Education (CHANCE).

initiatives (Kwesiga, 2002); and insufficient focus on the social and cultural obstacles to gender equality in education.

## Box 2: From policies to practice - challenges in girls' education

An official at MoES noted that there were numerous gender in education policies, programmes and initiatives and a multi-sectoral task force to 'engender education processes', emphasising that, 'The Ministry is actually one of the key ministries that has translated the National Gender Policy into our own specific education gender policies.' However, the communication of these policies to sub-national levels and their translation into action remains a key challenge, especially in the decentralised structures of Uganda, where local governments are responsible for implementing national policies. 'So, yes, we will have the policies,' she says, 'but the practice is another issue.'

Part of the reason is lack of funding: 'Gender has remained off budget. It is not within the mainstream budget of the Ministry, so that means we are being supported by different NGOs or different funders and therefore they will go to some specific districts, not every district, and also to specific areas [...] so the implementation is limited to the funds that are available.'

She also noted that, even though the government has policies of free education at both primary (UPE) and secondary (USE) levels, not many parents can afford the additional expenses of sending children to school, including the opportunity costs of forgoing children's work (both at home and in family livelihoods, such as fishing), or additional expenses (such as sanitary hygiene products for girls). Moreover, it is difficult to combat deep-rooted cultural attitudes and practices linked to early marriage, teenage pregnancy and SGBV, which is a big issue in schools.

For her, 'I think the key strategy is working with communities, because that is where the girls come from, this is where the stereotypes are, this is where the attitude towards the education of girls is negative and therefore the Ministry needs to develop a strategy to work directly with communities to ensure that girls actually go to school and stay in school.'

### 3.2.3 Economic domain

Uganda's livelihoods are based largely on the primary production of food and cash crops, livestock and trade. Mixed livelihoods across the country are common, with some communities dependent predominantly on the production of livestock products (milk and meat) supplemented with some food production. Other areas rely mainly on crop production, with some farmers owning a few animals to augment their household income or serve as a fall-back resource (Browne and Glaeser, 2010). Paid labour often entails migrating to a nearby town or further afield, for weeks at a time, to work in better-favoured agricultural areas or in cities (ibid.).

Gross domestic product (GDP) has been rising at a rate of 5.6-7.1% per annum over the past 10 years (UBoS, 2012) with a significant reduction in poverty, from 56.4% (1992/93) to 25% (2009/10). Nevertheless, another 43% of the population is insecure and remains vulnerable to poverty. Poverty has significant regional and sub-regional as well as urban/rural dimensions, and there has been a steady increase in income inequality, from 0.365 (1993) to 0.426 (2010) as measured by the Gini coefficient (MoFPED, 2012).

Among the key assets needed for young girls to attain economic autonomy as young adults is material capital. In this regard, girls need to be seen as future economic actors who are entitled to property, assets and land (Plan International, 2009). Nevertheless, evidence shows that girls' and young women's access to and control over property – especially land – is limited (MoLHUD, 2008). Succession and inheritance law is discriminatory, entitling males to inherit their father's property. Girls' and women's access and user rights to land and property remains largely through their relationship to a male relative (the father in the case of girls and unmarried women, the husband in the case of married women) (ibid.). Operationalisation of the Land Act (1998) Section 39 (the 'consent clause')<sup>5</sup> and 'children's voice' in land transactions is limited. Land grabbing from widows by the husband's family is also problematic. This contravenes traditional customary practice and can lead to serious impoverishment – making early marriage of girls more likely.

Adolescents and young adults face challenges of unemployment, poverty, poor governance issues and limited access to accurate information about essential skills in the labour market (FOWODE, 2010; Nahamya, 2006). Female jobseekers face risks of sexual harassment and abuse (FOWODE,

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<sup>5</sup> Written approval of the spouse/dependent children is required in case of sale, transfer, pledge, mortgage or lease, exchange or other forms of giving away of any land on which the person ordinarily resides with his or her spouse and her dependent children below 18 years (Art. 39)

2010); young married women face challenges relating to unsupportive spouses and/or restrictions on mobility; while high interest rates hinder women's capacity to access loans/credit (particularly when they have no collateral in the form of land or other property) and put financial stress on women's businesses (FIDH and FHRI, 2012; Kyalisiima, 2007). An even larger barrier, perhaps, are the consent policies of banks which commonly require husbands (or fathers if the girl is unmarried) to co-sign any loan applications or to act as guarantor. This effectively prevents women from borrowing as individuals: husband/men rarely agree to sign on behalf of their wives, or if they do, they often require full control over the loan (Kamuhanda, 2010).

KIs who spoke about the issue of economic empowerment noted in particular the lack of technical training institutes and serious career guidance for students who are left without the knowledge and awareness needed to prepare themselves for jobs. One stated that teachers do not see this as their responsibility: *'Teachers [...] do not care [...] They think they should just pump students with lessons, mark their books and that is it: they don't really encourage children to look into other aspects of life, for example entrepreneurship.'*

While the Ugandan Constitution (1995) prohibits child labour, it is estimated that some 25.4% of children aged 5-17 years are engaged in economic activities (23.7% of girls and 26.9% of boys). While more boys than girls in all age groups are seen to be engaged in economic activities, girls often combine domestic chores as well. With the HIV and AIDS epidemic, girls have been reported as taking up a higher burden of care, both household services and work outside the home to meet additional expenses in case of parental illness or death (MoGLSD, 2012). Girls also make up the bulk of child domestic workers, a common practice in Uganda that exposes them to different forms of abuse and exploitation and deprives them of their right to education (ibid.).

### 3.2.4 Physical domain

#### Physical safety and bodily integrity

There are a number of interventions to promote the physical safety of girls and young women in Uganda; nevertheless, SGBV remains a major issue of concern. It is manifested in various forms, including battering, sexual abuse and harassment, rape, abduction, trafficking, forced prostitution and harmful cultural traditional practices, namely, female genital mutilation (FGM), marriage by abduction and pervasive practices of early marriage (FIDH and FHRI, 2012; MoGLSD, 2011; UBoS, 2010). SGBV is estimated to be higher among female adolescents (39%) than male adolescents (11%), and it is estimated that nearly half (49%) of primary school girls and 15% of schoolboys have been sexually abused (Republic of Uganda, 2011). Problems of sexual harassment and violence in schools are particularly serious: one KI reported that secondary school girls identify this as one of their biggest problems: *'Teachers tell the students, "Well, you are not passing, but we will help you with some private coaching."*

Studies attribute high prevalence of SGBV among adolescent girls to the dominant patriarchal thinking that privileges male sexuality while suppressing and/or controlling female sexuality (ACFODE, 2009; Muhanguzi, 2011; Muhanguzi et al., 2011). This may be aggravated by Uganda's history of conflict, as high levels of SGBV are also characteristic of other post-conflict environments. One KI noted that 'defilement' (the local term for sexual abuse) has become a critical problem, running unchecked, because *'The social structure, the people who would have particularly played the most significant role to promote the social safeguards are increasingly becoming fewer, are increasingly becoming powerless.'* This suggests that socio-cultural norms which used to control such actions have become weakened or have collapsed - due in part to conflict but also to rapid social changes diminishing social cohesion. Most cases go unreported, and instead are settled out of court for a minimal fine paid to the family of the victims (ACFODE, 2009; HURINET, 2009). Silence about such experiences is attributed to fear that the stigma will interfere with possibilities for marriage; poverty and inability to cope with the bureaucratic procedures of seeking justice are also key factors (ACFODE, 2009; UNFPA and MoGLSD, 2009).

While positive steps have been taken to address violence against girls and women through legislation such as the FGM Act, the Domestic Violence Act and the Penal Code, there is a lack of effective measures to implement the laws and – particularly – to address constraints associated with limited access to justice, with an insufficient allocation of funding to the justice sector (FIDH and FHRI, 2012).

## Sexual and reproductive health

Rapid population growth averaging 3.2 per year (UBoS, 2012) is attributed to the persistently high fertility rate in Uganda, with overall fertility estimated at 6.2 and a high age-specific fertility rate (ASFR) among girls and young women (15-24 years) (UBoS, 2011a). In the context of poor health service delivery systems, adolescent girls and young women face significant sexual and reproductive health risks. *The State of Uganda's Population* (Republic of Uganda, 2011) estimates that between 6,000 and 14,000 women and girls die each year as a result of pregnancy-related complications, while 130,000-405,000 women and girls suffer from disabilities caused by pregnancy and childbirth. Maternal mortality has been persistently high and is on the increase, with current estimates of 438/100,000 (2010/11) (UBoS, 2011a). A high proportion of girls and women deliver without skilled assistance. Nearly a fifth (18%) of deaths of girls aged 15-19 years are related to maternal causes, as are nearly a quarter (23%) of deaths of women aged 20-24 years (UBoS, 2011a). In 2008, 44% of the country's maternal deaths occurred among girls and women in the 15-24-year age group (Republic of Uganda, 2008b). Over a third (34%) of girls under the age of 20 years and 42% of women aged 20-34 deliver at home with no skilled attendant (UBoS, 2011a).

Uganda has high levels of early and unsafe sexual activity among adolescents, which often starts in the early teenage years (Neema et al., 2006; WHO, 1998). The median age at first sexual intercourse is lower among women (16.8 years) than men (18.6 years) (UBoS, 2011a). A tenth of young girls aged 12-19 years are currently in union, with the proportion doubling to nearly a fifth (19%) of girls aged 15-19, 13% of whom have already had a child. Another 10% of the 12-19 year olds are not in union and but have already had a child (Neema et al., 2006).

While the minimum legal age for marriage in Uganda is 18 years, 15% of girls are married by age 15, and 49% by age 18: the median age at first marriage is 17.9 years (UBoS, 2011a). High rates of early marriage in Uganda are accompanied by high levels of intergenerational sex (Myers and Harvey, 2011). Early sexual activity and pregnancy heighten vulnerability to the consequences of unsafe abortion. Teenage pregnancy remains persistently high, at around 24% (UBoS, 2011a). More than a third (39%) of women aged 20-49 years give birth by age 18, and more than half (63%) have had their first birth by age 20. The median age at first birth is estimated at 18.9 years, varying by region and by urban/rural locality. Unmarried adolescent mothers often experience stigma, shame, rejection and exclusion in their community in the process of reintegration, and can become destitute (Murungi, 2011).

HIV infection is a significant threat for women and girls. HIV prevalence is higher for women (7.7%) than for men (5.6%), with adolescent girls (15-19 years) and young women (20-24 years) three times more likely to be infected than boys (MoH and ORC Macro, 2006; UAC and National Youth Council, 2007). HIV prevalence has been found to be highest among young people engaged in long-term sexual relationships (UAC and National Youth Council, 2007). Prevalence rates among adolescents are attributed to low condom use (55% for male adolescents; 38% for female adolescents); limited access to sexual and reproductive health information leading to a lack of comprehensive knowledge about HIV and AIDS; early sexual debut and early marriage (Kyomuhendo, 2010; Muhanguzi and Ninsiima, 2011; Neema et al., 2007; Republic of Uganda, 2011; UAC and National Youth Council, 2007). An unequal balance of power in relationships makes it difficult to negotiate safe sexual relations, thus rendering girls and young women more vulnerable (FOWODE, 2010; MoH and ORC Macro, 2006; Muhanguzi, 2011). It is also widely accepted socially the men will have more than one partner.

### Box 3: Upstream and downstream challenges in adolescent sexual and reproductive health programmes

KIs at national level identified a number of challenges at both 'upstream' policy level and 'downstream' service supply and delivery level, with negative consequences for adolescent girls' physical wellbeing.

Among the upstream challenges, *'Adolescent and reproductive health falls across several ministries, so it becomes difficult to see who has the most responsibility.'* For reproductive education in school health programmes, for example, who takes responsibility, and what should be done about out-of-school children?

Among the downstream challenges, *'Coverage is a real issue in terms of capacity. For example, sex education is very important, but who should talk about sex education to the girls? Is it the teachers, is it the nurses? Is it the parents? It becomes an issue.'* With responsibility for transmitting needed reproductive and health information falling between the cracks, young people are left in significant ignorance: *'Even girls at the university do not know you can have sex without getting pregnant.'*

Lack of capacity and specialised training on adolescent health issues is a key concern: *'We don't have the category of the "child mother" in the health sector. So we tend to treat them like women. And that is not correct [...] Even nurses who work in school dispensaries don't know anything about handling young people, let alone the girls [...] We attempted a strategy on adolescent-friendly reproductive services, but implementation is almost zero because of lack of capacity.'*

Health agents feel powerless to combat teenage pregnancies: *'You can't say, "Don't get pregnant because below 18 you shouldn't deliver." People will just laugh at you [...] It is we are talking theory, while they are doing "practicals."*

The consequences for adolescent girls' capability development are clear: *'The moment a girl becomes pregnant [...] 90% of the time their lives are turned upside down, because for the majority that is where the education ends. That is where dependence starts. That is where the capacity to make money becomes severely affected. Human capabilities? The chances of developing those become endangered.'*

Failure on the part of health service providers to understand community norms and values around sexual and reproductive health can also be an impediment to appropriate health care provision and uptake of services. One KI noted that some women's failure to give birth in health facilities was rooted in a desire to *'protect the placenta'*, which, according to certain local value systems, should be buried near the homestead instead of being discarded, as is common health centre practice.

### 3.2.5 Political and civic domain

#### Participation in politics and civic activities

Women's political participation has increased since the institution of the national affirmative action policy in 1993, with representation in parliament rising from 18% in 1993 to 35% in 2011 (EASSI, 2005; UNDP, 2011). A fifth of cabinet positions and a third (32%) of parliamentary committee chairs are filled by women. As one of our KIs noted, however, *'Women's participation in politics does not automatically translate into women's empowerment [...] [Moreover,] girls' civic awareness is quite low.'* One KI pointed to the discouraging effect of media representations of successful women – especially those who enter politics – as those who have sacrificed family to career. *'Negative media presentations about women politicians do not support building the girls' and young women's political capability.'*

Government has made deliberate efforts to encourage young people's engagement in public decision-making, with five youth representatives in Parliament and two councillors – one male and one female – to represent youth at all local government levels of political representation (Local Government Act 1997). In the Ninth Parliament (2011), youth constitute 1.3% (five youth – three male and two female – out of a total of 375 members). Innovative technologies such as U-report – an SMS-based communication platform and social monitoring tool supported by the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) – also engage with young people and give them a voice, with over 165,000 young people already registered (KI, Kampala); participation, of course, depends on access to these new information and communication technologies (ICT).

A situation analysis of challenges facing youth in major life transitions in 12 districts found that young people felt frustrated by gender-based discrimination, nepotism and other forms of corruption when they strive to participate in political processes (International Youth Foundation, 2011). Limited participation of girls and young women in politics and civic activities is attributed to restrictive cultural norms, gender discrimination, illiteracy and confinement to the home.

#### Limited access to justice

While the government of Uganda commits to ensuring access to justice to all its citizens and has made improvements in increasing such access, many challenges remain, especially in addressing injustices against girls and women. The challenges relate to gender-biased laws; time poverty owing to multiple gender roles and lack of resources; gender biases and stereotypes among the justice officials that invariably discriminate against and marginalise women; delayed delivery of justice; a malfunctioning commercial justice system; long distances to legal institutions; male-dominated dispute resolution mechanisms in the private sphere that uphold patriarchal values to the detriment of women; and marginal representation of women in community-based dispute resolution fora (local council courts, clan structures) (Nordic Consulting Group, 2008).

Other constraints include widespread corruption within the justice sector, including local council courts; male dominance of senior positions within the justice sector; cultural values related to women's perceived low status, particularly in family and succession matters; harassment and intimidation (Nordic Consulting Group, 2008); and limited access to justice, characterised by lack of medical services to give medical evidence and of legal service providers (HURINET, 2009).

## 4 Field study design and setting

### 4.1 Study aims and processes

The field study was designed to elicit information, insights and perspectives on the situation of adolescent girls in two selected study sites and to identify particular vulnerabilities as well as some of the underlying norms, attitudes and practices that either perpetuate these vulnerabilities or offer opportunities for the development of capabilities. The study aimed to capture local understandings and experiences of gendered adolescence, unpack impact pathways and explore changes/transitions over the life-course.

The study was exploratory in nature and primarily qualitative in approach. While findings from an initial broad national literature review were drawn into the analysis, and the views of key stakeholders at both national and sub national levels were drawn in, fieldwork was restricted to a very small sample in two parishes of just two districts of the country. Findings are therefore not meant to be representative of adolescent girls in Uganda as a whole, but rather to contribute to a nuanced understanding of adolescents' experiences and suggest new ways of looking at factors contributing to or inhibiting girls' capabilities in particular settings. Participatory research methods were employed both to encourage adolescent girls and boys to express their views and to allow triangulation among a variety of perspectives.

Study processes began in October 2012 and included a partners' meeting of country teams; a review of relevant literature; capacity development of national researchers in participatory research methods; pilot testing and adaptation of research tools; a national stakeholder workshop to outline the purpose and contours of the study and elicit perspectives on key research priorities; fieldwork (nine days at each study site in January 2013); and data analysis and reporting.

The research team was composed of two senior researchers (Professor Grace Bantebya Kyomuhendo and Dr Florence Muhanguzi of Makerere University, Kampala) and three research assistants: Ruth Nsibirano, Peace Musiimenta (staff of the School of Women and Gender Studies, Makerere University) and Juliet Kushaba (graduate of the Masters in Women and Gender Studies programme, Makerere University). International support was provided by Dr Carol Watson, ODI consultant.

### 4.2 Methodology

The study employed a variety of qualitative and participatory research tools, as Table 2 shows. The appendices provide detailed tools and the breakdown of respondents by category.

**Table 2: Data collection tools and techniques**

Tool	Purpose	Type of respondent
<b>Key informant interviews (KIIs)</b> <i>(10 at national level; 11 at district level)</i>	To learn about contextual factors contributing to adolescent girls' status, opportunities, challenges and changes over time	Key national and district/sub-district government officials, government and NGO service providers, community leaders and development partners
<b>Focus group discussions (FGDs)</b> <i>(10)</i>	To explore general community-level definitions, views and experiences of gendered adolescence; to identify areas of consensus and debate	Adolescent girls and boys and family members
<b>In-depth individual interviews (IDI)</b>	To understand individual experiences of adolescence and its gendered	Adolescent girls and boys (in and out of school);

(37)	dimensions	married/unmarried)
<b>Intra-household case studies</b> (8)	To explore intra-household dynamics <i>vis-à-vis</i> adolescent girls by triangulating views of adults and children; and by gender	Selected households with adolescents
<b>Life histories and generational pairings</b> (7)	To explore key moments in girls' lives present and past; generational differences in adolescent experiences; could include examples of positive deviance	Selected from the above
<b>Body map</b> (2)	To explore experiences, perceptions and feelings about boys' and girls' capabilities	Adolescent girls aged 11-14 years
<b>Household/family drawing, time use charts and institutional mapping</b> (7, including in case studies)	To visualise relationships, processes, interactions and support systems	Respondents of IDIs and intra-household case studies
<b>Observations</b>	To capture behaviours and physical household conditions/disposition	Conducted primarily in the intra-household setting

At the field level, purposive sampling was used to select the adolescent girls and boys for interviews and discussions at each study site, assisted by district and local leaders. Selection of adolescent girls and boys was based on age groups (ages 10-14 and 15 -18); school status (enrolled/not enrolled); poverty status (those known to be living in households under the poverty line); family structure (a mixture of polygamous/monogamous families, and families with three generations represented - grandmother, mother and daughter). During FGDs, the snowball technique was used to select respondents for the intra-household case studies, life histories and intergenerational pairings.

The collected data from the interviews and FGDs were audio-recorded (with consent from the participants), and translated and transcribed from the local languages into English. Narrative reports were written and subjected to content and thematic analysis. Triangulation was used to classify common themes. Common and unique experiences among respondents were identified and interpreted. Our analyses also drew on information derived from district documents.

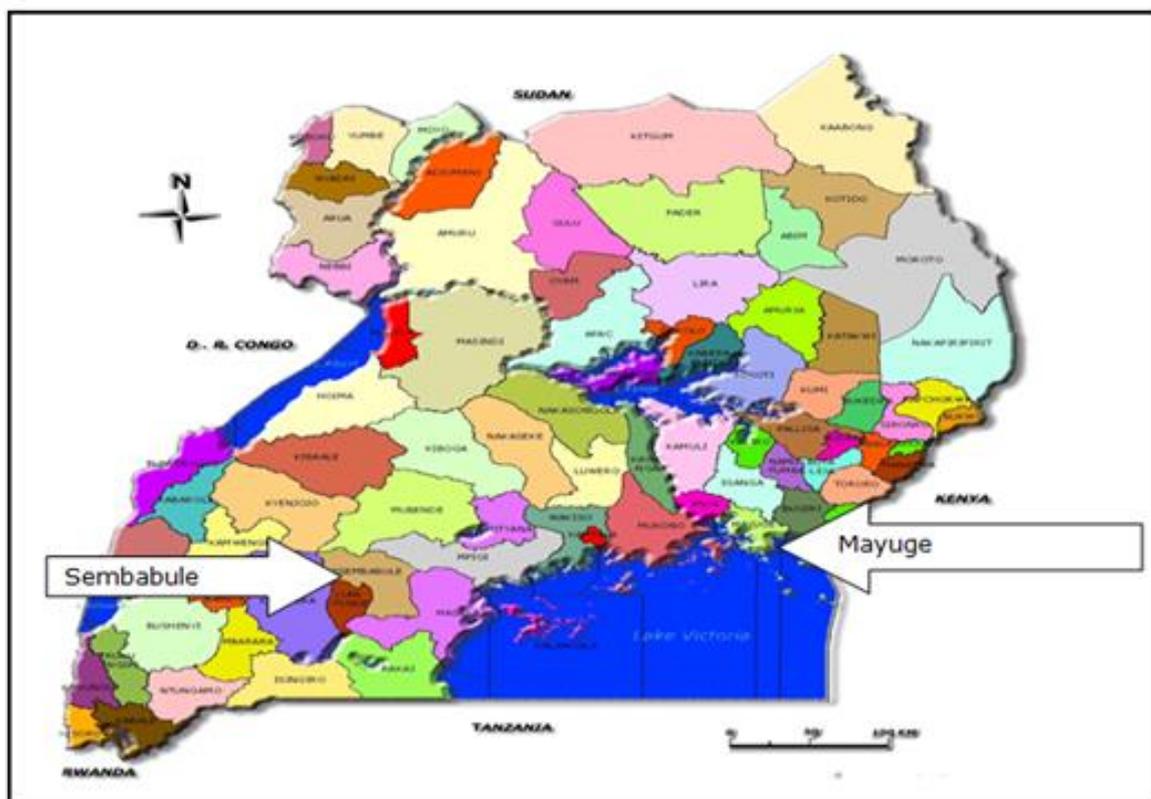
Both the nature of topics covered by the study and the focus on adolescent girls called for close attention to ethical procedures. In conformity with national and international ethical standards for research, the basic ethical framework built on principles of respect for the rights and needs of children and 'doing no harm'. Key ethical considerations included measures to enhance participation and inclusion of excluded groups in the research, ensure informed consent, protect children and ensure confidentiality and anonymity. The team followed national guidelines in all respects. All names in the examples cited in the report have been changed to protect the identity of respondents.

### 4.3 Site selection and district settings

The study was conducted in the districts of Mayuge (East Central region) and Sembabule (Central I region) (see Figure 2), focusing on two parishes from one sub-county of each district. In Mayuge, this was Bukabooli sub-county, Matovu and Bugumya parishes; in Sembabule, it was Lwemiyaga sub-county, Tangiriza and Rwemibu parishes.

The districts were purposively selected from an established list of 'hard-to-reach' districts in Uganda, which are characterised by remoteness, relatively high poverty rates (21.4% in East Central region and 11.2% in Central I region) and limited social infrastructure. Other criteria included poor socio-demographic indicators (including high fertility and teenage pregnancy and high rates of reported gender-based violence). Specific sub-counties and parishes were selected in consultation with district officials on preliminary site visits used to outline the study purposes, followed by further consultations at sub-county level.

Figure 2: Map of study districts



The two districts present different livelihood profiles and are made up of a mix of different ethnic groups and religions. The population of Mayuge is engaged primarily in agriculture and fishing; the population of Sembabule combines pastoralism and agriculture. District-level research was conducted by the research team in the dominant local languages of the study sites: Lusoga in Mayuge and Luganda and Runyakole in Sembabule, with some further interpretation used with a local interpreter particularly in Sembabule, for interviews with younger girls. At the national level, English was used.

#### 4.3.1 Mayuge district

Mayuge is in the East Central region of Uganda – a well-watered area bordering Lake Victoria to the south. Its population is projected at over 400,000 (2012), of whom 58.9% are below the age of 18 years. Over half (51.2%) of the population is female (although men predominate in the southern islands) and the total fertility rate is 7.02. Population density is 317 persons/km<sup>2</sup>, with reported high immigration into the district in recent years, especially to Mayuge Town and to forested areas where development potential is high. Immigration is also fuelled by the return of inhabitants who had previously fled tsetse fly infestation (Mayuge District Local Government, 2011; 2012). Mayuge is an ethnically diverse region, with Basoga the predominant group. Common languages include Lusoga, Luganda, Swahili and some English. According to 2002 district census figures, Muslims make up about 36% of the population and Christians of the Anglican and Catholic faith 33% and 23%, respectively, with 4% Pentecostals and other smaller denominations (UBoS, 2011b).



Typical homestead in Mayuge, Matovu parish

The population is largely rural (95.5%), and dependent primarily on subsistence farming, with an emphasis on food crops such as millet, sweet potato, beans, *simsim* (sesame) and sunflower. Cash crops of coffee and cotton are also grown, and sugarcane has recently been introduced, leading to the development of seven sugar factories. Child labour is reported to be on the increase because of

the demands of the lucrative sugarcane industry and fisheries. About 91% of women are involved in agriculture, compared with 72.4% of men; however, women's access to extension services is limited. This is attributed to women's work burden of home care, men's control over women's mobility to attend extension service training and women's limited access to information on training programmes.

While women and children do the cultivation and harvesting, men sell the produce and decide how the proceeds will be used. Fishing is another important means of livelihood for coastal populations (Lake Victoria and rivers), with over 56 landing sites producing over 4,000 tonnes of fish, both for export and for domestic consumption. Women and girls perform most of the household chores (Mayuge District Local Government, 2011; 2012; UBoS, 2011b).

**Table 3: Household division of labour in Mayuge district**

Men	Women	Girls	Boys
Building	Cooking	Going to school	Going to school
Trading	Looking after young ones	Fetching water	Grazing
<i>Bodaboda</i> (motorcycle/ bicycle taxis)	Fetching water	Handicrafts	Fetching water
Carpentry	Farming	Washing clothes	Farming
Grinding	Small businesses	Collecting firewood	<i>Bodaboda</i>
Grazing/livestock	Helping pupils with their homework	Farming	Building
Farming	Washing clothes	Other household chores	Fishing
Operating taxis	Collecting firewood		Making bricks
Fishing			
Stone quarrying			
Handicrafts			
Burning charcoal			
Making bricks			

Source: Mayuge District Local Government (2011).

The civil service sector is a largely male domain, with women making up just 28.4% of district staff and 13.6% at the sub-county level, clustered mostly in health and education. Private sector employment is also largely male. According to a 2002 district business census, men owned 85% of businesses, and women only 15%. Men also own most of the land, as a result of customary inheritance practices: women's user rights depend on consultation with men. While women own small property like chicken, goats and pigs, men own cattle, bicycles, motorcycles, houses and land (Mayuge District Local Government, 2011; 2012).

District-level poverty rates are not available. According to 2002 district census results,

- In the rural areas of Mayuge, only 27% of people have at least one pair of shoes and 28% of children have a blanket; 52% take sugar every day; and 64% have two sets of clothes.
- The majority (93%) of rural households use paraffin (or *tadoba*) as the main source of lighting; 87.4% use firewood for cooking and 11% use charcoal: the lack of affordable alternatives has paved the way for the destruction of more than 80% of the district's tree cover.
- Three-quarters of the population (76%) live in their own houses, the majority roofed with iron sheets, grass, tiles or sugarcane leaves; 14.2% of the population live in huts.
- The most common means of transportation, other than walking, is bicycle (43% of male- and 19% of female-headed households), but over half (51.1%) of households have no means of transportation.
- Word of mouth and radio are the main means of communication, particularly in rural areas, with word of mouth particularly dominant among women (Mayuge District Local Government, 2011; 2012; UBoS, 2011b).

District literacy rates are relatively low at 63% (2002), and the ratio of literate women to men aged 15-24 years is estimated at 1:2. However, school enrolment has improved significantly with the introduction of UPE and USE. On average, each parish has two government-aided primary schools and each sub-county has a government-aided secondary school. Total enrolment at primary level is estimated to be 119,808, with more females than males in both higher and lower primary. This is attributed to high dropout rates for boys, who then engage in fishing and other income-generating activities. Only 44% of pupils sit for exams in the first term; more males than females repeat classes.

School infrastructure and learning environments are poor: the pupil/classroom ratio is 114:1 and the pupil/latrine stance ratio 65:1, the pupil/library ratio is 3,994:1 and teaching learning materials are insufficient, with school feeding rare (Mayuge District Local Government, 2011; 2012; UBoS, 2011b).<sup>6</sup>

The district health department reports life expectancy at birth of 47 (2009/10); other district sources place it at 52. Malaria is one of the most commonly reported illnesses. Immunisation reaches 78% of children and only 45% of the population has access to safe water sources. The population/doctor ratio is extremely high at 54,112/1; and there is only one midwife and one traditional birth attendant, respectively, for every 4,731 and 974 women of reproductive age.

Only 27% of deliveries occur in district health facilities. Access to family planning is a major challenge in the district owing to a shortage of skilled technical staff and poor quality of services, which, combined with traditional attitudes and women's fear of men's disapproval, limit service uptake. Contraceptive prevalence is 15% and teenage pregnancy is common. HIV and AIDS are also a major health issue in the district (prevalence rates are not available): Health Management Information System (HMIS) statistics for 2009 show that of 11,244 pregnant women tested in 2008/9; 533 (4.7%) were positive.

Risk factors for HIV and sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) include multiple partner sex (including polygamous marriage, early marriage, separation and remarriage); prostitution at fish landing sites; low literacy levels limiting access to information; low condom utilisation; lack of child protection leading to defilement; substance abuse (marijuana, alcohol, fuel); and cultural practices including widow inheritance and other ritual celebrations (Mayuge District Local Government, 2011; 2012; UBoS, 2011b).

#### 4.3.2 Sembabule district

Sembabule is located in Central I region of Uganda, with a population of 180,045 (2002), over half of whom (57.1%) are below the age of 18. Children of school age represent 22% of the population. Population density is 78.9 per km<sup>2</sup>; the total fertility rate is 6.9; and the mean household size is 4.6. The region is semi-arid, with much of it covered by dryland savannah characteristic of much the 'cattle corridor'.



Landscape in Sembabule

The vast majority of the population is rural, engaged in peasant agriculture – coffee, bananas, maize, millet – and animal husbandry – chiefly cows and goats, but also chickens and pigs – with agro-pastoral activities often pursued in combination. Between 30% and 40% of livestock herders lead a semi-pastoral or transhumant life cycle. Dairy farming is promoted through the development of milk processing units, but the marketing infrastructure is weak. Women have limited control over resources; only 15% of women in Sembabule have land titles, and in pastoral areas men control the proceeds of the sale of milk or cows. Both boys and girls engage in income-generating activities (Sembabule District Local Government, 2011).

The district is ethnically diverse, with the majority made up of Baganda, followed by Banyakole, Bahima and a mix of other Ugandan ethnic groups as well as some from Rwanda. Luganda and Runyankole are the major languages of communication. Catholics make up 45.1% of the population (2002); Anglican/Protestants 30.6%; Muslims 15.2%; and Pentecostals 6.1%. Other smaller denominations comprise the remainder (UBoS, 2005b; 2009b; Sembabule district profile).

Around 34% of the population is considered poor (based on the 2002 population census).

- Over a quarter (27.9%) of dwellings are characterised as semi-permanent and over half (57.7%) as temporary; the majority of the dwellings are made of mud and poles, with iron sheet or thatch for roofs and rammed earth for floors.

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<sup>6</sup> The district supplied no statistics on secondary schools.

- The majority (87.4%) of the population relies on *tadoba* (locally made candles that use kerosene) for lighting and on firewood for cooking (93.5%) and uses open water sources and pit latrines or defecation in the bush.
- Less than half of people live in households where everybody takes sugar at least once a day, every child has a blanket and everybody has at least one pair of shoes.
- Less than 2% of the population in 2002 had a phone, but over half had a radio, which was the main source of information.
- Bicycles are found in male-headed households more commonly than in female-headed households, but the majority of the population lives with no household means of transportation, which is particularly significant in that the majority of the population lives more than 5km from a health centre, between 1km and 4km from a primary school and between 0.5km and 1km from a source of water (2002 census).
- Particular 'poverty pockets' include the sub-county of Lwemiyaga, whose remoteness provides poor access to markets; where arid conditions result in a lack of water and pastures; and where lack of knowledge and persistent outbreaks of livestock diseases contribute to vulnerability (Sembabule District Local Government, 2011; Sembabule district profile; Sub-county Technical Planning Committee, 2011; UBoS, 2005b; 2009b; ).

The district has 187 government and 32 private primary schools, with a 2012 primary school enrolment of 68,430 (6,400 private). The learning environment in government UPE schools is poor and infrastructure weak: the pupil/classroom ratio stands at 96:1 (2012) and the pupil/latrine stance ratio at 50:1. The sector is plagued by poor school completion rates and high absenteeism among pupils (seasonal according to the agro-pastoral calendar, but averaging 30%) and teachers (12%), as well as high teacher turnover. Primary school dropout rates reach 60% overall, in part because both boys and girls engage in income-generating activities. Rates are slightly higher among girls (66%), owing to societal support for early marriage. Hunger also affects children's learning. There are 28 secondary schools (but only two public) and two polytechnics (one public).

Malaria is the most commonly reported illness and the leading cause of morbidity and mortality among children and pregnant mothers. Less than half of the population has access to safe water; there are no hospitals in the district; and in 2009 there were only three doctors, two of whom were private (district statistical abstract). Child immunisation coverage hovers around 44% and there is high infant and child mortality. The total fertility rate in the district is high, at 6.7, and less than a third (27%) of women aged 15-49 years use contraceptives. This low level of use is thought to arise mainly from cultural and religious beliefs and preferences for large families as a source of sustenance and a form of social security.

Reproductive health risks loom large in the absence of adequate health infrastructure. Maternal health indicators are very weak: maternal mortality is very high, at 508/100,000 live births; less than a third of women receive appropriate antenatal and postnatal care; and 86% deliver outside of health facilities (less than 5% of all deliveries were attended by a skilled health worker in 2009, according to the district profile). A fifth of all antenatal care patients are teenagers, but only 16.8% of teenage mothers are referred for emergency obstetric care, and 88.8% of them deliver outside of health units. There is a general lack of youth-friendly health services.

HIV and AIDS remain a problem in the district, with an estimated prevalence rate of 8.2% according to 2011 HMIS data. There is relatively low awareness of HIV prevention and continued practice of risky behaviours, particularly among youth (only half of young people report condom use, for example) (USAID, 2012). Women are unable to negotiate safer sex owing to economic dependence and fear of violence; domestic violence may also occur if a woman tests for HIV and her husband finds out. Practices such as widow inheritance continue and contribute to women's risks of HIV (Sembabule District Local Government, 2011; Sub-county Technical Planning Committee, 2011).

#### **Box 4: Health and education services in Lemwiyaga field site sub-country**

Health service infrastructure is extremely weak in Lemwiyaga, with no hospital, only three semi-functioning health centres and no qualified doctors, for a sub-county population of 19,423. This is accompanied by a lack of essential drugs. Family planning is reported at 24%. Reproductive health needs are acute: sub-county maternal mortality is estimated at 506 out of 100,000 (Sub-county Technical Planning Committee, 2011).

There are 23 primary schools in the sub-county (five private) and four secondary schools (three private), with no polytechnics. Schooling is characterised by poor performance in PLEs and high primary dropout rates (20% for

girls; 18% for boys). Qualified teachers are difficult to recruit, because lack of accommodation for civil servants leads to a reluctance to serve in this sub-county. Lwemiyaga sub-county is consequently characterised by low levels of enrolment and completion at primary and secondary levels, despite government and partner interventions. Irregular attendance and high girls' dropout rates in upper primary owe to their assumption of caring and housework duties at home as well as unfavourable school environments for older girls.

The literacy rate for women aged 18 years and above in 2002 was 60.6%, compared with 73% for males. Of the four community development centres in the district as a whole, none is situated in Lwemiyaga (Sembabule District Local Government, 2011; UBoS 2009b; USAID, 2012).

Family conflicts result from unequal sharing of resources. Men resort to violence to enforce 'order', discipline and 'respect' among women and to ensure women perform their traditional roles. Low levels of female literacy result from early dropout from school – often because of early marriage, pregnancy or withdrawal by parents who prefer to educate sons. For this and other reasons, women often have low self-esteem. Domestic violence, linked to age, alcohol and drugs, low levels of education and 'cultural norms', is an increasing problem, leading to family break-up (Sembabule District Local Government, 2011; Sub-county Technical Planning Committee, 2011).

Men predominate in the civil service sector, except in health and community development (Sembabule district profile; UBoS, 2005b; 2009b). Only a third of local councils are constituted of women. Constraints include negative attitudes by husbands who want women to spend their time on productive labour; negative attitudes by the community, who think women cannot make good leaders; and heavy domestic chores and family responsibilities, leading to a sense of powerlessness and social exclusion. District and sub-county recruitment is not gender sensitive; for example, most agricultural extension workers are men.

Women are for the most part left out of village planning meetings. Because they are regarded as men's property, women are at times forbidden from participating in social groups, credit groups or training, depriving them of options to emancipate themselves from poverty. Widows are also often dispossessed of property by in-laws. Lack of ownership rights means limited collateral for loans. There is limited funding for women or youth-specific activities, and widening income disparities between men and women, since women do not benefit from government programmes (National Agricultural Advisory Services – NAADS, the Area-based Agricultural Modernisation Programme – AAMP and the Local Government Development Programme – LGDP). (Sembabule District Local Government, 2011; Sub-county Technical Planning Committee, 2011).

## 5 Key findings from the field research

The research findings are organised according to the key capability domains for adolescent girls that form the focus of our analysis. The field research threw up significant overlaps and inter-linkages, both among the different capability domains themselves (such that factors within education, for example, had strong connections with issues surrounding physical security, household and family expectations, economic opportunities and the like) and in the relation between specific social norms and the different capability domains (such that, for example, social norms surrounding early marriage had significant impacts on multiple domains of capabilities for girls, including education, economic opportunity, physical wellbeing and so on). Moreover, community constructions and definitions of adolescence were found to shape the different entitlements, expectations, vulnerabilities and opportunities of boys and girls in both study sites in a more or less organic manner. In the presentation of the findings below, an attempt is made as far as possible to avoid repetition by maintaining a focus on the major factors intervening in a specific domain and to use cross-referencing to others as relevant. The 'organic' nature of adolescent girls lived experiences, however, is important to bear in mind.

It is also important to recognise how conditions within the environment, such as widespread poverty and poor social infrastructure and service provision, serve to severely constrict opportunities and capability development in all domains and therefore intertwine with social norms, attitudes and practices that limit still further opportunities for adolescent girls. It is sometimes difficult, particularly in a qualitative study such as this one, to disentangle the relative weight of such environmental factors, which are expressions of multidimensional poverty and – in our analytical framework – relate to the 'non-actions' compromising capabilities, impinging on entitlements and compounding exclusion, from

the social norms, attitudes and practices that may do the same. In keeping with our analytical framework, both 'supply-' and 'demand'-side factors study respondents reported are presented as findings, albeit with an attempt to highlight the role of social norms, attitudes and practices therein.

The two study sites differed in – among other things – agro-ecological setting, socioeconomic profile and ethnic composition; nevertheless, many of the findings on adolescent girls were similar, or simply variations on a common theme, with other variations within the multi-cultural study sites often as interesting as those found between the two sites. In the presentation below, therefore, while all findings are identified by district and points of comparison are highlighted when these emerged as important, there is no systematic comparison of district findings *per se*. Such a comparison, it is felt, would need fuller development of long-term ethnographic research methods.

## 5.1 Household and family domain

*'Tell me, what's wrong with being a girl?'*

Our analytical framework posits the household and family as a discrete capability domain; our research findings, however, are that it also serves to structure and/or influence gendered capability development in other domains and, as such, can be seen as foundational for adolescent girls' lived experiences and future expectations. The gender dimensions of early marriage/pregnancy, bride price payments, household division of labour and inheritance practices are seen in later sections of this report to have implications for girls' reproductive health, educational achievement, ability to acquire assets and opportunities to participate in the economic domain. Parental restrictions on girls' mobility (arising out of gendered ideologies of public and private domains and appropriate behaviours ascribed to each) are shown to be one factor among others in limiting girls' opportunities for broader network and civic participation. Tensions and violence within the household are also seen as key sources of stress in the psychosocial domain as well as of physical risk in the physical domain.

In a sense, then, the household and family as a primordial site of socialization processes and transmission of gendered norms from one generation to the next contributes to both the production and reproduction of expectations and behaviour patterns for adolescent girls and, as such, its dominant features and characteristics have relevance for all of the other domains. In this first section, the focus will be primarily on an overall description and analysis of the gendered nature of household living arrangements and structures as well as of the intra-household processes and practices reported from the two study communities. The specific implications of these for realisation of capabilities will be brought out in more detail in the succeeding sections.

### 5.1.1 Household structures and living arrangements

#### Mayuge

A typical family in the study community in Mayuge is polygamous, with a man as the *de facto* household head. There are however variations by age, with polygamy most common among the older age groups. There are usually two or three wives, several children of different ages and extended kith and kin. Altogether there may be 20-30 family members in the household, most of whom are small children. Household members do not all share the same accommodation, hence the existence of several dwelling/residential huts and other structures in the same compound.

The household head does not occupy any one hut but rotates around his wives' huts. The senior wife's hut is often the largest, reflecting not only her seniority but also her enhanced status. Where there is a permanent house, the senior wife often occupies it. Boys aged 10 years and above do not sleep in their mother's hut. They are instead encouraged to build their own hut a distance away from their mother's huts as a mark of their growing maturity. A Kiganda saying, recounted by a 16-year old girl in Mayuge, is that 'a boy who builds his house is not young', meaning he is beginning to take on the attributes of a future household head who will be expected to provide a home for his own family.

When there is a grandmother, she occupies a separate hut together with the adolescent girls. Like boys, adolescent girls do not share accommodation with their parents. In some homesteads, adolescent girls were



**Polygamous household, Mayuge**

encountered occupying a single hut conveniently located between their parents' huts. It was pointed out that this hut was meant as a transitory dwelling for girls before they relocate to their marital home. An open hut with no walls but with poles and a roof is usually located centrally, and is used for recreation, dining or food storage. Many homes lack specific housing structures for cooking, bathing and excreta disposal.

What is important to note here is the precarious situation of the adolescent girl, within her own homestead. The fact that she has no permanent place of abode relegates her to a vulnerable status, which is tantamount to being a stranger or a transient. This status *per se*, coupled with the insecurity it evokes, subjects the adolescent girl to a number of vulnerabilities, not least of which is the pressure to get a husband and leave her natal home at the earliest convenience. This is arguably one of the reasons why girls choose or acquiesce to high-risk options such as early

marriage and pregnancy, in disregard of the risks involved (see education and physical domains). As one 15-year-old girl in Mayuge put it, *'For us girls, what are we expected to do? It looks like we are not liked in many places including home. Look at the boys – they are allowed to build themselves huts and forever stay at home. Yet for the girls, the boys are not even allowed to build for us! It's like everybody wants you to get out of the way. Tell me what's wrong with being a girl?'*

FGDs with women and men in the district emphasised that a girl who overstays in her father's homestead without getting married is a shame not only to her family but also to her entire clan. She is derogatorily referred to as 'the one with no marriage value'.

In contrast, for the male adolescent, the benefits of this housing pattern are many and varied. The relocation out of their mother's hut into their own independent residence, apart from instilling in them a sense of maturity and discipline, accords them a permanent residential status in the home. As one boy put it, it also spares him the scandal of listening to his parent's engagement in sex at night: *'I don't want to hear my mother and father having sexual intercourse.'* Older girls who share one-roomed houses with their parents, on the other hand, said that hearing such activity all the time made them want to have sex even at an earlier age.

It was also observed that this housing pattern allows boys unlimited mobility since they are free to come and go at any time, even at night, as their huts are respected as private spaces by every household member, including their parents. Girls who share accommodation with their grandmother do not enjoy this kind of freedom. *'Boys are free to move where they want and we can even have lunch or supper without them. But for us girls, no way,'* stated a 19-year-old girl.

### Sembabule

A typical household in Sembabule has around nine members. In contrast with Mayuge, most households are monogamous extended families, composed of children, their parents and in most cases grandparents or uncles. Polygamy exists but is not very common; when it does occur, co-wives do not live in cooperative arrangements within the same homesteads, but far apart. We encountered one polygamous family of this nature where the man had four wives and 25 children.

Children live with their parents in the same unit but with separate rooms for girls and boys (sometimes separate structures for boys). They separate from their parents at the time of marriage, which is to someone from outside of the community (but not usually outside of the ethnic group – intermarriages among the Bahima and Banyankole or other tribes are discouraged). Most girls are said get married between 15 and 18 years old, with early marriage propelled in part by the practice of bride price, which many observers have described as a sort of 'commoditisation' of girls and others among our KIs called 'selling girls for profit' (see Box 5).



Girl's home in Sembabule

## Box 5: Culture and the commoditisation of girls

*'Culture is a problem, especially in the cattle corridor where there is a tendency for girls to be married off early and an attitude of looking on girls as property'* (District Technical Committee, Sembabule).

*'Some of these parents look at a girl child at 10 years, they see that lady as a productive person in the family, they are going to get property from her at marriage, so they are looking at her as a source of bride price'* (Sub-county Technical Team, Sembabule).

*'Some girls get married in S2 at 15 years though the right age should be 18 years. Girls are married off by their parents at an early age to get wealth because of high poverty levels'* (16-year-old girl, Sembabule).

*'The girl child remains a target of culture. Girls are for gaining cattle for the parents: they get married, get pregnant, give birth and that is it'* (Government official, Sembabule).

The persistence of such cultural practices is reflected in the story recounted by one KI, who said he tried, but failed, to give his daughter away in marriage to the boy she liked without requesting bride price:

*So the boy went and told his parents and they were wondering, we are getting a woman for free. They negotiated but we failed to agree, so she is now in the UK studying but she would be married by now. So the boy's family thought we had belittled them, [suggesting] that they can't pay for a wife yet. I just didn't want to sell my daughter. Culture is so binding but it can't change if it does not involve women* (Male district official, Sembabule).

A son in this culture becomes independent only when the father dies, and it is only on marriage that a boy becomes a 'real man', usually around the age of 20, but sometimes earlier if, for example, they are out of school or the parents can no longer support them. A boy becomes truly independent – particularly among the cattle keepers – when his father dies because, as the District Technical Team put it, *'At any one time there must be only one bull in the kraal.'* When boys come of age in Sembabule, they often move to the mushrooming towns and rent small houses, and that is where they marry from.

### 5.1.2 Gendered norms and practices within households

#### Intra-household eating practices

Findings from field research in Mayuge point to the existence of cultural norms that pattern the intra-household distribution of food and common household eating practices. Such norms do not favour girls and women. One girl explained that in her household such dietary norms are strictly adhered to: when fish and chicken are on the menu, there are parts a woman should not touch. In the case of fish, the husband eats the head, the wife the middle part and the children the tail. In the case of chicken, the entire back and the gizzard are reserved for the husband. The husband can demand food at any time he wishes, even deep in the night when he returns home from drinking. For boys, food is served and left in their huts when they are not around at supper time. For girls and the women, such privileges do not exist.



**Girls fetching water for the household, Mayuge**

It was reported that it is not uncommon for women in Mayuge to serve the husband a 'mountain' of food while they (the women) and the children go hungry. Other KIs confirmed that it is a cultural expectation for the men to eat first: a common saying in the community is 'A woman eats last.' The nutritional implications of this for women and girls in conditions of food scarcity deserve critical analysis. In Sembabule, field discussions confirmed that the man ate first and was given more food than other family members.

#### Gendered division of labour within the household

Discussions in all of the communities in both Mayuge and Sembabule revealed a gendered division of labour within households, with men and women/boys and girls assigned and expected to perform different tasks.

Study participants in Mayuge explained that both boys and girls were expected to help on the family farm, and boys in particular help care for animals, but thereafter activities diverge, with girls expected in addition to help their mothers in some of the more time-consuming tasks, such as cleaning the house, washing dishes, cooking and babysitting. Boys may have some time off in the evening to play football, according to the District Technical Team. As a religious leader observed, it is accepted that 'Girls [...] even the younger ones [...] do more housework than boys.' Girls also help collect firewood and care for family members who are ill.



Girls caring for siblings, Mayuge

Both boys and girls fetch water, although girls are seen to spend more time on this: a Muslim religious leader in Mayuge noted that, 'The boys, if not properly supervised, only go to the garden and fetch water and that's it. For boys, you just see them riding bicycles to collect a few jerry cans of water.' According the Sub-county Technical Team, girls' tasks are clearly seen as 'a preparation for future responsibilities as wives/women', as are those of boys, who 'are expected to take care of the compound, build houses, graze cattle or even fetch water'.

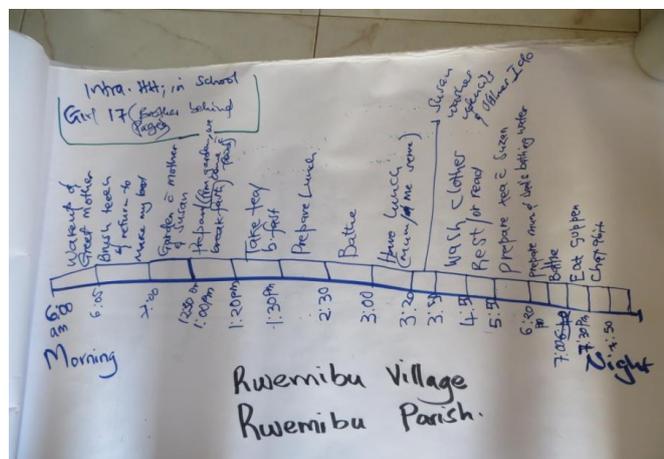
Although girls agree that they do many activities in the home, many seem to accept the situation. 'Me, I enjoy all the work around home,' said a 13-year-old girl in Mayuge, whose grandmother confirmed that she did all her activities well. Other girls expressed a wish for more help around the home from their brothers: 'I would like the boys to take up chores evenly with the girls,' stated a 17-year-old girl in Mayuge. 'For instance, they can do things like fetching water.' Boys and men in many households defended the gendered division of labour as justifiable, since it is dictated by strongly held sociocultural norms. One older man in Mayuge had this to say:

*God created us differently, the men and the women. That's why culture also treats us differently. It is government that is spoiling things. How can my son cook, bathe the children, wash my clothes or fetch water when the women and the girls are there? How can my wife build the hut when her sons are there? Can I call my daughter to help to slaughter cock when God blessed me with all these sons? God would curse me if I did. At least for us, the Basoga, we share out the work. We are not like the Karimojong men, where the men are kings when women and girls are around (Men and women's mixed FGD, Matovu, Mayuge).*

Mothers themselves were opposed to the idea of their male children participating in cooking, child care or related chores, intimating that this was actually taboo. They instead preferred their sons to participate in outdoor activities like grazing. Other study participants, however, stressed that the gendered division of labour within households was unequal and had a negative impact on girls' capabilities in various ways.

In Sembabule, study participants detailed a similar gendered division of labour in the household. Most household chores are left to girls, including cooking, washing clothes and utensils, caring for the sick, washing children, working on the family plot (including harvesting of millet and groundnuts), cleaning the home and compound and collecting firewood. The Bahima girls also graze cattle.

Boys are involved in farming, collecting firewood, grazing cattle and other animals (goats, sheep), building houses, repairing the home and fences, clearing ground for the compound, milking the cows and also sometimes fetching water, albeit with a distinctly gendered difference, according to one boy who noted that, 'I ride a motorcycle to go and fetch water, but a girl can't do that.' This male appropriation of technology to accomplish a particular task – therefore distinguishing it from the same task performed by girls – echoes the situation



Girl's daily time use chart, Sembabule

found in Mayuge.

A number of participants captured the different expectations around male and female roles within the household. *'It is hard to find a boy who cooks,'* stated adults in FGDs. *'When a brother is asked to cook,'* confirmed a 14-year-old girl, *'he refuses – he says it is for girls.'* One mother insisted that, *'Boys are not allowed to serve food at home. A boy can serve himself but not the family, even when he is married. That is the work of girls.'* Others confirmed this general pattern: *'If it is clothes, they wash their own clothes – not for the whole family. But the girls wash for the whole family, including those of the father.'*

This gendered division of labour has become an acceptable part of a normal daily life of a girl, and most study participants did not think there would ever be a change in this arrangement. Some flexibility in the gender division of labour was mentioned – with a girl sometimes allowed to milk cows (an essentially male domain) if, for example, she is home alone and needs milk to drink so as not to go hungry. But many felt it would not be proper to have any big change: *'That change would not be good,'* stated a young girl in Sembabule. *'It is not good to find a boy washing plates – he should not help me or the mother. It is not good for a boy to start cooking food – it is hard, finding him squatting in front of the cooking stones, no.'* Other girls in the district felt that boys should be taught some domestic work, but took a strictly pragmatic view: *'We need to teach even boys how to do other chores, because if boys do not know how to cook and their wife falls sick, who will cook for her?'*

Participants in Sembabule pointed to a clear division of labour between adult men and women, which for them was and should be the norm, focusing on the care work role of the women and the economic provider role of the men:

*Each family member, the husband and wife, has specific roles, men are involved in women's domestic roles only when the woman is sick or away [...] I cannot see her walking around alive and okay and I start washing clothes [...] When it comes to caring for the sick, weak and old, it is the female members of the family who take care of that category as the men foot the bills if any. The men are supposed to economically support their wives and families. If they fail, they are labelled irresponsible by the community members and it will be hard for them to keep their wife (Men and women's mixed FGD, Rwemibu, Sembabule).*

*Both parents take care of the family but the father has more responsibility. He pays school expenses, buys family necessities, takes care of the medical bills and what to plant for the season. The mother also pays school expenses, cooks for the family (IDI, male younger adolescent, Tangiriza, Sembabule).*

*It is the woman who suffers with the child when it is sick, because even when you are sleeping at night, you find that it is the female parent who takes extra care about the children, you can be in deep sleep and by the time you wake up you find her with her child, maybe covering them in bed, maybe the child has urinated, she is changing the baby from one cloth to another, so it is mainly the female parent who takes more care about the children (male participant, men and women's mixed FGD, Rwemibu, Sembabule).*

Women in Sembabule noted, however, that many men were abdicating their responsibilities as economic providers – going off to the trading centres drinking alcohol, sitting around *bodaboda* and discussing football. *'Currently, men are not [working as providers],'* stated a female member of the District Technical Team in Sembabule. *'If he spends the day in town and leaves me at home digging alone, how does that make him the breadwinner? But he comes and asks you – did you dig in your father's land? They think that because they have the land, you are there just as a worker.'*

### **Gender and age-based decision making, authority and autonomy within the household**

Both boys and girls have very limited authority or decision-making power at home. Most of the decisions with regard to domestic chores and the functioning of the household in general are made by the parents – normally the father, when he is present in the household. This conforms to basic patriarchal structures in which both age and gender hierarchies are at play. Box 6 captures some of the common norms and practices study participants in the two sites described.

## Box 6: Norms and practices around household decision making and authority

*'Decisions in the home are made by the father because he is the head of the family – the mother decides only when the father is away. Permission has to be sought from the father if anyone wants to do something or to go out of the home'* (14-year-old boy, Mayuge).

*'Father decides [on issues] concerning money, land, schools. If it is about me getting married, then it is father and mother; getting hired labour it is father. Most decisions in the family are taken by the father though at times with the mother. Most consultations are to the father because he has more authority in the home'* (18-year-old boy, Mayuge).

*'In the family it is the man who makes decisions [...] This is expressed in the saying that "A man decides whatever he wishes." A mother can also decide where the children can go or whom they can visit and the time they should come back. So when children want to go out they have to ask for permission from the father or the mother. If I want to go out, I ask for permission from my husband. If he refuses you forget about it and let go'* (Mother of 18-year-old adolescent girl, Sembabule).

*'The young people do not make decisions, it is the parents who make them for them, though at times the boys use force and take their decisions. Parents have overall power in decision making as the young people are still young and inexperienced. The parent remains a parent – you cannot give the father conditions on his property or in his home. You cannot – he will tell you that it is my land, this is my home'* (Female older adolescents FGD, Sembabule).

*'At home, some parents are too cruel, they don't listen to these children, they don't allow these children to participate in their discussions, when a child tries to raise a point they say, "Shut up, what are you saying?" These are the children when a parent gets back at home instead of running to the parent, they run to hide'* (Sub-county Technical Team, Mayuge).

*'Everyone is born with a right to take decisions but it is the community to enforce it, but generally young people do not take decisions; it is their parents who do [...] It is men who take decisions over everything in the family, he decides whatever he wants often times even without consulting the wives [...] Boys usually take decision in homes only when their fathers have died'* (Men and women's mixed FGD, Sembabule).

Mothers who are heads of household are seen to take on overall parental authority and decision-making power; in these cases, both girls and boys report that they are also consulted. Some boys took pride in the fact that their mother consulted them if the father was absent. *'My mother consults me and I consult her as well. If she wants to do something she asks me whether it is okay or not,'* noted a 17-year-old boy in Sembabule. *'My mother is the head of the family, so if anyone is to move or do anything they need to get permission from her,'* explained a 17-year-old girl in Mayuge, adding, *'But my mother consults me before making any new purchases in the home and discusses the economic situations at home.'*

Mothers could also sometimes be used to try to influence a father's decisions, although ultimately the father's decision is final: *'You go through your mother because if you tell your father, he rebukes you,'* explained an older adolescent girl in Sembabule. *'But your mother will approach him softly and convince him and then you get a chance to give your opinion [...] He might have given you some land but you cannot sell because he will never allow you to sell so he remains the final person to decide. He decides on his own, no debate on that issue.'* One of the only domains over which women in the household are seen to have ultimate decision-making authority is *'what meals the family is to have'*; according to FGDs with adults in Sembabule, though, *'There are some other radical women who can even refuse a man to sell land if he wanted.'* For the most part, however, while women have a voice in household affairs, men have overall authority.

Girls seemed in general to have more limited autonomy within the household than boys, and also less of a voice in family issues *'Boys are listened to more than girls at home and so they are more liable to participate in decision-making than the girls in the home,'* explained a mixed group of adults in Mayuge. Particular issues around girls' limited mobility also came to the fore in discussions: *'Girls' movements are restricted compared with the boys, even when they ask for permission to go to the trading centre they are sometimes refused,'* according to a 14-year-old boy in Mayuge. This was confirmed by others in both Mayuge and Sembabule.

Some girls look forward to the time of marriage to take on more of an adult decision-making role in the household. As noted by adult women in Sembabule, *'Girls can get a voice when married if their husbands allow them to.'* At the same time, girls understand this new adult voice role will actually be limited by the authority of members of the clan into which they have married and the good graces of

the husband. *'When you get married, that is where you find the clan [...] these ones also make decisions for you,'* explained a group of older girls in Sembabule.

### 5.1.3 Particular vulnerabilities arising from different household or family situations

#### Orphanhood

The death or absence of a mother or father can increase the vulnerability of both boys and girls within a household in many ways. The death of a father most often deprives the household of its key source livelihood, leading to diminished household resources and lack of basic necessities including salt, soap, sugar, food and paraffin. Findings from the field research identified cases of both boys and girls going to bed hungry and unable to continue schooling as they took on greater responsibilities at home.

*'The death of my father made me feel very bad,'* said a 17-year-old girl in Mayuge. *'I did not know how to dig<sup>7</sup> but I started digging for money to survive, even fetching water I learnt after the death of my father [...] I saw that we were suffering so I requested my mother to allow me to get a job so I could help her. She accepted and gave me UGX5,000. I bought sugarcane.'* This family lived on a small plot of land on which they had a two-room brick house with a tin roof. The kitchen had collapsed and the family prepared meals outside except on days when it rained, when they were allowed to share a neighbour's kitchen.

The death or absence of a mother can deprive adolescent girls in particular of their closest source of support, and leave all children open to neglect or abuse from the alternative caregiver. As one 14-year-old girl in Mayuge put it, *'Grandmother looks after us as mummy seems to have gone for good. The happiest times for me are when I am at school. Here at home I am mistreated, particularly by grandmother.'*

Men's neglect of the responsibility of looking after their children was also evoked in field discussions. A 13-year-old girl in Mayuge reported that her father had abandoned all his children, with two of them now living with their grandmother. *'Our father does not care about us,'* she said. *'He has money but [...] his job is merely to drink, he does not look after us.'*

#### The situation of married adolescent and unmarried adolescents with babies

While all adolescent mothers are vulnerable (see physical domain) unmarried adolescent mothers are particularly so, poised as they are between the concerns of girlhood and the responsibilities of womanhood, but not able to make the transition between natal home and marital home that would assist them, in some way, in assuming those responsibilities. In the cultural setting of communities in Mayuge, where girls are expected to be married and out of the natal home as soon as they 'mature', this ambiguity in their status leaves them bereft of ready support structures and uncertain of their future. *'A girl who delivers a baby at home is a visitor. Any time the father of the child might take her or any other man,'* explained the mother of a 16-year-old girl in Mayuge.

In Sembabule, an unmarried adolescent who gets pregnant while still living at home breaks a variety of cultural taboos: she is not supposed to share basins and plates with the parents and so is sent to the paternal aunts to avoid *obuko* (shame/pollution). At the same time, dashed hopes and shattered dreams also seemed characteristic of married adolescents/mothers in Sembabule, who were unable to envision any future plans to overcome the particular vulnerabilities arising from their situation.

#### Tensions in polygamous, compound or ruptured families

Findings from the fieldwork indicate that the practice of polygamy can subject adolescent girls to a number of vulnerabilities, as can other forms of 'compound' families where stepparents cohabite with offspring of different unions. Interviews with some girls in polygamous households revealed environments of crippling poverty, suspicion, tension, insecurity and, more often than not, open hostility. It was asserted that, although both male and female children are subjected to these insecurities, the plight of girls is worse than that of boys.

Adolescent girls complained, for instance, that the burden of caring for the large number of children in polygamous households fell squarely on them. A 12-year-old girl in Mayuge whose mother had recently left her polygamous household remarked thus: *'Ever since my mother left, I have been staying with my stepmother, who has six small and sickly children. My stepmother is lazy and*

<sup>7</sup> In Uganda, 'digging' refers to farming

*irresponsible. It is as if I'm the mother of her children. Even when they fall sick, I'm the one who takes them to the health centre, as she just sits at home and plaits her hair. When it is her turn for cooking, I don't go to school. I'm tired of it all, because I have no idea when and how it will end.'* In Uganda, men have no obligation to pay alimony or child support; women leaving a violent or unhappy marriage are often reluctantly forced to leave their children behind, as children who leave with their mothers will lose economic security and status.

Other girls in both polygamous and non-polygamous 'compound' families evoked similar tensions, including risks of maltreatment by stepparents (see Box 7), the physical and psychosocial effects of which are explored in later sections of this report.

### Box 7: Mistreatment by stepparents

#### Maya's story

Maya is 16 years old and, despite being a bright girl, was educated only up to the sixth year of primary (P6). Her father is a *Haji* (meaning he has made the Islamic pilgrimage to Mecca) and has four wives, all resident in the same compound. Maya's mother bore five children, all of them girls.

For Maya's father, who does not value the girl child, the failure of Maya's mother to produce a male child soon became a subject of much contention. In fact, when the fifth and apparently the last child of Maya's mother turned out to be a girl, he withdrew all of Maya's children from school as a punishment.

What pained Maya most was that all her stepsisters (from her father's other wives) remained enrolled in school. Maya said tearfully that, as if her cessation of education were not enough, her father had been trying to marry her off, a move she has totally rejected. Maya believes her predicament is being orchestrated by her stepmothers, all of whom for various reasons hate her mother. Maya is planning to run away from home and go to Kampala to live with a maternal relative who has promised to enrol her in a vocational school to train in tailoring (Intra-household case study, Matovu, Mayuge).

#### Joyce's story

*'This is my home and there is only one mother. It has always been like this because our father is a Protestant clergyman. Our religion dictates that in the home there should be only one mother. But father has other women who live outside of the home, some of them married elsewhere. My mother is now re-married in Iganga, but I live here with my father. In this family, there are five other children who are like me. Our father does not allow our mothers to come here, because he thinks they will be a bad influence on us. He also fears being shamed.*

*'Our [step]mother does not treat the children who are not hers by birth well. She sees us as housemaids. She overworks us, while her children do nothing all day. Look at that big drum of water. We have to fill it with water from the well every morning. None of her children, even the big boys, touches a jerry can to fetch water. To make matters worse, she does not allow us to use the bicycle, saying that it is only for her son, who rides it to school.*

*'Our stepmother pretends to love us only when our father is around. This is when she orders her children to do some housework, like washing the dishes. Otherwise, when he is not around, which is quite often, we sometimes have no time to attend school. That drum over there has to stay full. Sadly, our father does not know about all this. Our stepmother warned us of severe consequences if we ever tell him'* (IDI, 14-year-old girl, Bugumya, Mayuge).

## 5.2 Education domain

*'Most parents don't think that girls are meant to go to school – they are meant to marry.'*

The study findings as a whole indicate lack of sustained parental investment in girls' education. This arises from a combination of factors. Sociocultural expectations about girls' role in the household and society lessen the perceived value of education for them, while conditions of poverty limit parents' ability to shoulder the costs of education. Such factors are intertwined with patterns of son preference that favour education for boys set within an overall context of weak educational service provision for all. Gender-specific vulnerabilities for girls include withdrawal from school from school because of pregnancy or early marriage; risks of SGBV; and gender-discriminatory school environments.



Girls studying, Mayuge

The focus of the study is on the public schools (called UPE and USE), which are generally perceived to be of lower quality than are private schools. Private schools

are accessible only for those few who can afford to pay higher tuition and fees for boarding facilities, which are not provided in the UPE schools.

### 5.2.1 Household and community-level norms and practices

Overall, gender discriminatory sociocultural norms, attitudes and practices were identified as key hindrances to girls' education. Many of these were linked to the household and family domain, particularly through the unequal gender division of labour within the household, as a result of which girls are retained at home to help with domestic responsibilities or have less time to devote to school, and the persistence of sociocultural practices of early marriage. The expectation that girls will marry out of the family and into another clan was reported as a key limitation to girls' school enrolment and attainment. Respondents mentioned that girls are enrolled in school just to prepare for marriage, when they pass into the responsibility of another family.

#### Box 8: Why educate girls?

*'In this village people do not see educating girls as important. If you walk around, finding a girl who has completed S6 is not easy – maybe only 15 or so out of 100. Yet this is not so for boys – for them they can be 75%. A girl is enrolled in school just to grow up from there, in preparation for marriage' (Mixed adolescent FGD, Mayuge).*

*'Most parents don't think that girls are meant to go to school – they are meant to marry, so when you reach the age of 14, you go and get married [...] As soon as they grow breasts, parents think that girls are mature, so they start to think of how to get wealth – how is family X going to pay cows to them – that is when girls begin to drop out of school' (District Technical Committee, Sembabule).*

*'Some parents do not have a positive hope in the girls and thus they don't educate them, taking it that they will get married soon, so even if they get education they will be of help to the other family [...] So a parent will say, "Let me educate my boy as he might help me in the future" and so they neglect the girl child' (Men and women mixed FGD, Tangiriza, Sembabule).*

Some community members noted that more literate parents may value education more, but that those who are not educated normally see their daughters reproducing the same lifecycle patterns that they themselves followed, namely, early marriage followed immediately by childbirth. *'You can see the vicious cycle,'* noted the District Team in Mayuge: *'A girl of 14 gets married to a boy of 16 and they start life, and the children they produce usually go around that same cycle.'*

#### Underlying poverty

Poverty – intertwined with and reinforcing the attitudes and perspectives above – was reported by most of the respondents as a key factor impinging on girls' right to an education. Although Uganda provides free education, ancillary costs can be considerable, particularly for households living in poverty. In many parents' calculations, the immediate need is for children's labour to produce even a precarious family livelihood. Thereafter, a daughter's early circulation into marriage to bring bride price often outweighs any potential long-term gains from investment in education. *'In government schools they charge no fees, apart from the examination fee, which is UGX1,000 or 2,000 only,'* explained a group of parents in Mayuge. *'But then they ask for so many things like a ream of paper, 5 kilos of beans, 5 kilos of maize, and if the child is in P7 they require 35 kilos of maize flour and 10 kilos of beans per pupil per term. Can a parent with many children in school afford this?'*

#### Son preference

Some families, therefore, privilege their sons, since they are the ones who will inherit the family's wealth from the father. *'Some families are completely poor,'* explained district officials in Sembabule. *'So this bars the girl child from going to school because if there are three or four children at home then the boys take the priority. This is because in most homes we look at the boys as the ones who will inherit or succeed the father's existence, so that is another challenge around here.'*

#### Lack of economic and decision-making power on the part of mothers

Some parents, particularly mothers, expressed real anguish at not being able to retain their children in school, suggesting that there may be significant gendered differentials within the household in the value placed on girls' education. Mothers more than fathers may also wish to delay daughters' marriages by retaining them in school. Frequent clashes between husbands and wives in the family are reported to arise over school fees, which are traditionally the responsibility of the husband to pay. Men have been known to react violently when women, with no cash income, insist on demanding money to cover their children's education expenses. As district officials in Sembabule observed,

*You find these women crying when they have problems and they are saying 'I wish I had gotten a chance to go to school.' They try very hard to keep their children in school – even when the mothers are being battered in their own homes, they try to stay there in order to keep the children going to school. So [...] those who are illiterate have a feeling of what an educated person is and what value she has. It is just that they encounter problems along the way – the problem of not being able to attain what is required to maintain the children in school and also the problem of lack of decision-making power within the household [...] Even if the woman was the one who produced the coffee beans that could provide the means to keep her children in school, her husband comes home and sells everything and she has no say, so whether you want it or not, it is the decision of the man (District Technical Team, Sembabule).*

Such intra-household tensions over school fees can have significant repercussions for girls' psychosocial well being (see Section 5.5) and can also heighten conflicts between siblings when boys may be favoured over girls. One 12-year-old girl from a polygamous family in Mayuge spoke of the sense of injustice she felt: *'One time my father refused to pay our fees saying we are not wise and it was my mother who rescued us by paying half [...] Yet my father was paying for our brother who in any case was not interested in going to school.'*

### **Early marriage**

The withdrawal of girls from school for marriage was one of the most widely echoed practices cited by study participants at both community and district levels, demonstrating clearly how social norms, attitudes and practices in one capability domain – household and family – impinge on opportunities to develop capabilities in another domain, education, within a general context of poverty. In many cases, respondents reported that daughters were taken out of school and married off to bring in bride price for cash-strapped parents, thus perpetuating such patterns of early marriage and limiting options for the development of girls' capabilities through education (see Box 9).

### **Box 9: Poverty, bride price, early marriage and limitations on girls' education**

*'The girl children are often times married off by the parents at ages when they should still be in school because of quick monetary gains in form of bride price' (Muslim religious leader, Mayuge).*

*'When a Musoga man lacks money for soap, yet has a daughter in school, he takes her out of school and gives her away for marriage. This is sheer greed for money. This girl is deprived of opportunity to bring real development to her family' (Acting Kyabazinga cultural leader, Mayuge).*

*'In some families poverty is too much that even parents encourage their school-going girl children to get boyfriends, like bodaboda men, with a hope of getting money in form of bride wealth' (Sub County Technical Team, Mayuge).*

### **Gender division of labour in the household**

The entrenched gender role stereotyping in the household noted in Section 5.1 militates against girls' participation in school. Although both boys and girls participate in various household chores, there are time-consuming activities like cooking that are exclusively performed by girls. Girls are also more involved in other domestic activities such as child care, cleaning, fetching water and gathering fuel wood – all of which inhibit their educational opportunities, particularly in adolescence, as a Mayuge sub-county official explained: *'At adolescence, girls are involved in a lot more household chores than boys. This is because they are being prepared for adult roles as wives, but it affects their performance in class as they have no time to do their homework.'*

### **Children's contribution to household livelihood**

In other cases, both boys and girls are withdrawn from school to contribute to family livelihoods. As district officials in Mayuge explained, *'Most parents find out that they cannot afford providing necessities for their children so [...] most of the boys are going for sugarcane cutting and girls go to chase birds from the rice farms – as others are going to school, you see the girls are in the swamps. This is the new trend of what is keeping them out of school.'* In Sembabule, both boys and girls are involved with agro-pastoral activities. Boys accompany the herds on dry season migrations in search of water and pasture and as a result miss large chunks of school, since the academic calendar does not mesh with the agro-pastoral calendar. Girls in Sembabule reported that, *'Some parents who have many cows also refuse their boys to go to school, sending them to instead go and graze the cows.'* An NGO officer in the same district confirmed that, *'A cow is like a miracle at home – everything in the home is based on the cow, so education is not as important as grazing the cows.'* Fetching water in

arid pastoral areas is also a significant activity that mostly requires girls' labour and takes up much of their time, hence interfering with school.

In still other cases, parents withdraw their children from school for a term or two, hoping to make enough to cover fees for the next. However, the girls sometimes become impatient working on the family farm and so 'run off' to get married, thinking this will bring them a better life; or, they wait so long that they become overage. *'By the time a girl finishes schooling in P7,'* a mixed group of adults in Mayuge explained, *'she is 16 or 17 years and the boy around 14. Even when a girl starts early, they make her drop out temporarily in favour of a boy. Its only when the boy finishes or drops out that the girl goes back, and by that time she is over age.'*

### **Growing out of school**

The advanced age at which many children start school compounds problems of retention of older girls as they advance through the system, as they no longer see themselves fitting into the school setting. An adolescent girl in Sembabule explained that, *'Some girls don't want to study when they see that they have overgrown and cannot fit within the rest of the girls. They at times decide to get married instead.'* This is true as well for older boys in the district: *'You find a 14-year-old boy who is in P1,'* explained a focus group of older girls in Sembabule. *'Children who are younger than him start mocking him calling him old man [shwenkuru] and he leaves school because of that.'* But the problem is compounded for girls, whose emerging sexuality contributes to the risk of early pregnancy as an additional obstacle to remaining in school: *'The girl child becomes more vulnerable when men begin to look at her as more than a young girl, so many girls will have to drop out of school because of pregnancy,'* explained a male NGO officer in Sembabule.

### **Safety and security on the way to school**

Safety and security issues arising as a result of long distances to schools – particularly scarce secondary schools – place girls who transit from home to school under the threat of gender-based violence. For girls of high school age, already considered 'ripe' for sexual activity, *'This puts them at risk of men and boys along the way and so making it hard to complete their secondary school'* (Mayuge District Technical Committee). *'The girls can easily be raped on such long, lonely journeys. I always see rape cases when we go for our security meetings at the police. Men get girls on the way and buy them mandazi [doughnuts] and because they are already hungry they accept all such offers and end up pregnant,'* confirmed the District Technical Committee in Sembabule. Young girls in Sembabule recounted experiences of 'bad boys' from the town taking marijuana and 'hijacking girls on the long lonely way where there is no one to rescue you. They once chased us nearly all the way home.' Security issues loom large for village girls who come to Sembabule to continue their education. Since there are no boarding facilities, parents must rent accommodation where girls are not supervised or protected, according to the District Technical Committee.

### **Adolescent pregnancy**

Both the fear and the fact of adolescent pregnancy are key factors leading to early withdrawal or dropout from school. In the FGD with community members, both men and women expressed the fear of girls getting pregnant before completing their education, with men in particular often using it as a justification for investing more in boys: *'Most male parents will make sure they educate the boys,'* explained a mixed group of adults in Sembabule. *'You can educate the girl, but even before she gets to S4 and she gets pregnant, all money is wasted, so such things make the parents lose morale and you give up on her. But even if a boy drops out of school and wastes the parent's money in S3, he can get to do what he wants at home.'* Adolescent girls had similar views, reporting that some parents refuse to take their girls to school for fear of them becoming pregnant, which is a very real risk. *'Girls are impregnated by fellow students, men along the way and men in the community in S1 and they drop out of school completely,'* explained a group of young girls in Sembabule. An NGO officer in the district pointed to high dropout rates owing to early pregnancy, noting that *'Girls' ignorance about reproductive health issues becomes a major barrier to their progress in education.'* It is interesting, and actually quite revealing that responsibility for such issues is perceived to lie with the girl alone.

For most girls, pregnancy and motherhood mean the end of their educational experiences, as there is not much support for pregnant girls wishing to remain in school, let alone for new mothers wishing to return. *'Once you get pregnant, that is the end of school for you,'* said a 17-year-old girl with a baby in Mayuge. Yet others noted that remaining in school could be possible, particularly with the support of trusted adults and girls' determination to surmount enormous obstacles in pursuing their education. In Mayuge, a 15-year-old schoolgirl observed that, *'The majority of girls who get pregnant are in P6 and*

they miss out on continuing up to P7 to sit for the exams. But some are brave and they come back to school after giving birth.’ A 16-year-old mother in school in Mayuge testified to this, and noted the importance of mentoring support: *‘All girls who get pregnant stop studying, but I did not. I wanted to abort but the senior woman teacher advised me against it. She supported and encouraged me to go back to the classroom and study. My fellow pupils would jeer me but I persisted’* (see Box 10).

### Box 10: Aisha, a 17-year-old girl mother who completed her schooling

Aisha, aged 17, was born into a large polygamous Muslim family in Kanyana village, Mayuge. At the time of the interview, she had just finished her fourth year of secondary (S4) vacation and had a three month-old baby boy. Aisha had got pregnant during the first term of S4 after a short fling with a boy who was slightly older than she was. She had gone to a neighbouring village for a sleepover at her aunt’s where she met and befriended the boy. The pregnancy was both unplanned and unwanted. She was afraid, and decided to keep quiet about her condition. However, at the end of the first trimester she mustered the courage to confide in her mother, who was furious and advised her to abort the pregnancy, but Aisha refused.

Aisha’s mother then informed her father, who, in spite of his shock, remained calm. He and Aisha went to see the headmaster. Aisha’s father asked the headmaster to let Aisha remain in school since this was her final year and she had to sit for her school certificate examinations. After much pleading, the headmaster acquiesced and Aisha returned to the classroom that very day. Aisha said her biggest challenge was the stigma her pregnancy evoked among her fellow students and teachers. Her peers avoided her and the teachers saw her as a bad influence.

Aisha, however, stoically endured the last term and sat for her examinations. Meanwhile, her father approached the parents of her boyfriend over the issue of Aisha’s pregnancy and a settlement was reached. A fine of UGX800,000 (\$308) was levied and promptly paid to Aisha’s father. Although Aisha never knew how that money was disbursed, she was grateful to her father who had deviated from the norm and supported her completion of secondary education. She was optimistic about the outcome of her examinations.

#### Lack of role models

Both boys and girls lack positive role models of educated individuals in the community, which makes it hard for young people to see the value of continuing their education: *‘When there is no one in the whole community who has studied,’* explained a group of adolescents in Mayuge, *‘you do not get an appetite to study.’* *‘There are no exemplary people in the community that young people can look up to, to continue with education,’* noted a mixed group of adults in Sembabule, where *‘Both boys and girls are also discouraged by seeing elder siblings with degrees back home without jobs.’* The situation is especially difficult for girls, *‘who see all around them signs of restricted opportunities for educated women, as most community leaders, civil service staff and even teachers are men,’* according to the Sub-country Technical Team in Sembabule.

#### 5.2.2 School-level factors

Key challenges in education identified by KIs, community members and adolescents included the lack of schools in sufficient numbers, meaning long distances to travel – particularly at secondary level; poor quality of school facilities, including insufficient water and sanitation; gender-discriminatory teaching/learning processes and environment; and limitations in the teaching force, including low morale and lack of female teachers.

#### Scarcity of schools and long distances

Long distances to schools – sometimes as far as 10km – are considered a serious impediment, particularly for girls. In pastoral areas of Sembabule, where there is no transport, children have to walk long distances over the savannah – waking up very early to do so. *‘The distance is too long and the area is not friendly as they move,’* explained the District Technical Committee in Sembabule. *‘The parent can take the child to school at five years, the child will go to school for only two days, because of the long distances they walk. The child ends up missing most days and is grazing cattle, so because of that they keep repeating the classes and so the age at which they are supposed to finish keeps increasing,’* confirmed a mixed group of adults. Even in farming areas of Sembabule, distances are significant, and especially so in the case of secondary schools, of which there are very few per district: *‘Now we have USE, but the schools are too far so it is hard to force children walk such distances to those schools,’* admitted a government official.



Primary school in Bukabooli sub-county, Mayuge

Technical training is almost out of the question. As adults in Mayuge explained, *'Here we have only primary and secondary schools. There is no technical. In the whole of Mayuge there is only one technical at Nkokonjeru, but it is very far from here. Children from this way cannot go there. Even the schools for senior are far from each other. This is a real sickness! Just imagine a young girl child moving from Bukabooli, it is a hill.'*

### **Challenges of menstrual hygiene management**

Lack of appropriate sanitation facilities in schools, coupled with gender-insensitive environments, leads to particular problems in terms of girls' menstrual hygiene. This is a cause of frequent absences to prevent embarrassment and – sometimes – outright withdrawal from school, since menstruation signals the onset of womanhood, at which point girls are considered marriageable. Lack of appropriate water and sanitation facilities means boys, girls and teachers all share the same stance. *'That is so terrible for girls,'* observed a male NGO officer in Sembabule, *'and for them is one of the worst challenges.'* A 13-year-old girl in Mayuge explained that, *'At school, accidents happen and we get red maps on our dresses. Our teacher who is male says that we scandalise him and tells us to go and pad ourselves properly. The boys laugh at us and the teacher does not stop them, he sometimes laughs along with them. The shamed girl goes home and comes back after two or three days.'* District Technical Team members in Mayuge confirmed that, *'When the girls turn above 14 years and start their menstruation cycle they tend to shy away from school, and if you follow it up the completion rate of girls in schools is very low because of those factors.'*

### **Gender-based harassment and abuse**

The negative attitude of teachers, general indiscipline and, not least, routine sexual harassment by both their fellow male pupils and the teachers were among the issues adolescent girls said they resented the most; observations by adults confirmed such conditions.

Some teachers were reported to deliberately use abusive and derogatory language with the express purpose of shaming girls. Male teachers were singled out as the perpetrators, especially when they make negative comments about girls' bodies, and/or appearance. *'Some teachers do not know how to handle pupils. They do not treat them like children. They use insensitive derogatory language like "Look at her disgusting large boobs. You have come late; do you think this is your father's compound?" The girl feels humiliated. She starts feeling overgrown and out of place. Her fellow pupils start calling her names, and she stops coming to school,'* reported the Sub-county Technical Team in Mayuge. Female pupils who are the victims of this verbal sexual harassment become psychologically disoriented, develop an inferiority complex, feel out of place and often drop out of school.

Study participants also evoked physical sexual abuse in schools. According to district officials in Sembabule, *'Sexual and gender-based abuse are an ever-present threat, with many cases of "defilement" reported in schools.'*

### **Box 11: Experience of sexual advances at school**

*'When I was in the fifth year of primary school (P5), a teacher tried to befriend me. I had taken my book for marking and the teacher said, "Oh you write well!" I asked him, "What about you? Do you write badly?" Then he said, "You girl, you ask too many questions." Then he started touching me and I rebuked him. He returned my book unmarked and told me to return later.'*

*'When I returned at lunchtime, he offered me food, which I refused. Then he sent me to collect maths books. When I returned he told me that he was going to take me to his home so that I can bear him children! I rudely reminded him that he is my grandfather's age. He got annoyed but kept quiet. I reported him to the headmaster.'*

*'The headmaster called a staff meeting where the teacher was reprimanded and almost dismissed. However, [he was retained] and at the end of the term he positioned me second in class though I was the first. The girl who had accepted his advances was given the first position! I told my father and he changed my school. At least here we don't have such teachers' (ID1, 15-year-old school girl, Mayuge).'*

### **Poor quality of education**

Public (UPE/USE) schools were cast in a negative light by parents and pupils. Respondents said they were characterised by maladministration, unmotivated teachers, teacher and pupil truancy and gross indiscipline. One 16-year-old girl in Mayuge, when expressing disappointment with the quality of education she was receiving, reported that she was told by the teacher, *'This is UPE, we don't care.'* The poor standard of education in both primary and secondary public schools can lead to disengagement and dropout. *'Some girls in UPE or USE schools see that they are breaking*

*themselves down and getting nothing in return – they see that it [the education they are receiving] is not helpful,*’ explained adolescent girls in Sembabule. Teacher absenteeism is a chronic problem and lack of supervision leads to lax practices: *‘Teachers are not exemplary at school – they over drink and at times don’t even come in to teach,’* complained one young girl in Sembabule.

### **Lack of concerned female teachers**

Female teachers are particularly difficult to recruit to remote, ‘hard-to-reach’ communities; their absence can create significant obstacles to girls’ education. Lack of role models and support in the school environment contribute to girls’ feelings of isolation and disengagement, and they have no one to turn to when there is a problem. The important role of senior women teachers was emphasised by most respondents; however, as recounted by the District Technical Team in Mayuge, *‘The system of senior teachers (with allowances) has broken down and today there is no excitement about being a senior teacher – no “ownership”. Before, those senior teachers used to take these children as their own.’* A male district official in Sembabule confirmed that, in the past, senior teachers could make a significant difference, telling his story of a P6 teacher named Idah: *‘She was teaching mathematics when she noticed a girl was having her period. She told the whole class to stand up apart from her, she ordered us to run out of class; by the time we came back she had sorted her out. So the strategy worked, none of us knew what had happened to her.’*

### **Negative stereotypes of girls’ intellectual abilities**

Girls’ confidence is undermined by both teachers and male students, who commonly belittle girls’ intellectual abilities. This was voiced particularly strongly in Mayuge, where the District Technical Team noted the pernicious internalisation of girls’ supposed ‘inferiority’ resulting from such processes: *‘Teachers have a tendency to think boys are stronger and think better, while girls are psychologically tender; so girls think, “After all, I am a girl.” It’s taken as given that girls don’t know mathematics, for example, so there is a thinking that when a girl fails something it’s considered normal.’*

Boys in particular seem to have no respect for their female counterparts, describing them as generally dull, dumb and naturally foolish – with no justification for being in school. An 18-year-old boy in Mayuge said that, *‘In our class we are boys and girls. However, the teachers select us [boys] most, because it is the boys who are clever. Most girls are not clever and they know it. Yes the majority are foolish and you hear some of them saying, you are right, I’m not clever.’* A 16-year-old boy echoed this: *‘Boys are brighter than girls. Girls are dull and dumb. Teachers know this and when asking questions in the classroom, they target boys. Girls know and openly admit they are dumb. They don’t put up their hands.’*

### **Other forms of exploitation and abuse**

Both boys and girls reported experiences of exploitation and abuse by teachers that contribute to the unfavourable learning environment and breach relationships of trust. Some spoke of the use of caning as a form of discipline; others evoked other kinds of abuse. A male pupil in Sembabule spoke of his hesitance to ask questions for fear the teacher would beat him. A girl in Sembabule said some students were told to cook for the teachers, adding, *‘This is not good because it is done in school hours when children are supposed to be in class.’* Adolescent girls in Mayuge complained of being forced to work in the gardens: *‘They take us in teachers’ gardens even when it is time for lessons. They take the whole class, but sometimes it is the girls alone. Sometimes they select us giving out numbers, if you don’t get a number they take you to dig. Sometimes they beat you. When you go back to class nobody repeats for you what other pupils have been studying. You are just left like that.’*

### **5.2.3 Positive actions and emerging trends**

Discussions with district officials and community members revealed clear recognition of the key challenges to girls’ education but also identified positive initiatives that are underway.

In Mayuge there are a number of interventions, including community-driven initiatives, to raise the economic status of families to enable girls to stay in school. A Muslim religious leader in Mayuge reported that awareness raising through peer educators had been initiated through a mosque, which emphasises that marrying girls off and causing them to drop out of school is a legal offence. A community patrol made up of peer educators and village health workers has been established to look for children who drop out and impose small fines on parents. When parents give explanations that children are needed to chase birds away from their rice plantations, the patrols reply that, *‘Your rice will not be beneficial to the community in the future, but the child will be.’* Other district programmes

are underway to improve school infrastructure, build schools and improve the quality of education by, among other things, recruiting more female senior teachers for girls.

In Sembabule, parents noted with appreciation the automatic promotion policy in UPE schools that helps combat problems associated with overage pupils. The District Technical Team reported that community dialogues are held on the benefits of education and health care. An NGO-implemented child rights project works with young people, parents and leaders at the parish level to implement activities in schools (clubs, career guidance, parent–teacher meetings) and support parish education committees to encourage enrolment. The Sub-country Technical Team also cited current initiatives around school construction, teacher recruitment, training and sensitisation (including on gender), provision of schoolbooks and attempts to draft a by-law on obligatory school attendance in line with national policy. A government official noted that the UPE law on obligatory primary attendance was having an effect: *‘They have a saying now that only when a girl finishes P7 [after UPE] can she get married. They say, “Finish P7 so that Museveni does not arrest you.” The parents also do not take their children out of school before P7 now because the RDC [resident District Commissioner].’*

There is a clear recognition of the need to address the problem on all fronts. A government official in Sembabule noted that, *‘This is a struggle and when you are at the front line, you don’t use one method – culture, for example, also encompasses religion. The interventions should target the women, not the girls. This is because women are the legislators – if they come back on track then the girls will.’* There is also clear recognition of the immensity of the problems in the face of limited budgets to support them. According to an NGO officer, *‘So it is all about that – whatever you do – even if you have invested a lot of money in it, is just a drop in the ocean of so many social problems.’*

There are also promising indications that community values around education are themselves slowly changing. Intra-generational interviews and life histories in both Mayuge and Sembabule revealed, on the whole, greater opportunities for the current generation of girls to attend and remain in school than for girls in their mothers’ or grandmothers’ time. Adolescent girls in Sembabule identified education as the only way to achieve a bright future, because it opens up more opportunities at all levels: *‘I think education is the only way you can attain what you want in life [...] to get a job, get a good future [...] A person who has educated his child can eat well in future and be well off while the other one remains in poverty. When one is educated they can support each other as a family and as husband and wife.’* Community members also agreed education was important, with some suggesting it might be even more important for girls, since it would prepare them to be of greater support to both natal and marital families: *‘A boy helps only one family, once he marries everything is for his family. A girl can help her husband’s side and her own family too. This all depends on the knowledge she has gained from school.’*

## 5.3 Economic domain

*‘Girls fail to build up assets because they lack skills to earn an income, customs do not allow girls to inherit and most girls drop out of school at low levels of education.’*

Findings from the field research show that the factors constraining adolescent girls’ ability to realise their economic capabilities are gender specific and rooted in sociocultural practices at household or family level. Other factors – at the service provision level – intervene to restrict access to training opportunities, credit facilities and decent work. The prevailing context of poverty constrains productive employment opportunities for both boys and girls and inhibits capability development in this domain.

### 5.3.1 Gendered inheritance and property rights

A critical element contributing to diminished economic potential is the limited opportunity for girls and women to own or control land, which is a core factor of economic production in the rural agricultural communities of our field research. It was most apparent in Mayuge and also evident in Sembabule, although in the latter district the system seems to allow for more flexibility.

In Mayuge, among all the ethnic groupings encountered in the study area it was emphasised that girls and women generally are not expected to own or control land (see Box 12). In their natal homes, both girls and boys may be allocated small plots of land where they are free to cultivate crops for family subsistence or sale. In families where land is limited, the girls may work in the plots allocated to their mothers for cultivation and may claim a share of the proceeds if there is any surplus for sale. This

also applies to small boys. Girls are, however, generally left out of the inheritance of family plots, because inheritance practises are governed by patriarchal norms, with land passing from a father to his sons. The exclusion of girls is justified by patrilocal marriage whereby women, on marriage, move to their husband's home, community and clan.

## Box 12: Girls excluded from inheritance of land and property in Mayuge

*'As a custom, boys must have a share of the father's land. If I have four boys I have to make sure that my piece of land is shared by those four boys, girls are counted as strangers who are supposed to be somewhere else. The phrase is "omwana omulenzi kiryowa tavaawo, omwana omuwala kawonero," which means the boy doesn't go anywhere but the girl will go any time. She just stays in the house of her mother until she gets someone to take her away'* (District Technical Team, Mayuge).

*'Girls do not inherit property from their fathers. Boys inherit land and other property from their fathers. For us this way, girls are being discriminated at inheritance – through claims that they will get married and go away anytime. So girls don't inherit – it is for boys to inherit'* (Pentecostal religious leader, Mayuge).

*'Girls fail to build up assets because they lack skills to earn an income, customs do not allow girls to inherit and most girls drop out of school at low levels of education'* (Pentecostal religious leader, Mayuge).

*'Like most of the African cultures, the Basoga claim that land is not given to the girls, as the chief has said. They claim that since girls will go out and marry, culturally, girls can't inherit and can't be an heir to a family. So they prefer males to inherit'* (Bukabooli Sub-county Technical Team, Mayuge).

*'If a father dies, it is the male children who inherit. Girls this side do not inherit'* (Muslim religious leader, Mayuge).

Girls' 'outsider' position on their father's land in their natal home is starkly illustrated among the Basomya, in Mayuge, where it was reported that, if a girl dies while still at her father's home before getting married, she is buried at the periphery of the family land, to emphasise that, despite living at home, she had no share of that land. This is not the case for boys, who, additionally, have the option of demanding *in vivo* transfers of their share of family land if they do not have the means of buying for themselves land elsewhere, according to a mixed group of adults in Mayuge. Such 'in vivo' transfers are often the norm, with the transfer made at the time of marriage and formalized (and possibly added to) when the father dies.

The situation of girls with regard to land ownership and/or control does not change when they get married. Among all the ethnic groupings encountered in Mayuge, married women are seen as visitors who may at any whim return to their natal home or get married elsewhere. In this context, they are not encouraged to own or have control over any key marital family asset apart from their personal effects. In fact, married women are seen as their husband's or marital clan's property; it would be absurd for 'property' to own or control property. By not being able to own land, girls and women are deprived of one of the most important resources in these communities. This cripples their ability to participate meaningfully in economic production at any level.

Girls are aware of this system and not always happy with it, but do not have any clear sense that it could be changed. *'I'm aware that the land is for my brothers – it is only given to the boys since they say that girls can never own land where they were born. The boys also know that the girls are not supposed to have land at home,'* said a 17-year-old out-of-school girl with baby in Mayuge. Some KIs claimed that girls simply accepted this situation: *'The girls are comfortable with that kind of arrangement [...] they know that all the land is for the boys [...] They are not complaining so that means they are comfortable,'* asserted members of the Mayuge District Technical Team.

In Sembabule, where there is a growing scarcity of land owing to land sales to wealthy individuals for the establishment of big ranches, giving land to children is dependent on how much land a family possesses: eight out of ten families are judged to be land insecure. Inheritance rights mainly follow the male line, although alternative provisions can be made in the father's will. Recent changes in attitudes towards girls' inheritance were reported, with a growing tendency to include them in inheritance. One KI estimated that in some 40-60% of households (primarily Bahima and a few other ethnic groups), girls inherit both cows and land, albeit in smaller proportions than boys do. This is in line with Islamic inheritance practices, although it is not clear from the research whether the religiously prescribed proportions are respected among the Muslim groups.

## Box 13: Some share for girls in land and property in Sembabule

*'Young people get [assets] from their parents – if it is land, they get from their parents. This is mostly for the boys. Most girls get married. For the girl to get land [...] it depends on the father's will. You cannot say that they don't get it, but still it depends on the parent's will'* (Men and women mixed FGD, Rwemibu, Sembabule).

*'It is usually the boy who inherits the wealth left behind by the parents but this practice seems to be changing in Sembabule town, where parents are also giving out or leaving property to girls – the district deals with cases of land conflicts'* (District Technical Committee, Sembabule).

*'In households sharing out land through kibanja [which is a form of tenure arrangement in Uganda] the children don't get equal shares; the girl gets small parts, whereas the boys get bigger parts. This is because when a girl grows up she will go away – she does not belong to the family'* (District Technical Committee, Sembabule).

*'The inheritance is improving, I have seen several cases of people giving out property to even the girls. In Sembabule, I find this peculiar. When they are giving out inheritance you find that even girls have a share'* (District Technical Committee, Sembabule).

*'For the girl child – they also have a share of their fathers' property. I don't know about other religious beliefs, but in ours, even if it is a house, they can take the roof off and divide it up so that everyone gets their share. In our Sharia law, they count off everything and share it, even if they are coffee trees – they too are counted. It is only that the boy gets more than the girls. If boys are to get ten items, then a girl gets eight items. That is what the Sharia law dictates'* (Muslim religious leader, Sembabule).

*'Girls are mostly married off without receiving anything from their parents in terms of inheritance, but the government is beginning to change this so that they can be provided for in their parents' will [...] We have just learnt that girls are also children who should be respected. Now it has become a policy for girls to also be given land'* (Protestant religious leader, Sembabule).

When asked about the tendency to favour boys in inheritance, if not exclusively, then at least in relative terms girls concurred with views from adults in the community, the district and the Sub-county Technical Team on the cultural reasons for them to be excluded from inheritance: *'The reason is that for us girls, they know that when we finish school we get married and where we get married becomes our clan, but boys remain in the same clan. That is why boys are given the assets to groom them as they grow,'* affirmed a group of older girls in Sembabule. At the same time, younger girls pointed out that daughters did inherit from their father, particularly when a family has no sons. *'Most parents say that the girl will share from her husband's land, but if the father produced only girls he will give to all of them.'*

### 5.3.2 Economic participation

#### Restricted mobility and labour exclusion

Although both girls and boys are engaged in a variety of economic activities linked to agrarian and urban economies (see Box 14), one factor undermining adolescent girls' economic participation is their limited freedom of movement. In many of the ethnic groups encountered in Mayuge, adolescent girls are not expected to engage in activities, economic or otherwise, that would require them to move out of proximity of the home. *'Young people are not allowed to move aimlessly around the community,'* stated a 15-year-old girl in Mayuge, *'especially the girls.'* An 18-year-old boy further explained that, *'Girls' movements are restricted more than the boys because they are at risk of pregnancy.'*

Thus, unlike the boys in Mayuge, who move out to work in the sugarcane estates as cane cutters, go out to the lake or rivers to fish, seek employment in factories as porters or venture out in the forest reserve to cultivate, burn charcoal or bake bricks (often around the age of 16), girls who were interviewed indicated that their only means of earning income was to engage in casual labour work that mainly involves cultivation in their neighbours' gardens. The girls reported that they often did such work together with their mothers and that the proceeds were shared equally. One girl talked about operating a small business, selling sugarcane by the roadside near her home; however, she described the income as paltry and insufficient for investment in any viable economic venture.

In agro-pastoral Sembabule, where homesteads are scattered 5-10km apart, Bahima women are not supposed to move far away from home; their role is to wait on men (the milkers) to bring them the milk from the family herds for transformation into milk products, such as ghee. Cases of restricted mobility of girls are attributed to parental protection of girls against sexual exploitation – girls' movement outside the home and acquiring cash is associated with engagement in sexual relationships. Boys, on

the other hand, are freely allowed to engage in economic activities outside the home and – because they have separate houses from the parents (see Section 5.1) – they can come home any time they wish, with limited control of their movements. Girls therefore noted that boys could find work more easily than girls. *‘That is how it is,’* stated a group of older girls in Sembabule with some resignation. *‘Parents think differently. They think that when you as a girl go to the market, you’re seen by many and that is not right and so they do not like to give time to those who will see you. That is why they refuse you.’*

#### Box 14: Common economic activities of young people in the two study districts

Outside of household or family-based work, adolescents and young people in both districts engage in a variety of income-generating activities.

In agricultural Mayuge, boys and young men work on rice plantations, cut sugarcane or fish. They also bake bricks, engage in trade, take on casual construction work or seek work in the neighbouring steel mill. Girls also work in the rice fields and sugar plantations – chasing birds and weeding – and cultivate garden plots for the sale of produce, often as a way of raising money for school fees. In town, male youths drive *bodabodas*, while girls and young women are engaged in small-scale vending. Some move to other towns to be domestic workers (Klls, Mayuge).

In agro-pastoral Sembabule, young people derive income from small-scale enterprises and casual jobs. Boys commonly engage in brick making, grazing animals as hired herders (cows and goats), working on dairy farms and trading in goats and cows on the proceeds of crop sales. They also carry firewood into town to sell – often to raise school fees. Girls grow maize, beans and groundnuts on small plots to earn money for school fees, and make crafts, particularly baskets. In town, boys drive *bodabodas* while girls often as young as eight sell food items in the market or work as maids or house girls – sometimes outside the district. Older girls – from the age of 13 – are increasingly seen to take on work as attendants in bars and restaurants, although there is some stigma attached to these jobs, which are associated with ‘loose morals’ (Klls, Sembabule).

#### Risky engagement in paid labour and exploitative practices

Girls and boys in both Mayuge and Sembabule are involved in child labour activities that draw them out of school (as seen in Section 5.2): *‘The government has laws against child labour as a violation of children’s rights, but there are no specific district by-laws on this and they are not enforced,’* observed the District Technical Team in Mayuge.

Adolescent boys and girls who seek unskilled employment often work in hazardous conditions, and are not fairly remunerated by their employers (Pentecostal religious leader, Mayuge). Risks involved in working on the rice and sugar plantations in Mayuge include injury resulting from a lack of protective gear; sleepiness and inattention during the school day as a consequence of irregular hours and night work; exposure to risky behaviours, such as drug use; and injury owing to heavy work (a child of 12 is expected to work as hard as an adult of 30). There is also the threat of SGBV and exploitation. The District Technical Team in Mayuge, evoking the tendency for girls to work in the rice farms (*shamba*), noted that, *‘When they are in the shamba, there are these men who see them isolated and go on to rape them. They defile them and then they run away. There were two cases in Bukabooli: in one, a girl was looking after rice in the swamp when a very big man came and raped her, so she came to the sub-county crying so I gave her a letter to go to the probation office.’*

Some girls from Mayuge move to neighbouring towns like Iganga and Jinja, or the capital city, Kampala, where they find domestic work as house girls. Others move to the beaches/fish landing sites and end up involved in the sex trade in the coastal towns and islands (Pentecostal religious leader, Mayuge). Girls working in bars and restaurants in Sembabule may also be drawn into prostitution. *‘In these bars and restaurants, girls are paid very little money so they end up working as prostitutes to be able to survive which exposes them to the risks of HIV infection and unwanted pregnancies. Some are paid UGX30,000 a month, which cannot even pay for accommodation’* (District Technical Committee in Sembabule). Housemaids also risk abuse: *‘The maids who work in people’s homes are defiled, because this is*



Girls working on rice plantations, Mayuge

*the boss who pays her at the end of the month, so if he demands sex the girl has no say,*' reported the District Technical Committee in Sembabule.

Young people in employment – particularly young women – often have little bargaining power and can easily be exploited through underpayment or even non-payment: *'There are times when you work for someone and he says that he will give you the money later, so you do the work and finish eventually but he doesn't pay you,'* explained a group of older girls in Sembabule. Housemaids can find themselves in particularly exploitative circumstances, as an older group of adolescents in Sembabule explained: *'You get a job of a house girl, and after negotiating what you want you start. Afterwards a time comes when you want to go home, but during the time you have been working you may have broken some glasses, which the mistress counts. By the time she pays you, she deducts this money from your salary – something you did not expect. At times you also get sick but when she takes you for treatment she also deducts all those expenses from your salary, so it is confusing.'*

In the cattle corridor in Sembabule, an emerging trend is for groups of boys to be brought in as a type of bonded labour, putting them at particular risk: *'If they die, there are no details about them so we [the district team] just bury them around,'* stated the District Technical Committee. Another emerging trend in Sembabule is international security labour recruitment for places such as Iraq, Afghanistan and, recently, Somalia – with both boys and girls apparently involved, according to the District Technical Committee.

### **Unemployment**

In both districts, young people face severe challenges in finding well-paid, productive employment owing to a lack of decent employment opportunities, training facilities and access to credit. Low levels of skills and education prevent them from accessing both formal and informal employment. In Sembabule, the problem of youth unemployment is seen as a security threat, as idle male youth may turn to drugs or crime, while young women may turn to sex work.

While both boys and girls are affected by unemployment, the fact that boys usually have a higher level of education than girls means they are at an advantage in accessing available jobs. *'Girls lack skills to create income and have low levels of education because they drop out of school so early so they are limited in what they can earn,'* reported a religious leader in Mayuge. Gender-based discrimination was also reported in the case of young mothers with children who have dropped out of school as a result of pregnancy. In discussions with a mixed group of adults in Sembabule, it was noted that, *'Someone may require a worker who has no child, but you cannot throw away the child. The person may also want someone who studied to a certain level and yet you never reached that level required.'* Limitations on girls' movements outside of the home or home community also restrict access to economic opportunities, as does discrimination in recruitment.

### **5.3.3 Access to training and credit**

#### **Limited opportunities for vocational training and technical skill building**

Both boys and girls suffer from lack of opportunities for technical training in the study districts, where there are few established training institutes. Key informants in Mayuge reported one government vocational school in the district, but mostly for male-oriented activities (bricklaying, mechanics) along with some tailoring, while at sub-county level there is little access to vocational training or entrepreneurial skill development of any kind outside of an occasional religious-backed initiative, as noted by the Sub-county Technical Team: *'There is no specific known vocational institute in the sub-county; the only help is from FLEP [Family Life Education Programme], a Church of Uganda initiative to help young girls who drop out of school get access to sewing machines and learn tailoring in Matovu parish.'* The Pentecostal religious leader in Mayuge also identified an NGO founded by Busoga diocese that had trained some community members, including out-of-school girls, in tailoring, and provided them with 15 sewing machines in 2012. However, there is no systematic programme covering the whole District and there are no financial institutions willing to provide resources to train and equip adolescent girls and boys with entrepreneurial skills. Lacking suitable skills, most out-of-school and unmarried adolescent girls are left with few options for skilled labour or entrepreneurship.

Key informants in Sembabule painted a similar picture of limited training opportunities – identifying only one skills training centre established by an NGO that is 'limping along' because it has no support. They also mentioned one government vocational education institution in the district, which is not accessible to most communities and is not, moreover, highly appreciated: *'There is a tendency to look at people who go there as failures,'* explained the District Technical Committee. As in Mayuge,

entrepreneurship training programmes for young people in the district are almost completely lacking, leaving both male and female youth without needed productive skills. One KI spoke eloquently of the challenges faced by young women in completing schooling or taking up and pursuing skill-building opportunities, even when they exist, particularly when they have been forced to drop out of school as a result of pregnancy and must now juggle childcare and schooling:

*Within the apprenticeship programme, one of the challenges they face is that some of them are already heads of households. Now she is coming to this place where she is making any money for a year but there are issues to do with putting bread on the table, so this significantly affects her level of attendance. So for her, her needs have changed. She is no longer a child, she is now a mother and she needs to take care of her child because her father or mother can no longer take care and are not interested in another child because they are already struggling with money. So for her to enrol back in school might not be easy [...] She is still a teenager, but going back to school seems like a very long journey, and one that would make the child that was born very vulnerable in terms of malnutrition and poor health and even the risk of dying. So her economic needs have changed and she needs to take care of herself [and her child]* (Male NGO officer, Sembabule).

### Lack of credit and start-up capital

Discussions revealed that most adolescents not only lack entrepreneurial skills but also are severely constrained by a lack of capital and seed money to initiate business activities. Available credit facilities are reserved for adults and/or demand collateral that young men, much less young women, do not have. Banking laws also prohibit those under the age of 18 from opening an account. *'In microfinance,'* explained the District Technical Team in Mayuge, *'we cannot give someone who is a minor [under 18] a loan. So if that person wanted a loan, he would have an adult stand in for them. Even opening up a bank account – we cannot allow a minor to run a bank account. That, in fact, is a government law that governs banking institutions and the Bank of Uganda cannot allow this.'* The situation is similar in Sembabule. *'We have credit facilities. Even here we have an association, a SACCO [savings and credit cooperative]. Our group has both males and females. But adolescents do not have any – they are still under the care of their parents and are still in school. So they are not part of any groups,'* explained a mixed group of adults in Sembabule.

In Mayuge, it was reported that some adolescent girls had tried to circumvent this challenge by registering and joining informal and women-only revolving funds, known locally as *nigina*. Married girls under the age of 18 in particular have been known to falsify their age in order to qualify for inclusion in such groups. The funds raised in this way may be invested to start an income-generating activity that may be profitable in the long run. Others might arrange informal loans of their own, as the story of Motoni attests (see Box 15), showing the resilience adolescent girls can demonstrate in the face of significant challenges.

### Box 15: Motoni, a resilient entrepreneur

Motoni, aged 14, dropped out of primary school during the sixth year (P6) owing to a lack of interest. Her polygamous family has 19 children. Her parents are rarely at home, as her father is a fisherman and her mother a cultivator in a distant forest reserve. As the eldest, Motoni is more or less the *de facto* head of household in the absence of her parents. As a result of severe cash shortfalls, Motoni's family lives on the edge – always on the brink of starvation. It was the desire to mitigate her family's extreme poverty that motivated Motoni to borrow UGX20,000 (\$7) from a close friend in order to start a business.

With the assistance of her siblings, she erected a makeshift stall by the roadside, close to her home, and started selling fresh sugarcane. Her supply source was the neighbour's garden, which made it easy to transport the fresh cane to her stall. When purchasing the cane, she was charged a standard fee of UGX5,000 (\$1.90) per bundle irrespective of the size of the canes. At the stall, Motoni would sort out and sell the canes according to size. When demand was very high, she would chop the canes into small pieces and charge UGX100-200 per piece. She sold each big whole cane at UGX500, and the small ones at UGX300. Business boomed, largely because of high demand created by the presence of a nearby school and many passers-by.

Every five days Motoni would replenish her stock, and within six weeks she had paid her friend back the loan she had taken. After three months, however, challenges started to arise. Her neighbour's garden – her sole supply of fresh sugarcane – was increasingly unable to meet the growing demand at her stall. Other sugarcane gardens were 5km away, meaning she needed a bicycle to transport produce to her stall. As her family owns no means of transport – not even a bicycle – she resorted to hiring one from a neighbour.

Soon Motoni realised that this was not cost effective, as the prices she charged her customers had not changed. As if this were not enough, she soon got a competitor – an older woman who had the advantage of procuring fresh cane from her own garden. This enabled her to sell her cane at almost half the price charged by Motoni.

Motoni soon started losing her customers, and some who had been buying canes on credit declined to pay her back, arguing that all along she had been cheating them. Given this state of affairs, it did not take long for Motoni's business to collapse. However, the young girl did not lose her morale and resilience. With some of the money she had saved from the sugarcane business, she is now considering other options, such as dealing in dried and smoked fish.

In Sembabule, it was observed that many economic dreams of young people are shattered by a lack of money, from school fees to invest in a complete education to resources to pursue training and capital to start a business. *'The young people lack capital – you might want to buy a motorcycle but you have no means of getting it,'* confirmed a mixed group of adults in the district. Young people also fail to qualify for participation in government programmes such as those offered through the National Agricultural Advisory Services (NAADS), which distributes seedlings but requires land ownership as a precondition.

### 5.3.4 Positive actions

Some positive initiatives – albeit scattered – were reported to enhance opportunities for adolescent economic capability development in the two districts; for the most part these remain small scale. In Mayuge, one government vocational training institute offers some stipends for students based on merit. Restless Development, an NGO, targets out-of-school young people aged 18-26, offering employment as 'change agents' to work with youth in their counties. Another NGO offers tailoring training. In Sembabule, some youth have received entrepreneurial skills training under the short-lived Youth Entrepreneurship Skills (YES) programme, which focused on the saloon business. SACCOs support women in producing crafts and energy-saving cook stoves for sale, and organisations such as Ugandan Women's Efforts to Save the Orphans (UWESO) have programmes for both women and girls who have dropped out of school.

There have been some government interventions, such as Community Development Programmes (CDPs) targeting vulnerable women, while the NAADS included out-of school youth – boys and girls – in a poultry-raising project (though this was apparently mismanaged). Other actions are taken by NGOs. The Lutheran World Federation (LWF), for example, targets vulnerable women and children through savings group associations for women and an apprenticeship programme for girls who have dropped out of school owing to pregnancy, do not have husbands and need skills. The girls are attached to a local artisan for a year – the majority in hairdressing and tailoring – and are then provided with start-up materials for their businesses.

## 5.4 Physical domain

*'What is immature cannot ripen.'*

Communities in the two study sites had a variety of attitudes and practices regarding sexual maturation processes, which had different implications for adolescent girls and boys.

In both sites, girls' sexual maturation – manifested by menstruation and the development of breasts – was seen to mark the dividing line between girlhood and womanhood, with no transitional period of 'adolescence' in between, unlike for boys. In Sembabule, the Sub-county Technical Team explained that, *'If a girl starts having menstrual periods (around nine or 10) she stops being a child [...] she is now a woman. Also when she has a child – even if she is only 13 years old, she is considered a woman.'* Among the Basoga in Mayuge, *'A girl irrespective of her age is a child/girl so long as she is resident at her parents' home under their care. Once a girl leaves her home for marriage and gives birth, she becomes a woman'* (Muslim cleric). By this logic, he continued, *'It is only boys who can be adolescents or youth.'* Thus, for girls, 'maturity' is linked more or less directly to 'physical maturity' in the sense that she has 'ripened', as demonstrated by the popular saying, *'What is immature cannot ripen.'*

There are, moreover, strong social prescriptions against a Basoga girl shedding menstrual blood in her father's home; at puberty she comes under the classification of *muko*, or 'in-law', to her father,

implying that father and daughter are not expected to interact closely or live in close proximity. Indeed, in this community, a girl remaining in the natal home after puberty is not even expected to wash her father's clothes. Hence there is a strong push for early marriage, to avoid such complications, as observed by one informant: *'The Basamya and Basoga do not allow a girl to drop blood in their homes. So they marry her off immediately, at the first signs of puberty.'*

The same is true in Sembabule, where the District Technical Committee explained even further that a girl who becomes pregnant and has a child while still in her father's home is *'referred to as a curse because she fits into no specific stage in life [...] while the baby is called bastard'*. The practice of bride price in particular was highlighted as a key factor impelling early marriage in Sembabule. This is discussed further in the analysis of the household and family domain.

Such cultural contexts serve as a backdrop to the patterns of early sexual debut, pregnancy and marriage that contribute to girls' physical vulnerabilities in the study communities, discussed below. They do not, however, fully explain the high incidence of various forms of SGBV that was reported to occur in the two study communities.

While underlying assumptions that a girl who has menstruated and is able to get pregnant is mature – an adult – and thus a legitimate target of men's sexual advances may be at play, this would undoubtedly need more detailed investigation of cultural notions of masculinities and social norms around male violence, which this study did not fully explore.

The study did reveal, however, additional factors on the supply side impinging on entitlements for gender justice and contributing to girls' vulnerability in the physical domain. These include lack of information about vital bodily functions and sexual and reproductive health issues; lack of appropriate reproductive health services; and lack of protective measures against and legal recourse in the case of sexual and gender-based violence and abuse.

#### 5.4.1 Early sexual debut, pregnancy and marriage

##### Early sexual relations

In Mayuge, field interviews and discussions indicated that the average age of sexual debut for girls was around 12 or 13 years and that, by the age of 14, an out-of-school Musoga girl is expected to be pregnant and married. *'Young girls get married as soon as they grow breasts,'* explained a group of young girls in Mayuge, *'even a child of 12 years. By 15 years she has grown too much.'* For the boys, the age of sexual debut is higher, at 16 or 17 years, while marriage itself comes much later. In Sembabule, study participants agreed that adolescent girls were engaging in sex at an early age – around 13 or so – but it depended on the family and upbringing. One girl opined that it was good to start *'trying things out'* in the teen years, and also that it should not be left too long: *'For me I was saying that, some books tell us that when you take long to play sex, you might become barren and others say that if you get married when you are still virgin, you bore the man in the room.'* As in Mayuge, early marriage in Sembabule is a common phenomenon, associated here very strongly with poverty and the practice of bride price. *'Girls get married off as early as 14 years by the parents looking at wealth instead of the girl's future,'* explained the District Technical Committee. However, some girls said they would rather delay marriage at least until after they finished school.

##### Sex for material gain

A number of study participants in Mayuge maintained that, as a result of increased awareness of their sexuality at puberty and external influences, many girls behave *'irrationally'*, becoming wild and uncontrollable both at home and at school. Some, it was observed, start openly taunting old men and boys, challenging them to bouts of sexual intercourse. *'Our children are spoilt,'* complained a mixed group of adults in Mayuge. *'They engage in sexual relationships very early, 12 or 13 years. By the time a girl is 18 she is a mature woman with four children. At the age of 12 a child is already sharp. They cannot wait until P6 or P7 to be educated about adult things, by their teachers. They learn early from the TV, yes blue movies are everywhere and those who bring them make money out of them. So we cannot stop them.'* It was noted that this was the time girls covet material things like clothes, shoes and cosmetics, which older men provide in exchange for sexual favours. Young girls in Mayuge explained that, *'Some girls are misled by the little money boys give them and they disrespect their parents – they do it. Like Milia – she was 13 years old. Even the breasts were not yet grown. She used to abuse her parents every day, so they left her alone. The boys used to give her money, UGX5,000 which could not even last a day.'*

The association of early sex with the seeking of material gain from boys was also highlighted in Sembabule, where the District Technical Committee reported that, *'Young people say that the girls at times have three or four partners: there is one for "detoothing" [being with men for material gain], there is one for paying the house rent; one for putting air time [on mobile phones], one for parties and another for valentines.'* A mixed group of adolescents reported that, *'In the market, the boy will buy her a soda for UGX1,000, a cake for UGX500 and something else for UGX2,000, totalling UGX3,500, and that day she gives him [sex] [...] He might buy for her a phone and he uses that phone to sleep with her most of the time.'* Early marriages, already fuelled by parents seeking material gain from bride price, are also sometimes favoured by the girls themselves, *'partly because girls admire a lot of things that their parents cannot afford to give them because of high poverty levels in families [...] So she decides to marry or sell her body,'* explained adolescent girls in Sembabule. Detailed statistics are lacking on the extent of these practices.

### **Early pregnancy/marriage**

Adult KIs in Mayuge pointed out that, more often than not, the consequences of girls' early sexuality were dire and included, among other things, dropping out of school, early pregnancy, unsafe abortion, eviction from home, destitution, early marriage and, not least, infection with STDs including HIV and AIDS. Early pregnancy, whether within marriage or outside, is common and wrapped up in a girl's own identity as someone who can give birth in a society that values fertility. *'Early pregnancy is still a very big challenge,'* explained sub-county officials in Mayuge. *'You find that a young girl of 14 or 15 is having a baby and she is proud and happy, and she proudly carries her baby around to show that she is a mother. But she herself is just a baby – she is below 18 and she starts caring for another baby, so that is a very big challenge.'*

Respondents in Sembabule also highlighted the negative physical consequences of early marriage and/or pregnancy, including difficulties in giving birth, lack of appropriate maternal health care and high rates of maternal mortality. *'When girls are involved in early marriages, they face a number of challenges like having problems at giving birth, some end up involved in multiple relations, others dump children in toilets and others face financial and marital problems in new homes like domestic fights,'* explained a group of adolescent girls in Sembabule. A mixed group of older adolescents concurred that, *'Girls who get married while young run risk of being second or third wives, some can die while giving birth because their bones are not mature enough while others face continuous bleeding because of abortions.'*

District officials in Sembabule estimated that around a quarter of girls 14-19 years were pregnant. There is no general hospital in the district and only two health centres, neither of which is equipped for Caesarean sections. Around 17% of teen pregnancies are referred to a hospital in another district for further action, and many of them are 'scissored' (given an episiotomy). *'So we have quite a burden. We are not sure of the maternal mortality rate, because of a lack of statistics, but there is a burden of young mothers – babies who are becoming mothers.'* Some girls, because they are not married, fear going to health centres for care. Respondents noted that the boys or men who impregnated them very rarely paid the consequences.

Men in the community are seen to have multiple partners, and to be irresponsible in their relationships. *'Girls who are impregnated are then disappointed by their partner and find no support in caring for the baby,'* observed sub-county officials in Sembabule. *'They sometimes marry bodaboda boys who seem to offer a good living, but just stay married for a short time and then divorce. These bodaboda boys, though young, are already polygamists – some are having four children in just one year, with risks of STDs – also they become unable to cope and at times lose their jobs.'* A mixed group of adults agreed that, *'Girls are easily deceived by men giving them money, chapatti, phones, among others, in exchange for sex. In fact, a big percentage of young girls are impregnated by older men in the community.'*

Interestingly, some respondents suggested an ethnic dimension to pregnancies and their outcomes. In Sembabule, the Sub-county Technical Team noted that, *'If a non-Muhima boy (for example a Muganda) impregnates a Muhima girl, they make her abort (after which she could return to school); if it is a Muhima boy, she keeps the child.'* More investigation is needed to determine the social norms around appropriate reproductive and marriage partners to more fully understand this reported practice.

## 5.4.2 Lack of reproductive and sexual health information and services

### Limited access to information ...

Information on sexual and reproductive health is an essential input into responsible behaviour and informed reproductive choices. Discussions at field level, however, indicated that adolescent girls had little knowledge about essential reproductive and sexual health issues. While not all of the reasons for this are clear, some are rooted in the fact that such matters are considered 'sacred' or 'taboo' and should not be discussed openly, but rather communicated through indirect language or sayings. There were also some suggestions that customary practices of paternal 'aunties' taking girls aside at the time of marriage to initiate them into the knowledge, practices and duties of womanhood may be losing force and so far have not been replaced at scale by appropriate health education in schools, or taken up by parents themselves in the home. This is, in turn, is related to the fear that, if such information is given too early – that is, before marriage – it will 'spoil' the girls and incite them to inappropriate behaviour.

### ... On menstruation

Ignorance about their own bodies is first manifested at puberty when, despite the social importance of sexual maturation processes for girls, the onset of menstruation is shrouded in secrecy, turning it into a traumatic event for many girls.

### Box 16: Experiences of first menstruation

*'When I had my first period I knew nothing about menstruation. I told my elder sister and she taught me how to pad myself up using strong cloth or face towels' (IDI, 13-year-old schoolgirl, Mayuge).*

*'Me, I was at school. I started feeling headache pain and I went and told madam that I had a headache and wanted to go back home, so madam gave me tablets and told me to first go and sleep. So I did and after sleeping I went for a short call and I started seeing blood, I wanted to cry, I removed the knickers and threw them in the latrine' (16-year-old girl, Matovu, Mayuge).*

*'We want to know and learn about what they tell big girls. We also want to know about periods so that if we start we know how it is. They're having periods and yet we don't know how it is' (Young girls FGD, Bukabooli, Mayuge).*

*'Me I was at home. It was at night, after having supper and everyone was sleeping, even my parents. Then I felt I was getting wet down there, so I went to the urinal and after squatting I saw blood. So I ran out calling my sister, "Come out and see, I am urinating blood!" So after seeing that, my sister gave me a pad' (18-year-old girl, Matovu, Mayuge).*

*'The first experience of menstruation came unawares as a shock. It was so painful and I was not prepared at all for it. It is my mother who told me what to do' (17-year-old out-of-school girl, Matovu, Mayuge).*

*'I didn't know the first day that if you're entering menstruation period, you may feel a headache or stomach ache [...] I didn't know because I was still young, 12 years, I did not understand pads. When I started menstruation, I was staying with my sister; she is the one who bought some and taught me how to use it' (Intra-household, female adolescents, Lwemiyaga, Sembabule).*

*'I did not tell my mother that I had started my monthly periods until one day she saw me and asked. I then told her but I have never told my father' (IDI, 16-year-old girl, Rwemibu, Sembabule).*

### ... On birth control and protection

Ignorance continues thereafter around fertility regulation methods and services, and about protection against STDs.

In Mayuge, most of the girls who were interviewed were ignorant or had only limited knowledge about fertility regulation methods, which is why for them early engagement in sexual activity results more often than not in early pregnancy. *'Girls engage in sexual encounters at an early age because they need provision for the needs the parents cannot afford,'* explained a mixed group of adolescents in Mayuge. *'Yet they cannot access family planning services to avoid early pregnancies.'*

Two sisters who had been enrolled in a private school on Jaguzi Island before relocating to a school in this district were among the only girls who appeared to be knowledgeable about fertility regulation: *'At our former school, doctors would at times come to talk about family planning. They would tell us that if you do not want to get pregnant, you use family planning. But they would caution us that, even*

*if you are using family planning, do not forget the protectors, you use the condoms.'* These girls had even seen and handled condoms: *'Some people had told us that condoms have holes in them. So when they brought them to us in Juguzi, we poured water in them and the water just seeped through!'*

Most other girls appeared ignorant about family planning in general, while some said they had heard about family planning over the radio, but that it did not exist in their area. Boys in Mayuge, on the other hand, were familiar with condoms, which they explained were most readily available at the big hospitals, where they are provided free of charge; they are also dispensed once a week at their local health centre: *'We go and line up on Thursday and they give us the condoms,'* they noted, *'but the girls are never there. Most girls have never seen a condom. It is the older married women who are there.'* Both boys and girls were ignorant about other methods of fertility regulation and indeed about sexual maturation and sexual and reproductive health in general.

Lack of knowledge of and access to family planning was one of the reasons cited for early and frequent child bearing in Sembabule, although other factors were also considered important. *'In this community,'* explained a group of older adolescent girls, *'most women give birth to their first child after P7 at 15 or 16 years and most families give birth to between five and 10 children. This is because they consider children wealth, others don't know family planning while others have a single sex of children so they are looking for another sex.'* Younger girls are particularly left out of reproductive health information. *'At school young people are only taught good social behaviours like respect to parents and elders,'* explained a young adolescent girl in Sembabule who was not aware of menstruation, AIDS or sexual diseases. Consequently, most young girls enter into puberty without adequate information on how to deal with the changes in their bodies and the implications for reproductive health.

Older girls in Sembabule did seem to have some information about 'safe' and 'unsafe' days and about family planning supplies, and some knew where to secure these (both condoms – free, and pills – paid for), although they noted that few young boys knew how to use these. They also pointed out that parents and other adults object: *'Condoms are freely provided at government health centres,'* noted a mixed group of older adolescents in Sembabule. *'But young people are shy to pick them or ask for them from the health workers. Parents can also take it badly when they see young people with condoms, so they have to hide them and so rarely use them. Condoms are given nicknames by the young people so that parents don't understand what they are talking about.'*

Religious leaders also express certain reservations: *'Religious leaders are not comfortable with some things,'* explained a Muslim religious leader in Sembabule, *'for example hanging a big box of condoms on the tree where the bodaboda drivers park and refilling it whenever it is empty, thus promoting rampant sexual behaviour among youth. This is against religion, but we do not talk much about it.'*

### **Vulnerability to HIV and AIDS and other STDs**

In both study districts, while some of the younger girls in particular were uninformed, the majority of the adolescent girls and boys interviewed were aware of HIV and AIDS and its mode of infection. In Mayuge, for example, engaging in unprotected sexual intercourse with an infected person was identified as the most common mode transmission. While the use of male condoms as a means of protection against infection was known to some, particularly older adolescents or those who had been to town, others viewed this with scepticism, mainly because of the influx of fake and expired condoms in the health facilities where they are distributed.

Adolescent girls have more limited knowledge about condoms, but also more limited access, mainly because of the risk of being labelled promiscuous if seen in the queues at the health centre. At the same time, many of the adolescent girls who consider themselves adults and are determined to become mothers do not see the purpose of condoms. Such fears and attitudes, rooted in social norms and practices coupled with non-provision of services, intensify their vulnerability to HIV and other STDs.

In Sembabule, HIV and AIDS are strongly associated with poverty, which impels people – particularly girls – into risky behaviours such as engaging in unprotected sex. While condoms are identified as a protective measure, condom use is low. Testing positive is a devastating experience, and there is no one to provide counselling.

Some respondents talked about increasing complacency in the campaign against HIV and AIDS. It was observed that many people – including adolescent boys and girls – had developed an 'I do not

care attitude' and were having unprotected sexual intercourse. When asked about their reckless behaviour, the response was *'Bbalimbajamu mbaawo?'* (*'Why grow so old? I'm a tree from which timber will be hewed?'*) Box 17 captures some of the findings on both attitudes and practices as well as environmental factors that contribute to high levels of vulnerability to HIV and AIDS in Sembabule in particular.

### Box 17: Gendered risks of HIV

*'HIV infection is high because of high levels of poverty, the poor are easily lured into unsafe sexual behaviour. People also do not want to use protection even though condoms are provided free of charge at government hospitals. Others just spread it intentionally while the rest do not know how to use protection'* (Men and women mixed FGD, Rwemibu, Sembabule).

*'Girls are more at risk of getting infected with AIDS than boys because they are easily seduced and convinced especially if they are from poor families [...] There are men who use girls, they pay them for sex, but there are no specific known prostitutes who are from the community, maybe they go to other towns'* (Men and women mixed FGD, Rwemibu, Sembabule).

*'The high risks of catching AIDS are caused by unprotected sexual encounters, people lack information about AIDS, also ARVs [antiretrovirals] have reduced the fear of the disease so people live unresponsively. Information about AIDS can be obtained from hospitals, but there is no one to talk to apart from posters on the wall'* (Female older adolescents FGD, Rwemibu, Sembabule).

*'There are high risks of catching HIV among young people, especially young girls. Young girls are still affected by STDs, and many young girls have STDs yet they are still in school. The young people if they test positive find it hard to cope with the situation, and more girls are affected compared with boys because they are more at risk and mature faster and at times they have multiple partners'* (District Technical Committee FGD, Sembabule).

### Sources of sexual and reproductive health information

In Mayuge, both adolescent boys and adolescent girls identified their school, the radio and their peers as the main sources of information about sexual and reproductive health. Both in-school and out-of-school adolescents singled out the radio programme 'Straight Talk' as the most popular and accessible information source. At school, health visitors, senior women teachers and peers were mentioned as the main sources of information. Health facilities in general were not seen to provide effective youth-friendly information or services. *'There are no services specifically for youth and no support for adolescents,'* observed a Muslim religious leader in Mayuge.

Some girls talked about consulting their mothers and paternal aunts about reproductive health issues, but there is evidence to show that the information provided is not only incorrect but also outright dangerous. For instance, one girl who confided in and sought advice from her mother about the onset of menstruation was advised to avoid having sexual intercourse with boys during this period because she would become pregnant. Some of the adolescent boys recounted similar faulty advice.

Adolescents in Sembabule identified schools, radio and newspapers as key sources of information about reproductive health, but noted that younger adolescents (10-14) were most often left out of information sessions in schools. Older adolescents (both boys and girls) reported having obtained information on a number of issues, namely, HIV and AIDS, menstruation, STDs, body changes, behavioural changes, sexual relationships and personal and environmental hygiene. Health visitors come from the hospital to speak to them about these issues, with girls and boys in separate sessions. Girls reported that the information obtained was sometimes inadequate, as they remain with unanswered questions about how HIV infection is spread, how to control pregnancy and how to deal with menstrual pains. Girls also reported that most parents were reluctant to give any reproductive health education because they think children are too young, and they are not always totally informed themselves.

As in Mayuge, there is a dearth of youth-friendly information and services. *'There is no place where young people can easily access reproductive health information and services,'* confirmed a mixed group of adults in Sembabule. *'The lucky get it from the very few schools that do it. Mothers usually talk to their girls about life experiences but do not have current information about reproductive health.'*

### 5.4.3 Traditional practices

In the multi-ethnic setting of the field research, communities have retained different cultural identities, characterised by different norms, values and practices. In Mayuge, respondents described practices linked to beliefs about the care and form of male and female sexual organs as follows.

## Female practices

There was unanimity among the respondents that severe forms of FGM were not practised in Mayuge district. It was noted that practices such as female circumcision, where all or some of the female external genitalia are excised, were common among the Sebei tribe in Kapchorwa district. However, it was disclosed that among the Basoga a more subtle form of FGM is practised: *'In our culture,'* explained two sisters, *'girls have to pull their clitoris. It is something you have to do and we have all done it. When the clitoris is pulled and elongated, it acts as a curtain to the vagina. When you have not pulled it and you sleep with a man or a boy, you look like a house without a curtain. Every kind of thing whether good or bad enters you.'*

Other girls who were interviewed shied away from discussing this topic, though the elder women acknowledged that the practice, referred to as *okukyalira ensiko*, or 'visiting the bush', is still practised among a section of the Basoga. A similar practice was reported by an elderly woman as common among the neighbouring Baganda, though in this case it was the inner lips of the vagina, the *labia minora*, that are pulled. It was disclosed that in the past this ritual was mandatory for any girl intending to get married. The pulling of the *labia minora* is also a common practice in Sembabule, where it is described as mandatory– it is done before a girl is married and not having it done could be cause for divorce.

Other sexual practices mentioned do not necessarily involve mutilation. These include herbal baths, mostly by adolescent girls, allegedly to prevent strong body odour, and oral administration of herbal concoctions to cleanse the reproductive system of foul, smelly fluids, which are perceived as a sexual turnoff for the men.

## Male practices

Male circumcision, known as *imbalu* among immigrants from Bugish, is considered a ritual of passage from boyhood to adulthood, and is mandatory among all Bagishu at the time of adolescence. It is preceded by naked marching and frenzied dancing by the circumcision candidates and other tribe mates. Respondents described these dances, known as *kadodi*, as exciting. Many wives, it was observed, are often battered by their husbands when they get carried away and follow the *kadodi* dancers instead of attending to their domestic chores. Both girls and women agreed that such beatings, despite being a form of gender-based violence, were normal and justified.

Another practice boys mentioned is the savage squeezing of their breasts to prevent them from enlarging and resembling those of girls. One boy talked about experiencing much pain and itching after undergoing this ritual, which may go on intermittently for several days. It was noted, however, that a number of boys do not experience breast swelling, and thus are spared this ritual. The squeezing of the breasts may be done by oneself or by others.

### 5.4.4 Sexual and gender-based violence

There was unanimity among respondents in the study areas that various forms of SGBV existed, and that men were mostly the perpetrators and girls and women the victims. The forms of violence mentioned most were wife beating, sexual assault/rape and child abuse/defilement. Psychological violence was also mentioned, albeit implicitly.

#### Domestic violence

Wife beating was described as more or less routine in the study areas. While domestic violence is a crime in Uganda, most consider it a family matter, and community attitudes condone or accept some forms of violence against women – with women themselves internalising such attitudes. *'In fact, at community level, they say that if a man beats a woman it's a sign of love,'* explained the District Technical Team in Mayuge. *'When you are not beaten by your husband then you are not loved. When you go to the water source, you hear a woman saying that, "My husband beat me," and others telling her, "It is a sign of love." So for them, beating a woman is a sign of love.'* Adult men in Sembabule invoked wife beating as a necessary disciplinary measure to 'correct' the behaviour of wives when they do something 'wrong': *'It is normal to beat a woman to correct her where she is going wrong – if a woman makes a mistake you give her some tea canes [...] At times the wife comes from an inferior family status, so to make sure she reaches your level you must use a strong voice, including disciplining her.'*

Such beating often results in physical injury and trauma. Alcohol and substance abuse by the male partner were identified as the main reason men beat their wives. Other triggers were misunderstandings over food, quarrels over household expenses (sometimes around the paying of

school fees), property disputes and fidelity- or polygamy-related frictions. Men who travel may also get violent if, on their return, their wife asks them to be tested for HIV. Some men, it was observed, beat their wives merely as a way of asserting their masculinity.

Some respondents highlighted age at marriage as a factor contributing to domestic violence. *'There is violence created by the fact that people get married while young because of early unwanted pregnancies and they lack respect for each other. Some disagree over sex, suspecting of cheating,'* noted the District Technical Team in Sembabule. Young married girls are particularly at risk of violence from older husbands. In Mayuge, age differences can span over 25 years as girls as young as 15 may be married to men over 40 who assume the authority of fathers over them. *'That man looks at this girl as his daughter, so he takes battering as a way of teaching and disciplining,'* explained the District Technical Team in Mayuge. *'Even if that man hurts her she can do nothing [...] That's why we have children in slums: this girl gets married at 14, she is battered and by 18 she thinks it's too much. Meanwhile, she has already had children. She leaves and goes to another marriage, she gets battered and by 25 it is too much for her, so she leaves again and ends up in the slums [...] In most of these buzigozigo [one roomed rented houses, mainly in towns] are young women who end up sex workers, so it [domestic violence] has a negative impact.'* Intergenerational marriage is also common in Sembabule, where cases were reported of 70-year-old men marrying 17- or 18-year-old girls, the age differences also being a common trigger for violence.

One girl in Mayuge said that food could provoke domestic violence in her family's home. Fish is a common source of protein in the area and in her home, but there are parts that are reserved for different family members. She said that her father ate the head, the wife the stomach 'middle' part and the children the tail. Any deviation from this, she said, sparked off a quarrel and subsequent beating of her mother.

Violence in the home can have significant effects on children: *'Our father drinks a lot,'* explained a 16-year-old girl in Mayuge. *'And when he comes back home drunk he quarrels and chases us and mother away from home, but we refuse to go. Then he starts fighting with mum. Me, I do not fear him, so I go and separate them. Sometimes I help mum.'* But her younger sister added, *'For me I fear, so when they are fighting, I just look on. I'm not brave like my sister.'*

Sometimes it is the children, in addition to and/or instead of the wife, who are the subject of domestic violence. A number of incidents of violence against children were reported in polygamous households and households with stepparents, attesting to the particular tensions that may arise in these circumstances. *'Dad treats us so badly, accusing us of backbiting about our stepmother who stays in another home,'* reported a 12-year-old girl from a polygamous family in Mayuge. *'He would beat us whenever he came home, and one day we reported him to the police.'* A mixed group of adolescent in Sembabule noted that, *'Cases of child abuse happen especially to children who stay with stepmothers,'* while other episodes were described as just a form of discipline for unruly children, perpetrated on *'bad-mannered children who come home late from disco halls, those who deserve a beating'*.

A government official in Sembabule painted a stark picture of cycles of violence and abuse: *'There is a big problem of violence in the homes. The men are fighting the women every other night. The children are watching and becoming the victims thereafter. When the wife eventually runs away, the girl child remains to take care of the younger ones. In some cases, the man in fact may chase away his wife and turn the child into a wife. Girls are victimised in this way from the age of 15.'*

### **Rape and defilement**

Rape and 'defilement' are significant problems in both study areas. In Mayuge, the violence suffered by adolescent girls includes rape, sexual harassment, forced early marriage and/or abduction. Study participants said girls had no safe spaces in the community. In homes where the mother has remarried, they are at risk of being harassed by their stepfathers; at school they are sexually harassed or defiled by their male teachers; and in the wider community they are prey to the old men, their male peers and, of late, the *bodaboda* riders. The village well/borehole, the paddy rice fields, the road to school, the trading centre, the beaches/fish landing sites and the lonely forests and gardens were all described as high-risk spaces for adolescent girls.

Some girls in Mayuge spoke about their own traumatic experiences, linking them at times to what was seen as a transgression of dangerous, male-dominated 'public' space: *'I had been told never to go to the market at night,'* admitted a 14-year-old girl in Mayuge, *'but I continued there. So one time an old*

*man who pretended to be drunk raped me.'* Some seem to 'blame the victim', suggesting the girls bring it on themselves: *'Defilement is present but it's the girls who bring it about,'* asserted a mixed group of adolescents in Mayuge. *'A young girl finds an older man and tells him he cannot manage her sexually, so he does whatever is in his means to defile her.'* Other informants linked it to the family situation itself: *'You find that there is violence at home, the woman is away, so this young girl is forced to take care of the family [...] until the mother comes back. We then have a problem of fathers defiling their own daughters,'* explained the Sub-county Technical Team in Mayuge, continuing, *'At times they do this to their stepdaughters; if a woman leaves her behind, he is always forcing the girl into sex.'*

Rates of rape and defilement were also said to be high in Sembabule. District authorities placed defilement at the top of the list of crimes in the district, even though cases of defilement are only reported when parents fail to reach agreement on compensation with the defilers. Both rape and violence are associated with alcohol and drug abuse, but also occur within families (see Box 18) and present common threats in girls' everyday environments. Young girls identified friends who had been raped in their community and outlined the dangers they faced: *'She was going to fetch water,'* explained one girl in Sembabule. *'She left one well and went to another where she found two older men and a younger man. The two older men left and the one young man remained behind and then raped her.'* *'When coming from school there is a risk of rape from men along the way,'* said another, *'so a girl has to leave school early, wait for colleagues and move in a group or carry stones to throw at them. If it was possible a girl needs to be in a boarding school.'*

As in Mayuge, some informants blamed the victim, pointing to promiscuous dressing and behaviour as a causal factor, as was the case with a government official in Sembabule: *'The women and girls are putting on miniskirts, they are showing their private parts, mothers are wearing the same and are all walking to church. Some mothers are big but are wearing tight trousers going to church, putting pastors in problems as those in miniskirts sit before them. That is why even sometimes these young girls are defiled – their dressing is not good at all.'*

Coerced early marriage and marriage by abduction were also reportedly common in some communities in Sembabule. Although the latter practice – whereby families negotiate bride price after young girls are abducted as wives – was seen to be on the decline overall in its customary form, it may still be underpinning norms, attitudes and practices that culturally condone persisting patterns of male violence against women and girls.

### **Box 18: Kyankazi's story**

Kyankazi has experienced many hardships from a very young age. Her father died when she was two, leaving her alone with her mother. Her mother later got married to the son of her paternal uncle who was taking care of them after the death of her father.

*'My father died when I was two years old. I don't remember the year exactly – maybe the elders do – but for me I was still very young. I could not understand, I was told that he passed on. By then I had to live another life. I was living with my mother on land my father had left behind.'*

*'When I was ten years old my stepfather (who was also my uncle) requested sex from me. Actually, he didn't request as such – he tried to rape me. I ran away crying, I made an alarm. He ran after me for about 2 miles as I ran to my other uncle's home while naked. We ran and reached my other uncle's home.'*

*'My other uncle asked, "What is it? Why are you naked?" Then I told him about my stepfather, how he wanted to rape me. They got clothes and dressed me. Then my uncle tried to intervene to solve the whole issue. I narrated the story about how it started. My uncle abused him [stepfather], told him how what he had done was bad and that he was going to build a house for my mum and me so that we could live a stable life. I then stayed with my uncle for some time until he decided that I should return to my mum. He told me to report to him any issues or problems that would arise.'*

*'But the problem [the stepfather keeps on asking her for sex] has kept on. Still now, when I am grown up, he keeps on reminding me and he never stops asking for sex. But I try to ignore it. That is the situation – a kind of mistreatment – but I have tried to ignore it [...] [But] he threatens me all the time. Sometimes he tries to take some of my property which my father left, like cows, and sells them when I am not aware. Sometimes I cannot manage to handle him myself because he is a man and I am a girl so I tell my uncle to intervene.'*

*'When I sat for the 2008/09 examinations (Uganda Certificate of Education), during the vacation they started preparing me for marriage, but I refused. Then other people – relatives and other people in the village – told my uncle that I was old, he should not educate me but should let me be married. I said I didn't want to get married. I*

*know what I want. I am focused and want to study. Now all my property that had been supporting my education is finished. I don't know what I will do to further my education'* (Life history, Lwemiyaga, Sembabule).

### Limitations in recourse to justice

Channels for redressing domestic violence, rape and defilement are extremely weak. People often do not report domestic violence as they consider it a family matter. Moreover, from a practical perspective, *'If the wife reports the husband, they can take him to prison, sell the family goats and cow, and in the end the whole family loses,'* explained a religious leader in Mayuge. *'So instead they reach a compromise and try to settle their dispute outside of the law.'* The police are not often involved, he continued, even when the victim of domestic violence requires hospitalisation: *'These cases come before them [at local council level], and if the man is in the wrong he is given a small fine and told to take the wife to the hospital. When women bring the cases to them, they are handled with urgency, but the cases are not usually taken to the police.'*

Young people's independent access to justice is not at all well defined or perceived: *'Parents interfere with young people accessing justice,'* explained the Sub-county Technical Team in Mayuge. *'Moreover, young people themselves are scared of the local authority and hate them.'* Justice is normally accessed through the local council system and the police, but it is hard for the young people to make claims on such systems because they lack both the knowledge and the material means to do so and moreover live in societies that put all of the authority in the hands of adults – not children. Normally both formal and informal fees are demanded, and complicated processes follow. As a result, many young people have lost trust in the police: *'Even when you want to go to the police [...] they won't care about you because they have nothing to gain from you,'* explained a mixed group of adolescents in Sembabule. *'So you die with your pain.'*

Adults in Sembabule stressed that, *'Access to justice is not easy for the young people because they don't have the money needed to pursue it. Girls do not know that they can even report parents to the authorities [...] If you go to the LC [local council] to report, there is some money that they want but if you don't have that money, you can fail to get help.'* The Sembabule District Technical Team confirmed that, *'The justice system facilities are far away from the young people and most of them are not aware that such systems exist. Young people fear to report cases and are not supported. The judicial system also has challenges, they are overwhelmed by big numbers, lack proper facilitation and are often compromised to frustrate people's cases.'*

Adolescent girls face particular obstacles in accessing justice in cases of violence in the home. In cases of domestic violence, victims have nowhere to go: some go back home, others go into other marriages and few of them ever report. Even when they report they do not get any help; they are told that these are family matters that can be settled at home, or men bribe the police. Often times, girls lack money to report cases. Moreover, as adolescent girls in Sembabule pointed out, *'Some look at reporting to the police as an embarrassment, so they keep quiet'* (see also Box 19).

### Box 19: Naimaso, a 15-year-old girl battered into unconsciousness by her father

Naimaso is the first born in a family of 15 children. Her mother was separated from her father five years ago and now lives in a far-off village, where she has remarried. Naimaso's mother never produced any sons, which was the reason she was chased away. Naimaso's father has also remarried and his new wife has borne him three sons, one of whom is enrolled in secondary school. Naimaso's father spends most of his time at his other family but comes back to Naimaso's home twice a month.

But Naimaso says that, ever since her mother left, her father has developed a negative attitude towards her and her siblings. He neglected the family and stopped paying the children's school fees. Whenever he came home, he was always drunk. He demanded food, well aware that there was none. Then he accused Naimaso and her sisters of rumour mongering and backbiting about their stepmother, because he knew they all hated her. He went on to abuse them, saying that they were stupid and good for nothing *malayas* (prostitutes), just like their mother.

*'Last month he came around and as usual started his drunken and abusive tirade. He had refused to pay our school fees, yet had enrolled his son – who is dull and not interested in studying – in an expensive secondary school at Busitema. When he called me a malaya, I could not take it any longer. I abused him, very badly. When he came to beat me I did not run away, but challenged him to kill me, there and then.'*

*'Indeed he almost killed me. He beat me into unconsciousness, and I was rescued by the police. As he was beating me my sisters rushed to the police post and reported him. We do not know what happened but he was not even imprisoned! But since then he has at least not returned back'* (Case study, Mayuge).

Rape and violence against children in the family are, in theory, police matters: *'For children or young people who are victims of beating in the family, the case is referred to the police,'* explained a Muslim religious leader in Mayuge. *'Reported cases of rape of a young girl are also automatically a police case at central Mayuge level.'* However, this again depends on the cases being reported in the first place, something parents may be hesitant to do, not only because of the complex and unsatisfactory nature of the legal system itself, but also because of fear of tarnishing their daughter's reputation and diminishing her chances of finding a marriage partners if the rape becomes public. As the District Technical Team in Mayuge observed:

*Some parents are a hindrance to the law about defilers,'* observed. *'They hide their defiled girls. Even when you report to police, they say we shall settle the issues at home. For example, a girl is raped, you intervene and they tell you, "This matter we shall handle, we shall talk to the parents of the boy and things will be normalised." These issues are usually left in the hands of the defiler and their parents. At times they may be neighbours or even relatives and money is usually the factor. If the defilers find out the parents are poor, they come with like UGX1 million [in bride price] and they say they will be good in-laws. The girl is usually then forced to get married.'*

*Very few families or girls have the confidence to report rape cases. They call it shameful. Others take rape offenders as would-be relatives and so fear to report them [...] Most families don't want to say that my daughter was raped. They keep it to themselves and when police or service officers come in they say, "We shall settle this matter here, she will be alright, they have settled us with money, we shall take her to hospital," so there are those kind of things that make everything hard [...] Also, by tradition, if it is known that your daughter was raped, she loses dignity. She even fears to report that case, there is that stigma is also an issue. And on top of that they think she will not get another man to marry her after she was raped. They will say "Patricia was raped, ahh! I can't go there to take her"'* (Mayuge Sub-county Technical Team).

Logistical problems and procedural complications linked to service provision also intervene to limit recourse to justice. The collection of evidence to prove a rape case, including evidence from a medical examination, is often impossible to undertake, and cooperation from the police may require payment, explained the Sub-county Technical Team in Mayuge: *'In cases of rape, the district lacks a medical doctor who can show evidence of rape, in addition to the bureaucracy involved, for one to move from Bukabooli to the police, evidence would be lost. One needs to bathe, and the police are so far.'* It is also hard for the poor to report cases: because of the money for transport required by police officers, justice becomes expensive for poor people.

As for rape within marriage, cases are nearly unheard of: *'Marital rape is not an accepted concept. Among the Bahima in Sembabule, for example, someone who is married cannot be raped,'* observed the Sembabule District Technical Team. Moreover, when the sub-district team tries to follow up cases of 15 year olds marrying, pointing to this as a form of defilement, they are backed up neither by parents nor by local politicians: *'So you realise that, if you are to follow those cases,'* explained the Sembabule Sub-county Technical Team, *'instead of handling the cases you may end up losing your job.'*

#### 5.4.5 Positive actions

Efforts to combat early marriage are implemented through support to girls in school. Some are being made to extend sexual and reproductive health information through school health programmes, particularly in Sembabule. Respondents mentioned in particular information about AIDS and other STDs that is given to the pupils at school through the President's Initiative on AIDS Strategy for Communication to Youth (PIASCY) sessions. Counsellors and Voluntary Health Teams (VHTs) are also doing a great deal to raise awareness of sexual health issues in communities.

An NGO-supported child rights programme is establishing clubs in school and trains child advocates for community work, with para-social workers trained to give feedback on cases of family violence and other cases of child abuse. At the district there are probation officers, the LC system and the courts of law, although the family and children's court has not taken root yet because of an insufficient number of magistrates.

## 5.5 Psychosocial domain

*'My main worries are to plan for my child, I worry also about how to plan for myself.'*

When adolescent boys and girls in Mayuge and Sembabule were asked to list and/or describe the real-life experiences, situations or individuals that brought them happiness, sorrow or stress, their responses were diverse, context specific and age specific. For the most part, they evoked issues centred around themselves (their changing bodies, getting pregnant, their relationships with boys, the threat of HIV, continuing in school and getting a job after school); their households (poverty, domestic chores, domestic violence and relationships with family members, particularly stepparents); and – to a lesser extent – their wider community.

They raised fears about rape as well as drug abuse, which is on the rise among adolescent boys. Older girls were more likely to express worries than younger ones. Young people in Sembabule, for example, said, *'As long as I eat and sleep and am not aware of what is around me then I cannot be stressed.'* The girls have aspirations and look forward to a brighter future in spite of the challenges they are facing.

### 5.5.1 Physical concerns

#### Concerns about bodily changes

Many of the adolescent girls expressed anxiety and worried about the physiological and bodily changes they were undergoing or had undergone in the recent past. Menstruation – with its related tensions and discomforts – was the physiological change of most concern and – as discussed above – it was experienced as shameful, humiliating and embarrassing, primarily because girls were not adequately prepared. Some girls admitted that it evoked in them a feeling of inferiority, especially when they compared themselves with their male peers. Others spoke of anger at having no one to confide in. Still others simply felt anxiety, as they did not know what was happening to them. One young girl in Mayuge, describing her first period, the embarrassment it caused and the lack of explanations about it – including from her mother and sister – reported that, *'For a whole week, I was tense and worried, wondering when the bleeding would stop.'*

Other bodily and physiological changes the girls described as stressful included the growth of breasts and body hair and the development of 'offensive' body odours. *'For me I feel shame when I see my breasts,'* admitted a 16-year-old girl in Mayuge. *'They are big, I can't leave them out. I don't want anyone to see them. I also feel ashamed of the hair.'* *'I feel very angry,'* asserted a 15-year-old girl in Mayuge, *'because of those things. First you had no breasts, then they all come out. Also because of menstruation, that makes me very angry – particularly washing the blood.'*

One girl expressed worry about the strong body odour she had not had before puberty. The same girl confided that she was afflicted with a condition of excessive and smelly vaginal fluids. She described her condition as worrisome and a possible turnoff for her future sexual partners. Other girls were anxious about skin diseases like ringworm and acne, which they had not experienced before the onset of puberty.

Some of the girls, however, felt happy and took pride in the physiological and bodily changes they had experienced. They said that changes like menstruation and the growth of breasts and pubic hair, among other things, were the things that made them adults/women – a status they cherished. *'I feel big – I feel that now I am mature. I am no longer young,'* exulted a 16-year-old girl in Mayuge.

Most male adolescents felt too shy to talk with us about their bodily and physiological changes, a factor that rendered it impossible to gauge their real feelings about the changes.

#### Fear of pregnancy and rape

As seen above, a number of girls expressed worries about getting pregnant while in school, an experience they said was traumatising, made girls misfits in society and ended their future – forcing them to forego school and get married at an early age. Some of them couched this specifically in terms of rape-induced pregnancies (fear of boys who use drugs and lie in wait to rape girls as they go to school or fetch water). Others spoke more generally about pregnancy as an outcome of their sexual relationships with boys. The first is associated with a generalised fear of male violence, particularly in public places but also, as seen above, within families. The second is associated with lack of access to birth control and protection

### **Anxiety about HIV and AIDS**

Both boys and girls were worried about the persistently high prevalence of HIV and AIDS in their community. They also expressed anxiety about complacency and negative attitudes towards the disease and the fact that people can hide their status so you do not know who is infected. *'Some of us behave as if AIDS is not there,'* confided a mixed group of adolescents in Mayuge. *'The girls do not want boys to use condoms, because they want to get pregnant. When people go to hospital for testing, and they test positive, they do not want others to know [...] I fear AIDS is going to finish us all.'* As a girl in Sembabule put it, *'My biggest worries are about getting AIDS and schooling – seeing that my future does not stop on the way. If I contract AIDS, everything becomes a problem for me.'*

### **5.5.2 Issues around relationships**

#### **Anxiety about tensions in the home and domestic violence**

Two girls in secondary school in Mayuge, whose situation was described above, were extremely worried about their father's habitual drunkenness, and the subsequent battering of their mother. One of the girls was anxious about what would happen when she was away at her boarding school, since she is the one who intervenes and separates her parents whenever they fight, often assisting their mother.

A number of girls evoked difficulties in relationships with stepparents, which were worrying to them because they often resulted in mistreatment, as discussed above. *'You know my father has a second wife,'* said a 14-year-old girl in Mayuge. *'So whenever we talk about that woman our dad keeps beating us. That's why we don't want to stay here [in the house], we want to stay at school.'* A group of adolescent girls in Sembabule spoke of tensions with their stepmother as a continuing source of stress. *'You may be living with your stepmother: when you're in the class you are worrying about the chores you must do when you reach home [...] it hinders your studying. At times there is a stepmother who has a good heart but there will also be another type who says that, "This child is not mine," and she keeps on mistreating you.'*

#### **Relationships with boys**

Many girls expressed worries and concerns about relationships with boys. These were not only about fears of getting pregnant, but also about the strength of relationships, about being deceived or disappointed and about not knowing how to deal with boys who were attracted to them. A group of adolescent girls in Sembabule explained:

*Girls become worried when boys have not talked to them. Or you ask yourself what a boy has seen in you when you have been playing sex together. Or you may have a boyfriend and he leaves you [...] We get worried when a boy "chucks" [dumps] us – we fear being chucked [...] There are so many questions that you are bound to ask yourself. You say to yourself, "So how am I? What has made him chuck me?" No one is there to give you the answer and you yourself have failed to find the answer – that is why we get worried [...] At times your boyfriend is your best friend; he knows most of your secrets and when he changes, you ask yourself, "Who am I going share my secrets with?" There are also cases when you have a boyfriend and other boys also come and start disturbing you – saying that you are the one they love [...] It is worrying because you ask yourself, "Why does every boy come to me?" When every boy is looking at you, saying, "You know that you are beautiful," that thing worries us because you know at any time you are in danger. If these boys meet and they have all ever tried you then they will one day decide to rape you.'*

### **5.5.3 Worries about the impact of household poverty**

#### **Withdrawal from school**

Both male and female adolescents expressed anxiety about the poverty and hardship prevalent in their homes. Some were worried about basic subsistence; others were more anxious about whether funds would be available to enable them to continue or return to school. The latter was most common. *'Now that my father is struggling, we may have to stop at S4 and search for other courses and see if we can earn some money and continue with our studies,'* said a 16-year-old girl in Mayuge. *'What makes us worried?'* asked another group of adolescents in the same district. *'Poverty and lack of jobs, when you have no coin in the pockets, the brain can't feel well either.'* One 13-year-old girl in Mayuge said that, when money for school fees is scarce, she is compelled to drop out temporarily to enable her brothers to study, as had happened the previous year. *'There was even no maize to take to*

school. So I let my brother study and I sat at home. I'm worried that this year it may be the same story, because our maize is doing badly.'

### **Caring for babies**

Girls with babies worried greatly about their babies' wellbeing and how they would provide for them. Those with head of household responsibilities also worried about the welfare of other family members. *'I am worried about the stomach ache and the regular sickness for my baby.'* explained a 17-year-old orphan out of school in Mayuge. *'I am also worried when my brother is sick and then about food and clothes.'* *'My main worries are to plan for my child,'* said a 17-year-old girl with a baby, but admitted as well that, *'I worry also about how to plan for myself.'* The interconnected nature of the concerns of adolescent mothers is evident in the following from a 17-year-old girl in Mayuge: *'First and foremost I think about not being in school. It worries me a lot. The second thing that stresses me is the baby – I ask myself how I am going to be able to raise him up, and then how to protect my life.'*

### **Lack of fulfilment of personal needs**

Adolescent girls in Sembabule described frustration arising out of *'not having what you like [...] You don't get basic needs, or you may get your basic needs but not what you want as a person.'* A 13-year-old girl in this district pined for things teenage girls everywhere pine for – nice clothes, shoes, dresses – her longing made more acute by her family's destitute situation: *'Because we were left with mum, I have no shoes, clothes. After I bathe, I put on the same clothes.'* Still other adolescent girls evoked the stigma that being poor can bring when one lacks 'pocket money' for basic necessities and has to ask classmates for help: *'I also would want to be like others so that I can buy sugar, but at school when you go to the others they mock you [...] they say you have come to beg for sugar because you don't even have bread. You think we can eat maize flour all the time without accompaniment?'*

### **5.5.4 Worries about school and the school environment**

Many of the adolescent girls and boys interviewed were enrolled in public schools under the government's UPE and USE programmes. These pupils/students expressed much anxiety about the condition of their schools and the quality of the teaching offered.

Two girls in Mayuge who were previously enrolled in a private school said the teachers in UPE schools simply did not care about how they taught or the quality of education they delivered: *'The teachers simply do not care. When they happen to come they are late; if they step in the classroom they have nothing to teach; and when we complain they say, "Look, this is UPE, if you want better education, why don't you go to a private school?" I'm so worried, because this year I'm sitting for my PLE.'*

Both boys and girls worried about their performance at school. *'What worries us is doing exams,'* stated a group of older adolescent girls in Sembabule. *'Our results are not back yet. We worry because we don't know whether we shall pass or not.'* The same girls were also concerned about fitting into the class: *'What worries us is when you're old in a class and yet other children are young.'* Others worried about whether they would find jobs after school, as was the case for this adolescent boy in Sembabule: *'I sit and get worried about schooling [...] you study but you may fail to achieve what you studied for [...] What will I do because there are many educated people around but are doing nothing.'*

The practice of caning as corporal punishment in schools was described as not only painful but also degrading and humiliating, especially for the grown-up girls. One adolescent boy was worried his school had degenerated into a space for sexual harassment of girls and fornication. Girls were also worried about their male teachers, who often subject them to undisguised sexual harassment and take revenge on girls who decline their advances by failing them in class. These girls observed that they had nowhere to report such injustices since the head teachers were sometimes involved in abusing the girls.

District officials corroborated girls' depictions of sexual predation and psychological abuse in the classroom: *'There are some institutions that have teachers who, instead of handling the child as a child, handle the child as a co-wife'* (Mayuge Sub-county Technical Team).

One 13-year-old girl in Mayuge expressed anxiety about witches and witchcraft at her school. She claimed that she had missed a year without attending school because she was bewitched. Although

this girl was determined to return to school the following year, she was anxious about what would befall her, and was afraid of 'the evil spirits'.

### 5.5.5 Worries about the wider environment

#### Drug abuse among adolescents

District officials, community leaders, parents and adolescents themselves recognised the dangers of increasing trends in drug abuse among adolescents, primarily boys. They linked this to anxiety about the future, boredom, frustration about not being able to continue schooling and idleness owing to lack of prospects for productive employment. Some noted that this was primarily an urban phenomenon, but it also seems to be on the rise in rural areas. In Sembabule, district officials said that juvenile crime was on the increase as a result of drug abuse and alcoholism, particularly among gangs of 'bad boys' who do not want to work but instead are increasingly running away from rural areas and camping in towns. In both districts, increasing numbers of rape cases were attributed to increasing drug abuse.

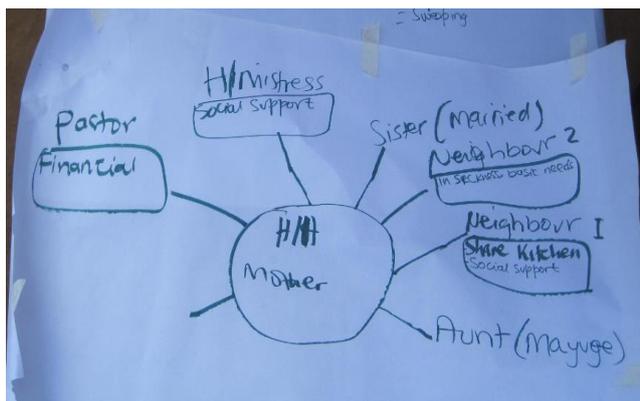
In Mayuge, a Pentecostal religious leader explained that, 'Most young people are affected by stress about the unpredictable future and some of them end up taking drugs. The problem is increasing among boys because they are idle, just like alcoholism. They take such drugs to kill boredom and stress and [because of] social problems like unemployment, lack of money and lack of food [...] Psychological problems may also arise when children want to continue school but can't, so they feel sad and end up just loitering around the village. Orphans whose parents have died of AIDS also drop out of school.'

District officials in Mayuge agreed that 'Drugs and alcohol are growing problems for young people, particularly in towns, with boys more affected than girls.' Migration and urbanisation are seen to be contributing to the phenomenon, which is just now emerging – the problem was not there before. No real counselling services are available and the probation office cannot really cope with the issues.

Adolescents in Mayuge themselves recognised the problem: 'Boys want to take cocaine. They want to have swag. They put on trousers half way, what they call "balance". They pretend to have money by stacking a UGX10,000 bank note on top of a wad of blank papers so as to con young girls, especially those who put on short skirts. Some pretend to be musicians, yet they do not even know what they are singing about. They drop out of school early and look for young girls to marry.' Adults in the district confirmed rising use – particularly by boys – of drugs, including *mairungi* (a local leaf believed to get people high), cocaine and *bangi* (marijuana), along with glue or petrol sniffing.

### 5.5.6 Feeling happy, cheerful and hopeful

Despite the long litany of anxieties, worries and stresses, it emerged that all was not gloom for the adolescent girls in the study area. Many of them expressed joy to be alive, young and healthy, and, above all, enrolled in school. Some girls were happy about the support they got from their parents, especially their mothers, on whom they can always count. Some of the girls were optimistic that they had a promising academic future, and were determined to remain in school until they achieved this objective. They also wanted to serve as role models to others. 'I want to show an example to my young siblings,' stated a 17-year-old girl in Mayuge. 'I want them to look at me and emulate my life. For instance, if I can study and have a nice kind of life they will also admire that; "if I studied and got to where she is I will be better," then they will also study hard.'



Adolescent girls' social support networks in Mayuge

The younger girls expressed happiness particularly when the basic necessities were provided for them: 'If we eat well, dress well, sleep well, all this excites me – if we are able to sleep on mattresses and not on a mat. Others don't have bed sheets, they have gomases [traditional dress for women]. So if we have bed sheets we are happy,' stated a group of young girls in Mayuge.

In participatory exercises conducted to map out social support networks, girls depicted these mainly in terms of family, religious institutions and friends (see picture above). For one 16-year-old schoolgirl in Mayuge, the mother gives support to buy necessities; the father pays school fees and other school necessities; the school provides education and friends; friends provide moral support; and the church provides for spiritual needs. For a 17-year-old schoolgirl in Mayuge with a baby, the mother is closest because she is the closest support; the hospital offers medical services; the mosque offers spiritual support; the school offers education; and the church gives friends.

Young people have big dreams and believe studying hard will help them achieve these. Looking to the future, adolescent girls have aspirations of becoming nurses, doctors, lawyers and teachers. They wish to see a community of people who value education of girls and where there is no corruption.

### 5.5.7 Positive actions

Though a number of girls and boys reported corporal punishment in schools, others expressed happiness about the protection they get from government through criminalisation of such practices. The freedom of children to report all acts of SGBV to the LCs and the police was also seen in this light. A few support services have been established for boys and girls, including some counselling services provided by government. Religious groups also provide support. According to the Pentecostal leader in Mayuge, for example, the church offers counselling on Sundays when boys and girls come to attend services, and they have additional special counselling days for young people.

## 5.6 Political and civic domain

*'I have not reached the age for giving opinions.'*

The participation of girls and boys in networks beyond the household through community meetings or decision making in the public domain is very limited. They are neither recognised nor expected to participate, as they are considered too young to contribute to what is considered an adult domain. Nor do they have much scope for participation in adolescent-specific clubs or associations, which are very rare in the communities visited. Some avenues for youth participation are offered through churches or mosques.

Scope for participation and leadership is greatest in the school setting, but even there limitations are encountered, particularly by girls, who may often feel too 'shy' to raise their hands in the classroom and make their voices heard. There are, however, exceptions, of girls who assume leadership positions in their schools and are confident and assertive. One key element that has entered into the lived experiences of adolescents in the study communities is the mobile phone, which allows them to expand their networks of association, although a number of mostly adult community members expressed negative opinions about this.

### 5.6.1 Lack of representation or voice in community meetings

In Mayuge, neither boys nor girls participate in village or community activities, including LC meetings. Boys interviewed attributed this to their age. They said their fathers had a voice in the community and were listened to. One 18-year-old boy said he always attended LC meetings, but just listened. He disclosed that it was considered culturally inappropriate for children to speak or make decisions in the presence of their elders. *'In the community meetings,'* he explained, *'young people have no voice and are not listened to, they are taken as young and inexperienced. When they go to such meetings they just sit and listen.'* A 14-year-old boy in Mayuge confirmed that, *'Young people do not give opinions in community meetings. I have not reached time for giving opinions.'*

Girls seem to be even more distanced from these meetings, as a mixed group of adolescents in Mayuge pointed out: *'In the LC meetings, young people are not invited to attend, so it is not easy for girls to speak or give advice in those meetings. Village meetings are rarely organised and even then young people are not*



Girls FGD, Bugumya, Mayuge

*invited.* A 17-year-old out-of-school girl attested that, *‘Young people rarely get chances to participate in community decision making. All I know is that when you rise up your hand they never select you to say a word. I have never got that chance.’*

Study participants specified that, for all intents and purposes, community affairs were in the hands of adults. *‘It is only in families where young people can make simple decisions,’* explained the Sub-county Technical Team. *‘In the community there is no such opportunity. One should be above 18 years and above primary level to take decisions in the community. They tell you to wait for your turn – you are still a child, you don’t know what you are saying.’* Yet some of the adolescents interviewed in Mayuge expressed interest in wider political processes (see Box 20).

### **Box 20: Interest in broader national political process**

Most of the boys and girls interviewed were aged below 18 years, and thus ineligible to participate in local or national elections, even as voters. Some of the girls showed substantial interest and were eager to reach voting age. Girls voiced the problem of lack of positive role models for women leaders, especially in the field of education in their community. They observed that, in their sub-county, very few girls had attained ‘A’ levels in comparison with boys. When it comes to university and other tertiary institutions the situation gets even worse, yet tertiary education is essential for one to acquire personal skills, self-confidence and other capabilities that are essential for political leadership and effective participation in civic activities.

However, both the adolescents and adults expressed pride in two women politicians from their political constituencies, one of whom is serving as a cabinet minister in the government and another who previously both served as a cabinet minister and was the vice-president of Uganda. The duo are held in much esteem and are regarded as enduring role models for all the young women and girls who are nurturing aspirations to engage in political leadership. However, such high-calibre role models are not readily available in other similar rural constituencies (fieldwork discussions, Mayuge).

In Sembabule, district officials identified youth councils as structures to provide for adolescent participation and representation in local politics; however, it appears that those below the age of 19 rarely participate, and their concerns are not taken into account at community level. There is also a suggestion that adult politicians manipulate these councils for political ends.

*‘Politically, there are youth councils in place, meeting and functioning. Participation in the youth councils is from 16 up to 30 years. At the council level, we have two youth counsellors from the ages of 16 to 30; one qualifies from sub-county to district level. There is also a political line if we are talking of more youth participation. Especially in Sembabule at the height of politics, politicians tend to use this age bracket to mobilise and canvas for votes and after elections, that’s the end’* (District Technical Team, Sembabule).



**Adolescent girls FGD, Sembabule**

Limited participation of adolescents in public life/politics/meetings was attributed to their lack of confidence and lower levels of education and age, but also to parental restrictions on attendance in meetings – particularly for girls. *‘One challenge,’* explained the District Technical Team in Sembabule, *‘is the education level determines the level of decision making. Those ones who are educated will be freer to take decisions than those who are not. Culture is also an influence, where [parents] don’t always let their children be free, and particularly the girls to attend a meeting, they think she can easily be spoilt there. So they are forced to stay at home.’* Moreover, as in Mayuge, sociocultural norms based on age hierarchy run counter to the mixing of age groups; younger people will not be free to talk in front of

their elders. *‘When you are targeting youths,’* noted the District Technical Team, *‘you don’t mix them with the old, because some will not be free to speak. They might have some good ideas but they can’t bring them out, but if you put them alone they can bring out what they want. So basically they need a different design of how you can meet them.’*

The District Technical Team did identify some issues that attracted participation from older youth: *‘At LC III level the youth are there, though not those below 19 – they are not there. [The older ones] are very active in community meetings [...] But it depends how it is organised, if it is something attractive,*

*like you bring it in a way of sports like a sports gala, there you will get them active.* ' It is not clear, however, whether girls would be attracted to such events, Respondants also confirmed that the younger ones really had no voice: *'However, the adolescent ideas are rarely considered.'*

Adolescents interviewed in Sembabule also indicated that young people did not participate much in community decision making or leadership outside of schools. A group of older adolescent girls said that, *'Young people – both boys and girls – do not participate in the politics of their communities, they are not given the opportunity. In schools they can be prefects, but some people fear engaging in politics because of fear of losing in elections, inferiority complex and other fears... ha!'*

### 5.6.2 Participation and leadership development in the school setting

As study participants pointed out, there are certain opportunities for participation and exercise of leadership skills in the school setting, but these are not always promoted actively by teachers or school authorities; moreover, gender norms and attitudes in wider society find their way into the classroom to effectively mute girls' voices. *'Most young people – especially girls – are too shy to express themselves before others and so find it hard to take positions of leadership even in schools,'* noted the Mayuge Sub-county Technical Team. *'Those gender stereotypes like "Women are not supposed to be politicians," "Women are not supposed to do certain work that men do," that is also a challenge, they are denied chance to do what they should have done, they say, such and such work is for the men.'*

None of the in-school adolescents interviewed talked about the existence of debating clubs in their schools, which implies that these future leaders are denied a forum and opportunity for learning how to engage in constructive political debate. Nevertheless, some girls showed great resilience and drive, focused, despite the odds, on succeeding in the academic, civic and political spheres. One girl in secondary school in Mayuge informed us proudly that she had been head girl in her primary school for three years, from P5 to P7, having contested and won three competitive elections. She is also a councillor representing her stream, another position she attained after winning an open and competitive election. She felt proud because this position comes with a bursary. Both she and her sisters represent exceptions to the rule (see Box 21).

#### Box 21: Girls' leadership qualities

Two sisters, Mercy and Mildred, are bright and assertive at school. They are not intimidated by either their male schoolmates or teachers. Mercy has a dream of completing her studies and becoming a police officer. Mildred also aspires to excel academically, and to become a teacher, nurse or linguist. At her primary school Mercy was a footballer, an activity she described as hitherto male-dominated.

When she relocated to a new school, she contested in open elections for a position of school councillor, which she won. She intends to use her position to reorganise and promote football as a sport for girls in her secondary school. Mildred is head girl and also prefect for music, dance and drama in her primary school. Like her sister, she campaigned openly and won the election.

Both girls attribute their success to their good command of the English language and oratory skills. The duo also acknowledged that, in order to win the elections, they had to become assertive and learn to talk without any fear of their fellow pupils and teachers. They hailed their former primary school – Kaswabuli, on Jaguzi Island – for instilling in them leadership qualities at an early age.

The girls also expressed interest in participating in civic activities in their community. They were willing to accompany their father to LC meetings if given the chance. Although such opportunities are rare, one of the girls talked about a village meeting she attended and contributed to positively by giving advice on how the community could be mobilised to repair a communal borehole (Adolescent girls aged 15 and 16, Matovu, Mayuge).

In Sembabule, a students' association with both girls and boys has recently been formed in Lwemiyaga sub-county, and district officials noted the presence of clubs in schools, with active participation by girls. *'We also have patriotism clubs in senior secondary schools in the district and they meet [...] We teach them how to debate on different discussions, and girls are very active, they are more active than the boys.'* Such in-school clubs, of course, leave high numbers of out-of-school children without voice or representation, as district officials admitted: *'The club has just started and still is in only secondary, it is also more for these educated youths and not the out-of-school youth.'*

### 5.6.3 Limited youth groups, clubs and associations

In Mayuge, outside of the school setting, there are few clubs or associations for either boys or girls to participate in, leaving few options for girls' participation in wider networks. *'There are no opportunities for young girls to participate in community decision making, and few clubs or associations, or internet,'* stated a Pentecostal religious leader. A 15-year-old girl explained that her circle of friends was restricted in both number and scope: *'In free time, we play with friends but near the home because there are no clubs or associations for young girls or craft making groups.'* Community savings groups were an exception in this community, as they were apparently open to participation by young people, particularly girls. *'There are groups like nigiina,'* explained a Muslim religious leader. *'These are small saving groups where young people can pool resources, including for school fees. Girls mostly participate in these.'*



**Community map drawn by 15-year-old boy, Matovu, Mayuge**

For the most part, however, the evidence from community maps shows an absence of safe and supportive spaces for either adolescent boys or girls to network, organise, develop and exercise skills for civic participation and political leadership. A close look at the community map presented above shows no social halls or other facilities designed solely for adolescents to gather, network and, more specifically, develop capabilities for political leadership and civic participation.

In Sembabule, the District Technical Team reported that there were youth clubs in the community and church clubs that involve all youth at the diocese, parish and sub-parish levels. *'We have youth clubs, like in my church, we have the diocesan youth day. We have the youth at all levels, at parish level, at sub-parish, they have programmes and projects,'* asserted a member of the District Technical Team. However, other KIs reported few social clubs in their particular communities. One noted that, while boys and girls had been encouraged to set up associations, only one had been formed in one of the district parishes – Kampala – composed of seven members. An adolescent boy reported being a member of a community group where he pays a membership fee of UGX1,000. But adolescent girls did not report membership in any groups or associations. This may be linked to the greater restrictions placed by parents on the mobility of daughters, such that, even if clubs or associations are present in neighbouring areas, girls may nonetheless be prohibited from attending.

#### **Box 22: Restricted mobility as a factor in limited participation in community activities**

Participating in meetings or community events outside of the home, neighbourhood or village is often rendered difficult for adolescents because of parental restrictions on their freedom of movement. In most cases, girls' movements are much more restricted than those of boys, but sometimes parental control over boys' movements is also quite strong.

*'Movement is restricted in the home and permission has to be sought from the father if anyone has to move to town. The restriction is more for the girls than it is for the boys because girls can easily get spoilt with early pregnancies, and are easy to be deceived by boys – someone may seduce us and we are not strong hearted [...] Your future ends there, you enter in a new life, everything is waiting for you and you will be in the village. Most of the time girls are protected because there are many chances of getting a problem compared with boys'* (Intra-household discussion, 17-year-old girl, Lwemiyaga, Sembabule)

*'Everyone in the family has to ask for permission to move around from the mother but my sisters are not allowed to move to the town at night'* (IDI, 17-year-old boy, Lwemiyaga, Sembabule).

*'For anyone to move from home they first ask for permission from the father; only if he is not around that permission is sought from the mother. As long as one is at home, even if they [girls] are married they seek permission from dad or mum. Girls do not take evening walks or go to the pool'* (Intra-household discussions, 18-year-old boy, Lwemiyaga, Sembabule).

*'Children are not allowed to loiter in the village and should ask for permission before going anywhere'* (Intra-household discussions, mother of adolescent girl, Lwemiyaga, Sembabule).

#### 5.6.4 Mobile phones expanding social networks and interaction

There is no internet in the field study areas, but adolescent girls were happy about the proliferation of information and communication technologies (ICTs) such as mobile telephony and FM radios, which have made communication easier. Several girls owned mobile handsets, which they were very proud of. FM radios were identified and described as not only entertaining but also major sources of development information. The girls said it was easy and convenient for them to listen to the radio as they attend their domestic chores. Parents and elders, however, do not appreciate young people, especially young girls, owning mobile phones.

In Mayuge, the District Technical Team couched objections in terms of money: *'It is still not generally acceptable for young people, especially girls, to own phones because it has more to do with money to service the phone than the phone itself.'* Others highlighted fears of the use to which the phones were put. The Sub-county Technical Team noted that, *'Some parents believe young people owning phones has done more harm than good, they fail to concentrate on books and spend most times chatting with boyfriends, so there is a limit or restrictions to phones.'* Religious leaders highlighted the negative effect of phones enabling girls to connect with boyfriends. *'Young people – both boys and girls - now have phones and that has made the situation worse because once a girl gets a phone it is a gateway to get a boyfriend,'* affirmed a Pentecostal leader in Mayuge. A Muslim leader confirmed that this was why parents' tried to prevent their daughters from getting phones: *'Boys now have access to phones, but girls less so, because parents do not allow them.'*

Some boys also disapproved of girls having phones: *'It's not necessary, because it causes moral decay especially on the side of girls. When girls have phones, the only programmes they have are for fornication,'* asserted some of the boys in a mixed group of adolescents in Mayuge. Girls themselves seemed to recognise the complexities of phone interactions with men. One 15-year-old girl, commenting on parental restrictions on having a phone, put it this way: *'They say if we have phones, the men will communicate with us, because when men meet you, they just ask you that, "You give me your phone number." If you say you don't have one, they ask you, "Can I buy one for you?" You say you don't want that, then they just abuse you, and call you falla [useless] if you don't have a phone.'*

In Sembabule, while internet cafes in towns are frequented more by boys than by girls, both boys and girls have mobile phones, although the problem of money for access arises – with some girls said to be selling their bodies for 'air time'.

#### 5.6.5 Positive actions

Positive examples of actions to support adolescent participation in civic affairs through appropriate decision-making fora are rather limited in the two study districts. Existing structures such as youth councils cater primarily to the older age group defined as 'youth'. Programmes supporting young women's participation in community and agricultural development are also geared to older age groups. Some youth fellowship clubs and counselling exist in places of worship, and some girls participate in informal savings groups known as *nigiina*.

The internet, a tool to expand social networks and knowledge streams, is limited to internet cafes in urban areas, which are frequented primarily by males. However, mobile phones have spread widely, although parents largely disapprove of their use by daughters. Schools appear to offer the greatest potential for leadership training and civic awareness for all adolescents, and there were some positive examples of this happening. But weaknesses in the education system and school environment – particularly for girls – blunt such potential.

## 6 Change or continuity? Gender relations over time

The bulk of the field research focused on and highlighted the weight of gender discriminatory norms and practices on the lived experiences of adolescent girls; however, intergenerational interviews and historical timelines highlighted a number of significant changes that appear to be taking place within the different capability domains. Such changes are most evident around education, but also appear in some of the other domains, as revealed by comparisons across a small set of grandmother–mother–daughter triads interviewed in the two study districts. While such changes do not yet appear powerful enough to fully transform adolescent girls' opportunities for capability development, and there remain

clear signs of continuities and persistence in discriminatory practices, they do indicate that the situation is not static. This section analyses key findings on changes in different capability domains derived from the intergenerational interviews and presents a case study demonstrating changes and continuities across three generations. Full details of the intergenerational pairings and case studies are provided in the appendices.

## 6.1 Changes in girls' capability domains

### 6.1.1 Household and family relations

Marriage forms are evolving differently in the two study districts. In Mayuge, polygamy has continued to be the predominant marriage type across the generations, whereas monogamous marriages are becoming more common in Sembabule (all grandmothers interviewed in Sembabule were in polygamous marriages, compared with only one mother).

Early marriage was the norm among the older generations and is still a common practice in both districts. All grandmothers and mothers interviewed had been married before the age of 18 years (the age at first marriage for grandmothers ranged between 14 and 16 and for mothers between 14 and 18). *'Did I even reach 16 years? I got married at 14 years because during that time the situation didn't allow you to get to that level,'* explained a 44-year-old mother in Mayuge. Some of the older women linked the justification for early marriage to the need to stave off out-of-wedlock pregnancies, as a mother in Mayuge reported: *'We all grew up when it was bad for a girl to reproduce when still at home, unless it is was by accident. This was good in our time.'*

Currently, however, while girls still marry as early as 13 years, the age of marriage was reported to be rising. Some associated this with the enactment of the law on defilement. But it may also be a sign of more options for adolescent girls. The change in expected age at marriage can be seen in the future plans girls articulated – none of the girls interviewed in the intergenerational exercise reported any plans for marriage; instead, they wanted to study and get good jobs. *'In our mother's time,'* noted a 20-year-old girl in Sembabule, *'children used to get married when they were still young. Even some girls of today get married when they are still young. But for me, I prefer to be around 28 years old, after I have finished school and get a job.'*

Another change noted in both districts is more freedom of choice in marriage partner, showing a shift in practice from earlier times, when marriage was commonly arranged and sometimes forced, including through practices of marriage by abduction – each linked into systems of bride wealth. A 71-year-old grandmother in Mayuge noted that, *'Some girls would get married at 16 years or 18 years when I was growing up, and they would sell girls, but now a girl identifies her own husband and today they get married at 18 years or even 20 years.'* A 70-year-old grandmother in Sembabule explained that, *'It [forcing girls into marriage] is not there now, but in those days [in the past] when someone loved a girl, he would come, carry her off and marry her – sometimes reaching an understanding with the parents and [afterwards] bringing things for bridewealth. But when the parents did not like the man, he [the father] would send his sons to go and carry back the daughter.'*

The practice of widow inheritance was reported in Sembabule, although it was said to be growing rare. One of the mothers interviewed was married to a brother-in-law after the death of her husband, explaining that this was done to ensure that any children born remained in the same lineage: *'The family will not refuse the children of this man [the brother-in-law she married], but they would have refused them if I had married someone else. Now the children belong to the family.'*

Son bias has been and remains a predominant norm in the two districts. The pressure to produce sons was articulated by a 52-year-old grandmother in Mayuge: *'If you gave birth to female children only, people spoke ill about you. You had no choice because that's what God planned for you, but still it was hurting because you also want boys.'* While this attitude remains quite strong, families are increasingly becoming aware of the need to value both boys and girls, who are seen as giving different kinds of support to parents, as expressed by a 61-year-old grandmother in Mayuge:

*When it comes to that [value of children], all of us really love the coffee tree [the girl]. They used to value a boy because I have heard parents saying, "Who will build a house for me?" But by luck, even a girl can do it. Still, all in all, people used to like so much giving birth to a hare [a*

*boy]. But a girl is special – a boy just buys land, but a girl can pack sugar for her father and mother, salt – that is why she is special. She is very kind – she builds a house for me.*

While the gender division of labour is said to be changing in some households, and both boys and girls are engaged in family-related work, the prevailing practice is still for girls and women to take on the heaviest burden of domestic/reproductive tasks. *'All my children work,'* reported a 47-year-old mother in Sembabule. *'Girls cook, clean the house; boys fetch water, graze cows; girls also help graze cows.'* The persistence over time of children's contributions to the life and livelihood of the household was reported by a 48-year-old mother in Mayuge: *'Boys and girls used to go to the garden – when they came back the girls would prepare food and wash plates while the boys were fetching water. My children do the same.'*

### 6.1.2 Education

Education is by far the domain that exhibits the greatest evidence of change over the generations. In the grandmothers' time, most girls did not attend school at all, while most of the granddaughters are either attending school or have gained at least some level of schooling. All but one of the grandmothers interviewed reported never having been to school: *'We never saw these papers you are writing on,'* said one 71-year-old grandmother in Mayuge. *'In my generation, none of us went to school.'* What schooling existed was mostly for 'the rich' and for boys. Education for girls was associated with prostitution, explained this same grandmother; this, at least, is the reason her stepfather gave for not sending her to school. Other grandmothers confirmed the association of girls' education with promiscuity and pregnancy. A grandmother in Sembabule reminisced that, *'In those years they used to say that when a girl goes to school she would get pregnant and get married.'* *'My money will be wasted.'* Some grandmothers, however, noted that they were allowed to take some instruction in baptism or confirmation classes through the church.

Things slowly started to change in the next generation. Four out of the seven mothers interviewed had not been to school; three had some primary education. Nevertheless, there were limits. *'Education for the girls was so limited,'* explained a 44-year-old mother in Mayuge. *'Back then, if a girl studied up to P5 she was regarded as having been highly educated.'* Now, both mothers and grandmothers confirmed that educational opportunities for girls had expanded greatly; however, they noted that girls still drop out before completing primary; moreover, they had serious concerns about the quality of teaching, which they said had deteriorated. *'They used to take education as important,'* noted a mother in Mayuge, *'but these days you find a P7 child does not know English [...] When we were in school, the teachers used to care about the children but these days if you [the parent] don't put in a lot of effort, the child fails'.*

All of the daughters interviewed were in school and expressed high aspirations of studying in order to get a good job. *'After school, I want to be a doctor – I like it so much. I want to finish S4 and 6, do sciences then go to university,'* stated a 20-year-old girl in Sembabule. A 17 year old in Mayuge added that, *'I want to study, get a job and support and please my parents.'*

### 6.1.3 Economic domain

In both study districts, household livelihoods have been built primarily around small-scale agriculture – both crop farming and livestock raising. Both grandmothers and mothers noted differences in male and female participation in the economic domain, explaining that men – in fulfilment of the male role as 'breadwinner' – had been primarily responsible for cultivation or raising animals for sale, while women concentrated on subsistence production to feed the family, although this is now changing, in line with the changing needs of the household. *'We did not have the idea of selling the produce,'* explained a 32-year-old mother in Mayuge. *'You would grow tomatoes but you did not think of selling them. But now after harvesting the tomatoes, I do sell and get a little money. We have children who need to go to school – all the money that we make goes to buy books, school fees.'*

Grandmothers noted that property and asset ownership used to be restricted to men, but that this too was now changing, as women can acquire property if they have money to purchase it or can demand property sharing on divorce. *'Ownership of land?'* questioned a grandmother from Mayuge. *'Where would I have bought it from? What would I have used to buy it? It was up to the man to buy it. It was for the man [...] Today when you separate with a man you ask for property sharing, but did we understand all that? If you separated with your husband, you could take only what you came with.'* A 66-year-old grandmother in Sembabule confirmed that, *'In those years women did not own things like*

*gardens, land, cows. They were not there. These things have just come. In those years when you dug a garden of groundnuts, the man would sell the produce and not give you money; now you sell it yourself.'*

Mothers confirmed such changes in ownership patterns: *'Now I can also hold personal valuables while the husband will also own his own things,'* explained a 44-year-old mother from Mayuge. *'Today each one of you in a home will own their own things like chicken, goats; because now if you have your money you can buy your own chicken and raise them well knowing that it is yours.'* Nevertheless, male control over property is still strong: *'With property the men have control and they make decisions. For me I only decide on what to cook for my family,'* noted a 32-year-old mother in Mayuge.

Girls in both Sembabule and Mayuge noted that, while changes are underway, property ownership and control remains a primarily male domain. However, in Sembabule in particular, among the Bahima, both girls and boys can inherit from their parents, opening up opportunities to girls in this way. *'When my father died,'* reported a 19-year-old girl in Sembabule, *'he left a few hectares of land and some animals behind. This is what is contributing to lift me up to S6.'*

#### 6.1.4 Physical domain

Intergenerational interviews suggested that most grandmothers had no access at all to family planning services. While this is now changing, available services are largely for adults, with negative perceptions continuing to limit access and use by adolescent girls. *'It [family planning] was not there in the past,'* reported a 71-year-old grandmother from Mayuge. *'I am just seeing it now that I am old and I have even stopped having children!'* A 66-year-old grandmother confirmed that, *'In the time I was married, I didn't see family planning. We would produce as many children as we could – my co-wives and I.'* One generation later, mothers reported availability of different family planning measures, including local medicine, but usage remained limited, reinforcing trends for large families (ranging from six to 10 children), with large families continuing to be valued. Access to both information and services for adolescent girls is still very limited; girls who make use of contraceptives were said to do so secretly, without their parents' knowledge.

A phenomenon highlighted by both mothers and daughters was the rising incidence of teenage sex and pregnancies outside of 'wedlock'. This is attributed to various factors, including, according to a 48-year-old mother in Mayuge, the school environment: *'These days, children understand early. When you send her to school she goes her own way and the next thing is a pregnancy';* as well as the waning influence of paternal aunts who used to be in charge of sexual education for girls: *'Our time was different – the aunts used to talk to the girls when they were still young, which is not the case today – now we have to do it ourselves. These days you find a 12-year-old child who is pregnant, which was not the case in our time. A girl would wait to make her own family.'* A 19-year-old girl from Mayuge recounted that, *'In the past they used to protect themselves compared with adolescents of today. I am told that the aunts used to teach young girls to protect their virginity, but nowadays few girls protect their virginity.'*

Five of the six grandmothers (the one exception being married to a pastor) and most mothers (four of seven) reported domestic violence as a common experience for women. This was frequently linked to alcohol consumption on the part of the husband. *'When I got married, my husband was good, but eventually he changed and started selling family property, just to drink. His father gave him a lot of negative advice against me and he mistreated me,'* recounted one 61-year-old grandmother in Mayuge. A grandmother in Sembabule evoked a similar experience: *'My husband used to fight when he was drunk – he would beat the children and so you sleep in the bush. You might love a man and say that he would make a good husband but after you are married, you find a burning fire and he beats you.'* There was little recourse, she continued. *'Where do you report? Reporting those days was not there and, even if they arrested and imprisoned him, where would you go?'*

#### 6.1.5 Political domain/civic participation

The mobility of women and girls – though still limited – has improved over time. Some women today can go to the markets to conduct informal business, and participate in community meeting/activities, something the older generations of women could not do. As one grandmother in Mayuge described it, *'These days women have more control, but in the past they were controlled [...] such things as working women did not exist and there were no such things as moving out of the home. Such things [participation in peer support networks] have just come – they are yours [the interviewer's] – they*

were not there before. What could you discuss as a woman? I have just started hearing these things [women going to meetings].’ Adolescent girls are also seen to enjoy more freedom, as a 32-year-old mother in Mayuge observed: ‘Young women these days are free – if you want to go somewhere you can freely go. But adolescents of our time were very much restricted from moving about. In the evenings you would not leave home, now children move around whether in the evening or not.’

A 17-year old girl in Mayuge confirmed that she was able to participate in some community activities: ‘One time, I participated in a meeting where farmers were going to be given sorghum. I went to represent my mother in the meeting. I sat and listened to the discussion. They had invited my mother and she sent me there [...] So I went and told my mum about what was there.’ However, such opportunities for civic engagement remain limited, and movements outside of the home are still seen to be fraught with danger for adolescent girls. Parents therefore continue to restrict their daughters’ movements, offering both protective and utilitarian justifications, as a 20-year-old girl in Sembabule narrated: ‘When you leave a girl child to just move, she learns bad manners. She might not get time to help her parents. She might even start engaging in sexual relationships.’

## 6.2 From grandmother to granddaughter: changes lived and observed

The intergenerational pairing presented below demonstrates the changing contexts of life for a grandmother, a mother and a daughter in the rural community of Matoya, Mayuge. What is particularly clear is that educational opportunities have increased. While neither the grandmother nor the mother went to school, the daughter is in school and her parents are supportive and provide for her needs. Such parental investment reflects changing perspectives on the value of education and is supported by the government’s UPE programmes and policies.

Changes in marriage practices are also evident. While the grandmother was sold for marriage, the mother had identified her own husband and noted that, these days, girls have more of an opportunity to choose their spouse. Domestic violence seems to have diminished, although it is not clear whether this is a sign of a wider trend or a more individual phenomenon. Sources of livelihood have changed: the grandparent’s generation relied primarily on subsistence agriculture; the current generation relies on both agriculture and other sources of livelihood, such as petty trade of agricultural produce.

The daughter has clear aspirations for the future: she wants to study well, find a job and support her parents and family. She is currently 17 years old and in the interview did not even mention marriage.

Other changes evoked through the interviews included more freedom of movement for girls and women, and more access to family planning information, which did not exist at all before. Box 23 illustrates some of these changes.

### Box 23: Case study of intergenerational change, Mayuge

**Getu, the grandmother**, was born in 1942 and grew up with her mother after the death of her father. At age 14, her mother sold her to a man in marriage: ‘At that time, they would just give us to those who wanted to start up a home.’ She and her husband had 14 children. The husband was alcoholic and violent and did not want to educate the children, although some did go to school. When he died, she decided never to remarry. Her family has always had property but it is not hers: her husband had sold all his land, leaving her with nothing.

Getu has observed many changes over time. Nowadays, children are in school – both boys and girls. In the past, some might go, but she herself was not educated. ‘They used to say that girls learned prostitution from school. Many girls would stop at baptism and confirmation classes.’ Marriage practices have also changed. ‘When I was growing up, girls would be sold, but these days girls identify their own husbands.’ She seems somewhat bewildered about changes in the new generation, however, and thinks girls have become unruly. ‘Issues to do with girls these days are above me. Nowadays children assume maturity. When you tell them things, as an older woman, they do not listen to you.’

**Jesca, the mother**, is 32 years old, born and married in the same village, with six children. She has never been to school and was married at the age of 17 at a time when she was still living with her parents. Conditions were not peaceful at home, so she was happy to get married. She is the second wife; the first one stays somewhere else. Her husband takes care of her, and all her children are in school – both boys and girls – even though the family is poor. Their source of income is casual labour and proceeds from agriculture. The husband makes decision on the children’s education while she makes decisions on food and clothing. She participates in community meetings, especially on cleaning the well. She wants to set up a business selling clothes and

agricultural produce. There is no violence in the home, but she sees it in the neighbourhood. Her main challenge is the health of her children: two of her children have fallen sick and died.

Jesca has seen many changes over the years and feels children – particularly girls – these days are better off. *'These days children go to school, whereas in earlier days children would spend time in the bush. Now the government is providing free education through UPE. If you do not go to school and are five years or older you are arrested.'* In the past, boys would never do any household chores such as cooking, but these days they are starting to. She is against early marriage: *'If someone gets married at an early age, they are imprisoned.'* She had never heard of family planning when she was growing up, but knows that today it is available. Nevertheless, she notes that most girls still get pregnant between 14 and 17 years. She observes that, these days, women and girls are freer to move and go where they want – they ask for permission and it is given, whereas in earlier days they were not allowed to move outside the home to visit others. She also feels that there is more protection for girls, attributing this to changes in legal conditions: *'If you hit them, you are imprisoned,'* she explains.

**Wagala, the daughter**, is 17 years old, living with her parents and five siblings. She is the first child. She and her brothers and sisters all go to school. The father decided where the children should go to school. The father spends most of the time with them – not with his other wife and family. Up to P3 she was happy at school, and the teachers taught her well. Then she got sick, with lots of headaches, and could not study well, so she became unhappy. She was healed through prayer. She is an athlete at school. The parents provide for all her needs. They do equal work at home and she relates well with friends in the village. She herself has never experienced any violence but she has heard about boys raping girls. She had her first menstrual period at age 16 – they had taught them about menstruation in school.

What makes her happy is that her parents are alive and take care of her. The sad thing is that she keeps falling sick and missing school. She worries about her family continuing to be able to pay school fees, as she is afraid of being chased out of school. She wants to study, get a job and please her parents. She is appreciated when she does well in school. She is not involved in any kind of youth programme, but she has attended one community meeting with her mother.

## 7 Emerging conclusions and implications for policy and research

### 7.1 Key findings and recommendations

Both the literature review and the field research shed light on how adolescent girls' attainment of their full potential in various capability domains is shaped and constrained by discriminatory formal and informal laws, norms and practices prevalent in the communities where they live. The study shows that, despite an enabling legal and policy framework capable of addressing adolescent girls' vulnerabilities as they prepare for crucial transitions to adult roles, including economic participation, political/civic leadership, citizenship, marriage and parenthood, they still face a myriad of challenges. These, while rooted in discriminatory social norms, attitudes and practices, are compounded by conditions of poverty and lack of quality service provision, which constrain overall opportunities and development. It is clear that policies seeking to empower adolescent girls and enhance their capabilities would need to take into account both aspects in an integrated manner.

#### 7.1.1 Household domain

Marriage and family function as the predominant social institutions that define the status of adolescent girls and young women in society. Study findings indicate that, within the household, both girls and women continue to experience immense oppression and discrimination that severely constrain the development and full realisation of their capabilities. The unequal gendered division of labour within the household burdens women and girls with most of the 'care' work, thus limiting their capacity to engage in and benefit from other activities, including education, training and productive labour.

Practices such as bridewealth payments contribute to early marriages and effectively turn girls into commodities, passing from ownership by fathers to ownership by husbands. Discriminatory masculinity norms both in the family and in the public domain, and unequal rights for girls and women, are all features of the marriage institution that have closed girls and women's opportunities for psychosocial development and realisation of gender justice. Specific forms of marriage and household structures and arrangements, such as polygamy, may have specific consequences for girls

and women, which remain to be more fully explored. 'Compound' families and family break-up were also seen to create situations of particular vulnerability. Lack of voice and decision-making roles in household and family affairs is characteristic for girls, who, in the patriarchal models of family that are most common, are doubly vulnerable on the basis of both gender and generation. Violence within households – including gender-based violence – is also traumatic for girls.

Interventions at the household level are rare in the communities studied. Recommendations for potential programme approaches would include communications efforts around gender equality in the household to break down existing stereotypes; information campaigns around the reforms foreseen in the marriage and divorce bill that is currently being promoted and both information and enforcement of laws on early marriage; introduction of labour-saving technologies to cut down on women and girls' 'time poverty'; and expansion of crèches to relieve some of the burden of care for younger siblings.

Greater attention to creating and supporting employment opportunities for women might also help reduce the use of bride-price. If women had their own economic power and were able to bring economic resources to their household, there would perhaps be less perceived need for brideprice. Women having greater economic power and greater asset ownership could also provide leverage on a number of the other issues covered, from political voice to mobility to gender based violence (as women would have greater power to exit violent relationships, necessarily changing the conjugal contract).

### 7.1.2 Education domain

Despite progress made to enhance girls' educational attainment over the past decade, especially through policies of free education at primary and secondary levels and particular programmes to enhance opportunities for girls, significant challenges remain. Factors such as biased gender ideologies; the role and status of women and girls in the family, clan and community; negative attitudes towards girls' educational attainment; teenage pregnancy and early marriage; gender-insensitive school environments; and the impact of HIV and AIDS on households continue to undermine opportunities for girls to develop their capabilities through education.

Findings from field research provide evidence that the factors compromising adolescent girls' participation and achievement in education are diverse and multifaceted. Whereas some of the factors are linked to supply-side deficiencies in the education sector and others linked more broadly to household poverty, many within both schools and communities are deeply rooted in the sociocultural norms, values, and practices that define and shape everyday life of the people in the study sites.

There is, moreover, evidence to suggest that both the sociocultural and school environmental factors work in synergy to undermine the ability of adolescent girls to realise their full potential in the education capability domain. What happens in the home, including cultural expectations of girls' role within the household and lack of support for girls' education, deeply affects performance and persistence at school.

Key recommendations on measures to enhance education for girls derive from well-known global good practice that seeks to address barriers at the level of both supply and demand: investing in 'girl-friendly' school infrastructure, including separate latrines and appropriate sanitation and hygiene to address issues of menstrual management; eradicating sexual harassment and violence in schools; eliminating gender stereotypes in school texts; investing in female teachers and mentors, and training and supervising all teachers on gender-sensitive teaching/learning and classroom management techniques; providing incentives to parents to send daughters to school (including, for example, take-home rations, fee reductions/abolition, provision of uniforms, conditional cash transfers); developing appropriate policies and programmes to allow pregnant school girls and girl mothers to continue schooling; offering more 'second chance' alternatives; and implementing specific measures to ensure girls' retention through secondary, including, where appropriate, scholarship support or boarding facilities.

### 7.1.3 Economic domain

Girls and young women are confronted with key limitations on opportunities to develop and benefit from their economic capabilities. Such capabilities are compromised at the outset by property inheritance customs that favour boys and men. Exclusion of girls and women from ownership of and control over critical productive assets such as land and livestock renders girls and women vulnerable and economically insecure, a situation that translates into diminished agency and increased dependence on and subordination to men for economic survival. This is in spite of a favourable land

policy and other positive national legislation in place. Other challenges include parental underinvestment in girls' education, limited opportunities for vocational training, limited access to credit facilities, exploitation of children's labour and high rates of participation in unremunerated domestic care, which is considered 'natural' for girls and women but exacerbates time poverty.

There was unanimity among study participants that government has not done enough to address the economic challenges of young people. Moreover, 'youth programmes' do not reach adolescents, but focus on older age groups (18-30). As a result of insufficient formal education, lack of vocational skills and crippling household poverty, both male and female adolescents' ability to access formal employment has remained constrained.

Whereas both girls and boys face economic difficulties, the plight of adolescent girls appears worse, exacerbated by prevailing gender-specific constraints including discriminatory inheritance practices that exclude them from ownership of and control over land; restrictions on mobility that exclude them from certain economic occupations; and hazardous working conditions that leave them open to sexual exploitation. A broader issue discussed by study participants is the prevailing view that girls and women do not need to participate, or excel, in the economic domain, since this has traditionally been regarded as the 'male breadwinner' prerogative. Thus, government has yet to do anything significant to promote economic capabilities of adolescent girls in the study setting. Lack of opportunities for vocational training where girls could gain skills to earn an income and build up their economic capabilities is of particular concern.

Expanding access to and opportunities for quality vocational and technical training for adolescent girls is a critical priority to enhance their economic capabilities. Support for productive activities and decent employment for young women is also critical, including through gender-sensitive measures that take into account their dual productive and reproductive roles. Rural development programmes should include specific measures to support and enhance women's agro-pastoral activities and contributions to the household economy. Support for appropriate income-generating opportunities for young mothers – particularly those who are on their own – is particularly important. The dynamics of marriage and family practices in particular around inheritance and *in vitro* transfers of assets need to be further understood as a backdrop to measures seeking to expand young women's access to assets.

#### 7.1.4 Physical domain

Both the physical/bodily integrity and security and the sexual and reproductive health rights of adolescent girls are severely compromised by a combination of challenges rooted in patriarchal norms of male control over female bodies, and the primacy placed on women's reproductive roles. These contribute to perpetuating such practices as early and/or forced marriage and various forms of SGBV. The study has also revealed adolescent girls' ignorance of their reproductive health rights and extremely limited access to quality maternal health care. The latter, as highlighted in the literature review, has translated to increased maternal morbidity, increased infection and transmission of HIV and overall poor reproductive health outcomes, including high rates of maternal mortality. Gender differentials in HIV infection are, among other things, attributed to deeply entrenched cultural expectations of male and female sexualised roles and behaviour.

For many girls in the two study districts, the adage that 'biology is destiny' seems to have solidified into a straightjacket that defines them as physical beings with breasts, the appearance of which signals readiness for marriage by parents eager to collect bride price. Lack of information about sexual and reproductive health combined with lack of access to appropriate, adolescent-friendly health services results in early and frequent pregnancies. This is accompanied by attendant health problems, contributing to high rates of maternal mortality and morbidity.

Women and girls in the two study communities are also subject to appalling levels of male violence, perpetrated not only by strangers but also by male members of the family, who should be among the most trusted adults in a girl's life. Access to justice is severely constrained and protection limited. Indeed, a girl who has been raped is sometimes expected to marry her rapist – if the bride price offered is enough, a *de facto* continuation of the traditional practice of marriage by abduction. There seem to be few 'safe spaces' for girls who face violence in homes, in schools and in between.

Far greater efforts are needed to insist on the bodily integrity of adolescent girls and young women, encourage girls to remain in school and delay marriage, expand access to quality sexual and reproductive health information and services and combat prevailing norms and practices of male

violence. Measures to reinforce laws against gender-based violence and to bring perpetrators to justice are also crucially needed.

### 7.1.5 Psychosocial domain

This has been a relatively neglected domain, with literature focusing primarily on specific cases of trauma and disturbance owing to violence (including gender-based violence) or situations of conflict and the psychosocial services needed to support victims and survivors. Work has also been undertaken around the psychosocial needs of orphans and vulnerable children. Less explored in the literature are the more everyday experiences of emotional wellbeing or malaise and the specific contours these take among adolescent girls of different backgrounds and life situations.

A sense of psychosocial wellbeing is important for girls as they grow into adults and develop their capabilities to the fullest. This can be brought about in part through a sense of security and value created through supportive networks. While such networks do exist for girls in the study areas, some of whom spoke of friends, families and others as people to whom they could turn when needing help or comfort, it is an area that could undoubtedly benefit from deeper attention. Girls expressed a variety of worries and concerns – about their bodies, their relationships, their lives and their futures – and it is not at all clear that such concerns are being addressed through established patterns of adult/child communication and interaction. Formal counselling services are rare and access to these very limited.

Mentoring by adult women (female teachers; district or sub-district development staff; NGO service providers; community leaders; others) could be promoted around different issues and at different venues along with peer-to-peer counselling and support services. Special outreach services and support may be needed for adolescent mothers or for adolescent girls with babies. Community dialogue processes designed specifically to take adolescent girls' views and concerns into account could be helpful in providing a conduit for interaction with caring adults. Girls' clubs and other forms of female solidarity systems could also be established and/or reinforced.

### 7.1.6 Political and civic domain

The literature review revealed that a favourable legal and policy environment has not increased effective participation of female youth in political and civic leadership. Female leadership aspirants are severely constrained by factors such as lack of resources and logistics for mass mobilisation, lack of time, given reproductive and care roles, and lack of voice in public fora, linked to gender role stereotypes. KIs also noted how – on a national level – patronage politics can operate to keep women in subordinate positions to men.

In the two study areas, participation of girls and boys in networks beyond the household through community meetings or decision making in the civic domain is very limited. Adolescents are neither recognised nor expected to participate, as they are considered too young to contribute to what is considered an adult domain. Nor do they have much scope for participation in adolescent-specific clubs or associations, which are very rare in the communities visited, though some avenues for youth participation are offered through churches or mosques. Particular gender-based limitations on girls' participation arise out of still deeply entrenched ideologies of 'public' and 'private' domains, whereby women and girls are restricted to the latter.

Scope for participation and leadership is greatest in the school setting, but even there limitations are encountered, particularly by girls, who may often feel too 'shy' to raise their hands in the classroom and make their voices heard. There are, however, exceptions, of girls who assume leadership positions in their schools and are confident and assertive. One notable element that has entered into adolescents' lives is the mobile phone, which allows them to expand their networks of association, although a number of community members expressed negative opinions about this.

It is clear that further investment in the development of adolescent girls' capabilities for civic involvement, leadership and decision making is sorely needed, as are initiatives that seek to expand and strengthen their social networks and engagements. A focus on adolescents, as opposed to youth, would help ensure the younger age groups are not neglected in this important domain. Schools offer potential for encouraging the development and exercise of adolescent girls' leadership and decision making. To do so, however, they must create an enabling environment to nurture girls' voice; identify role models of positive, assertive women; and provide guidance on options to explore outside of the school.

Development and expansion of school clubs and initiation of a variety of extracurricular activities, including sports, would further support such efforts. For adolescent girls who are out of school, appropriate groups and associations could be established to support them in their various activities and encourage their participation in community affairs. Issues surrounding the restricted mobility of girls and young women should be addressed through community dialogue and bolstered with positive examples of the benefits of participation in networks outside the home.

## 7.2 Crosscutting themes and conceptual issues emerging from the research

### 7.2.1 Household as a foundational domain

The family and household (and the sociocultural and economic norms and practices therein) emerged in our research as a 'foundational domain' from which multiple limitations arise. Practices of early marriage, backed up and fuelled in part by bride price, limit educational opportunities for girls, contribute to reproductive health problems and – with large age differentials between husband and wife – perpetuate women's subordination to male authority within the household and lack of voice. Unequal inheritance practices limit economic capabilities as women and girls are denied access to family assets and thus remain in a state of dependence on male family members in both the natal and the marital home. The gendered division of labour within the household leaves women and girls with little free time to develop capabilities in other domains. Restricted mobility, arising from ideologies of the 'good girl' who remains at home, is reinforced by legitimate fears of SGBV outside of the home, reinforcing gendered ideologies of public and private domains.

Long the province of anthropologists with their kinship studies that paint scenes of bewildering complexity, or subject to virulent debate in national struggles to reform outmoded marriage and divorce bills and personal status codes, the actual specifics of household and family structures, relationships, roles and responsibilities have remained relatively neglected in international policy research. Our understanding of the complex and varied dynamics that not only nourish, but also dominate and control, various categories of household members remains quite limited. Yet these are the structures, in all of their local diversity, that serve as the bedrock for the production and reproduction of individuals as well as the social norms and relations that define them – equipping them with the capabilities they need to develop in the sense of Amartya Sen's expanding freedoms.

Recent work on the care economy is starting to address one dimension of the problem, in terms of the gendered division of labour within the household. But, in terms of adolescent girls, a much more nuanced and complete understanding is needed of the diverse types of household and family experiences, their change and persistence over time and the potential – beyond calls for 'stronger families' – for transformative structures to emerge.

### 7.2.2 Cultural definitions and understandings of adolescents

We started our research with a clear-cut age group in mind of girls between 10 and 19 years as the standard definition of adolescents. We broke this down into younger girls (10-14) and older ones (15-19) and were willing to give some consideration to young women as well, since they presaged so much of the near future for adolescents. What we did not consider at first were the different cultural understandings and meanings of adolescence we might encounter in the field, nor did we consider the possibility that some communities may not even have a category within the lifecycle called 'adolescent'.

What we found in reality was that communities defined life trajectories for girls in a number of different ways - not always, or even usually, in terms of age, but more often in terms of physical characteristics (particularly the budding of breasts) marking the debut of womanhood that would be fully defined (irrespective of age) by either marriage or pregnancy. So a girl married and/or pregnant at 13 is already a woman, even though – in the words of one KI, she is really just 'a baby having a baby'.

The reason an understanding of such local cultural 'age' categories is important is not just a matter of academic quibbling over terms – rather, it is linked to the kinds of policy and programme considerations that need to be given in the establishment of appropriate services or support. For example, we were told very clearly that a 'youth' programme (normally for those over 18) would not find young women coming in as members, because women of that age are normally married and thus not considered 'youths'.

### 7.2.3 Interconnected nature of capability domains

As in the initial work conducted on adolescent girls and chronic poverty on the basis of categories set out by the SIGI, we found as a research team that our capability domains were continually jumping around and merging, the one with the other, making it difficult to keep our analytical categories separate and distinct. As we explored issues around education, for example, practices of early marriage and bride price rose to the fore, brought to our attention by KIs as critical factors leading to dropout among girls. Likewise, as we focused on psychosocial and emotional wellbeing, girls expressed some of their key fears and sources of worry in terms of physical violence and violation. As we looked into issues of domestic violence within a family, with an alcohol-driven father regularly beating his wife, we found a 14-year-old girl afraid to intervene because she feared her father would punish her by cutting off her school fees. And so on.

The fact is, of course, girls experience all of our carefully defined 'capability domains' in a fluid and interconnected manner that our analytical categories cannot yet fully comprehend. This is perhaps inevitable, but should alert us to the importance of maintaining a 'holistic' vision of 'the social', of seeking to understand the interconnectedness of different domains and of being open to yet further dimensions that need to be taken into consideration for a fuller understanding of girls' lived experiences.

### 7.2.4 Reinforcement and enactment of social norms through institutions

It was during our investigation of the education capability domain that we were struck by the importance of looking for and understanding social norms, attitudes and practices at play, not just at the household or community level but also within specific institutions, such as schools, which both embody and operationalise these norms. The gendered nature of the classroom, gender biases in the teaching and learning processes, gender-based violence and its threat at school and the lack of gender-appropriate sanitation facilities and supplies for girls, taken together, have reproduced in the microcosm of the school some of the broader patterns of gender discriminatory norms and behaviour within the community at large. The same gendered analysis could be made of health services, which are not adolescent or girl friendly; of justice services, which are largely absent for girls; and of technical training institutions and other social institutions, which are important for girls but lacking.

### 7.2.5 Contextualised understandings

One of the main themes emerging from our research is that context matters. It is important for any real understanding of sociocultural norms, attitudes and practices to 'go local' and build understandings from the ground up. The general disconnect that is often observed between national-level policy and local-level implementation is mirrored in the disconnect between general terms or concepts that enter into the policy arena – such as 'adolescence', 'family' or even 'gender' – and their actual embodiment in specific individuals, families and communities. Beyond certain broad characteristics and parameters that might be shared, a girl from an agro-pastoral family will have quite different experiences, perceptions and possibilities open to her than a girl in an urban environment; an Islamic heritage and its local interpretation may have specific implications for marriage and inheritance; ethnicity may – or may not – matter in terms of a community's vision for its girls and the pathways it provides for their transition to womanhood.

Poverty and wealth; urban/rural location; geographic locality; individual household characteristics such as the educational level – but even the strength of character and/or personality of the mother and father – will all matter in terms of the specificity of lived experiences of the influence of sociocultural norms, attitudes and practices on the development and exercise of capabilities. Care must be taken, therefore, in both research and policy, to uncover the dimensions that make a difference, in order to understand them more fully, and more fully support those that offer positive potential for gender justice and the empowerment of girls.

### 7.2.6 Gatekeepers

The issue of gatekeepers came up during our analysis of results, when we began to detect patterns in some of the processes we were observing. For example, parents pay school fees for their daughters, thus opening up the doors to fuller development of capabilities, but then – whether out of economic necessity, greed for bride wealth, fear for a daughter's safety or simple devaluing of the importance of education beyond a certain level for girls – they withdraw the fees and abruptly close the door of opportunity, and the girl is left without a key. Fathers following different inheritance practices in different communities would either keep the gate of access to resources completely shut for their

daughters or allow them a small portion, albeit less so than for sons – thus opening up the gate just so far, but no wider.

Beyond individual gatekeepers, we began to conceptualise all of those who enforced or reinforced barriers to girls' empowerment based on discriminatory norms and ideologies as gatekeepers of various sorts, and even to see the ideologies themselves in that function. For example, the threat of male violence – kept alive in the enactment of violence by individual boys/men and as well as by behavioural patterns of humiliation or intimidation – operated effectively as a barrier to girls' mobility and entry into public domains.

### 7.2.7 Change processes and drivers

Intergenerational pairings and life histories served as useful tools to capture some of the dynamics of change as experienced by girls and their families. But wider community dialogue processes around changing social norms would undoubtedly further enrich such findings and provide more contextualised understandings of broader social trends in a particular community, district or region. Other historical research methods and a broader and deeper literature review on historical change processes more globally would help shed more light on the basic drivers of change or specific causal factors behind the changes experienced.

Social norms, in their manifestation as commonly held attitudes guiding and underpinning practices, are in constant flux but also, paradoxically, notoriously resistant to change. They may change partially only for some segments of society and not others; they may change for a while and then slide 'backwards'; or they may change in one aspect (e.g. attitudes) but not in another (e.g. practices). 'Injunctive norms' (attitudes on what people feel is right based on morals or beliefs) may differ and change in different ways from 'behavioural norms' (a measure of practice, or what people actually do), and the two change in different ways for different reference groups. Factors contributing to changes in either of these dimensions or in relation to different reference groups may differ, and the time span needed to analyse and measure the changes may go well beyond a generation or two.

The issues become even more complex in attempting to identify, distinguish and assess the relative weight of factors affecting adolescent girls' capabilities arising, on the one hand, from changes in social norms (however these might be captured) or, on the other hand, from changes in the overall context (including overall poverty levels and livelihood patterns/potentials) or service provision setting (what has been referred to as the 'supply side' in this study). It is clear that, as with the study of all such complex social phenomena, the elephant in the room can become a trunk, four stout legs or a spindly tail – all in movement – depending on the angle from which one seeks to grab a hold of it.

## 7.3 Considerations for further research and policy review

The study has highlighted certain issues and revealed salient gaps that may have implications for future research and policy formulation. In spite of efforts over the years, challenges have persisted unabated and adolescent girls continue to suffer gendered social injustice. This implies either a lacuna in the understanding of the diverse definitions and interpretations of the capabilities framework, especially as they apply to adolescent girls, or serious constraints in the operationalisation of the policies, programmes and interventions at all levels, coupled with the strength and persistence of gender-discriminatory norms, laws, attitudes and practices.

One focus of ongoing research could be an exploration of these issues, with an emphasis on the extent to which gender is understood as a crosscutting issue and mainstreamed in the policies, programmes and activities to address girls' vulnerabilities across all capabilities domains.

Such research could explore the dynamics of the intimate linkages between discriminatory cultural norms, practices, attitudes and group perceptions and systems of power relations, especially patriarchy and age-based hierarchies, to understand why discriminatory social institutions have retained their cohesion and rigidity and continued to affect girls and young women negatively despite concerted policy and programmatic action to address them.

Rarely in policy matters do programmes invest specifically in changing norms and practices; rather, they might offer services, or seek to empower individual girls through education and the like and hope in that way to build gradual processes of social change. Some programmes, however, do tackle social norms head-on and directly seek to build community-based processes of change. One thinks, for example, of efforts around FGM or ideologies of male violence. It would perhaps be useful to examine

and review such programmes and explore the extent to which they can be applied or adapted to other types of gender-discriminatory norms and practices.

As noted above, much policy-based research is still needed to understand social norms, attitudes and practices as they are made manifest and experienced at very local levels, thus piecing together, from the ground up, a sort of mosaic of culturally specific understandings. This could help build the evidence base for more informed policies and programmes. Support for longer-term research should be considered so ethnographic methods and participant observation could be built into research processes.

Research with adolescent girls requires specific tools and methodologies that help girls give voice to their experiences and aspirations and uncover hitherto unexplored dimensions of their realities. At the technical level, specific tools could be developed or applied based on best practices in this domain; these should at the same time take on the more political dimensions of empowerment through research, building on participatory action/research techniques through which the research process itself provides a catalyst for change.

At a programmatic or policy research level, key issues to explore might be around some of the following themes:

- Successful vocational programmes for girls and how they are sustained;
- Leadership training for girls – what works best?
- Assessment of programmes designed to address male violence – what approaches seem to work best and why?
- Sexual and reproductive health attitudes, information and services – why are girls so cut off?
- Comparative analysis of different national efforts to reform laws related to marriage, divorce and personal status, the resistance these efforts meet and any successes on the ground;
- Specific research on issues around early marriage and pregnancy (causes, consequences and measures to prevent it), and a particular focus on married adolescents and adolescent mothers;
- Research aimed at gaining a better conceptual and practical understanding of the family and household in their different forms, and of family/household dynamics, including sibling relationships, which is an under-researched area;
- Comparative assessment of the effectiveness in terms of adolescent girl capability enhancement of programmes designed to address social norms vs. other kinds of programmes. The key research question: is it more effective to address social norms head-on or obliquely, or do integrated approaches seem to work best?

From a broader social change perspective, the following research issues might be useful to consider:

- How have broad social changes, transformations or transitions around women and gender relations occurred in the past? What have been some of the key drivers of change? How have these varied by context?
- In a given country or context, has change around any particular social norm been more rapid or readily achieved than changes around others? What accounts for this?
- What are the links between overall poverty dynamics – including multidimensional poverty – and adolescent girls' capabilities, on the one hand, and social norms and capabilities, on the other? Is there some way to disentangle and/or illuminate the relationships?

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## Appendix 1: Key concepts

<b>Vulnerability</b>	Degree of exposure to risk, shocks, barriers or other sources of harm combined with the capacity to respond (resilience and capacity to prevent, mitigate or cope)
<b>Capability</b>	What individuals are able to be or do to enable them to fulfil aspects of their lives and aspirations and achieve wellbeing (the ability to be and to do/act – development as expanding ‘freedoms’ and ‘capabilities’)
<b>Social norms</b>	Rules or expectations about behaviour that reflect and embody prevailing cultural values and are backed by sanctions – either formal or informal. They are about what a group deems to be good, proper, acceptable or bad.
<b>Values</b>	The commonly held standards of what is acceptable or unacceptable, important or unimportant, right or wrong, workable or unworkable in a community or society
<b>Entitlements</b>	A guarantee of access to benefits based on commonly accepted principles or enshrined in law. A provision made in accordance with a legal framework of society. Legitimate claims of entitlement to the services and other conditions necessary to promote well-being are assets of citizens in a democratic society.
<b>Gender justice</b>	Envisions a society free of gender barriers – a society in which individuals are not held back by implicit bias, stereotypes or prejudice and can reach their full potential, whether at school, in the workplace or in the community. Justice also implies the idea of redress and therefore entitlements.

## Appendix 2: List of respondents by category of tool and study site

<b>Mayuge district, Bukabooli sub-county</b>		
Category of tool and respondents	No. exercises	No participants
<b>Individual interviews</b>		
Adolescent girls 11-14	6	6
Adolescent girls 15-19	8	8
Boys (brothers to adolescent girls)	7	7
<b>Intra-household Interviews</b>		
Intra-household (3 people per household)	5	15
<b>Life history interviews</b>		
Life history and intergenerational (3 people per household: daughter, mother and grandmother). Included timeline, household/family drawing, and institutional mapping	4	12
<b>FGDs</b>		
Adolescent girls 11-14; included body map exercise	1	7
Adolescent girls in school 15-18	1	10
Adolescent girls and boys 15-18 (5 girls, 5 boys)	1	10
Adolescent girls 15-19 out of school	1	10
Adult mixed group men and women (4 women, 5 men)	1	9
Subtotal	35	84
<b>Sembabule district, Rwemiyaga sub-county</b>		
Category of tool and respondents	No. exercises	No participants
<b>Individual interviews</b>		
Adolescent girls 11-14; included body map exercise	5	5
Adolescent girls 15-19	6	6
Boys (brothers to adolescent girls)	5	5
<b>Intra-household interviews</b>		
Intra-household (3 people per household). Included timeline, household/family drawing and institutional mapping	3	9
<b>Life history interviews</b>		
Life history and generational (2 households 3 people; 1 household 2 people: daughter, mother and grandmother)	3	8
Subtotal	22	33
<b>FGDs</b>		
Adolescent girls 11-14	1	8
Adolescent girls in school 15-18	2	20
Adolescent girls and boys 15-18 (4 girls, 6 boys)	1	10
Adult mixed group men and women (5 women, 7 men)	1	12
Subtotal	5	50
<b>KIIs</b>		
<b>National level</b>		
Female official MoH	1	1
Female official MoES	1	1
Male officer UNICEF	1	1
Female officer UNICEF	1	1
Female officer UNFPA	1	1
Female NGO programme officer	1	1
NGO founder and woman activist	1	1
Female professor Makerere University	1	1
Male professor Makerere University	1	1
Male associate professor, Makerere University	1	1
Subtotal	10	10

<b>District level</b>		
<b>Individual Kills</b>		
<b>Mayuge</b>		
Pentecostal religious leader, male	1	1
Kyabazinga (former caretaker), male	1	1
Muslim religious leader, male	1	1
NGO coordinator, male	1	1
Subtotal	4	4
<b>Sembabule</b>		
Government official, male	1	1
Orthodox religious leader, male	1	1
Protestant religious leader, male	1	1
Muslim religious leader, male	1	1
NGO official, male	1	1
Subtotal	5	5
<b>Group Kills</b>		
District Technical Team, Mayuge (2 women, 5 men)	1	7
Sub-county Technical Team, Mayuge (1 woman, 8 men)	1	9
Subtotal	2	16
District Technical Team, Sembabule (5 women, 9 men)	1	14
Sub-county Technical Team, Sembabule (1 woman, 4 men)	1	5
Subtotal	2	19

# Appendix 3: Research instruments, FGDs

## 1. FGD guide: adolescents

### Notes on methodology:

- This tool is for use in FGDs with **adolescent girls (15-19) and mixed groups of adolescent boys and girls (15-19)**. (*The revised body mapping tool will be used to guide FGDs with adolescent girls 11-14.*)
- Questions appropriate to specific groups (children in school; adults) **are indicated in red**.
- Given the context in Uganda, it is important to explore **particular vulnerabilities of orphans**.
- While some structure in the order and sequencing of questions is desirable, this should **NOT be rigid**.
- Participants should be encouraged to **elaborate** or **add additional issues** along the way as well as to build on what other participants are saying.
- This process requires at least two researchers: **one facilitator asking the questions; one note-taker**.
- FGDs should be **conducted in the local language**.

### Getting started:

- Facilitators should ensure that participants are comfortably seated in an appropriate setting (in the shade, not too crowded, water available, no background noises or interruptions etc.)
- Participants should be thanked for coming and facilitators should introduce themselves and explain – in simple terms – the purpose of the research, stressing the importance of getting individual views and feedback on the programme and how much this is valued.
- Facilitators should explain that they will be taking notes and recording the interview, as well as taking pictures, and should gain consent from the participants to do so (using informed consent checklist). Facilitator should explain that care will be taken to preserve anonymity (unless participants want names used).

### Recording, note-taking and transcriptions:

- After obtaining consent, **all FGDs should be recorded**, with the date, place and identification of facilitator and interviewee recorded first.
- **Basic information** on the groups should also be written down (number, gender, age, type of participants, community name, date etc.)
- **Complete** and legible notes should be taken (in English) of all responses. It is **VERY important** to report as much as possible on what was said **in the participants' own words**. Specific verbatim quotes, phrases, expressions etc. should be noted down along the way, including particular expressions in the local language (which can later be translated into English).
- Notes should include **start and end time of the FGD**, as well as a record of any difficulties encountered.
- Any **pictures taken** should be carefully labelled and dated.
- Key highlights of the discussions should be noted in the **daily reporting format**.
- Recordings should be **transcribed** into English after fieldwork.

### Other consideration:

- At the end of the FGD, participants should be **thanked** for their time and the information they provided and allowed to ask questions and offer any further suggestions or ideas.
- **Refreshments** should be available and any transport costs compensated (these should be organised beforehand with the local coordinator).
- Particularly interesting or articulate respondents may be identified by the facilitators for potential follow-up **life histories and/or case studies**. If the respondent accepts, arrangements should be made – with the local coordinator – for follow-up sessions – potentially in the respondent's home.

## Thematic area 1: Education and vocation

### Access to school

- What do you think about school in your community?
- Do adolescents in your community go to school?
  - If yes, which adolescents are likely to go to school?
  - If no, which adolescents are likely not to go to school?
  - Why?
- Is there a difference between the numbers of girls and boys that go to school in your community?
  - If yes, what is the difference?
  - Why?
- Do you think both adolescent girls and boys should go to school?
  - If yes, why
  - If no, why not?
- Are there any young people in your community who are denied access to school completely?

- If yes, who are they? **[Probe for gender differences/marginalised, e.g. orphans, children with disability]**
- What are some of the reasons?
- What age do young people tend to complete/finish school in your community?
  - Is there a difference between girls and boys?
  - If so, why?
- Do both adolescent girls and boys ever leave [drop out of] school without completing?
  - If yes, why?
  - Are there any differences between girls and boys dropping out?

#### **Extracurricular activities**

- Do all young people have the same extracurricular activities?
  - If not, what determines the choice of lessons or activities?
  - Are there any differences between girls and boys?
  - Why do you think this is?

#### **For children in school:**

- Are there lessons or extracurricular activities you don't take that you would find useful to take? What are these?

#### **Alternative education**

- Are there any places other than school where young people can go to learn?
  - If so, which are these other places?
  - What do they teach? Skill/craft/vocation/religion?
  - Who can go there to learn? **[Probe for gender and physical or mental capability of the potential learner]**
  - Do boys and girls go to the same places? If different, why?
- Do you think they have been helpful to young people in the community?
  - How helpful?
  - Do young people have to pay to go?
  - Have any of you ever been? If yes, what made you want to go?

### **Thematic area 2: Livelihood strategies**

#### **Household activities**

- What are the main activities that children and young people participate in?
  - Inside the household (household chores; child care)
  - Outside the household (agricultural-related activities; other)
  - Do these differ for boys and girls? If so, how and why?

#### **Paid employment**

- Do young people in your community make money [i.e. participate in activities for pay/money]?
  - If yes, how, where, when? (To include period when, how often/frequency)
  - Is there a difference between girls and boys?
    - If yes, why do you think this is the case?
  - Is there a difference between young people and adults?
    - If yes, why do you think this is the case?
- What limitations do young people face while making money?
- What are the key economic challenges young people face in this community? **[Probe: food insecurity, access to education, unemployment or work opportunities, environmental risks, rising prices, drought, migration]**
- Do you think these challenges are the same for young men and young women?
  - If yes, in which ways
- Are they the same challenges or different to those faced by adults?

#### **Migration**

- Do any young people in the community migrate to other places/towns/countries?
  - If yes, why do they migrate?
- Do their parents/or siblings migrate with them? **[Probe for gender differences]**
- Have any of you ever migrated? Have members of your households ever migrated?
- Are there any particular problems that people, particularly young people, face as migrants?

#### **Productive resources and assets**

- How do young people in your community acquire assets (land, animals, goods, household property, jewellery, money)?
  - Do boys and girls acquire these in the same ways?
  - Are these the same assets?

- If there are differences, what are these differences and how do you feel about them?
- Can young people easily access credit?
  - Are there any differences for young men and young women?

#### **Thematic area 3: Key coping strategies in the community**

- What are the key vulnerabilities (*ebitasobozesa*) in this area? [**Prompt economic, social, physical, environmental or other**]
  - What difficulties do people face in this community? [**Probe for economic, health, social, physical; for girls and boys; for men and women**]
- What do people do when in difficulty? (Specify economic, health, social, physical ... )
  - Identify differences in coping mechanisms used by boys and girls; by men and women; by adults and children

#### **Thematic area 4: Forming adult relationships (marriage and household)**

- At what age do young people normally separate from their parents (either to marry or to go live on their own)?
  - Is there a difference in age between when girls and boys separate from their parents?
  - What happens in the case of orphans?
- What are some of the main reasons for young people to separate from their parents?
  - Do girls and boys separate from their parents for different reasons?
  - If yes, what reasons? [**Probe for the reasons by gender**]
- At what age do girls normally get married in your community?
  - Is this the same for boys? If not, why is it different?
  - Does the age at marriage differ for different groups (ethnic, religious, other)?
- What do you think is a good age for marriage (for girls and for boys)?
- Do girls who marry usually stay within their home community/village or move to their husband's community?
  - Does this differ for different groups (ethnic, religious, other)?
- What are some of the challenges that girls who marry young face in their new households?

#### **Thematic area 5: Voice within household decision making**

- Do young people get involved in making decisions on issues?
  - Which issues do boys and girls get involved in? [**Probe for home and community issues**]
- Do young people in this community have a voice in household decision making
  - When they live with parents? [**Probe gender differences**]
  - When they live with parents-in-law? [**Probe gender differences**]
  - When they are married? [**Probe gender differences**]
  - If yes, on what issues do they make decisions (education, marriage, household expenditure)? [**Probe gender differences**]
  - What sort of decisions do young men and women usually make?
  - How are the decisions young men and women make different from those made by adult men and women?
- Do adults in this community feel that young people have a right to make decisions?
  - If yes, on which issues do adults think children can make decisions and on which issues do adults think children should have no say?
  - If adults don't feel young people have or should have a voice or decision-making power in the household, why is this the case?

#### **Thematic area 6: Sexual, reproductive and physical health**

##### **Health education and information and services**

- Do children receive any sexual and reproductive health education at school? (This includes *ebyokwegata* – sex issues, *ebyokuzala*, *ebyomukwano*, *endwade zekikaba* – HIV/AIDS and other STDs, *ebyokwegema okuzala*, *ebyembut* – family planning)
  - If yes, what were you taught about? [**Probe on: HIV/AIDS education/awareness, voluntary testing and counselling, reproductive health, menstruation**]
  - Who provides the information?
  - Do adolescent boys and girls and girls experience the same health education?
- Where else do young people access sexual and reproductive health information/education?
- Are there places where young people can go to receive youth-friendly health information and services? [**Probe: family, religious leaders, local health services, husband/wife, peers, etc.**]

##### **HIV and AIDS**

- What increases the risk of someone being exposed to HIV and AIDS?
- Are there any activities that take place in your household/community that increase this risk? [**Probe: early sexual initiation, FGM, early marriage etc.**]
- Do you think girls are more vulnerable to HIV than boys? If so, why?

- Do you know any people living with HIV (PLHIV) in your community? Are they youth (young boys and girls) or adults?
  - If young people, how do you view them? **[Probe for gender]**
  - If adults, how do you view them? **[Probe for gender]**
  - How are they treated in the community? **[Are they stigmatised or discriminated against?]**

### **Reproductive health**

- At what age do you think young people in the community have sexual relations for the first time?
- Do you think this differs for young men and women?
  - If yes, how and why is it different?
- What do you think are the reasons for young women and men having sex for the first time?
- What do you think are some of the risks associated with young people having sex? **[Probe STDs, HIV, etc.]**
- Do young people have access to contraception (family planning mechanisms) such as condoms?
  - If yes, from where?
  - If not, why not?
  - Do you think young people should have access?
  - What do you think about contraception?
- Are condoms provided free of charge or do people have to purchase them?
  - If they are freely distributed, has there been any change in young people's capacity to access/purchase contraception methods?
- At what age do most women in the community have their first child (younger than 15; 15-18; 19-23; 24+)?
- Is there an expected number of children that woman should have here?
  - If yes, how many? **[Probe for gender – is it the same for men and women?]**
  - Why do you think so?
  - Do you agree/disagree?
  - Who enforces this idea?
- What happens in cases where women cannot have children?
  - Does she experience any difficulties in her marriage? Do attitudes about her change?

### **Sexual exploitation**

- Are young women or men exchanging sex for money or other things (like food)?
- Are young women or men working as sex workers?
- Are young women or men at risk of trafficking (i.e., when young women are sent to other places, including other countries, under false pretences – such as finding them jobs but end up engaging in sex work)?
  - Why is this happening?
  - Is this become more/less (comment in the past 2-3 years)? Why?

### **Violence**

- Do you know of any young people who have faced violence (verbal, physical or sexual)?
  - If yes, where and from whom (e.g. school, field, public area in the community, home etc.)?
  - Why do you think it happened?
- Are certain groups of young people (orphans, disabled, ethnic minorities, PLHIV etc.) targets of discrimination and violence in this community? **[By violence we include physical violence, behavioural violence, name calling and aggression in general]**
  - Do you think violence is greater towards boys/men or towards girls/women?
  - What particular forms of violence are experienced by women and girls, and why?
- Do you think there have been changes in the situation regarding violence in the past 2-3 years? If so, why?
- Are there any traditional practices in your community that could be considered violence against women/girls (FGM, forced marriage, nutritional taboos)?

### **Access to justice**

- Do you think that all people in this community have access to justice (*okuwawaba oba okulumulwa*) (e.g. to the police, to courts, to traditional courts) if they feel an injustice has been done against them?
- If not, why do you think this is the case?
- Are there any particular challenges that women and girls face in accessing justice (particularly in cases of GBV; domestic violence, accessing assets/inheritance ...)?

### **Thematic area 7: Self-esteem and mental health**

- Are there any particular pressures on young people in your community that are emotionally (*okutabula obwongo*) and psychologically (*mundowoza*) difficult?
  - Are there differences between girls and boys?
- Sometimes young people who are stressed or depressed find it useful to have counselling services, someone to talk to or help from psychologists.
  - Are there government or NGO services that depressed young people in your community can use?
  - Are there any particular services for girls?

- Has the consumption of drugs (*ebilagalalagala*)/alcohol by young people ever been a problem in the community?
  - If yes, have you witnessed any change in young people's use drugs or alcohol?
  - Why do you think these changes are happening?
  - Are there differences between adolescent girls and boys?
- What are the effects on young people (and others) of taking drugs, smoking or alcohol?

#### **Thematic area 8: Social connectedness**

- What do adolescent girls and boys do with their spare time?
  - Do boys and girls spend their free time on the same activities?
  - Do boys and girls spend their free time in the same places?
  - Do boys and girls have the same opportunities for leisure (sports, clubs, etc.)?

#### **Access to communication**

- Do adolescent girls and boys in your community have access to mobile phones, computers, the internet?
- Is there a difference between girls and boys using these technologies?
  - If so, why do you think so?

#### **Youth involvement in social groups or civic organisations**

- Are there groups and clubs (at school or in your neighbourhood) within your community that young people can participate in?
  - If yes, what kinds of groups and clubs are there?
  - What benefits do young people get from belonging to the group?
  - Has there been a change in the number of youth groups and clubs accessible to young people over the past 5 years?
  - If yes, why is this?
- Are there other young people in the community who cannot participate in the clubs?
  - Who are they? [**Probe for gender, disability, orphan status, age**] Why can't they participate?
  - Do adolescent girls have the same opportunities to participate in clubs and associations as adolescent boys? If not, why/why not?
- Do you participate in any social (netball, village sports groups) and civic organisations?
  - If so of what kind (youth wing of political party, youth trade unions, grassroots campaigning on social issues)?
  - What made you become involved in this activity?
- Are there youth specific organisations in the community? [**N.B. this is different to clubs, looking more at youth development NGOs etc.**]
- What kind of activities do young people engage in with these organisations? [**Probe for civic engagement – e.g. campaigning on social issues, participation in local decision making**]

#### **Engagement in decision-making structures**

- Are there spaces for young people to participate in community/civic decision making (including political) (e.g. discussing with assemblyman or other members of the assembly; participation in town council meetings or equivalent)?
- What do you think about the relevance of civic participation for young people?
- Do you think that it is safe for young people to be involved in activities linked to civic participation?
- Are there any differences in opportunities and forms of civic participation for young women/men?
  - If so, what are these differences and why

#### **Thematic area 9: Future aspirations**

- What would you like to be when you are an adult?
- What changes, if any, would you make to your community?
- How do you think you could accomplish these changes?
- What might be some of the challenges to achieving those changes?

#### **Proverbs**

- What are some of the gender-related proverbs you have heard about in this community?
- What do they mean to you?

## **2. FGD guide: adults**

### **Notes on methodology:**

- This tool is for use in FGDs with **adults**.
- While some structure in the order and sequencing of questions is desirable, this should **NOT be rigid**.
- Participants should be encouraged **to elaborate** or **add additional issues** along the way as well as to build on what other participants are saying.

- Given the context in Uganda, it is important to explore **particular vulnerabilities of orphans** and any **challenges for caregivers of orphans**.
- This process requires at least two researchers: **one facilitator asking the questions; one note-taker**.
- FGDs should be **conducted in the local language**.

#### **Getting started:**

- Facilitators should ensure that participants are comfortably seated in an appropriate setting (in the shade, not too crowded, water available, no background noises or interruptions, etc.)
- Participants should be thanked for coming and facilitators should introduce themselves and explain – in simple terms – the purpose of the research, stressing the importance of getting individual views and feedback on the programme and how much this is valued.
- Facilitators should explain that they will be taking notes and recording the interview, as well as taking pictures, and should gain consent from the participants to do so (using informed consent checklist). Facilitator should explain that care will be taken to preserve anonymity (unless participants want names used).

#### **Recording, note-taking and transcriptions:**

- After obtaining consent, **all FGDs should be recorded**, with the date, place and identification of facilitator and interviewee recorded first.
- **Basic information** on the groups should also be written down (number, gender, age, type of participants, community name, date etc.)
- **Complete** and legible notes should be taken (in English) of all responses. It is **VERY important** to report as much as possible on what was said **in the participants' own words**. Specific verbatim quotes, phrases, expressions etc. should be noted down along the way, including particular expressions in the local language (which can later be translated into English).
- Notes should include **start and end time of the FGD**, as well as a record of any difficulties encountered.
- Any **pictures taken** should be carefully labelled and dated.
- Key highlights of the discussions should be noted in the **daily reporting format**.
- Recordings should be **transcribed** into English after fieldwork.

#### **Other consideration:**

- At the end of the FGD, participants should be **thanked** for their time and the information they provided and allowed to ask questions and offer any further suggestions or ideas.
- **Refreshments** should be available and any transport costs compensated (these should be organised beforehand with the local coordinator).
- Particularly interesting or articulate respondents may be identified by the facilitators for potential follow-up **life histories and/or case studies**. If the respondent accepts, arrangements should be made – with the local coordinator – for follow-up sessions – potentially in the respondent's home.

### **Thematic area 1: Education and vocation**

#### **Access to school**

- Do adolescents in your community go to school?
  - If yes, which adolescents are likely to go to school?
  - If no which adolescents are likely not to go to school?
  - Why?
- Is there a difference between the numbers of girls and boys that go to school in your community?
  - If yes, what is the difference?
  - Why?
- Do you think both adolescent girls and boys should go to school?
  - If yes, why
  - If no, why not?
- Are there any young people in your community who are denied access to school completely?
  - If yes who are they? [**Probe for gender differences/marginalised, e.g. orphans, children with disability**]
  - What are some of the reasons?
- What age do young people tend to complete/finish school in your community?
  - Is there a difference between girls and boys?
  - If so, why?
- Do both adolescent girls and boys ever leave (drop out of) school without completing?
  - If yes, why?
  - Are there any differences between girls and boys dropping out?
- Do all young people have the same extracurricular activities?
  - If not, what determines the choice of lessons or activities?
  - Are there any differences between girls and boys?
  - If so, why do you think this is?
- What do you think the main value of schooling is for your children?

- Is this different for your sons and daughters?

### **Alternative education**

- Are there any places other than school where young people can go to learn?
  - If so, which are these other places?
  - What do they teach (skill/craft/vocation/religion)?
  - Who can go there to learn? **[Probe for gender and physical or mental capability of the potential learner]**
  - Do boys and girls go to the same places? If different, why?
- Do you think they have been helpful to young people in the community?
  - How helpful?
  - Do young people have to pay to go?
  - Have any of you ever been? If yes, what made you want to go?

## **Thematic area 2: Livelihood strategies**

### **Household activities**

- What are the main activities that children and young people participate in?
  - Inside the household (household chores; child care)?
  - Outside the household (agricultural-related activities; other)
  - Do these differ for boys and girls? If so, how and why?

### **Paid employment**

- What are the key economic challenges young people face in this community? **[Probe: food insecurity, access to education, unemployment or work opportunities, environmental risks, rising prices, drought, migration]**
- Do you think these challenges are the same for young men and young women?
  - If yes, in which ways
- Are they the same challenges or different to those faced by adults?
- Do young people in your community make money (i.e. participate in activities for pay/money)?
  - If yes, how, where, when? (To include period when, how often/frequency)
  - Is there a difference between girls and boys?
    - If yes, why do you think this is the case?
  - Is there a difference between young people and adults?
    - If yes, why do you think this is the case?
- What limitations do young people face while making money?

### **Migration**

- Do any young people in the community migrate to other places/towns/countries?
  - If yes, why do they migrate?
- Do their parents/or siblings migrate with them? **[Probe for gender differences]**
- Have any of you ever migrated? Have members of your households ever migrated?
- Are there any particular problems that people, particularly young people, face as migrants?

### **Productive resources and assets**

- How do young people in your community acquire assets (land, animals, goods, household property, jewellery, money)?
  - Do boys and girls acquire these in the same ways?
  - Are these the same assets?
  - If there are differences, what are these differences and how do you feel about them?
- Can young people easily access credit?
  - Are there any differences for young men and young women?

## **Thematic area 3: Key coping strategies in the community**

- What are the key vulnerabilities (*ebitasobozesa*) in this area? **[Prompt economic, social, physical, environmental or other]**
  - What difficulties do people face in this community? **[Probe for economic, health, social, physical; for girls and boys; for men and women]**
- What do people do when in difficulty? (Specify economic, health, social, physical ... )
  - Identify differences in coping mechanisms used by boys and girls; by men and women; by adults and children
- Would you say most households in your community are the same in terms of being well-off or not?
  - If yes, are most households poor, middle or well-off?
  - If not, what are the key differences?
- What are the key characteristics of the most vulnerable households in your community?
- Are many people in your community in debt?

- If yes, how does this normally happen, and what do people do to pay off their debts

#### **Thematic area 4: Forming adult relationships (marriage and household)**

- At what age do young people normally separate from their parents (either to marry or to go live on their own)?
  - Is there a difference in age between when girls and boys separate from their parents?
- What are some of the main reasons for young people to separate from their parents?
  - Do girls and boys separate from their parents for different reasons?
  - If yes, what reasons? **[Probe for the reasons by gender]**
- At what age do girls normally get married in your community?
  - Is this the same for boys? If not, why is it different?
  - Does the age at marriage differ for different groups (ethnic, religious, other)?
- What do you think is a good age for marriage (for girls and for boys)?
- Do girls who marry usually stay within their home community/village or move to their husband's community?
  - Does this differ for different groups (ethnic, religious, other)?
- What are some of the challenges that girls who marry young face in their new households?
- What do you think the proper role for husbands and wives should be within the household?
  - Are roles different for husbands and wives, and should they be?
  - Who has/should have main decision-making authority in the household, and over what issues? (household expenditures, children, residence ... )?
- When husband and wife experience difficulties in marriage, what do they do?
  - Who do they turn to for advice?
- What are some of the difficulties that occur if a marriage breaks down?
  - Are these different for the man and the woman? Describe

#### **Thematic area 5: Voice within household decision-making**

- Do young people get involved in making decisions on issues?
  - Which issues do boys and girls get involved in? **[Probe for home and community issues]**
- Do young people in this community have a voice in household decision making:
  - When they live with parents? **[Probe gender differences]**
  - When they live with parents-in-law? **[Probe gender differences]**
  - When they are married? **[Probe gender differences]**
  - If yes, on what issues do they make decisions (education, marriage, household expenditure)? **[Probe gender differences]**
  - What sort of decisions do young men and women usually make?
  - How are the decisions do young men and women make different from those made by adult men and women?
- Do adults in this community feel that young people have a right to make decisions?
  - If yes, on which issues do adults think children can make decisions and on which issues do adults think children should have no say
  - If adults don't feel young people have or should have a voice or decision-making power in the household, why is this the case?

#### **Thematic Area 6: Sexual, reproductive and physical health**

##### **Health education and information and services**

- Do children receive any sexual and reproductive health education at school? (This includes *ebyokwegata* – sex issues, *ebyokuzala*, *ebyomukwano*, *endwade zekikaba* – HIV/AIDS and other STDs, *ebyokwegema okuzala*, *ebyembut* – family planning)
  - If yes, what were you taught about? **[Probe on HIV/AIDS education/awareness, voluntary testing and counselling, reproductive health, menstruation]**
  - Who provides the information?
  - Do adolescent boys and girls experience the same health education?
- Where else do young people access sexual and reproductive health information/education?
- Are there places where young people can go to receive youth friendly health information and services? **[Probe: family, religious leaders, local health services, husband/wife, peers etc.]**

##### **HIV and AIDS**

- What increases the risk of someone being exposed to HIV?
- Are there any activities that take place in your household/community that increase this risk? **[Probe: early sexual initiation, FGM, early marriage etc.]**
- Do you think girls are more vulnerable to HIV than boys? If so, why?
- Do you know any PLHIV in your community? Are they youth (young boys and girls) or adults?
  - If young people, how do you view them? **[Probe for gender]**
  - If adults, how do you view them? **[Probe for gender]**
  - How are they treated in the community? **[Are they stigmatised or discriminated against etc.?)**

### **Reproductive health**

- At what age do you think young people in the community have sexual relations for the first time?
- Do you think this differs for young men and women?
  - If yes, how and why is it different?
- What do you think are the reasons for young women and men having sex for the first time?
- What do you think are some of the risks associated with young people having sex? [**Probe STDs, HIV, etc.**]
- Do young people have access to contraception (family planning mechanisms) such as condoms?
  - If yes, from where?
  - If not, why not?
  - Do you think young people should have access?
  - What do you think about contraception?
- Are condoms provided free of charge or do people have to purchase them?
  - If they are freely distributed, has there been any change in young people's capacity to access/purchase contraception methods?
- At what age do most women in the community have their first child (younger than 15; 15-18; 19-23; 24+)?
- Is there an expected number of children that woman should have here?
  - If yes, how many? [**Probe for gender – is it the same for men and women?**]
  - Why do you think so?
  - Do you agree/disagree?
  - Who enforces this idea?
- What happens in cases where women cannot have children?
  - Does she experience any difficulties in her marriage? Do attitudes about her change?
- What do you see as some of the key changes around reproductive health and sexual activity in young people now compared with when you were young? Discuss

### **Sexual exploitation**

- Are young women or men exchanging sex for money or other things (like food)?
- Are young women or men working as sex workers?
- Are young women or men at risk of trafficking (i.e., when young women are sent to other places, including other countries, under false pretences – such as finding them jobs but end up engaging in sex work)?
  - Why is this happening?
  - Is this become more/less (comment in the past 2-3 years)? Why?

### **Violence**

- Do you know of any young people who have faced violence (verbal, physical or sexual)?
  - If yes, where and from whom (e.g. school, field, public area in the community, home etc.)?
  - Why do you think it happened?
- Are certain groups of young people (disabled, ethnic minorities, PLHIV etc.) targets of discrimination and violence in this community? [**By violence we include physical violence, behavioural violence, name calling and aggression in general**]
  - Do you think violence is greater towards boys/men or towards girls/women?
  - What particular forms of violence are experienced by women and girls, and why?
- Do you think there have been changes in the situation regarding violence in the past 2-3 years? If so, why?
- Are there any traditional practices in your community that could be considered violence against women/girls FGM, forced marriage, nutritional taboos)?

### **Access to justice**

- Do you think that all people in this community have access to justice (*okuwawaba oba okulumulwa*) (e.g. to the police, to courts, to traditional courts) if they feel an injustice has been done against them?
- If not, why do you think this is the case?
- Are there any particular challenges that women and girls face in accessing justice (particularly in cases of SGBV; domestic violence, accessing assets/inheritance ...)?

### **Thematic area 7: Self-esteem and mental health**

- Are there any particular pressures on young people in your community that are emotionally (*okutabula obwongo*) and psychologically (*mundowoza*) difficult?
  - Are there differences between girls and boys?
- Sometimes young people who are stressed or depressed find it useful to have counselling services, someone to talk to or help from psychologists.
  - Are there government or NGO services that depressed young people in your community can use?
  - Are there any particular services for girls?
- Has the consumption of drugs (*ebilagalalagala*)/alcohol by young people ever been a problem in the community?
  - If yes, have you witnessed any change in young people's use drugs or alcohol?
  - Why do you think these changes are happening?

- Are there differences between adolescent girls and boys?
- What are the effects on young people (and others) of taking drugs, smoking or alcohol?

#### **Thematic area 8: Social connectedness**

- What do adolescent girls and boys do with their spare time?
  - Do boys and girls spend their free time on the same activities?
  - Do boys and girls spend their free time in the same places?
  - Do boys and girls have the same opportunities for leisure (sports, clubs etc.)?

#### **Access to communication**

- Do adolescent girls and boys in your community have access to mobile phones, computers, the internet?
- Is there a difference between girls and boys using these technologies?
  - If so, why do you think so?

#### **Youth involvement in social groups or civic organisations**

- Are there groups and clubs (at school or in your neighbourhood) within your community that young people can participate in?
  - If yes, what kinds of groups and clubs are there?
  - What benefits do young people get from belonging to the group?
  - Has there been a change in the number of youth groups and clubs accessible to young people over the past 5 years?
  - If yes, why is this?
- Are there other young people in the community who cannot participate in the clubs?
  - Who are they? [**Probe for gender, disability, age**] Why can't they participate?
- Do adolescent girls have the same opportunities to participate in clubs and associations as adolescent boys?
  - If not, why/why not?
- Are there youth specific organisations in the community? [**N.B. this is different to clubs, looking more at youth development NGOs etc.**]
- What kind of activities do young people engage in with these organisations? [**Probe for civic engagement – e.g. campaigning on social issues, participation in local decision making**]

#### **Engagement in decision-making structures**

- Are there spaces for young people to participate in community/civic decision making (including political) (e.g. discussing with assemblyman or other members of the assembly; participation in town council meetings or equivalent)?
- What do you think about the relevance of civic participation for young people?
- Do you think that it is safe for young people to be involved in activities linked to civic participation?
- Are there any differences in opportunities and forms of civic participation for young women/men?
  - If so, what are these differences and why

#### **Thematic area 9: Future aspirations**

- What do you hope for your children/grandchildren?
- Do you have different hopes for your daughters/granddaughters than you do for your sons/grandsons?
- In what ways do you hope your children's/grandchildren's lives will be the same or different from your own?

#### **Proverbs**

- What are some of the gender-related proverbs you have heard about in this community?
- What do they mean to you?

## Appendix 4: Research instruments, IDIs

### Purpose

- IDIs aim to explore in detail particular aspects of adolescent girls' and boys' experiences in the different capability domains.

### Individuals covered: IDIs with adolescent girls and boys as follows:

- **Girls:** 2 younger in school; 2 younger out of school; 2 older in school; 2 older out of school; 2 married (ideally 1 with children)
- **Boys (brothers):** 2 older boys – 1 in school, 1 out of school; 2 younger boys – 1 in school; 1 out of school

### Methodological notes:

1. Explain the purpose of the research and what you will be using your answers for.
2. Explain that you will ask the interviewee questions and they can respond what they think and what they know (not only yes or no answers); they can also reply that they don't know when it is the case.
3. Record basic demographic information: name, gender, age, ethnicity, religion, community, category of respondent, date of interview, interviewer, reporter and time.

### Probes throughout for:

- Gender differences; ethnic and religious differences; orphan status; traditional institutions and cultural norms; power dynamics within households, peers, communities

### Probes: why, what, where, how, when, how often ...

- Keep the focus of the questions on the interviewee, their life and reality, as opposed to other adolescent girls, as this will be covered in the FGDs.

### Probing sentences include:

- Tell me more about it ... ; What do you mean by that ... ; Can you explain better/more ... ; Give me examples ... ; How is that/how/what do you mean ...

### 1. Family status and living arrangements

- How old are you? Are you single, married, divorced, widowed?
- Who do you live with (number of people in the household)? Who is the head of the household (age, gender and relationship to them)? Since when have you lived with them?
- How many siblings do you have? Younger? Older? Gender?
  - How many of them are married (gender differences)?
  - How many of them have children? How many children (gender differences)? (Give approximate age)
- What do you see as the key similarities and differences between your life and the lives of your siblings (older/younger; male/female)?
- What is your main family responsibility (study, worker, mother/father, carer etc.)?

#### *If a mother:*

- How many children do you have?
- How old were you when you had your first child?
- How old would you have liked to have been when you had your first child?
- Do all your children live with you? If no, where do they live, since when, why?
- Do you have other dependants living with you in your household (e.g. older family members, members living with a disability or illness)?
- Who is the primary caregiver in your household (in terms of caring for others)?

### 2. Intra-household division of labour and decision making

#### *Division of labour*

- What are your main activities inside the household (household chores; child care)? How long does it take you to do these?
- Are these different from other members of your household?
- Do you feel that you have the time to undertake all of the household/familial responsibilities that you have?
- Who decides on who does what? Why?
- How do you feel about this division of responsibilities (positive/negative)? Are they seen as a burden?
- Is the share of these responsibilities ever a source of conflict within the household?
- Over the next 5 years do you see this division of household roles changing?
  - If so, in what way?

- How would you like to see this household responsibilities shared?

### **Decision making in general**

- For what things do you have to ask permission? From whom?
- Do you feel that you have a voice in decision making within your household?
  - If you don't feel you have a voice/decision-making power in the household, why is this the case?
  - If yes, what kinds of decisions can you make now (about money, asset/land ownership, health, education, labour, employment, time use, marriage, expenditure, income)?
- How is it different for boys and girls/men and women within your household?
- Who do you most interact with in terms of making decisions?

### **Decision making around mobility**

- Are you able to move around freely within your community, outside, etc.?
  - If so, please tell us more about it – where do you usually go? For what purposes? How often?
  - If not, why? Who makes decisions about your mobility (e.g. religion/role in household/father's or husband's authority/safety concerns)?
- Do any of the women in your household/family have restricted mobility?
  - If response is different from what happens to the girl herself, then ask: why is it different?

## **3. Education and vocation**

### **Schooling access and conditions**

- Do you go to school/college?
  - If yes, what school/college do you go to? What costs do you incur going to school? Who pays for you?
  - If not in school, have you ever been to school? At what age did you leave? Please tell us why you left. If you never went to school, please explain why. **[Note: for currently out-of-school adolescents who once attended school, the rest of the questions should be asked in the past]**
- Did or do your brothers/sisters in your household go to school? **[Probe for information if yes, and reasons for differences, including gender]**
- If siblings go to school/college, do you all go to the same school/college? If not, why not, etc.?
- What do/did you require to go to school (uniform, books, bag, shoes, transport money etc.)? Who provides you with these items/supplies? Is it the same for girls/boys?
- How was the school/college selected? Why, by whom etc.?
- What do/did you like about your school?
- What do/did you not like about your school?
- Do/did your parents encourage your education/to go to school?
  - If so, how?
  - Do they encourage your siblings the same? If not, why not?
- How do/did you choose which subjects to study? (Who, parents, teachers, peers, media ...)
- Are you/or were you ever consulted at school/by teachers about your opinions (about the school, about our ideas, plans, home situation, concerns, etc.)?
- Are/were you able to express your thoughts/concerns to teachers if you have any? If not, why not?
- How are/were you treated at school?
  - In the classroom, in the schoolyard, on the way to and from school? By peers, by teachers, adults in the community (feel comfortable, uncomfortable, under pressure, happy etc.)?

### **Extracurricular activities**

- Which extracurricular activities exist in your school and which ones do/did you participate in and why?

### **If interviewee has children:**

- Are you planning to send your children to school? Which ones (gender differences) or all? If only boys or only girls, why?

### **Vocational training**

- Do you have/would you have access to vocational training if you chose to continue learning after school?
- If so, what are the requirements? What are the courses offered? Do you think they are useful?
- Is there a cost for attending? If so, are you/your family able to pay for it?

## **4. Leisure time**

- What types of leisure/recreational activities do you do (not linked to school – church, clubs, sports, bars, informal community, visiting friends etc.)?
- Is it the same for your siblings (gender and age differences)?
- Have your leisure activities changed over time? If so how?
- Has the amount of time you spend on them changed over time? More or less leisure time ... (if changed why and how? **[Probe for gender and age differences]**)

## 5. Economic wellbeing, livelihood strategies and access to assets

### **For all:**

- What is your family's economic situation?
- What is the main economic activity that sustains your family (farming, raising animals, commerce, trade, combination)?
- How many meals do you have per day?
  - Are there some hungry months? Have you ever felt hungry with nothing to eat? Do all members have the same amount of food, type of food etc.? If not, why not? Who has less, who has more (gender and age differences)? Who decides on all of the above?
- What assets does your household own (land, livestock, house, jewellery, other)?
  - Who controls/owns these assets (age/gender differences)?
  - Did you acquire any assets through inheritance? Is this different for boys/girls; men/women? What are some of the particular challenges for girls/women?
- What are some of the main economic challenges your family/household is facing (unemployment, drought, no main household provider etc.)?
  - When your household's livelihood is in difficulty/you face economic insecurity what does your family do? (What are your coping strategies?)
  - How effective are these/each coping strategy (after each coping strategy ask how effective it is)?
  - Have you, your family or any of your neighbours migrated? What do you know about this experience? Why did they migrate? What are some of the challenges?

### **For older adolescents:**

- Do you have a source of income?
  - If so, what, how, where, when, how often?

If you have paid employment:

- What do you do? When did you start? How did you make the decision? Who was involved in that decision? Why did you start?
- Does/did your employment interfere with your schooling?
- What do you do with the money you make? Save, give to someone, spend etc.?
  - If you had more money for yourself what would you spend it on?
- Do you feel safe at work?
  - If not, why not?
- Is there anything that makes you feel very good or very bad at work?
  - Have there been specific changes/incidents at work that have caused this feeling?
- Who else makes money in your household? Who has decision-making authority over the use of this money?
- What would you like to do in the future (work, stay at home, other)?
  - If response is work, what type of work?
  - Do you think there are any obstacles (lack of skills, parental disapproval, lack of opportunities, employers' bias etc.) for you to be able to pursue this work? If yes, what are these obstacles?
  - Do you think this would be different if you were a boy/girl (depending) or if you belonged to a different group (ethnic, religious)?

## 6. Forming adult relationships

### **For married girls:**

- At what age did you separate from your parents (either to marry, to go live on their own, to live with a partner)? Why?
- Who decided when you should separate from your parents?
  - How did you feel about that decision?
  - How do you feel about the age that you got married?
- Did most of your friends also marry at the same age, or are you the only one?
- Were you in school when you married and did you need to leave school because?
- How old is your husband? Does he have other wives? How do you feel about this?
- Are you living in your husband's home community, your home community or another one? How does this affect you?
- Does your husband support your further education, or working?
- How would your life have been different if you had not married?
- How do you feel about your marriage?

### **For older unmarried girls and boys:**

- Are you in any love relationship? If yes, how do you feel about the relationship you are in?
- Do you know of any of your peers who are in any love relationship?
- In which class are they? Are their lovers in the same class, age, outside school, teachers etc.?
- What do you think about young people engaging in relationships? [**Probe for boys, girls**]
- At what age would you like to marry? Why?

## 7. Reproductive and sexual health

### **For all:**

- Do you have any current health issues/concerns? How do you deal with them?
- Do/did you receive any sexual and reproductive health education at school?
  - If so, what were you taught about (body changes, sexual relationships, pregnancy, personal hygiene, family planning, menstruation, abortion etc.)?
- Where else do you access health information/education, in particular sexual and reproductive health information or advice? [**Probe: family, religious leaders, local health services, radio, TV, mobile phone, leaflets, NGOs, husband/wife, peers, siblings, health extension workers etc.**]
- Were you satisfied with what you were taught, the way you were taught etc.? Do you still have questions? Which ones?
- What do you know about HIV and AIDS and STDs? From where did you get this information?
- Do you have access to reproductive health services? Which ones? Are you satisfied with these?

**{At this stage, say that it is sensitive, reiterate that it is confidential, if they don't want to answer it's fine etc. It would be useful for us to know. }**

### **For girls only:**

- Have you started menstruation?
  - If so, how did you feel when you first started? What are your experiences with menstruation (including when at school – somewhere to dispose menstruation towels etc.)? What do you use when you menstruate? Where do you get it from? How did people react to you? Did it restrict your mobility?

### **For older girls:**

- Do you use family planning methods (pill, injectables, condoms, IUDs)?
  - If so, which ones, where do you get them from, how did you decide, what is your experience of using these methods? Who knows about this? How do people react to you if they know? What do you feel about using them?
- Have you ever had an unwanted/unexpected pregnancy? Have you heard any girls who have been pregnant?
  - If yes, how did they deal with it? If they had a termination/abortion, how, when, who helped them with it?

### **For older boys:**

- What do you know about menstruation? What do you feel about girls' menstruation? What kinds of support do you think girls need when menstruating?
- Are you familiar with different forms of family planning? Which ones? If you are or have been in a relationship, do/did you use condoms? If so, what?
- Have you heard any girls who have been pregnant? If yes, how did they deal with it?

## 8. Violence and access to justice

**{Reassure again here the respondents of confidentiality etc.}**

### **For married girls:**

- In some households there is violence against girls and women. Does this happen much in this community?
  - If so, what kind of violence is this? And by who? When does this type of violence tend to happen? Do women/girls complain or just tolerate this situation? What about you?

### **For all girls and boys:**

- We know that sometimes girls/boys face violence in their house or in school or the way to school? Do you know whether this happens in your village?
  - If so, what usually happens when this type of problem emerges?
  - What about you? Have you ever faced any violence? Or do you know of anyone in the household/school/community who has?
- If you have experienced violence, what did you do about this? What sources of support, if any, could you access? [**Probe for informal/social and formal support – access to justice**]
- Have you ever felt pressured in relation to a sexual experience? [**Probe: expectation from husband, peer pressure, loneliness, transactional sex etc.**]
- Are there any practices in your community that you feel are particularly harmful to women or girls or that cause physical discomfort?

## 9. Self-esteem and mental health

### **For all:**

- Adolescence is a challenging time – lots of changes – in your bodies, in the way you think, in your relationships etc.

- Do you ever feel sad, disappointed, upset, angry? About what? How do you cope when you face these challenges? Who do you turn to and why?
- Do you have any worries about the future? If so, what are they about?
- Sometimes young people who are stressed or depressed find it useful to have counselling services, someone to talk to (family member, religious authority) or help from psychologists.
  - Have you ever used services of this kind? Why/why not? Do you think the services were adequate?
  - Do you know of anyone else who have used such services? Describe
- Have you or anyone you know ever been involved in taking drugs or consuming alcohol?
  - If so what have been the reasons for this? [**Probe: social activity, escaping reality, peer pressure, depression**]
  - What were the effects on you/or your friend when taking drugs/stimulants or alcohol?
- Are you aware of any services to support you if you have concerns about drug and alcohol-related activities/behaviour? If you have used these services, were they adequate?
- What types of responses/interventions do you think could help young people like you?

## **10. Wellbeing and social connectedness**

### ***Horizontal social capital***

- Do you have friends in this community? How often do you meet with them? What do you do? Where do you go (e.g. clubs, friends' homes, doing chores such as fetching water, safe spaces)?
- Do you have to ask permission from someone to meet your friends; if so, who?
- Have your interactions with friends changed over time (as you became an adolescent etc.)?
- If you are in trouble (e.g. need support at school, financial support, feeling sad etc.), what do you do? Where do you go? Who do you turn to? What kind of help do you receive (focus on wellbeing and relationships)?
- Has this changed as you entered adolescence?
- Are you a member of any group or club (at school, in your neighbourhood, youth groups)?
  - If so, since when, where/which (social or political)? What do you do in the group? How many members are there? How do you become a member? How often do you meet? What benefits do you get from belonging to the group?
  - If you're not a member of a group or club, why?

### ***Vertical social capital***

- Are there spaces for you to participate in community decision making (including political) (e.g. village meetings, religious gatherings, school management committees; discussing with assemblyman/woman or other members of the assembly)?
- Are you aware of how to participate in the existing mechanisms/channels for civic participation (local councils; school management committees)?
  - Have you ever participated? If so when, why, how? What happened?
- If 18-19 years: Do you vote (if you are old enough/ elections of any type)? Why/why not? How do you decide?

### ***Access to communications***

- Who do you communicate with on a regular basis and how? Are there other people you would like to communicate with but are unable to? Why?
- Do you have access to a mobile phone and use the internet?
  - If no, would you like to have access to these types of communication technologies?
- Has your access to these communication technologies changed in the past 5 years?

## Appendix 5: Research instruments, life history and generational pairing

### Overview of methodology

- **Life histories** explore key moments in the lives of adolescent girls and older women, with **generational pairings** designed specifically to explore differences in experiences over time.
- This tool is for older adolescent girls 15-19 years (4) and older women (4). At least 2 of the girls selected should be in or have completed school; the others could be out of school and/or married.
- The selection of at least 2 adolescent girls in school is critical as a means of highlighting examples of positive deviance – families that have more egalitarian gender relations, supportive of girls' capabilities.
- For the **generational pairing** linked to the life histories, 2 of the girls and their mothers (and/or grandmothers) should be from the same family.
- Undertake each interview separately (owing to sensitivities/greater likelihood of being frank in absence of parents) but ensure that the interviews are undertaken by the same researcher.
- After the interviews, bring respondents together for guided exploration of changes (if it is logistically possible to get both sets of mothers/daughters together).

### Preparation

- After obtaining oral consent, the life history will be recorded and then translated and transcribed verbatim.
- Additional notes, observations and verbatim phrases will be noted by the researcher.
- A sheet of paper and pens need to be brought to the interview; a flip chart and markers will be important to record life history events and the later generational pairing exercise.
- As with all exercises, basic information about the respondents should be recorded, including names, ages, ethnic group/religion; relation of respondents to each other; village/locality; date and time of interview; name of interviewer and – if different – the note-taker.

### Notes

- The life history interview will take from 60 to 90 minutes; the following generational pairing exercise will take another hour or so.
- Please be prepared that in some cases a life history will not work, so if after around 10 minutes the researcher feels that it is not working either they should bring the interview to an end politely, or convert the conversation into an IDI. This may be the case with some adolescent girls who have shorter histories to reflect on and probably less experience at articulating their life story.
- Note that working with older women can also take time – needs to be built in as stories and memories are often important sources of information – may be same for persons with disabilities.
- Please also be prepared to accept that women who have suffered various tragedies may not want to speak in any detail about these; be sensitive continuing the discussion or not; give options for short breaks, and reconsider whether being a sympathetic ear is in fact of value.

### Getting started

- Introduce the project and its purpose. Explain the objective of the life history interview (to explore key moments in girls' lives present and past, generational differences in adolescent experience) and its format (you want the person to tell us about their life, and you will prompt them with some questions related to special areas of interest for the research).
- Explain in the two cases for which you will include generational pairings that you will be interviewing both mother and daughter (as well as grandmother, if possible) in order to better understand changes over time, and that after the individual interviews the pairs (or triads) will be brought together to reflect on key generational changes.
- Reiterate that all comments will remain confidential.

### Life history

**1. First, collect basic background information** (age, ethnic group/religion; place of birth; current living arrangements (living with parents, married or unmarried, nuclear, polygamous family etc.); position in the household).

**2. Then, draw a timeline on the flip chart** arranged in decades from birth, early childhood, middle childhood, adolescence, adulthood, older age.

*Example (decades depending on age):*

1940-50.....1950-60.....1960-70.....1970-80.....1980-90.....1990-2000.....2000-2012\*

Birth.....childhood .....adolescence .....early adulthood.....middle age.....older age

### Individual's longer past

**3. First, starting from the timeline, ask her to tell you when she was born – place that on the time line, and ask her to tell you about significant experiences and in her life, from childhood on.**

- Can you tell me your life story?
- Thinking back to your life since you were a child until now, can you tell us what have been the key events (positive and negative) that have marked your life? This includes thinking about things that have happened to you that have influenced the type of choices you have made or the alternatives you have had since you were a child until now as a young person.
  - At individual level (e.g. schooling, work, health, engaging in early sexual activity, deciding to get married/have child (if relevant))
  - Household level (e.g. livelihood opportunities; available household resources; decisions in the household to spend on schooling, your health or that of other members; changes in the family (birth, death, marriage, divorce etc.))
  - Community level (e.g. participation in community activities or discrimination/exclusion from community activities; participation or exclusion from participating in community decision making, situations of security/violence)
- Try through the exercise to get her to describe (in her language) the different phases of her life (baby; childhood; adolescent; woman; older woman?)

**4. Next, explain that you would like to understand in more detail about your recent past (point to the last decade and say you are interested in the past 3-5 years. Ask the following questions about the person's life:**

### Individual's recent past

- Can you tell me your life story? First, can you tell me about:
  - Any major life events that have happened over the past 3-5 years (e.g. education, economic opportunities, family events such as marriage, childbirth, social interactions, political)?
  - Any particularly happy moments or milestones over the past 3-5 years?
    - Did you feel in control of these happy events?
    - What decisions did you make building up to these events?
- Can you tell us about any difficulties/challenges that have happened over the past 3-5 years (e.g. with regard to getting enough money, employment or work opportunities, education, health, social interactions e.g. staying in touch with, being able to communicate with others, security, participation in the community etc.)?
- What can you tell us about the cause of these challenges? Can you explain why you think you have faced these challenges?
- Have you/your family tried to overcome these challenges? What strategies have you used? How well have these strategies worked? How important have your family resources/networks been in assisting you overcome challenges? Have they changed, deteriorated, improved etc. over time, then, now?
- How do you think your options/strategies have been similar or different to those from adolescents/adults (choose depending on whether you are interviewing a girl or an older women)?
- How do you think your options/strategies have been similar or different from boys/men of the same age?
- In particular, have/were there been any government programmes or services that have helped you overcome these challenges? What about any programmes or services provided by NGOs?
- Who else has helped you overcome problems (family, relatives, peer group, etc.)?

### Individual's future plans

**5. Now probe about the individual's future plans**

- Given your present circumstances what are your plans in the next 1 or 2 years? What about your longer-term plans?
- Have these plans changed with respect to the plans you had 5 years ago?
- Do you know if there are any youth programmes in the community (to promote employment opportunities, education, health, participation etc.)? Have you ever made use of any of these? If so, how do you think that youth programmes in this community can be improved to better meet your needs?

### Generational pairing exercise

**6. From the two sets of mothers/daughters that you have included in the life histories above, separately ask them to reflect on changes in experiences of adolescence over time. (If there is a grandmother, try to include her as well.)**

- Explain that you have learned a lot from each of them about key life events/challenges, and now want to explore any significant changes (or similarities) over time and possible explanations or underlying factors explaining these changes.
- Spend a bit of time looking over the time lines constructed for each (but don't get bogged down in the details). You might mention any particular changes that you yourself have observed.
- Then, ask them to reflect on the following capability domains, providing prompts of 'It used to be.....but now.....' – if necessary – to aid comparisons, as follows:

- **Education experience**
  - (Example) It used to be that girls did not go to school because their parents did not think it worth it, but now they go all the way through secondary ...
  - Mother and daughter then reflect on their own individual experiences and comment on changes (positive or negative) they see and what they might see as **underlying factors influencing these changes.**
- **Economic roles and opportunities** *(including types of work performed, access to paid employment; differences between men and women in the ways they can acquire assets – inheritance practices and the like; issues of ownership – land, property, capital)*
- **Division of labour and relationships within the family** *(including both gendered time use and decision-making authority/capacity within the household; relations between parents and children, brothers and sisters, husband and wife)*
- **Reproductive health and childbearing history** *(including things like age at first marriage; types of marriage; access to family planning; reproductive health services/delivery experiences; giving birth to girls vs. boys etc.)*
- **Physical security/bodily integrity** *(including any harmful traditional practices; experience of violence, measures of protection for girls ...)*
- **Social connectedness and participation** *(including friendship networks; peer support groups; participation in civic/political groups ...)*
- **Emotional/psychological wellbeing** *(including what makes them sad/happy; who they turn to when sad/depressed)*

## Appendix 6: Research instruments, intra-household case study and participatory exercises<sup>8</sup>

- Overall aim is to explore intra-household dynamics in terms of adolescent girls, by triangulating views of others in a household, including adults, other youth, children etc.
- Choose 4 households with adolescent girls: 1 nuclear household with girls and boys; 1 nuclear household with girls only; 1 polygamous household with girls and boys; 1 polygamous household with girls only (note, number can be reduced if necessary, as original plan called for 2 households only: the selection focus would be on households with girls and boys; one of which is nuclear, one polygamous).
- Can select households from those whose members have already participated in IDIs, FGDs, life histories etc.
- Go back a number of times at different times of the day, if possible sleep over in the household.
- Record discussions, take detailed notes – aim for thick description.
- Collect and take pictures of all visual representations.

### Step 1. Collect basic information on the household

#### 1. Respondent:

- Name, age, marital status, ethnic group, religion

#### 2. Who is living in the household?

- List out all household members by age/gender and relationship (including details on any orphans)
- For school-age children, indicate on the list which ones are in school
- Indicate who is the head of household
- Ask if this is a polygamous marriage and, if so, how many other wives and children the husband has and where they live

#### 3. How long have they lived here?

- If moved from elsewhere, ask when, from where and why they moved
- Ask the woman if this is her home village/community, her husband's or a new one
- Ask if they have other family members/relatives living in the same village/community
- Ask if they own their house/lands

#### 4. What is the main economic activity?

- Of the household head; the woman; other members in the family
- If farming, ask about types of crops, animals etc.
- Ask about any other economic/income-generating activities

#### 5. What are their major social activities?

- Church groups/fellowships? Women's associations? Political groups? Youth groups?

### Step 2. Apply various participatory tools and observation:

**Table of participatory tools and methods for intra-household case studies (with additional indications of exercises suitable to link to IDIs (or potentially FGDs))**

Tool	Purpose	Who	Themes to explore
1.Observation  Intra-household case study	Observe: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interactions/dynamics between people in the household (young/old, men/women)</li> <li>• Household activities (domestic; work-related)</li> <li>• Activities outside the house – school; market; clinic; youth/ community event</li> <li>• Positive (caring, joking); and negative (shouting, abuse) interactions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The household</li> <li>• Selected sites outside household: school; market; clinic, water point; youth club; community event</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Physical characteristics of household and arrangements of rooms/space</li> <li>• Gender and age differences in activities performed (kinds of activities, when performed)</li> <li>• Gender and age differences in use of space</li> <li>• Gender and age differences in positive and negative interactions</li> </ul>

<sup>8</sup> Please note that all participatory methods have been included in this sheet; some are intended solely for use in the intra-household case studies; others are intended as additional exercises to accompany IDIs or FGDs; some should be planned for use with both.

<p>2. Household drawing/ including wider community area where household is situated</p> <p>Intra-household case study</p>	<p>Visualise and explore:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What happens in different areas and who controls these areas</li> <li>• How respondents perceive their households</li> <li>• How respondents perceive where the boundaries of the household are</li> <li>• Private vs. public spaces; male vs. female spaces</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adolescent girls</li> <li>• Their brothers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gender differences in use of space – within household</li> <li>• Gender differences in mobility outside the household</li> <li>• Mobility differences married/unmarried girls</li> <li>• Issue of 'safe spaces' (where do girls feel it is safe for them to go – does this differ from boys?)</li> </ul>
<p>3. Family drawing</p> <p>Intra-household case study</p> <p>IDI</p>	<p>Visualise and explore:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Who does what activities within the family/household – ranking by who does most</li> <li>• Who has influence over your life and in what matters – ranking who has most</li> <li>• Conflicts and tensions between family members (parents/children; mother/father; husband/wife; siblings ...)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adolescent girls</li> <li>• Mothers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Who does what/who works the hardest and why (any age/gender differences?)</li> <li>• Key decision makers; who makes what decisions especially about children (any gender differences?)</li> <li>• What happens when there are tensions between family members? Why? How do you cope?</li> </ul>
<p>4. Institutional/ individual mapping (bubble diagram)</p> <p>Intra-household case study</p> <p>IDI</p>	<p>Visualise and explore:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Who are key individuals/institutions in a girl's life: how they are related; what affect/impact they have (positive and negative); degree of access to them ...</li> <li>• Can be both household members (institution of the family) but also people beyond the household (peer, friend, neighbour, relative) and institutions (religious authority, teacher, health worker, police, social worker)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adolescent girls</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Issues of social capital (networks, support systems and institutions; role models)</li> <li>• Sources of emotional wellbeing</li> <li>• Who they feel closest to/can communicate with or not and why</li> <li>• Who they turn to for support</li> <li>• How they relate to people in authority or service providers</li> </ul>
<p>5. Time-use diaries (timeline, with hour slots)</p> <p>Intra-household case study</p>	<p>Visualise and quantify:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Daily routines and time spent on different activities</li> <li>• Differences in what different people do at different times of the day</li> <li>• Mix of household activities; school; work; leisure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adolescent girls</li> <li>• Adolescent boys</li> <li>• If possible, other members</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Whether they think the activities are positive or negative</li> <li>• What they like/don't like doing</li> <li>• If they think the household division of labour is fair</li> <li>• How they spend their free time</li> <li>• If housework/work interferes with schooling</li> </ul>
<p>6. Main worries</p> <p>Intra-household case study</p> <p>IDIs (could also accompany FGDs)</p>	<p>Identify, list and rank:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Main concerns or worries of (and about) adolescent girls</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adolescent girls/boys</li> <li>• Mother about daughter</li> <li>• Father about daughter</li> </ul>	<p>Could be related to/probe for issues related to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family relationships/ quarrels; tensions with peers</li> <li>• School; work</li> <li>• Marriage; childbearing</li> <li>• Time use</li> <li>• Health issues;</li> <li>• Hunger/ economic difficulties</li> <li>• Physical safety ...</li> </ul>

7. Information needs  IDIs (could also accompany FGDs)	Identify, list and rank: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Perceived needs for information on specific issues</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adolescent girls/boys</li> </ul>	Could be related to/probe for issues related to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Education/training opportunities; health/reproductive health; coping strategies; access to justice ...</li> </ul>
8. Storytelling, anecdotes, proverbs, casual conversations  Intra-household case study	Capture and explore: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>General experiences in a more relaxed, casual and open manner</li> <li>Common sayings revealing underlying gender attitudes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Household/ community Members</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stories/anecdotes can be about any issue of importance to the household member</li> <li>Casual conversations can often reveal more information than structured interviews</li> <li>Proverbs or common sayings about women/girls/gender relations</li> </ul>

### Participatory methodologies/techniques/guidelines:

#### 1. Observation tool

The purpose of this tool is to observe interactions/dynamics between people in the household between young/old, men/women, and around certain activities. Structured observations on the following should be recorded:

##### Physical setting

- Household location: centre of village? Outskirts? Rural? Close to neighbours?
- Physical structure, characteristics: number and layout of rooms (sleeping spaces, work spaces, cooking and eating); building materials; electricity; sanitary conditions
- Household land: courtyard; garden, fields, grazing lands?
- Household possessions: including books, toys, radios, TV, mobile phones, furniture and equipment

##### Activities and interactions

- Household activities: domestic; work-related; who is doing what, where, when
- Interactions: between parents/children; siblings; husband/wife: positive (joking, caring etc.) and negative (power, abusing, etc.)
- Caregiving: who does what, who is being cared for mostly, forms of help to the carer
- Forms of communication: language, voice, decision making, respect, deviance, respect /favouritism, mannerisms, for girls, boys and parents
- Activities/mobility outside the house: school; market; water point; youth club; fields; grazing lands; health centre

#### 2. Household/community drawing

This is a version of commonly used participatory community mapping exercises that help visualise and explore the individual in relation to the wider group and spatial setting.

- This exercise ideally requires 2 people – the facilitator and a note-taker to record discussions.
- Equipment needed includes flip chart and different colour markers.
- Explain to respondents the purpose of the exercise, which is to identify:
  - What happens in different areas and who controls these areas;
  - How respondents perceive their households;
  - How respondents perceive where the boundaries of the household are;
  - Private vs. public spaces; male vs. female spaces
- Ask participants to start with a drawing of their own house, including interior rooms and exterior courtyard/gardens/fields etc.
- All areas should be labelled, and some symbol used to indicate whether the area is used primarily by girls/women or boys/men (or both).
- Ask participants to then draw the rest of the community, focusing on key features of importance to their lives and the lives of their family (e.g. roads, schools, churches/health centre; friends' houses; agricultural fields/grazing lands; shops; water points; markets; sacred areas etc.)
- Again, all areas should be labelled, and some symbol used to indicate whether the area is used primarily by girls/women or boys/men (or both).
- Engage participants in discussion about the significance of the different areas, who controls what, how/if public spaces are distinguished from private spaces; why some areas are seen as primarily 'female' spaces while others may be reserved for male or open to all etc.
- Take a picture of the final product and thank participants for their time

### 3. Family drawing

- You will need a flip chart and markers.
- Ask respondent to draw stick figures to represent each key family or household member, and have them label the figures. (Encourage them to include extended/polygamous family situations if relevant.)
- Use the drawing as a basis for asking the following questions:
  - Who has the most influence over decisions about your life in the family? Over what types of decisions? First list, then rank the most important members 1-4.
  - Who does what type of activities in your family? First list, then rank from most (or most important) to least (or least important).
- Either the facilitator or the note-taker should take detailed notes of these discussions.
- Take a picture of the drawing and thank respondent for their time

### 4. Institutional/individual mapping (bubble diagram)

- You will need a large sheet of paper and markers.
- One person should facilitate the exercise; another should take detailed notes of discussions.
- Explain the purpose of the exercise, which is to:
  - Understand the importance of different individuals/institutions to the lives of respondents (these can be family members, friends, neighbours or representative institutions such as teachers, religious authorities, social workers;
  - Identify the types of support offered by each individual/institution (who do they turn to for what types of support); and
  - Identify the degree of access to those individuals/institutions (is access easy? Are the individuals/institutions far away or close by?)
- Brainstorm to produce a list of the key individuals/institutions/service providers, or groups that the respondent can turn to in times of difficulty. Write these down on the flip chart/paper.
- Draw a diagram of the respondent in relation to these institutions/service providers/groups as follows:
  - Draw a circle in the centre representing the respondent.
  - Draw other circles representing each institution/individual/service provider in relation to the participants.
  - The size of the circle should – ideally – represent the relative importance to the participants of the institution/individual/service provider.
  - The distance of the circle from the centre should represent the degree of accessibility participants feel to each institution/individual/service provider.
- Discuss the type of support offered by each individual/institution, and why the respondent feels closest to one or another.
- Create more specific scenarios, such as: who would you turn to first if, for example, i) you suffered from physical violence; ii) were having difficulties with your school work; iii) were being forced to marry someone you did not want to marry; iv) were feeling sad or lonely etc.
- Reporter should record discussions, and take notes of discussions, including any verbatim expressions that stand out.
- Take a picture of the final chart and thank participants for their time

### 5. Time-use diaries/timeline

- You will need two researchers for this exercise, one as facilitator, one to report on discussion.
- You will need a large sheet of paper and a pen.
- Explain the purpose of the exercise to the respondent, which is to:
  - Determine the individual's daily routines and time spent on different activities;
  - Understand the mix of activities between school, household work/caring for household members, leisure time;
  - Explore differences in what different people do at different times of the day (working separately with different people (e.g. 1 boy/1 girl, and then comparing).
- Draw a vertical line on the paper and ask the respondent to start with the time they get up, listing the times they start and end each activity in the course of a normal day.
  - Note: for in-school adolescents, you may wish to have them construct two lines – one for a typical school day, one for a weekend or holiday.
- Make sure all hours of the day are filled up until the time the respondent goes to bed (even with spaces for resting or 'doing nothing').
- Then try to group the different activities into categories such as sleeping; eating; going to school/studying; leisure time/play/resting; socialising with friends; working outside the household; doing household chores/caring for siblings; etc.)
- Discuss the different categories and the time spent on each, drawing a pie chart to represent the relative proportions of time spent on each activity. Have the respondent comment on feelings related to time use. (Does she wish she had more time for leisure? Does she feel she spends too much time on housework? Would she wish that other family members (such as brothers) could help out more? Etc.



- Facilitator(s):
- Note-taker:

***Short-write up on the process:***

- In the case of individual exercises: was it easy/difficult to engage with the respondent? Were the instructions understood? Did it seem enjoyable? Were there any differences by age/gender?
- In the case of any group work: was it participatory; did everyone take part in the discussion; did anyone walk out, why: was it difficult/easy to manage, why; were people comfortable/uncomfortable, why?

INSERT PHOTOGRAPH OF VISUAL MATERIALS

***Summary of key findings from exercise***

***Full write-up of notes from note-taker:***

Include verbatim expressions; discussion points and explanations; observations etc.

***Intra-household case study***

Write-up will draw on all data inputs, including observations. It would be good to foresee as well some background information on the community/district.

## Appendix 7: Research instruments, KII guides

The following list of key informants has been developed for Uganda according to the level (national, district and sub-district).

### National:

- **Group meeting** with key stakeholders (29 October 2012): government officials, development partners (UN, bilateral and NGOs); youth and women council leaders; academics
- **Follow-up individual KIIs** with key stakeholders from above (*Quick question guide – to be developed*)

### District:

- **Group meeting** with district team: chief administrative officer; directors of health, education, community services, population and planning; probation and welfare officer; police protection unit (*Full questionnaire below*)
- **Group meeting individual KIIs** with LC5 chair; secretary for gender and child protection and youth (*Quick question guide*)
  - What are the key issues, challenges, and problems affecting adolescent girls and young women in your district (in education; economic roles; household/family situation; health, SGBV, physical security; political participation/voice ... )?
  - What are the opportunities for adolescent and young women to further their capabilities and achieve wellbeing in these domains?
  - What are the key programmes available to deal with gender-based discrimination that limit adolescent girls and young women’s capabilities in these domains?
  - Do you have suggestions on ways to move forward in enhancing adolescent girls’ and young women’s capabilities and gender justice?
- **Individual KIIs with NGOs working with women, youth and children** (*Quick question guide*)
  - What kinds of programmes do you offer for adolescent girls?
  - Where are these programmes implemented and what is your coverage?
  - What are some of the key challenges you face in these programmes?
  - What are some of your key results and achievements?
  - Who are your key partners and stakeholders and partners?

### Sub-county:

- **Group meeting** with LC3 chair and youth leaders (*Quick question guide*)
  - What are the key issues, challenges and problems affecting adolescent girls and young women in your district (in education; economic roles; household/family situation; health, SGBV, physical security; political participation/voice ... )?
  - What are the opportunities for adolescent and young women to further their capabilities and achieve wellbeing in these domains?
  - What are the key programmes available to deal with gender-based discrimination that limit adolescent girls and young women’s capabilities in these domains?
  - Do you have suggestions on ways to move forward in enhancing adolescent girls’ and young women’s capabilities and gender justice?
- **Group meeting** with sub-county team: chief administrative officer; directors of health, education, community services, population and planning; probation and welfare officer (*Full questionnaire below*)
- **Individual KIIs** with teachers (education), health providers (health and physical security and psychosocial); religious authorities (household; physical; psychosocial) (specific topics, as noted on questionnaire below)

### Reporting template for KII notes:

#### Background information:

- **Names, functions of key informants**
- **Gender**
- **Location:**
- **Date:** **Time start:** **Time end:**
- **Facilitator(s):** **Note-taker:**

### Full questionnaire

The following questions (corresponding to the capability domains) are to be asked for all of the group encounters noted above, with specific sector-specific questions to be asked for particular KIIs, as indicated). For each question, probes are needed for what and why; respondents should be asked to explain their perspectives, provide examples, elaborate on responses etc. The questions should be used as an indicative guide – NOT as a questionnaire. The focus should be on adolescent girls and young women. Probes should be made for particularly vulnerable girls, such as orphans.

Indicators	Questions	Capability
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Indicators	Questions	Capability
<b>Education (specific for teachers)</b>		
Girls accessing and attending education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are the key issues affecting educational opportunities for girls and boys in this community?</li> <li>• Do parents and other community members differ in the importance placed on education for girls and boys? Probe.</li> <li>• What are the particular challenges for adolescent girls attending and completing school?</li> <li>• Are there any specific measures in place to encourage girls to stay in school? Are they run by the government or by NGOs?</li> </ul>	Education
Gendered norms in the learning environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are there any differences between the education girls and boys receive?</li> <li>• Do teachers treat boys and girls differently within the classroom? If so, why do you think this is?</li> <li>• Do teachers in this community receive any training, or resources on understanding gender differences in teaching? If so, what has been the effect/ response?</li> </ul>	Education -
Opportunities to learn skills valued in labour market e.g. English, ICT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do vocational training opportunities exist for young people in this community? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Are they government, NGO or private sector?</li> <li>○ Do they differ for girls and boys?</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Are there any specialised vocational training opportunities available for adolescent girls?</li> </ul>	Education
<b>Employment/ economic activities</b>		
Gender differences in young people's access to assets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How do young women and men build up assets (inheritance, marriage, etc.)?</li> <li>• Are there particular challenges for girls and young women to build up and control assets?</li> <li>• Are there any programmes to facilitate young people's access to credit? Probe male/female, including any particular challenges for young women.</li> </ul>	Economic
Gender differences in young people's relationship with work and employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do young men and women perform unpaid labour in this community (household work; work on family farms, with herds etc.)? Are there gender differences?</li> <li>• At what age do young people start working in paid employment in this community? Are there gender differences?</li> <li>• What kinds of paid work do young people do? Are there gender differences? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Are there expectations as to the kinds of work that girls and boys should undertake?</li> <li>○ Are there differences in wages between young women and young men?</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Do you believe there is a problem with unemployment for young women/young men in this community? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ How does this relate to youth unemployment at the national level?</li> <li>○ What are some of the challenges to gaining access to employment? Both informal and formal? For girls, and for boys?</li> </ul> </li> <li>• What has been the government's response to the problem of unemployment for young women/young men? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Has there been a different response to the situation of young women and men?</li> <li>○ Has this response been effective? In what ways?</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Are there NGO/community-based organisations/private businesses supporting employment for young people? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ What do they aim to do and who are their targets? Probe for gender differences.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
No contracts; extended hours; dangerous conditions; sexual harassment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are some of the work-related risks young people face in the country or community (such as informality, long hours without compensation, dangerous conditions, harshness from employers, job insecurity)?</li> <li>• Are there any public, NGO or private interventions in place to improve the conditions of working youth?</li> <li>• Is there any evidence of cases of sexual harassment for young women at work? Has it changed recently?</li> </ul>	Economic Physical Political

Indicators	Questions	Capability
<p>Main geographical sources and destination areas of young migrants</p> <p>Migrant youth unable to access key services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do young people migrate in this community/country/district? Probe for gender and age differences. (If this is not considered an important issue, the following questions can be skipped.)</li> <li>• Where do young people migrate from and to? Probe for gender differences.</li> <li>• What are the main reasons for young people's migration? Probe for gender differences.</li> <li>• Are young migrants able to access key services in the same way as local youth (e.g. health, education, water/sanitation, housing, utilities, government support or benefits)? Probe for gender differences.</li> <li>• Where/how do young migrants access social networks and support? Probe for gender differences</li> <li>• What challenges do youth migrants face? Are there gender differences, age differences?</li> </ul>	<p>Economic Psycho-social</p>
<b>Household roles</b>		
<p>Household division of labour; time poverty; caregiving/ education</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What roles and responsibilities do boys and girls people have in terms of household care work? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Caring for dependants including young children, those with chronic illness and the elderly – and household tasks such as collecting water/firewood, cleaning etc.</li> <li>○ Are there gender differences or age differences?</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Have these roles and responsibilities been affected by HIV or other factors? Do you think that there are gendered differences?</li> <li>• If so, how does it affect their capacity to continue working and/or going to school? In terms of time use, concentration on studies</li> <li>• What kinds of laws and customs regulate household /family relations?</li> <li>• How do these laws and customs affect the position of girls and boys in the family/household?</li> </ul>	<p>Household Economic Education</p>
<b>Health (specific for health workers)</b>		
<p>Health problems for young people</p> <p>Maternal health indicators</p> <p>Young people's access to and the youth-friendliness of health services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are the key health problems affecting young people (girls and boys) in this community?</li> <li>• Do health services in this community provide specialised health care for young people, particularly with regard to areas such as reproductive health? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Is this part of a national programme? If so, what kinds of services are provided? How effective are they?</li> <li>○ Are health services for young people seen as a priority in the local planning in this area? If so, why? If not, why not?</li> <li>○ Are young people (girls/boys) involved in decision making about health services provided?</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Is there a difference between service provision targeted at girls and at boys? If yes what is it?</li> <li>• Is adolescent pregnancy a problem in this district/community? If so, what are the causes? Who is most at risk?</li> <li>• Is there any specific support for adolescent mothers, in both maternal health and child health care? Are these services well received by community members? If not, why not?</li> </ul>	<p>Physical Political</p>
<b>Physical security (specific for social workers, religious leaders, police/justice officials)</b>		
<p>Girls' vulnerability to SGBV</p> <p>Domestic violence</p> <p>Vulnerability of young people to different crimes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is SGBV a problem in this community? If so, what are the reasons and who is most affected? Are there any measures to address this?</li> <li>• Is domestic violence widespread; if so, what are the reasons? Who is most affected? Are there any measures to address it?</li> <li>• Is it justifiable for the state to criminalise domestic violence? Explain your answer. Probe for effectiveness in enforcement of the domestic violence law.</li> <li>• Are other kinds of violence/crimes etc. an issue in this community? Which kinds, who are the targets, etc.?</li> <li>• Are measures being put in place by government or NGOs to reduce the incidence of violence?</li> <li>• If so, are any of these measures focused specifically on young people? What are they?</li> </ul>	<p>Physical</p>

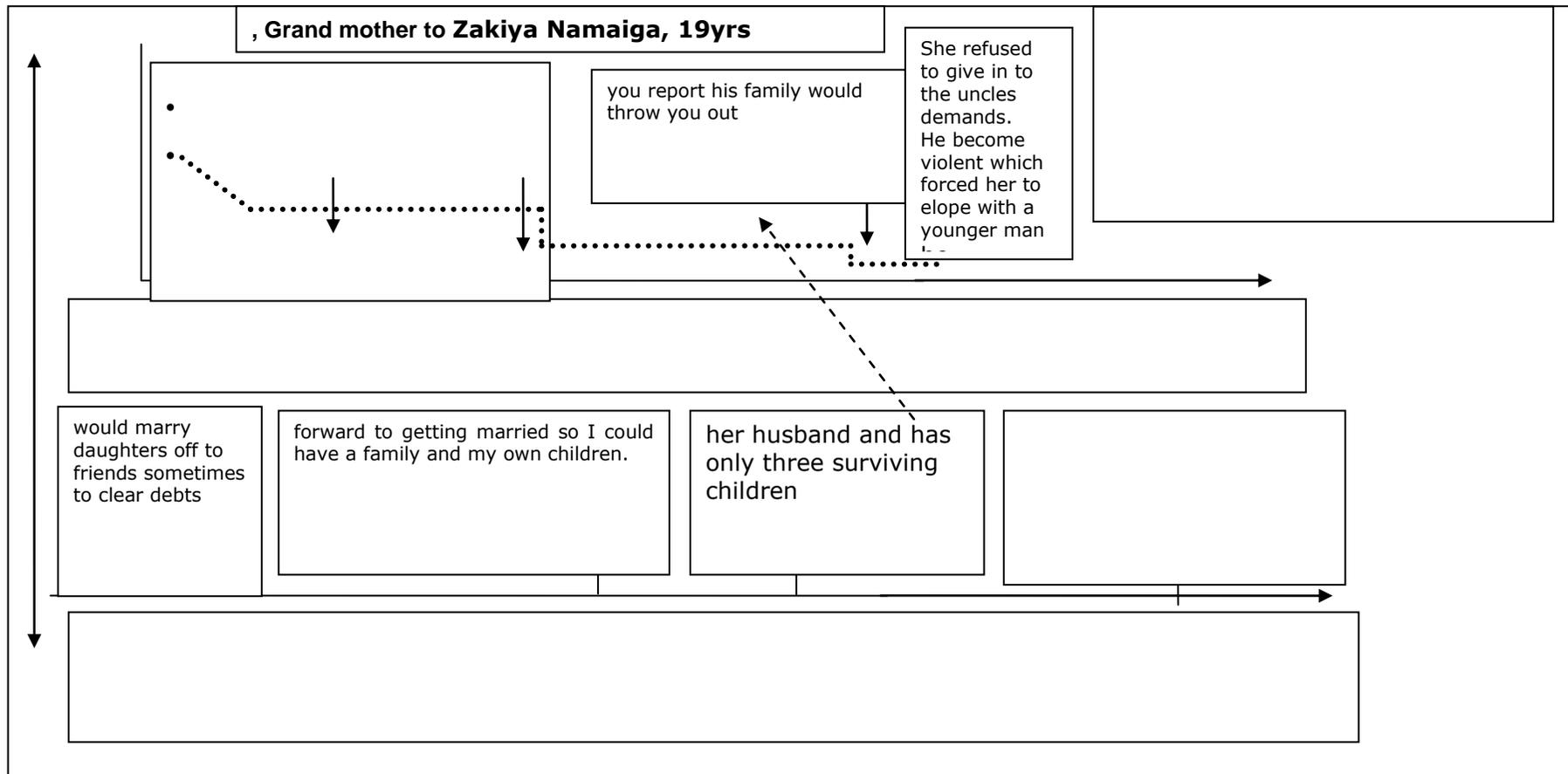
Justice systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are the different justice systems that exist in this community?</li> <li>• Are there any particular challenges in accessing these systems for young people, girls and women?</li> </ul>	Political
Measures for SGBV	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are there any specific measures in place to provide justice, counselling and support for survivors of SGBV?</li> </ul>	
Treatment by police/justice system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is there a specific treatment for youth offenders?</li> </ul>	
<b>Psycho-social wellbeing</b> ( <i>specific for health workers; social workers; religious leaders</i> )		
Psychosocial/emotional impact of different wellbeing issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are you aware of any emotional/psychosocial wellbeing issues affecting young people within this community/nationally? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Unemployment, lack of opportunities, limited schooling, isolation, lack of friendship – causing stress, depression, anxiety, fear etc.; orphanhood.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Is the consumption of drugs/alcohol by young people a problem in the community? If yes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Is this a problem for both girls and boys?</li> <li>○ Have you witnessed any change in young people's (girls and boys) use drugs or alcohol? Why do you think these changes are happening?</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Are any counselling services provided (government or NGO) to young people?</li> </ul>	Psycho-social
Justice systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are the different justice systems that exist in this community?</li> <li>• Are there any particular challenges in accessing these systems for young people, girls and women?</li> </ul>	Political
Measures for SGBV	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are there any specific measures in place to provide justice, counselling and support for survivors of SGBV?</li> </ul>	
Treatment of suspects/offenders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is there a specific treatment for youth offenders?</li> </ul>	
<b>Participation and social connectedness</b>		
Adolescent girls involved in local decision-making structures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are there opportunities for young people – particularly girls – to participate in local decision making? If yes what are they?</li> <li>• Are the voices of adolescent girls taken into consideration in discussing ways to promote social change; in economic, political or health programmes, HIV and AIDS programming, child-friendly education services? If so, through what mechanisms and by whom?</li> <li>• Are there particular challenges for girls in participating in decision-making structures?</li> <li>• Are there any measures in place to promote leadership skills for girls?</li> </ul>	Political
Social networks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What groups or clubs exist for young people, particularly adolescent girls (at school, in the community)?</li> <li>• What are the particular challenges for girls in participating in these groups/clubs, and are there measures to promote their participation?</li> </ul>	Political Psycho-social
Access to ICT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do young people have access to ICT in this community (radio/mobile phones/internet)?</li> <li>• Are there any differences in access for girls and boys, and what are reasons for this?</li> <li>• Are there any actions being taken to promote the use of information technology by young people, particularly girls?</li> </ul>	Political Education

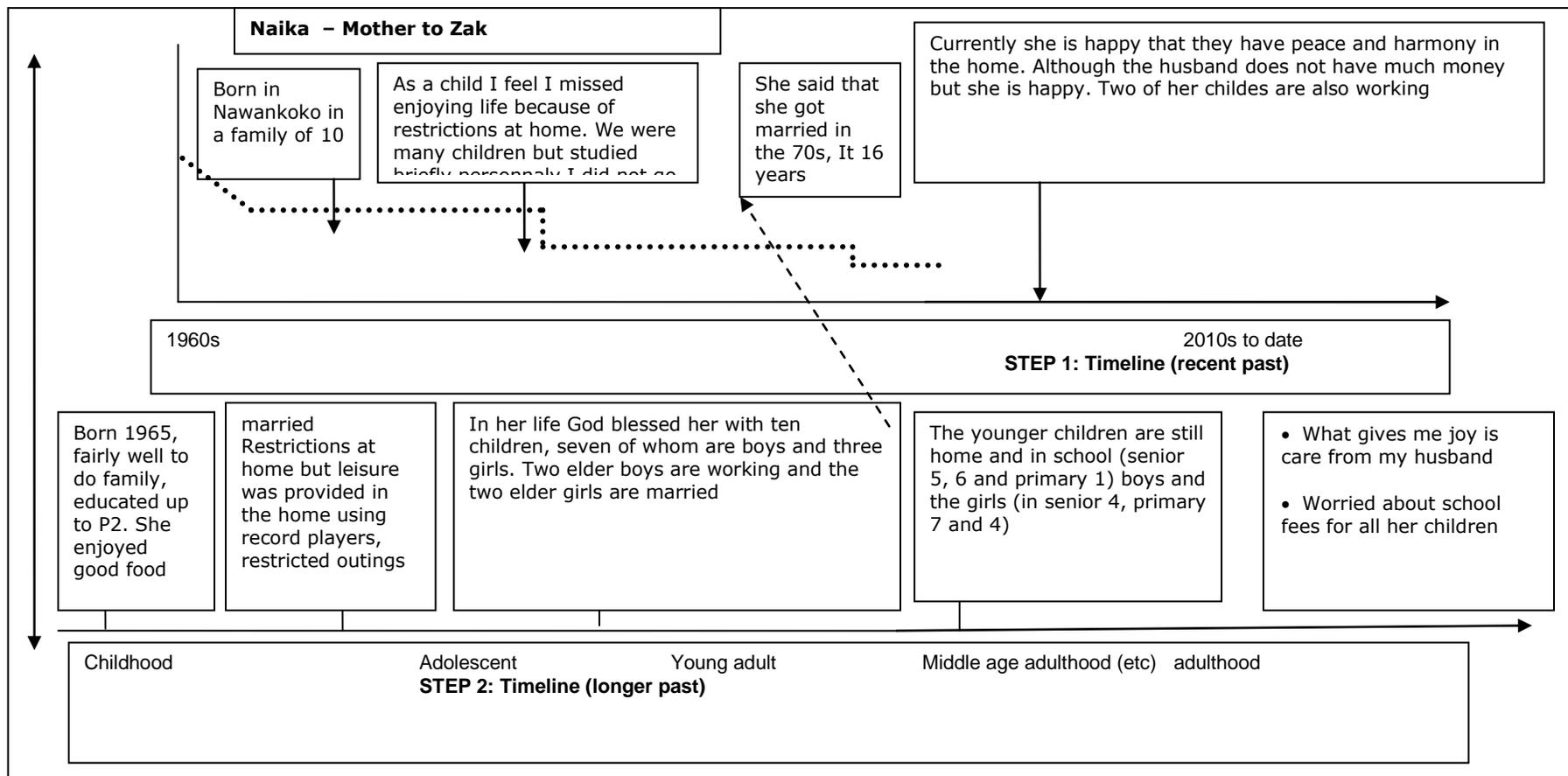
**Final question: In your opinion: what are the three key challenges for adolescent girls in this community? (And what issues should we be sure to look into in our research?)**

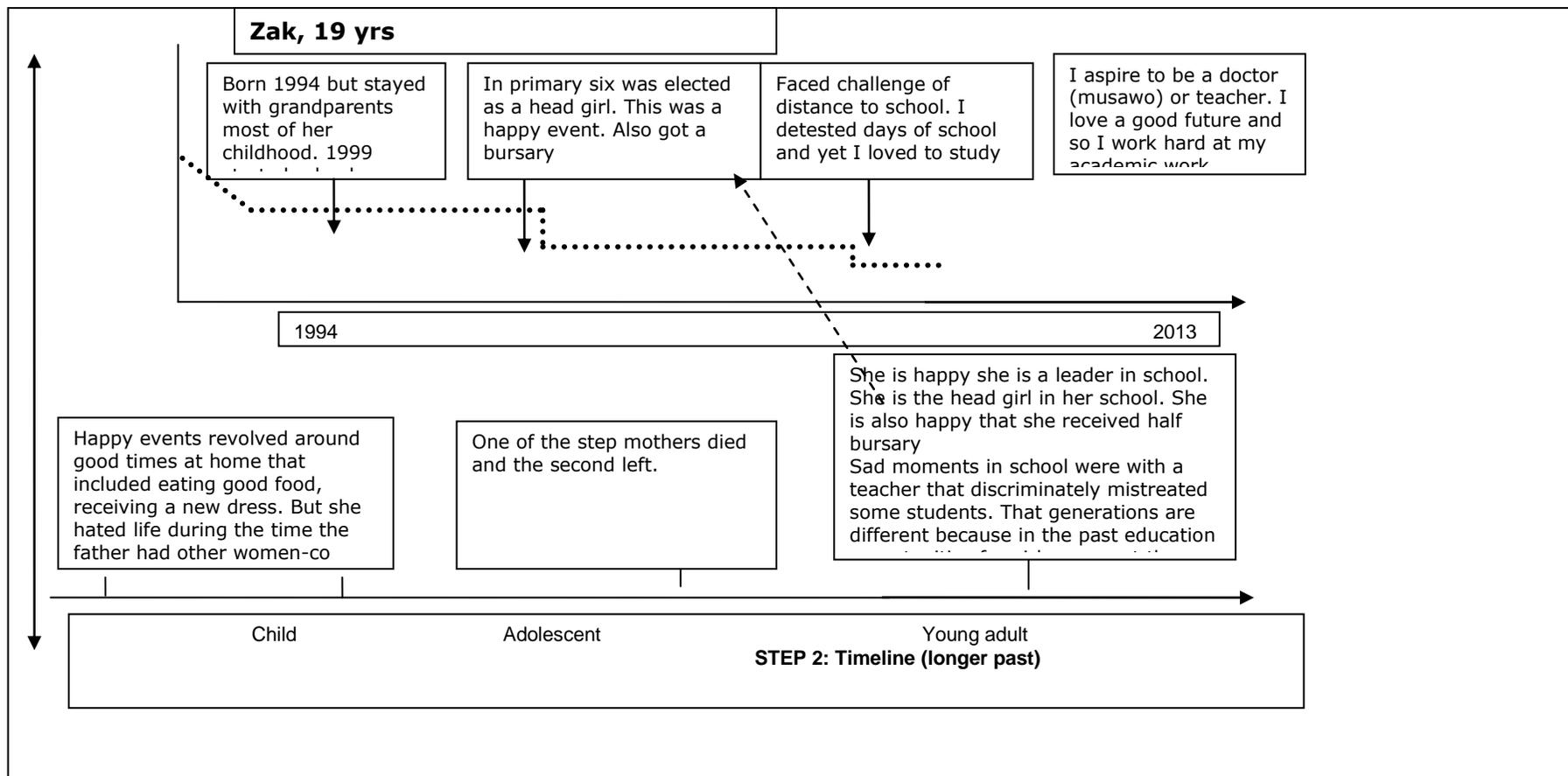
# Appendix 8: Life histories and intergenerational pairings, results

## 1. Life history and intergenerational pairing taken from grandmother, mother and daughter, Matovu, Mayuge district, Uganda

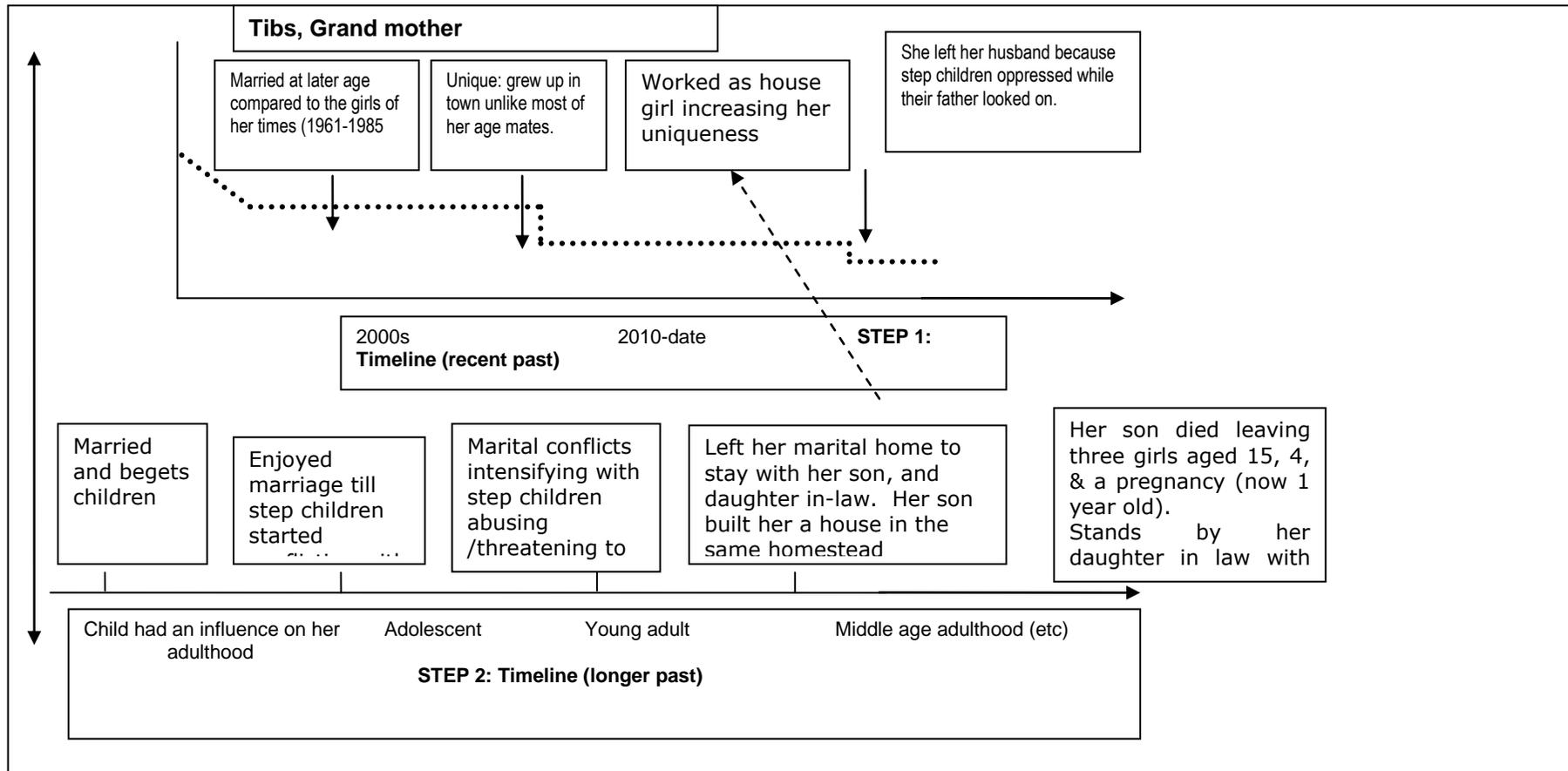
### 1.1. Life history, Mayuge

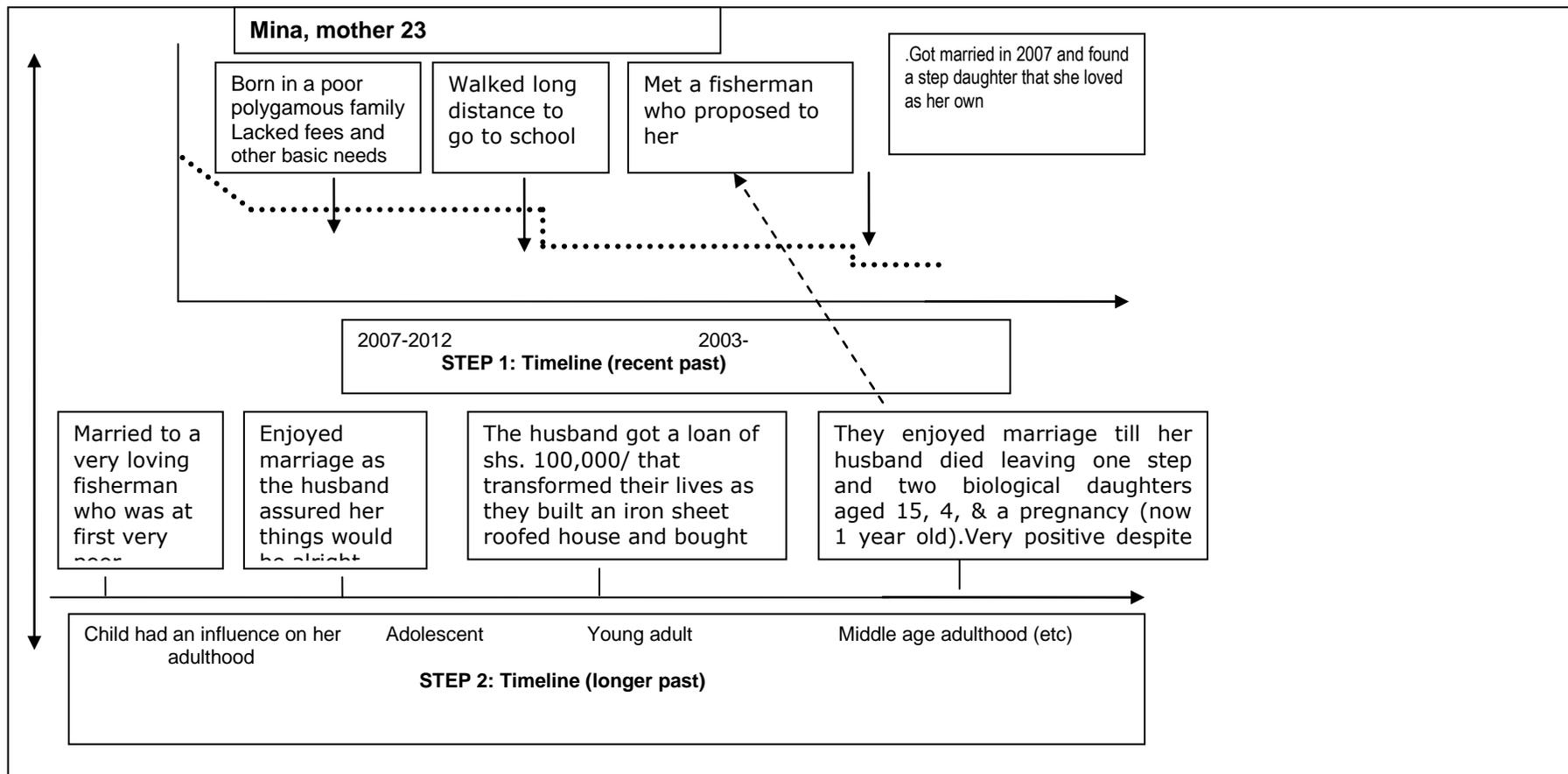


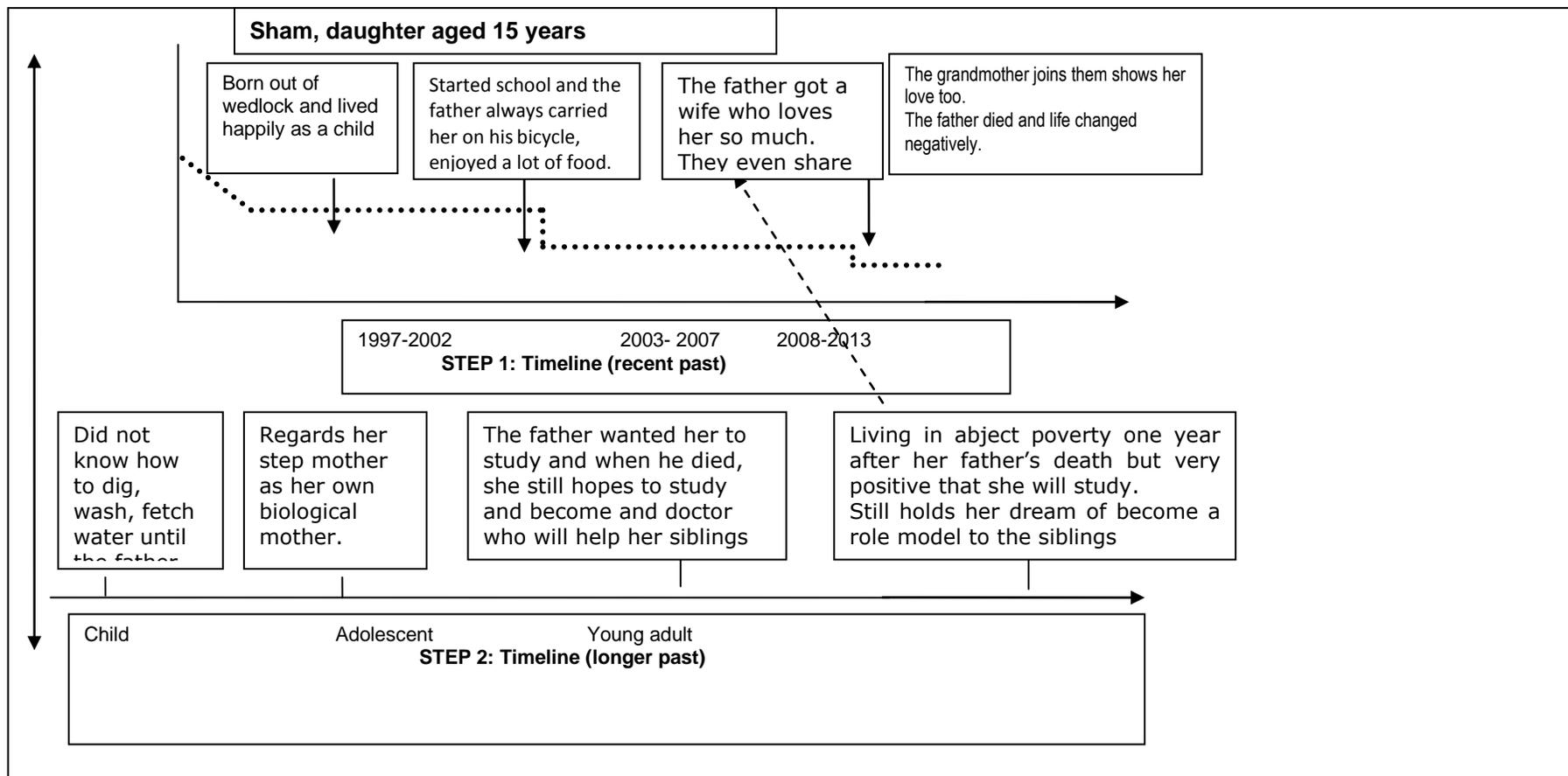




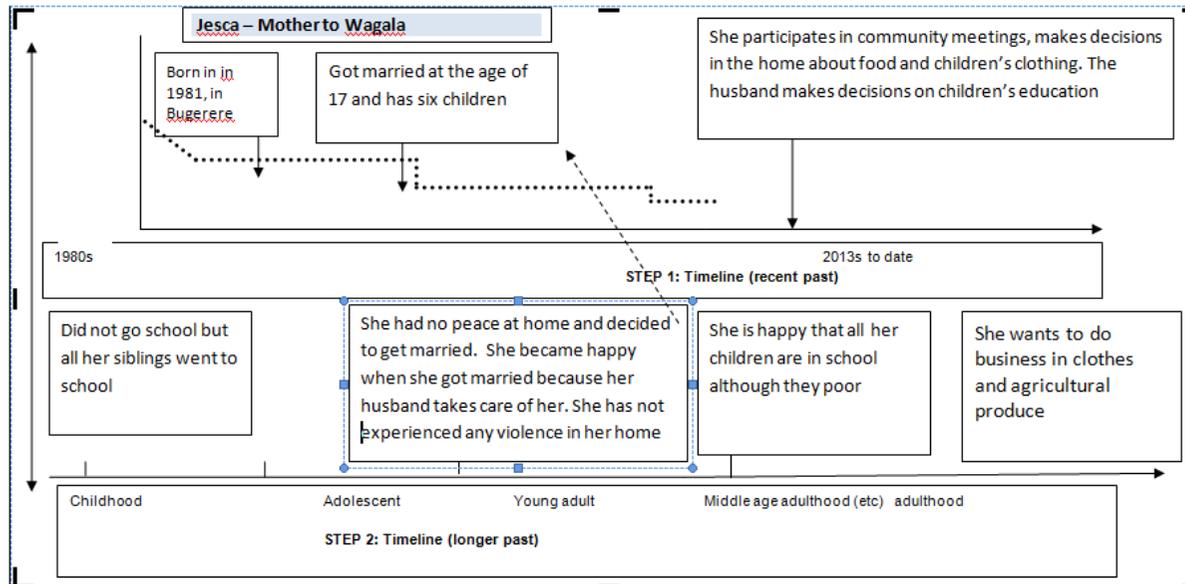
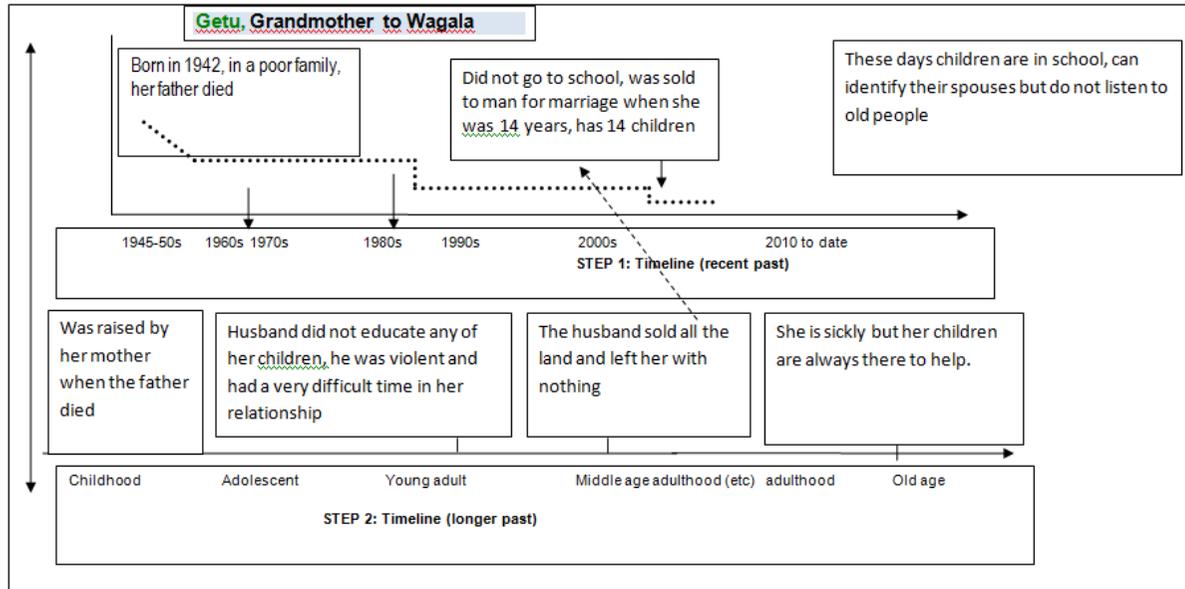
1.2 LH Mayuge,

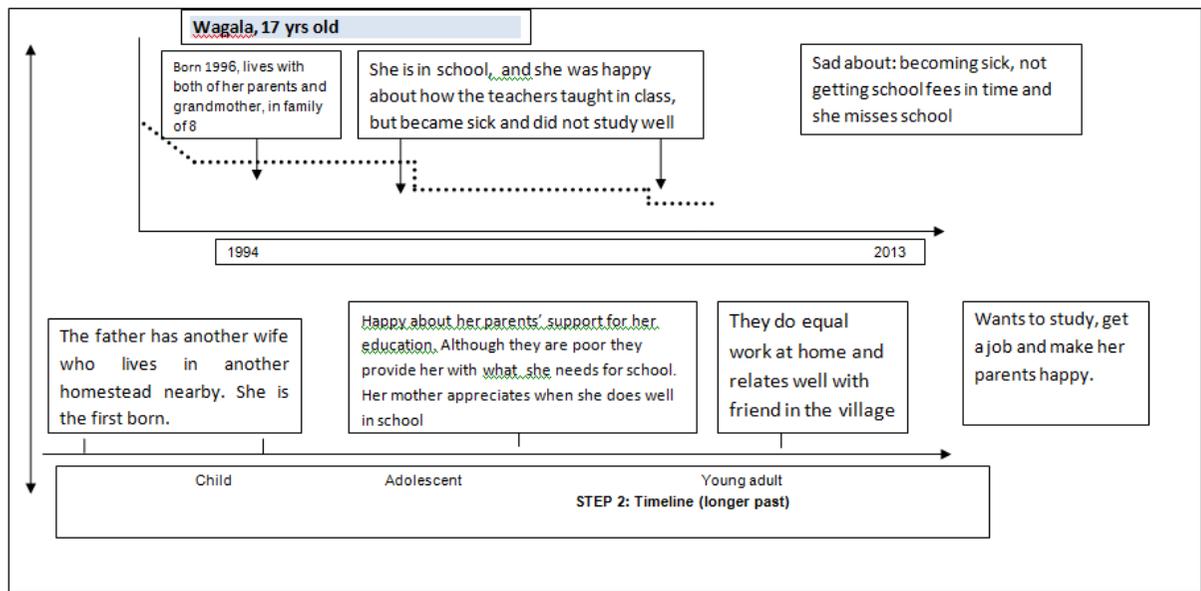






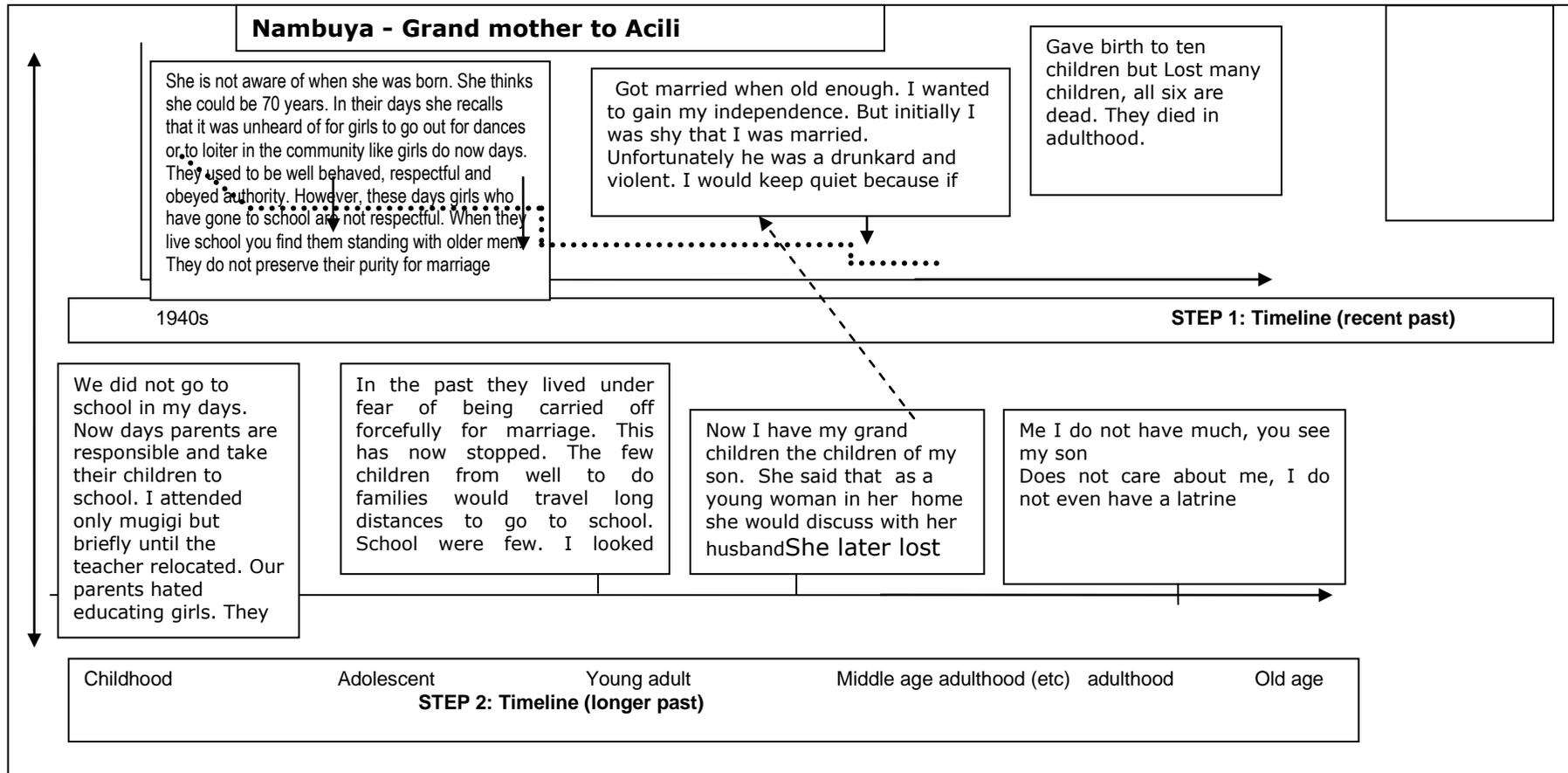
### 1.3 LH Mayuge

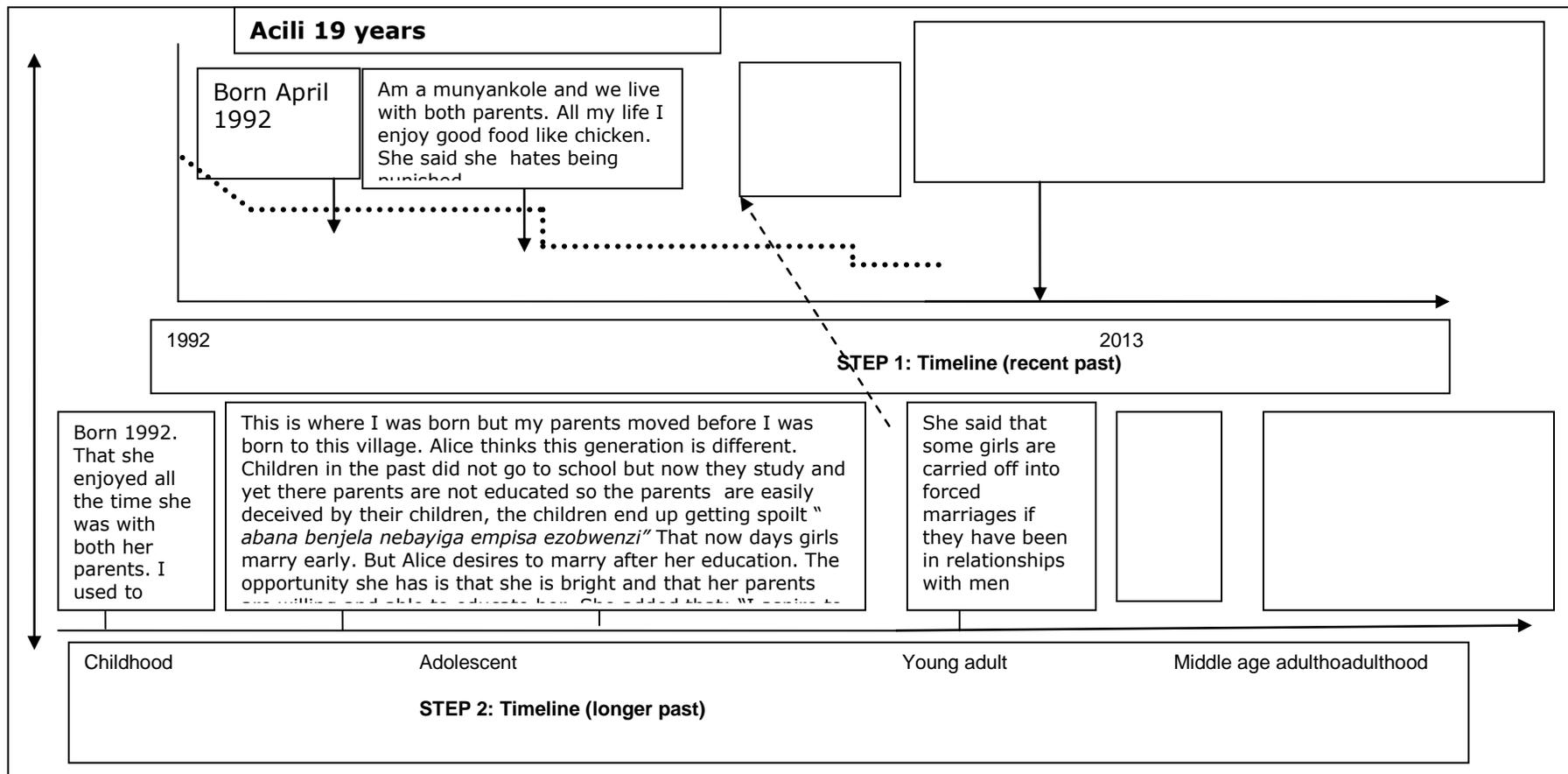


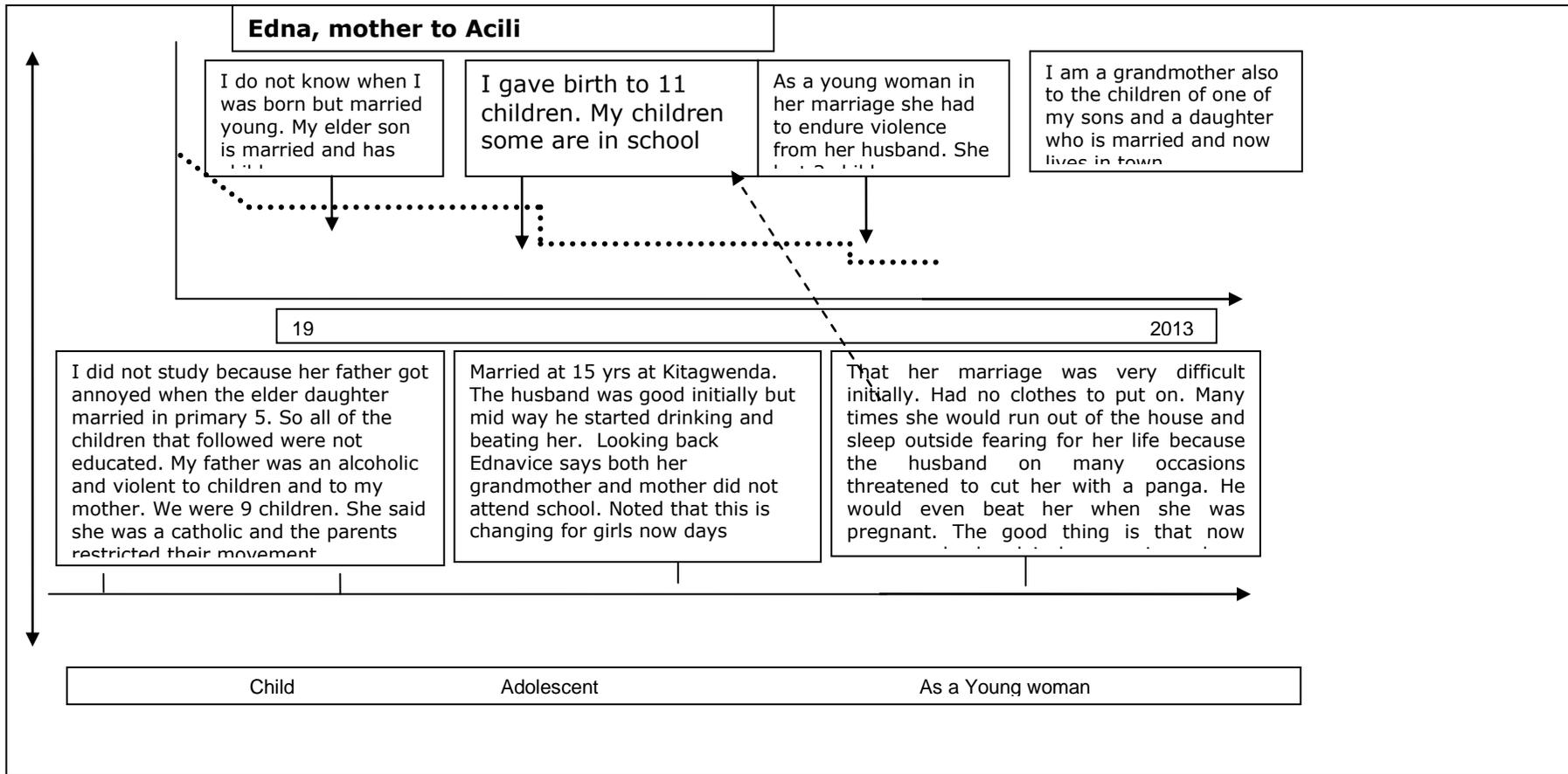


### 3 Life History and Intergenerational Pairing taken from Grand mother, Mother and daughter Rwemiyaga, Ssembabule district, Uganda

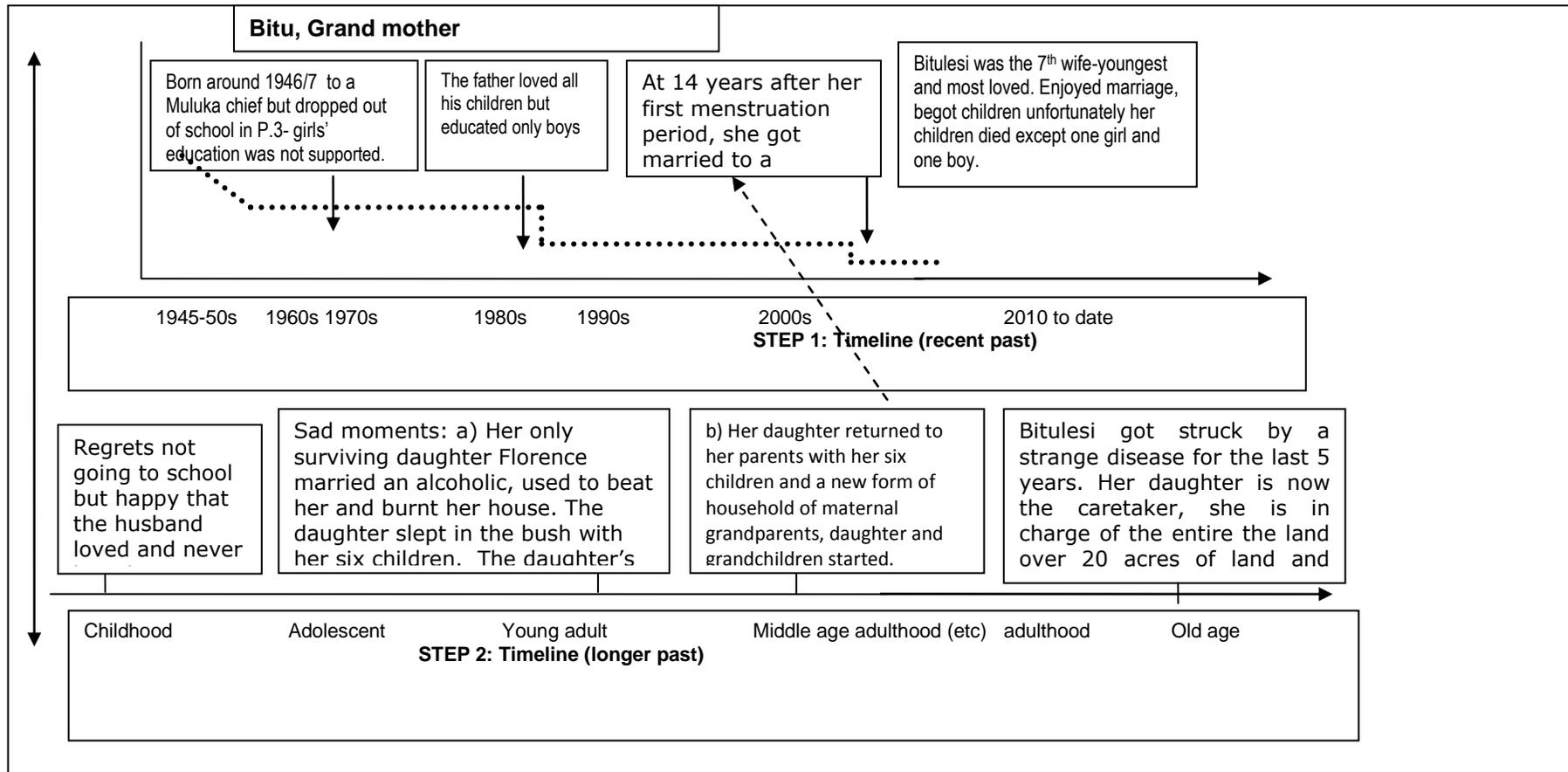
#### 3.1 LH Sembabule

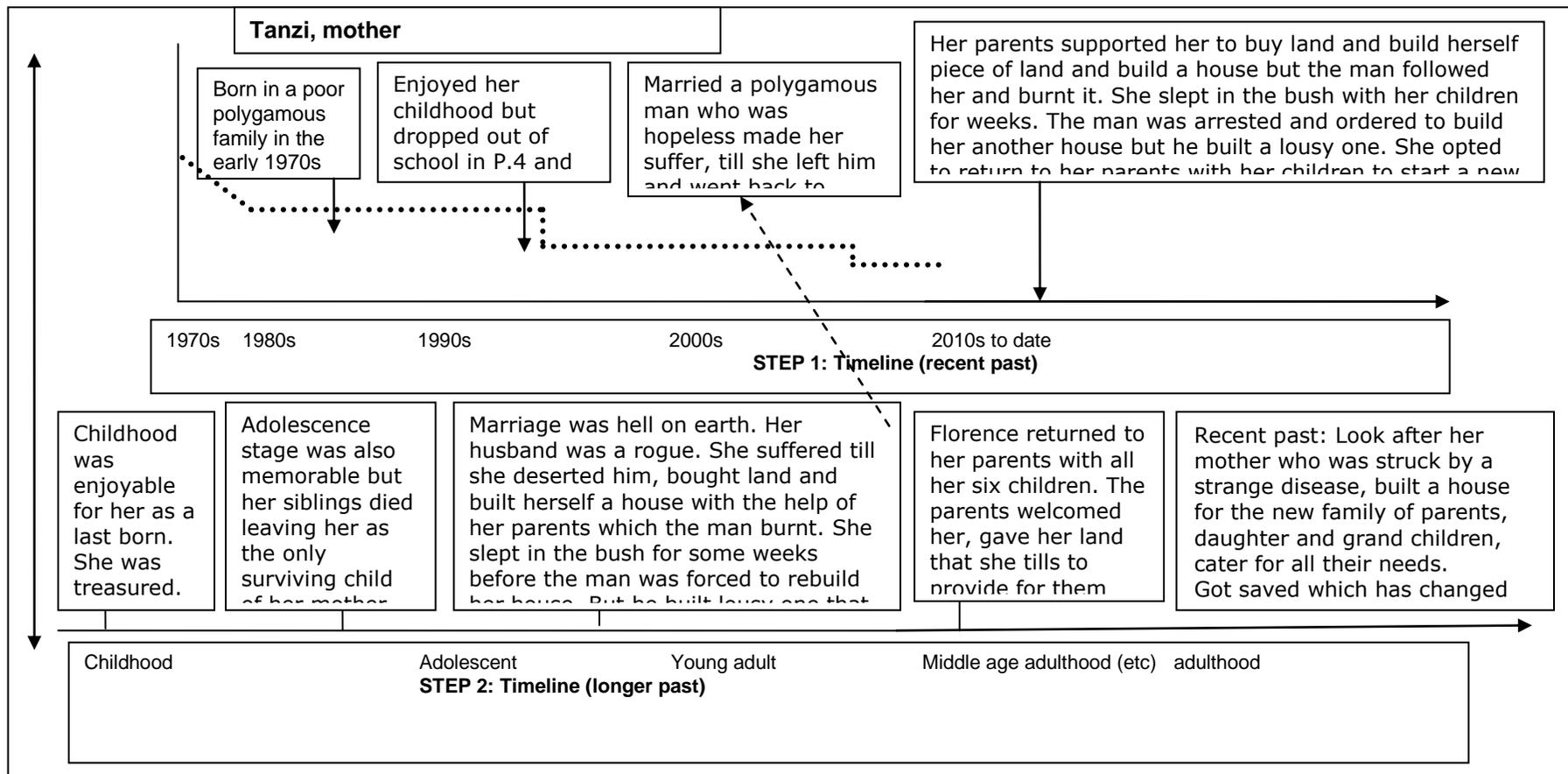


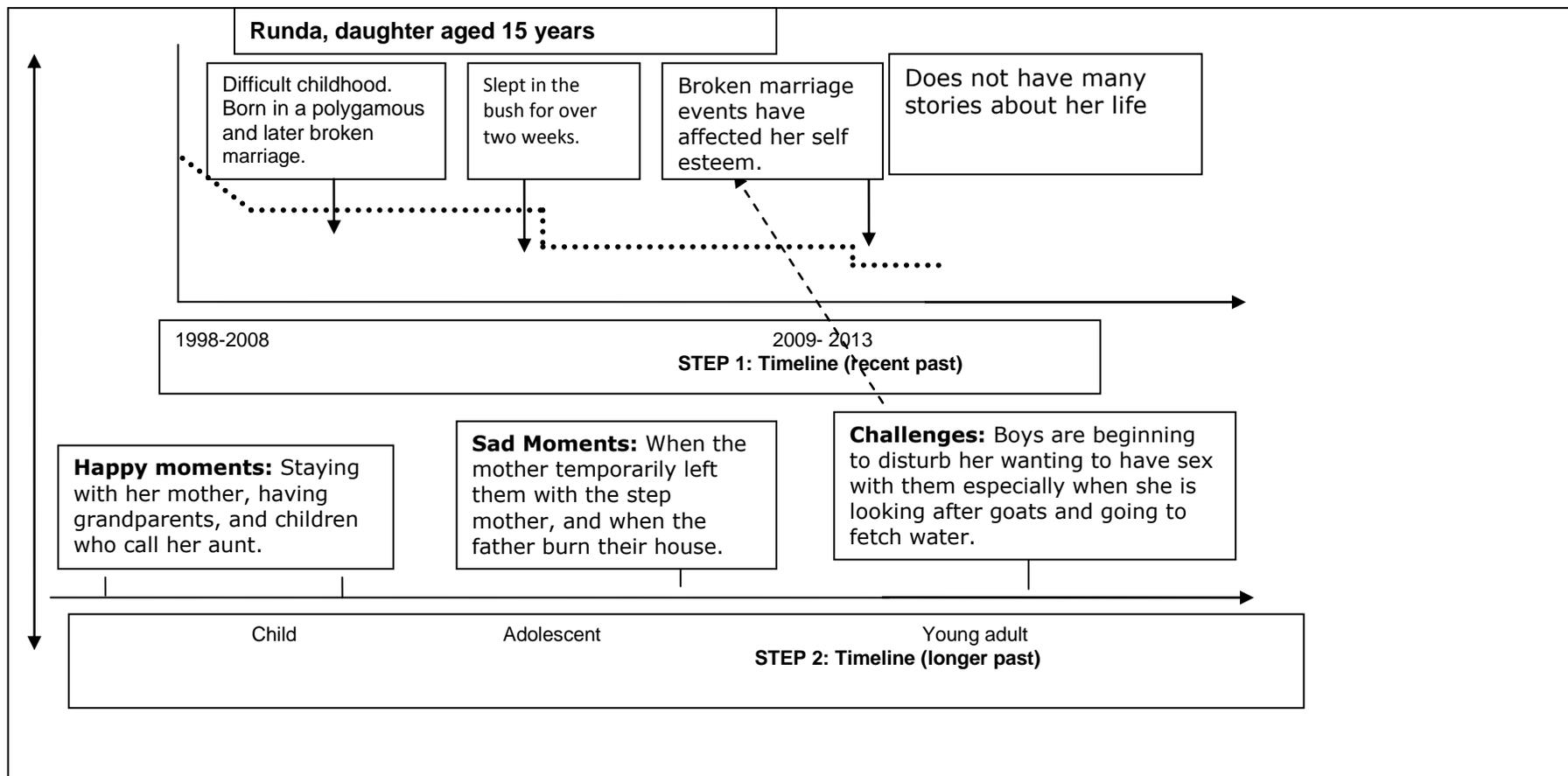




### 3.2 LH Sembabule







### 3.3. LH, Lwemiyaga, Sembabule district, Uganda

