Understanding Ecologies: Post-Conflict Service Provision
and the Resilience of Children Born in Captivity

by

Alina Dixon

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Arts

at

Dalhousie University
Halifax, Nova Scotia
April 2018

Dedication

In memory of my grandfather, Adelchi Bortolussi, for his unwavering support. You are

the source of the fire and determination within me that has made this endeavor possible.

You will always be in my heart.

Table of Contents

Table of Contents

Abstract

The conflict in northern Uganda often provokes images similar to those in the 2012 viral video of a warlord abducting young children and forcibly recruiting them to battle in a civil war. While these images helped to garner large-scale international efforts to assist victims of the conflict, this enthusiasm was relatively short-lived. As such, many of the most vulnerable victims, including children who were born within the captivity of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), continue to struggle. Moreover, although the conflict has been over for almost a decade, the longer term impacts of post-conflict initiatives have not been thoroughly investigated. The continued vulnerability of youth in Uganda, particular of children born in captivity, provokes the question – to what extent have post-conflict initiatives helped the most vulnerable overcome extreme adversity and hardship? This thesis examines this question by exploring how post conflict initiatives have shaped the environments in which children born in captivity live and develop within. Two main conclusions are suggested from this study. Firstly, in many cases post-conflict initiatives have either failed to remedy, or in some instance perpetuated the negative impacts of the conflict. Secondly, a small amount of initiatives have recognized that youth exist within multiple, interrelated environments and that the most effective post-conflict programming attempts to engage with a variety of these environments, rather than targeting solely the individual.

List of Abbreviations Used

CBC	Children Born in Captivity
CBO	Community-Based Organization
GUSCO	Gulu Support the Children Organization
GWED-G	Gulu Women's Economic Development and Globalization
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
LRA	Lord's Resistance Army
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
PTSD	Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
UN	United Nations
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UPE	Universal Primary Education
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

Acknowledgements

Chapter 1: Introduction

Children and youth are arguably some of the most severely affected by armed conflict, but have often remained on the margins of our focus when it comes to rebuilding war torn societies. Yet in 2012 one viral video attempted to reframe the narrative by highlighting the plight of thousands of children who had fallen victim to the brutality of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) in northern Uganda. This video, heavily dosed with emotional images, heartfelt dialogue, and easy to engage calls to action, succeeded in captivating audiences across the globe and raising millions of dollars to be sent to the region. In essence, the KONY 2012 viral video instigated a global discussion about what happens to the young people that are caught in the depths of war and conflict. While the many humanitarian and development initiatives that flocked to northern Uganda in the aftermath of its decade long conflict were no doubt attempting to fulfill altruistic motives, too little attention has been given to whether these initiatives have actually improved the lives of the people they have intended to help, particularly the youth that we were so captivated with in 2012. Thus, this research project seeks to question the extent to which post-conflict initiatives, including but by no means limited to those motivated or influenced by Kony 2012, have enabled children born in captivity to overcome adversity. This thesis argues that many initiatives have either failed to remedy, or further perpetuated some of the negative impacts of the conflict. It also argues that initiatives whic have discovered positive ways to remedy the conflict's negative impacts, face significant barriers in the implementation of their programming.

1.1: The Conflict in Northern Uganda

A distinguishing feature of the decades long civil war in northern Uganda, and one that has been a central feature of much of the media frenzy surrounding the conflict, is the LRA's insurgency led by Joseph Kony. However, focusing solely on this aspect of the conflict ignores the historical and political underpinnings that helped foster a context ripe for violent strife. In particular, it is important to note that much of the violence that arose in northern Uganda came in response to years of disenfranchisement and marginalization from the political centre located in the southern regions. Beginning during the colonial period under British rule, and for several years after in which Uganda remained a British Protectorate, the people of Uganda's southern regions worked more closely with British authorities, while those of the northern regions were principally laborers and agricultural producers (Kasaija 2008, 53). Consequently, while some regions of the country saw increased economic development, the Acholi people of northern Uganda remained economically marginalized and suffered disproportionately from growing levels of poverty (Van Acker 2004). These divides worsened under the dictatorial rule of Idi Amin who, wishing to expel any ethnic, political, or intellectual dissidents, ravaged much of the country and targeted other ethnic groups ither than his own, such as the Acholi. Following Amin's brutal reign of terror, the presidency of Yoweri Museveni was initially a welcome relief, ushering in increased international trade, investment, and ultimately some economic stimulation to the country (Bevan 2007). Yet, while the signs of Amin's terror were relieved from the southern regions, the northern region failed to benefit from renewed economic prosperity, and as Museveni's rule became more dictatorial, their marginalization continued without respite.

In response to their continued marginalization, the spiritual leader Alice Lakwena united the people of northern Uganda under the Holy Resistance Movement, claiming she received messages from the Holy Spirit that would help them defeat Museveni's government. Key leaders that emerged within this movement included Joseph Kony, who following the Holy Spirit's defeat in battle, rose to power and ultimately formed the LRA. While initially Kony gained support by promising a viable force to defeat the ruling government, by the 1990's he had lost much of this support (Bevan 2007). Aside from people's dissatisfaction with the targeting of civilians, as well as a general loss of faith in armed movements, Kony's increasing use of forced recruitment through abduction lost him much public support. By the early 2000s, Kony was pushed into neighbouring countries such as South Sudan and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, where he continued to wage war until relative peace returned to northern Uganda in the years following the peace talks between 2006 and 2008.

Northern Uganda was disproportionately affected by this conflict and the LRA's insurgency, with nearly 95 percent of the Acholi people being displaced and over 1.9 million living in Internally Displaced Persons camps by 2006 (Human Rights Watch 2005). While exact statistics concerning the number of children abducted into the LRA are unavailable, some estimate that the number ranges from 60,000 to 80,000 (Shanahan & Veale 2016). Furthermore, it has been estimated that by 2001, close to 3,000 children were born to forced mothers held within LRA captivity (Apio 2007). However, actual numbers are likely far higher given that many children born in captivity wish to remain anonymous, or died while still in captivity (World Vision 2015). In order to assist with the immense task of reconstruction and rehabilitation in northern Uganda following the

conflict, foreign and local organizations flocked to the region, fuelled in part by the popularity of social media campaigns like Kony 2012.

While exact statistics on the number and type of NGOs and development organizations operating in Uganda are unknown, there are several inferences that can be made based upon existing information and data from this project. Firstly, in the early 2000's the IDP camps established for the people of northern Uganda garnered much of the international assistance provided, with the UNHCR helping to manage the 251 camps from 2006 until the end of 2011 (UNHCR 2012). Overlapping with these activities was the establishment of rehabilitation centres for people returning from the LRA. Two centres in particular - those run by Gulu Support the Children Organization (GUSCO) and World Vision - are often cited as the longest standing centres, having operated since 1994 (Akena 2013; Aguto 2012). While GUSCO appeared to be relatively inactive during my time in Gulu, World Vision had seemingly shifted its focus to other areas of concern including health, nutrition and water and sanitation programs. There has also been a recent increase in projects and studies concerning challenges faced by child mothers (discussed in chapter three), with efforts to document their opinions and experiences. Throughout my time in Gulu some of the main programs I observed included vocational training, livelihood support, academic mentoring and financial assistance, sports and athletic training, and caring for abandoned or orphaned children through orphanages and similar institutions.

1.2: Research Problem and Purpose

Although there has been significant aid and development activity in northern Uganda, few studies have investigated the impacts they have had on the people they are

intended to help. Eunice Apio (2007) carried out one such investigation in which she assessed whether post-conflict reintegration initiatives successfully met the needs of children born in captivity. While an important first step, Apio also acknowledges that much more research is needed to understand the full impacts of post-conflict initiatives on the lives of children born in captivity in Uganda, as well as elsewhere across the world. Moreover, a study commissioned by the United Nations in 2000 recognized that while children who are born out of forced pregnancy in armed conflict are abundant, little is known about them. As such, this thesis seeks to add vital knowledge concerning an extremely vulnerable, yet severely understudied group of youth, while offering valuable insights on how programming can better attend to their unique needs and circumstances.

1.3: Research Questions

The primary question that guides this research is, "how have post conflict aid and development initiatives impacted the resilience of children born in captivity?". In order to answer this question there are also several secondary research questions that this project has sought to answer. These include the following:

1. What impacts have the conflict and post-conflict initiatives had on children born in captivity, as well as youth in general in northern Uganda?

2. What kinds of hardships do children born in captivity face in the post-conflict context?

3. How have post-conflict initiatives impacted the protective capabilities of important social ecological systems, such as the family and community, that impact the ability for children to overcome adversity?

4. What challenges do post-conflict initiatives encounter when attempting to provide systems of support for children born in captivity?

Two main arguments will be made in response to these questions. Firstly, I argue that in some cases post-conflict initiatives have either failed to remedy or perpetuated the negative effects of the conflict. Secondly, I argue that some initiatives have recognized that because youth exist within multiple environments, programming cannot target solely the individual. However, the second argument is qualified by the fact that while some initiatives may recognize this, they still face considerable challenges in translating this understanding into practice. The reasons for these challenges will be elaborated on in the course of this paper but include a pervasive sense of learned dependency and the continued political marginalization of Uganda's northern regions.

1.4: Importance of Research

As previously stated, this research project is significant as an initial step in understanding the impact that post-conflict initiatives have on the people they intend to help. The hope is that such an understanding will provoke further discussion and research that can be utilized in programming and policy changes that help to better meet the needs of vulnerable groups such as children born in captivity. More broadly however, this research also responds to arguments for expanding the knowledge base on youth in post-conflict contexts. These arguments, and their applicability to the context of northern Uganda, are briefly described below.

1.4.1: Youth and Insecurity

The youth and insecurity argument is premised on the notion of the 'youth bulge' which refers to nations, such as many in sub-Saharan Africa, whose youth populations represent a large proportion of the total population. It is widely speculated that regions with large youth populations are more likely to experience conflict and civil unrest

(Ludwig 2013). For instance, Cincotta (2009) states that, "as studies have shown, populations with excessive numbers of young people invite a higher risk of political violence and civil strife than others". As such, youth are depicted as compromising processes of peace-building and reconciliation.

A common criticism of such studies is that their conclusions are based on observing youth in contexts of frustration or unrest, rather than on concerted efforts to speak with and understand this demographic and the challenges and obstacles they face (Sommers 2011). From this perspective, in-depth conversations with young people have the potential to reveal a variety of other factors which result in feelings of frustration and despair that have the potential to result in violence. Wessells (2006) and Urbal (2006), amongst others, argue that the youth bulge alone does not cause conflicts, but can become dangerous when it is coupled with other factors such as unemployment, political disenfranchisement, and lack of access to education or professional development opportunities. For example, in the case of Sierra Leone, the lack of opportunities for youth to meaningfully engage in society has been cited as both a stimulus for the conflict, and a potential hindrance to lasting post-conflict peace (Kurtenbach & Pawelz 2015, Peters 2011, Hoffman 2006, Bender 2011).

Moreover, studies supporting the correlation between the existence of a youth bulge, or large youth populations, and susceptibility to violence often fail to account for circumstances in which the reverse relationship occurs - that is, instances where young people in regions experiencing a youth bulge not only do not incite violence, but act as agents for *positive* change. Therefore, there is a need for greater recognition of the positive impacts that youth have in post-conflict contexts, and the circumstances and environments that allow for youth to engage in positive rather than violent ways. Studies

to focus on this reverse relationship would follow the logic of resilience research and social ecology to the extent that they would address the extent to which a youth's environments play a role in determining their ability to act as positive agents of change.

Uganda's youth population is proportionately the largest in the world, with over 78 percent of the country's population below the age of 30, and this percentage continues to grow (USAID 2012). Uganda is also home to one of the world's highest youth unemployment rates, with only 4% of the total labour force between the ages of 15 and 24 in 2016 (World Bank). Women in Uganda's northern region also face twice as much deprivation related to discriminatory social institutions as women in the country's capital region (OECD 2015). Therefore, by the logic presented in the youth and insecurity argument these conditions are ripe for youth violence or insurgency. While participants noted that the outbreak of further violence in the region is unlikely given that many people are committed to healing from the atrocities endured during the LRA's insurgency, such conditions necessitate that youth in the region are taken seriously and engaged in a meaningful way. It is vitally important that the most vulnerable of youth, including children born in captivity, are better understood in terms of the types of environments and opportunities for positive development that surround them.

1.4.2: Youth and Development

Literature which supports children as development assets generally emphasizes the notion that children are the future, particularly the economic and development future of a nation. Furthermore, it contends that investments in youth are the most viable way to enhance human capability, and therefore a cost-effective means by which to reduce poverty, promote growth, and ultimately ensure fruitful returns on these initial

investments (Joshi 2012). The World Bank's pivotal 2007 World Development Report supported this view, arguing in favour of investing in children today to ensure greater economic prosperity for the future. Several other national aid and development agencies have made similar claims and have highlighted the importance of investing in children and youth. Examples include reports by Save the Children (2014), the World Economic Forum (2014), USAID (2012), and the International Labour Organization (2011), as well as this year's UN Economic and Social Council Youth Forum entitled "Youth Engagement in Eradicating Poverty and Promoting Prosperity: Voices from the Field." Such recognition by influential bodies such as the these underscore the developmental potential of young people. It is this recognition that Sukarieh and Tannock (2008) argue has propelled youth and youth employment to the forefront of international development and aid agendas.

However, as McEvoy-Levy (2007) argues, emphasizing youth as the future and as keys to the developmental capacity of a nation, threaten to overshadow the many talents and skills that youth have to offer in the present. This is to say that the agency that youth may exert in the present may be rendered invisible by viewing them solely through a developmental lens and focusing narrowly on how they can be an economic benefit to the region or nation at large. For example, as will be demonstrated later in this thesis, the education system in northern Uganda heavily emphasizes learning a skill or trade that can become immediately profitable, rather than encouraging students to be innovative or to pursue the careers they are passionate about but may not offer the same immediate benefit to the economy. In addition, and as will be expanded upon in subsequent chapters, there are few opportunities for youth to express themselves creatively. As discussed in the following section, this may have negative implications on the ability for youth to

contribute positively to post-conflict peace and reconciliation. In this sense, the argument that follows in favour of greater understanding of the value of youth in post-conflict contexts is a response to the pitfalls of the youth and development narrative.

In addition, the youth and development argument threatens to overshadow or ignore the structural causes of their poverty or suffering. For example, Hickel (2014) argues that the logic of the 'girl effect', which argues that investments in women and girls results in economic growth, slower population growth, and more positive family health, ignores the more substantive drivers of poverty such as corrupt global governance, structural adjustment, and labour exploitation. As well, the 'girl effect' argument simultaneously places the burden of responsibility onto women and girls to carry themselves out of the poverty that is created by the same institutions which purport to save them through efforts such as increased access to the labour market and credit. Similarly, a narrow focus on youth as development assets runs the risk of ignoring structural factors such as limited access to education, generational trauma, or stigmatization, that may limit their agency to act as such agents. Thus, while it is important to recognize the important role that that youth can play in development, it is also important to recognize the structural limitations that they face in their ability to exercise their agency to do so.

1.4.3: Youth as Agents of Change

Conceptualizing youth as agents of change emphasizes the ability for youth to positively affect post-conflict reconstruction, rehabilitation, and ultimately peace-building. Several authors have responded to the call for greater documentation of youth-led peace activities, with the objective of adding to the persuasive power of the 'youth as

agents of peace' discourse, potentially making it equally, if not more compelling than the 'youth bulge and insecurity' narrative.

However, aside from the inclusion of youth to avoid renewed violence, or simply to appease their appetite for political participation, there is evidence that youth can act as important actors, capable of making significant contributions in their own right. For example, in structured dialogue sessions youth from a variety of countries, many of which are at odds with each other, demonstrated exemplary understanding and respect for each other's perspectives (Ungerleider 2012). They also addressed the unique challenges that youth in their various contexts face, and generated possible solutions (Ungerleider 2012). These abilities have been demonstrated in other similar dialogues with youth in Northern Ireland through music and art (Lesley 2011), in Kenya through participatory videography (Valentina 2015), and in the Middle East through sport (Thrope & Ahmad 2015), amongst others. Evidently, when enabled to do so youth have the ability to offer valuable insights into peace processes and act as competent mediators of peace.

Similarly, there is growing documentation of the many ways that youth in post-conflict contexts utilize various artistic means as a way of healing from conflict and reconciling grievances. For instance, the 2007 elections in Sierra Leone saw the explosive use of music by youth to have their perspectives on important election issues heard (Shepler 2010). In northern Uganda, McClain (2012) has found evidence of such activity in an organized school art competition in which students explore various aspects of the conflict. Presentations included a song criticizing the ICC indictments and their inability to restore peace to the region, a skit mocking the ineffectiveness of the peace talks, and a song about amnesty and calling on soldiers to come back home. The use of art forms such as these has been hypothesized to stimulate a problem-solving attitude that is useful in

diminishing transgenerational trauma and the transmission of hatred onto others (Ishaq 2006).

Despite such evidence in favour of engaging youth in the aftermath of conflict, they continue to be marginalized or ignored in important peace and justice processes. With regard to Uganda's post-conflict context in particular, Ensor (2013) argues that children and youth lack a meaningful space to participate in traditional justice mechanisms and as such, are arguably denied their potential ability to act as peacemakers and positive agents in their societies. Therefore, it is important to recognize that in order to develop and utilize this strength, young people must be exposed to an environment that fosters, or at least allows for such creativity. Thus, the youth as agents of change discourse runs the risk of romanticizing the agency of youth and thereby ignoring the structural challenges which make action toward peace difficult. In this sense, it is important to analyze the environments that either facilitate or inhibit youth engagement in peace and reconciliation processes.

1.5: Scope of Study

This study is exploratory in nature. This is because there has not yet been a study of the resilience of children born in captivity in northern Uganda that has sought to analyze resilience by way of engaging with the people that make up the various environments within which these children exist. As such, it is not an exhaustive or definitive account, but instead is intended to provoke further discussion and investigation on the topic. For example, as a result of the designated scope and purpose of this study, an in-depth analysis on the significance of gender was not included. As this was not a key component of the initial project design, such an investigation would require additional,

more focused research. However, this study is mindful of the importance of gender to this analysis and where possible it has highlighted distinct gender-based impacts with the intent of provoking further discussion and inquiry. In addition, this study is physically limited to Gulu itself and does not consider the perspectives of people in surrounding regions of the country. While there are valuable insights to be gained from these perspectives, they would also likely have their own variations and unique historical contexts that demand further investigation.

1.6: Thesis Structure

Following this first chapter, which has established the context and background to this research, the second chapter outlines the two theories that this study has used. It highlights the main principles of both social ecology and a contemporary theory of resilience, while also emphasizing their intersections. In particular, it highlights the use of social ecology's nested ecologies principle within the analyses of protective and risk factors that are common within resilience research. Moreover, it establishes the need for these theories to be used in conjunction with each other in a study of this kind.

The third chapter reviews relevant literature regarding how children born in captivity fit within broader conceptualizations of children born in conflict, and general trends within resilience research regarding risk and protective factors in various ecological systems. It also touches on the limited research that is available concerning the resilience of children in conflict settings and argues that more research of this nature is required.

The fourth chapter presents an overview of the methods used to carry out this study and some of the ethical considerations that were taken into account. It also demonstrates the congruence between the methods chosen and the theories being utilized.

The fifth chapter is the first data analysis chapter and addresses the impacts of post-conflict initiatives on society in Gulu in general. As such, it provides the contextual knowledge necessary for the analysis which takes place in the following chapter. It addresses the changing relationship between NGOs and government in Uganda, the lack of standardization in the quality and availability of care amongst post-conflict initiatives, the degradation of culture and cultural identity, the deficiencies of many existing and former initiatives, and the pervasiveness of the sense of dependency in Gulu.

The sixth chapter builds on the preceding chapter by analysing the way that the impacts detailed in chapter five have affected the resilience of children born in captivity. To do so it addresses the changes that have occurred within the various ecological systems that surround children born in captivity and that are crucial in promoting or inhibiting resilience.

Lastly, the seventh chapter will draw conclusions and offer several brief policy recommendations. This chapter emphasizes that while many post-conflict initiatives have negatively impacted the resilience of children born in captivity, there are growing efforts to change the types of interventions that are available, while still encountering challenges. The policy recommendations highlight the need for greater political engagement from the various levels of government in Uganda, both locally in the northern regions and centrally from Kampala.

Chapter 2: Theoretical Framework

The two interrelated theories utilized for this study are those of social ecology and resilience. When taken together, these theories necessitate investigations of an individual's surroundings in order to assess their ability to overcome adversity. This approach was selected given that much research has focused on the challenges that children born in captivity face, with less emphasis given to their abilities to overcome these challenges. In addition, little recognition has been given to the ways the post-conflict initiatives, and the various actors engaged in these initiatives, have impacted their ability to do so. This chapter details the main assumptions of both theories while highlighting the ways that they are interrelated.

2.1: Social Ecology

The principal theory utilized for this study is that of social ecology. In a broad sense, this theory is concerned with the ways in which humans interact with, and are influenced by their surrounding environments. However, for the purposes of this study the application of this theory to the social sciences, and more particularly to child welfare and wellbeing, is of paramount importance. With these parameters in mind, much of the existing literature on social ecology credits American developmental psychologist, Urie Bronfenbrenner's theory of ecological systems, otherwise known as human ecology theory. Central to this theory, as well as to much of Bronfenbrenner's work, is the effect of environmental influences on children, a focus which continues to stimulate discussions and research on child wellbeing and welfare. Given its continued relevance to contemporary studies on child development, it is a crucial starting point for this discussion.

The most seminal aspect of Bronfenbrenner's theory is the identification of five environmental systems within which individuals exist and interact. These five systems, along with a short description of each, are as follows:

1. A *microsystem* refers to the immediate surroundings with which an individual directly interacts. While the family is a common reference point for this system, it also includes peers, work colleagues, religious groups, and schoolmates. Bronfenbrenner (1977) notes, however, that some groups may be less applicable to different age demographics, and in different geographical locations. For instance, work colleagues will not be an applicable group amongst infants and toddlers, but are likely to be important amongst older adolescents who are beginning to enter the work force.

2. A *mesosystem* does not refer to a specific level of surroundings per se, but rather to the interaction of structures within the microsystem itself. This is to say that the mesosystem encompasses the interrelations amongst the various actors and environments of the microsystem. For instance, while family and peer groups are part of the microsystem, the connection between these two groups represents a mesosystem. As well, these connections are not limited to dyad relationships, but can include any variation of connections with any number of groups. Thus, while a simple mesosystem may encompass the interaction between an individual's teachers and parents, a more complex mesosystem may include their teachers, parents, as well as peers and religious groups. Bronfenbrenner's (1977) succinct description of a mesosystems is as "a system of microsystems".

3. An *exosystem* refers to systems that an individual may not be directly involved in, but nonetheless is indirectly affected or influenced by. The examples provided by Bronfenbrenner (1977, 1994) include the world of work (potentially a parent's work

schedule), informal social networks, neighbourhood communities, and government agencies. More specifically for example, while a child may not interact directly with local school boards, contingent upon their enrollment in school, they will inevitably be affected by the decisions such a body makes.

4. A *macrosystem* is different from the preceding systems in that it does not refer to a specific context within which an individual exists. Rather, it is comprised of the cultural values, norms, and laws of a given society. In this sense, the macrosystem is the system of overarching structures which implicitly and explicitly define and influence the exo-, meso-, and microsystems. While specific laws and legal regulations overtly shape these systems, Bronfenbrenner notes that most macrosystems (in terms of cultural norms and values) are often carried "unwittingly" by society's members. For example, if a child grows up in a society which values tolerance and acceptance, while the policies, laws, and programs will undoubtedly reflect these values, they are likely to also influence the way in which the family chooses to raise that child and thus how they will develop.

5. The last system is one that is not present in Bronfenbrenner's earlier works such as *Towards an Experimental Ecology of Human Development* in 1977[1] and *Contexts of Child Rearing: Problems and Prospects* in 1979. The later inclusion of *chronosystems* sought to include aspects of time and the longitudinal study of child development (Bronfenbrenner 1994, 1986). It refers to consistencies or changes over the life course of an individual. Examples of these systems could include the effects of a parent's death or divorce on an individual over the course of a significant period of their life.

---

[1] While not named as such Bronfenbrenner does make reference to chronosystems in this work, labelling them as "ecological transitions" rather than a system in and of themselves.

One aspect of this model that is important to draw attention to is the interrelationship of the multiple systems. As is reflected in the description of exosystems, it is possible for the various components of a system to interact with each other. As well, as is highlighted by macrosystems, systems interact with and influence the other systems within which an individual exists. Bronfenbrenner's model therefore describes a system of nested environments in which all systems are related to each other and are in part dependent on the larger systems that they are a part of (Gorman-Smith, Tolan, & Henry 2005). This particular aspect is of great significance to the analysis of the ecologies of children born in captivity in northern Uganda, as will become evident in later chapters.

Bronfenbrenner's original model has been adapted to suit later investigations of child development, particularly in the fields of child health and maltreatment. In these fields, there has been an overwhelming emphasis on the role of family structures in particular (see Steinberg 2001, Martin, Gardner, Brooks-Gunn 2012, and Zhang 2013 for examples), to the extent that it has often become the most significant point of consideration. Earls and Carlson (2001) criticize this trend and argue that to adequately apply the principles of social ecology, greater exploration of the more distal contexts, such as communities, neighbourhoods, and societies, is needed. Thus, while the central tenet of Bronfenbrenner's theory, highlighting multiple levels of factors that influence an individual, has been retained, what constitutes each of the various levels has changed to better suit the needs of further research.

The specific adaptation of Bronfenbrenner's original model utilized here is that used in studies concerning the social ecology of children involved in, or affected by conflict, as it is most closely aligned to the objectives of this study. Such studies include the analysis of former child soldiers in Nepal (Kohrt et al. 2010), children affected by

political violence in Northern Ireland (Cummings et al. 2009), community characteristics and the mental health of post-conflict Sierra Leonean youth (Betancourt et al. 2014), as well as the multi-tiered implications of conflict on children more generally (Joshi & O'Donnell 2003, Boothby, Strang, & Wessells 2006). One notable point of departure from the initial model is the inclusion of ontogenic systems in some analyses. These systems generally refer to capacities of individuals themselves. This inclusion can arguably be seen as a response to Bronfenbrenner's admission in the later stages of his career that his initial model obscured the significance of individual abilities (Bronfrenbrenner 1989). An additional inconsistency is the level at which politics belong, with some placing it within the macrosystem and others attributing it to the exosystem. For instance, Earls and Carlson (2001) discuss political ideology and groups as synonymous with community organizations at the exosystem level. However, their rationale in doing so is that political beliefs bind groups of people together, thereby creating a type of community within itself. In contrast, Cummings et al. (2009) place politics within the macrosystem, referring more explicitly to the repercussions of political decisions and values onto embedded systems such as the exo- and microsystems. The delineation of the various systems that will be used in this analysis is as follows:

1. The way that microsystems are utilized in this study will largely conform to Bronfenbrenner's original conception of the term. In this sense microsystems refer to the immediate surroundings that a child is exposed to on a frequent basis. This includes primarily the family but also extends to other close peer relations that have a direct impact on the children under investigation.

2. The conceptualization of exosystems in this study departs from its original use. Drawing on the studies discussed above, exosystems in this study refer to the community

and neighbourhood of the children in question. As such, they are primarily defined as the larger systems within which the family and other immediate influences are embedded.

3. In line with Bronfenbrenner's original conception, macrosystems in this study refer to the larger systems of values and norms that govern a society, often implicitly. As well, the political systems which explicitly govern a society are included at this level. Despite their omission in some of the studies previously mentioned, political systems are included at this level in this research given that they are largely a function of overarching cultural values and norms in the context under investigation. While this becomes evident throughout the following analysis, the point is that the government policies, programs, and laws relevant to this study are an extension of larger value systems, and therefore should be analyzed within the same system.

Bronfenbrenner's later innovation of chronosytems are not included in this study. This is because the resource and time limitations of this study do not allow for a longitudinal analysis that would be necessary to draw out insights concerning a chronosystem. As well, ontogenic or individual systems are only briefly noted in this analysis, primarily because this research project is primarily concerned with the environment within which youth exist, rather than the youth and their individual capacities themselves. This is not to say that individual capacities are not important or relevant. In fact, the primary motivation of this study is to better understand youths' environments to demonstrate how they can be adjusted to better serve their needs and to help youth utilize their capabilities. Thus, the focal point of this research is still children (particularly those born in captivity), but they are studied through an analysis of how their environments influence their ability to be resilient.

2.2: Contemporary Theories of Resilience

Broadly, resilience is the ability of an individual to overcome adversity or significant risk, or to do well despite facing challenging circumstances. As such, resilience can be said to have been demonstrated when risk or adversity is significant enough to pose a substantial threat to healthy development or functioning, yet positive outcomes take place nonetheless (Riley & Masten 2005, Werner 2005). As will be shown in the following chapter, children born in captivity are exposed to a variety of challenges and risks, and therefore necessitate an analysis of their potential to demonstrate resilience. While in conflict settings resilience may amount to simply surviving, once "normative conditions are restored", as has been occurring in northern Uganda, expectations for resilience surpass the mere ability to survive (Riley and Masten 2005). It is important to note that for children born in captivity, "normative conditions" inevitably include violence, distrust, and abuse. In this sense, normative conditions refer to the conditions of the society as a whole, and can be considered to have been restored when relative peace and stability has returned. Thus, a key aspect of resilience for children born in captivity is the ability to unlearn many of the behaviours and conditions they may have become accustomed to during their time in a conflict setting.

With this in mind, the study of resilience is largely a study of the protective factors that modify the effects of adverse life circumstances (Luther & Cicchetti 2000). In traditional theories of resilience these protective factors were limited to the inherent traits of an individual such as their health, temperament, and emotional and intellectual competency (Werner 2005, Ungar 2012). For example, in examining why some youth from the same community resort to crime and violence when others choose education and legal employment, traditional theories of resilience may suggest that the latter have

greater senses of self-worth, emotional fortitude, and coping skills. However, there is growing consensus amongst resilience researchers that individual traits and capabilities alone cannot adequately account for a person's ability to be resilient. Rather, contemporary theories of resilience argue that a person's environment and surroundings are much more significant in influencing resiliency than has been traditionally understood (Ungar 2012). While still recognizing the importance of individual capacities, the theory of resilience utilized in this study argues that ecological contexts are equally if not more significant. In keeping with the same example as above, contemporary theories of resilience may uncover that those youth who make positive choices have a strong sense of self-worth instilled in them from their supportive parents, learned to mediate their emotions from sympathetic teachers, and had developed coping skills through their interactions and close ties with pro-social peers.

In this sense as well, individual traits and capacities are not seen as inherently either present or absent, but are developed and affected by on-going circumstances and changing environments. As a result, resilience is understood as a pattern of adaptation that may or may not occur based on the types of circumstances and environments that influence an individual (Riley & Masten 2005). Resilience is therefore conceptualized as a quality of an individual's various and changing social and physical ecologies, and the extent to which they play a positive role in said individual's development (Ungar 2011). Consequently, the second important tenet of this theory of resilience is that it is understood as a process, rather than as a singular, definitive outcome.

Social ecology is often incorporated into resilience research as a means to identify protective factors. For instance, traditional theories of resilience focus on protective factors within the individual or ontogenic system, while contemporary theories focus

more explicitly on factors within the micro-, exo-, and macrosystems. Yet as noted in social ecology, the family remains at the core of such investigations. The relationship between an infant and caregiver is often noted as being of seminal importance insofar as it provides a foundation for the basic system that promotes an individual's positive adaptation if they are to face adversity in their lifetime (Riley & Masten 2005, Walsh 2016). This is to say that early infant-caregiver relationships teach an individual from an early stage how to relate to others and form healthy and positive relationships, as well as efficacy in problem solving and coping skills. Thus, many of an individual's capacities for resilience are learned within these early relationships.

However, as the theory of social ecology argues, an individual is influenced by many factors aside from those developed within the family. This tenet has been adopted within the theory of resilience, with research focusing on the various other factors that present themselves within the micro-, exo- and macrosystems. Examples of other such factors include positive peer relationships (Criss et al 2009), and supportive teacher-student relationships (Liebenberg et al. 2016). It is also important to note that factors that are generally believed to perform a protective function can also be a source of adversity for an individual. For instance, in some contexts parents or caregivers, understood to be central figures in promoting an individual's resilience at an early age, can become a source of adversity. As Riley and Masten (2005) argue,

> "instead of learning prosocial skills and ways of interacting with others that involve warmth and intimacy, a child may learn that interactions are cold and rebuffing. Instead of gaining a sense of mastery, a child may feel ineffective in influencing the world around him or her. Instead of providing protective features, the caregiver may become a source of adversity. Adversity arising from the attachment figures poses particular threats to development because of the potential for undermining fundamental protective systems".

The notion that environments may be a source of adversity alludes to the third

tenet of resilience which is that ecologies may either inhibit *or* facilitate resilience. This

idea is particularly salient to this analysis given for instance that the conflict in northern

Uganda negatively impacted family structures and their ability to care for and support

children and youth, as will be discussed in following chapters. As well, as the analysis

will demonstrate, environments that were once a source of protection can *become* sources

of adversity, thereby further reinforcing the notion that resilience is better understood as a

process rather than as a singular, concrete outcome. In this sense, it is important to

examine the transformation of environments and the degree to which their ability to act as

protective factors is maintained in varying circumstances (Maton 2005).

An additional component of this process of resiliency that is significant to this

discussion is the ability for an individual to *access* resources or protective factors that

may exist within their surrounding environments. For instance, in keeping with the

previous example, programs and policies targeted at youth crime reduction may exist

within the macrosystem. However, the inability to access these services due to lack of

transportation infrastructure, fear of stigmatization from peers, or pressure from

caregivers not to engage, may hinder the capacity for resilience of the individual. As well,

in the context of conflict or political strife, such systems of support may deteriorate or be

absent altogether, thereby negatively impacting resilience. Hence, in addition to

individual capacities and relationships, resilience is also comprised of an individual's

ability to access resources (Lienbenberg, Ungar & Fons Can der Vijver 2012, Ungar

2010). This reflects a process of interaction in which an individual must navigate to and

through the various services and supports that exist in their environments. While their

ability to do is in part dictated by their own capacity, it is also mediated by the extent to

which an ecology makes the necessary supports available (Ungar 2010). This ultimately highlights the final proposition of this theory, which is that resilience is interactional and therefore much more dynamic than traditional theories of resilience have recognized.

2.3: A Note on Gender

As noted in the previous chapter, an in-depth gender analysis was not within the purview of this study. However, it is important to briefly note the potential significance of gender on the systems outlined in this chapter thus far. While this thesis does not address the impacts of gender, given the varying experiences of different genders within the conflict setting, the degree to which their experiences differ is an important component to be further investigated in future and subsequent work. Some key areas for future investigation related to these systems may include the extent to which gender influences the types of facilitators or obstructers of resilience that are available at each level, how it implicates the likelihood that an individual will seek out resources, and the degree to which it affects how an individual will interact with, and be affected by various ecological systems.

However, in order to adequately investigate these questions, amongst others, an additional and explicit theoretical focus on gender would need to be incorporated into this study. Questions that explicitly address the degree to which gender influences, and is influenced by programming would also need to be incorporated into the interview guide. As the primary theoretical goal of this project is to bridge the relationship between resilience and social ecology as they relate to children born in captivity, such gender analysis was not incorporated at this stage.

2.4: Conclusion

Contemporary theories of resilience encompass three main principles; that 1) social and physical ecologies, rather than inherent capabilities, are of primary concern, 2) environments can either inhibit or facilitate resilience, and 3) resilience is a dynamic and interactional process. Ultimately, the main argument that this theory favours, and which guides this research project, is that resilience cannot be understood without considering the contexts of an individual at various levels. Furthermore, while the impacts of this theory have been plentiful, two are of particular significance for this study. Firstly, there has been a move away from a predominant focus on examining the individual and family capacity for positive adaptive functioning, and towards the systems and institutions which ultimately limit or enable such functioning (Leadbetter, Dodgen, & Solarz 2005). Secondly, resilience is now better understood, not as an extraordinary quality of select individuals, but rather as an ordinary process stemming from everyday systems and structures (Masten 2001). Taken together, these implications prompt a need to understand and transform environments at multiple levels in order to enhance resilience (Maton 2005).

Conceptualizing resilience in this way moves the conversation away from simply whether resilience is displayed amongst individuals, and towards an analysis of *how* it occurs in some contexts and not in others. As such, the primary purpose of this research project is to examine the extent to which post-conflict initiatives have either helped or hindered environments such as families, peer groups, communities, and government structures foster the resilience of CBCs. Rather than emphasizing the resilient behaviour of some CBCs (a tendency in some of the existing literature that will be explored in the following chapter), this project focuses on the conditions that are necessary for

individuals to display such behaviour, and the extent to which post-conflict initiatives have impacted these conditions. Consequently, this project offers initial insights into the types of initiatives that are well-suited to build environmental capacity to support CBCs, and those which threaten to erode this capacity. Furthermore, this theory and ultimately this paper suggests that instances in which CBCs are unable to overcome adversity are less a consequence of an individual's unique characteristics, and more a reflection of the types and functioning of the environments within which they exist.

Chapter 3: Literature Review

While there are growing bodies of literature that examine both children born in captivity and youth resilience in conflict settings, there have been few investigations of the factors inhibiting and promoting the resilience of children born in captivity specifically. In the context of Uganda, there has been increasing attention paid to children born in captivity, yet much of this work has focused on the challenges they encounter, rather than their ability to overcome these challenges. Moreover, while conflict settings have been studied in their general application to youth resilience, the circumstances of children born in captivity are not yet prominently studied within resilience research. As a result, children born in captivity and youth resilience have typically been studied separately from each other. While useful insights can be gained from similar studies addressing other groups of conflict affected youth, or youth resilience in other challenging circumstances, the phenomenon being addressed in this study has unique features which necessitate its own line of inquiry.

This chapter demonstrates the intersection of these two bodies of literature and the relative dearth of research that exists concerning the resilience of children born in captivity. It first delineates the unique circumstances of children born in captivity and how they relate to other groups of conflict affected youth, noting the importance of a social ecological perspective. The chapter then examines trends within resilience research concerning the conceptualization of the various ecological systems, concluding that there is a significant gap within resilience and conflict studies.

3.1: A Note on 'Children' and 'Youth' as Concepts

Before delving into the pertinent research, it is first important to highlight the way that the terms "youth" and "children" are conceptualized in this study. Throughout this thesis these terms are used interchangeably and synonymously. The rationale for doing so is based primarily in the fact that the dominant constructions of "childhood" and "youth" put forth by international bodies such as the United Nations in documents such as the Convention on the Rights of the Child are based on one historically and geographically unique social context, and then globalized in a manner which allows it to dominate the current discourse. The notions that a child is someone that is dependent, vulnerable, and innocent until they reach the mature age of 18 (at which point they are recognized as adults), and that a youth is someone who occupies the elusive transition period between childhood and adulthood[2], are born out of the unique liberal individualism of Western Europe (Hayden 2001).

As such, understandings of children and childhoods that are touted as being universally applicable, are often incongruent with highly contextualized understandings of the concepts in many parts of the world. For instance, while various international standards (such as those set by the International Labour Organization) and documents like the UN's recent plan to eradicate child labour by 2020 stigmatize the use of child *labour* (UN News Centre 2014), various authors contend that child *work* is an integral component of social life in many places, and is necessary to prepare children for the transition to adulthood (Woodhead 1998, Invernizzi 2003). This is not to say that the latter defend the exploitation of children, but rather discrediting child work in its entirety

---

[2] The United Nations regards youth as being between the ages of 15-24, marking a period in which they have left compulsory education and are seeking employment.

fails to account the diversity of socially constructed notions concerning what childhood entails. As well, international legal and humanitarian discourses have largely failed to reconcile instances in which children are both victims and perpetrators of violent acts, as is common for many former child soldiers. This is because dominant discourses which emphasize the innocence, vulnerability, and protection of children are at odds with local and international calls for justice and accountability (notwithstanding the fact that opinions regarding what such justice entails are varied). The on-going trial of the former LRA commander Dominic Ongwen exemplifies these tensions[3].

Furthermore, children born in captivity present various contradictions to our understandings of children and youth. As Newman (2016) argues, former child soldiers commonly face difficulty reintegrating into civilian life partly because they have learned to cope and survive in the adult world of conflict and brutality. Thus, while they may be unable to accomplish many of the feats which mark adulthood such as finishing school, gaining employment, owning land (or moving onto the land of one's spouse), and getting married, they are distinguished from children and youth based on the experiences they have had in conflict. For children born in conflict this is even more the case given that they have not had any prior exposure to a 'normal' childhood to recall and build on. For instance, in Evelyn Amony's (2015) biographical account of her time within the LRA, she recounts confusion when being grouped with children in rehabilitation centres given that she had already given birth to children of her own, lived through armed conflict, and

---

[3] As the first former child soldier to be tried, there is little consensus as to whether Ongwen should be acquitted of charges given that he was abducted by the LRA and brutally exploited, or if he should be held criminally responsible for his actions as he rose to a position of authority. Even his indictment by the ICC was argued to be at odds with some local perceptions of justice and the desire to move past the conflict through reconciliation between perpetrators and victims, further demonstrating the limited applicability of universal discourses.

learned to function as an adult in many other ways. Thus, to use the terms "child" or "youth" with any one rigid definition would be to run the risk of failing to account for the unique circumstances that children born in captivity are born into, and the ways in which they straddle the conceptual lines between childhood, youth and adulthood.

3.2: Children Born of War or in Conflict

The term 'children born in captivity' fits within broader categorizations such as 'children born of war' or 'children born in conflict'. The expansiveness of these terms is demonstrated by Mochmann and Larsen (2008) who, at the onset of their paper, make the important delineation that in choosing to use the term 'children born of war' they are including children born to enemy soldiers, children born from soldiers of occupying forces, the children of child soldiers, and children born to peacekeeping forces. In the past decade, it is estimated that tens of thousands of children have been born from instances such as these (Carpenter 2010). However, despite the frequency of these phenomena, children born of war remain a relatively new focus of inquiry for academic and humanitarian investigation. With the exception of one study by Harris (1993) concerning children born in France during the Second World War, much of the research regarding this broad group of children originates in the crises of the 1990's such as the Rwandan genocide (Matloff 1994; McKinley 1996; Crawley & Simic 2012; Carpenter 2009) and the Bosnian war (Weitsman 2008; Jahn 2005; Erjavec 2010), with a general upsurge following 2007. One possible explanation for this increase in scholarly attention is the publication of Charli Carpenter's seminal book *Born of War: Protecting Children of Sexual Violence Survivors in Conflict Zones* in 2007, which brought together various

authors and issues concerning children born in war. As such, Carpenter is regarded as a key figure in research concerning children born in conflict.

Of the literature that does exist to date, there are several trends that are significant for the purposes of this project. Firstly, many existing studies have tended to focus primarily on the acts of sexual violence from which these children are conceived. For example, much of the literature regarding children born during the Rwandan genocide focuses on children as being a product of forced impregnation, from rape with the intent of impregnation, or as a tool of genocide (Crawley & Simic 2012; Weitsman 2008; Matloff 1995; and McKinley 1996). A similar focus has been given to children born under in the context of the Bosnian war (such as Carpenter 2009, 2010; Erjavec & Volcic 2010; and Mochmann & Lee 2010). Yet while children born in captivity were not infrequently born as a result of sexual violence, their distinguishing feature is not the means by which they were conceived, but rather the contexts into which they were born. By beginning their lives in a conflict setting, children born in captivity are conceptually distinguishable from those who are born as a result of sexual violence but remain within support systems, such as their family.

Nevertheless, vital insights can be drawn from studies concerning other groups of children born of war. For instance, various authors have studied the relationship between different groups of children born of war or in conflict and their mothers. Authors such as Rimmer (2007), Carpenter (2007, 2010), DeLaet (2007), and McEvoy-Levy (2007) have criticized traditional human rights and post-conflict discourses for not only failing to address or even recognize children born in conflict, but for actively marginalizing this group given the overwhelming emphasis on women in conflict and post-conflict settings. Furthermore, critical studies of the relationship between children born of war and their

mothers have uncovered important dynamics that are telling with regard to the challenges

that these children face. These include the inextricable link between the mother's socio-

legal status and opportunities available for the child (Rimmer 2007), the tendency for the

children to understand their identity through their relationship with their mother (Erjavec

2010), and capacity for successful post-conflict reintegration and reconstruction when the

agency of both mother and child is recognized and supported (Ochen 2015).

Secondly, important work has been conducted regarding the ways that these

children are represented within society. For example, Theidon (2015) focuses on the

naming practices of Peruvian children born in conflict, which often are symbolic of the

violent and negative terms of their conception. Weitsman (2008) and Daniel-Wrabetez

(2007) discuss societal representations of these children that are often negatively

influenced by the relative silence and stigmatization surrounding sexual violence more

generally. Harris (1993) and Seto (2015) both discuss how children born of war are

represented in national discourses as symbolic tools to represent the harm done to the

nation at large. This is also reflected in the studies by Carpenter (2009) and Crawley and

Simic (2012) assessing the symbolic representations of these children in news and media

respectively. News reports concerning children born in war generally display these types

of symbolic representations by focusing on the children as symbols of atrocity committed

against the mothers (Mattloff 1995; McKinley 1996; Smith 2000) and the nation (Powell

2001; Jahn 2005). Thus, the distinquishing factor between children born as a result of

sexual violence during a time of conflict and those born of similar circumstances during

times of relative peace, is that they represent a continuation or reminder of the conflict.

As such, they play a unique role in post-conflict reconstruction by serving as physical

embodiments of the trauma and violence left by the conflict in which they were conceived.

Lastly, there is a small body of literature that focuses specifically on the complex identity issues that children born in conflict face. Weitsman (2008) argues that images of rape, forced impregnation and forced maternity are reproduced in state, societal, and media representations of children born of wartime sexual violence in Bosnia and Rwanda. As such, she claims that this inhibits the ability for these children to claim their rights, or at minimum have their rights recognized as morally valuable. Erjavec and Volcic (2010) focus on the relationship between children born in conflict and their mothers following the Bosnian war. They contend that these children understand their own sense of self primarily through their (often negative) relationships with their mothers. The authors found that their small sample size of children internalized the sense of hostility and hate that they were subjected to by their mothers (as a result of the trauma, pain, and continuation of the conflict they often represented to their mothers), as well as a sense of responsibility for the post-conflict discrimination that they witness their mothers enduring. Therefore, while the authors are concerned primarily with the self-identity of children born in war, they maintain that the child's interactions and relationships with those around them play a pivotal role in shaping the individual.

The common thread amongst these studies is the recognition of the importance of external environments to children born in conflict insofar as they can critically affect the circumstances in which these children develop, and consequently the outcomes and challenges they may encounter. While this is also likely true for children born of sexual violence in non-conflict settings, the external environments that children born in conflict settings are exposed to are significantly different and therefore likely to have different

effects. These various bodies of literature give an indication of the types of actors at the family, community, and national levels that are engaged in shaping the lives of children born in captivity, and the remaining chapters will demonstrate how these actors may differ from times of relative peace to those of conflict.

3.2.1: Children Born in Captivity

Concerning children born in captivity in particular, there has been relatively little research from either academic and humanitarian sources, and that which does exist tends to focus primarily on the challenges these children face, rather than their ability or potential to overcome challenges. For example, a recent study by Denov and Lakor (2017) uses a social ecological perspective to highlight the challenges that children born in captivity in northern Uganda face, including stigma, verbal and physical abuse, lack of a sense of belonging or identity, and economic marginalization. However, the authors do not extend their analysis to assess the extent to which the environments under study either inhibit or promote the ability of children born in captivity to overcome these hardships. This approach follows a trend in which the focus has been solely on the challenges this group of children face. For example, a study conducted by Children as Peacebuilders International, in partnership with Watye Ki Gen, focused on the challenges that children born in captivity face in their immediate communities upon returning from conflict, many of which are similar to those found by Denov and Lakor (2017). Grace Akello, through the War Trauma Foundation (2013), focused specifically on the experiences of 'forces mothers' in Uganda and the discrimination and stigmatization they face upon reintegration into their communities, with reference to the negative implications for their children who were born within captivity. Both Onono (2013) and Apio (2008) also detail

the predominantly negative stigmas and discrimination that these youth face within their communities. As well, a recent report by the International Centre for Truth and Justice (2015) focused on the challenges and limited justice mechanisms for children born of conflict-related sexual violence and their mothers, finding that many children and their mothers were unable to access the limited government services available. Lastly, a study conducted through the University of Toronto's Trudeau Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies in 2012 focused on community perceptions of children associated with armed groups, including those born in captivity, and of transitional justice in Uganda. This study found that while perceptions were generally negative, there was still a high degree of variation based on geographical location and amongst different communities, with some areas being more receptive and accommodating to the integration of children associated with armed groups.

While these investigations have been necessary, given that the subject matter remains relatively new within academic and humanitarian research, there is a now significant base of knowledge on the subject to draw from. It is therefore appropriate and indeed essential to begin investigating children born in captivity and their environments in terms of resilience.

3.3: Resilience Research

In general, resilience research has identified various protective factors that play a positive role in the promotion of resilience in youth and risk factors that play a negative role. For instance, Kidd and Shahar (2008) found that among homeless youth in Canada, low self-esteem and isolation were significant risk factors, while social involvement and secure attachment to peers acted as protective factors. This method of identifying and

studying various factors that either inhibit or promote a child's development and well-being is consistent amongst much resilience research. Given that much of this research originates from social ecology, these factors are often categorized, either implicitly or explicitly, in terms of various ecological systems. The following sub sections detail some of the common risk and protective factors that have been found to exist within each of the ecological systems of youth in general.

An important caveat is that much of the research detailed in the following sections has not been conducted in Uganda, nor in areas of the world where children born in captivity are prevalent. As such, the conclusions drawn from these studies are based in contexts and environments much different than those under investigation in this study. This is not to say, however, that these studies cannot offer relevant insights. Rather, as will be argued in section 3.4, it is important that such studies be taken as a basis on which to begin more specific and contextualized studies in other parts of the world, in different circumstances. This research project has sought to accomplish this by investigating the extent to which understandings of resilience learned elsewhere are applicable in the context of northern Uganda. By doing so it also contributes to the growing body of literature, to be discussed in section 3.4, that seeks to expand resilience research into conflict and post-conflict contexts. Moreover, the seminal argument of resilience research is not that various ecological systems must function and appear in a particular way in order to promote resilience, but rather that in order to better understand resilience, it is necessary to better understand the various environments that influence it. As such, resilience research necessitates that its studies, while drawing on common hypotheses, be highly contextualized.

3.3.1: The Microsystem

As described in the previous chapter, the microsystem (commonly associated with the family) has been a primary site of investigation in studies concerning youth resilience. There is significant evidence that supports the importance of the family unit and family relationships as critical for positive youth development.

In many cases, the relationship between parents or caregivers and youth is seen to directly impact the individual capabilities of youth. For example, Wyman et al. (1992) found that youth with positive relationships with parents or caregivers had greater individual capabilities favourable to resilience, such as hopes and positive expectations for the future, interpersonal competency and engagement, and positive coping and adaptation to stress, than did those with negative relationships. Similarly, feelings of acceptance by, and perceived 'closeness' or 'connectedness' to a parent or caregiver has been found to be closely tied to positive emotional and behavioural functioning (Lynch & Cicchetti 2002; Kliewer et al. 2004; Bowen & Chapman 1996; Scott, Wallander, & Cameron 2015). While somewhat subjective, positive emotional and behavioral functioning is generally defined in terms of limited delinquency or risk-taking behaviour, emotional regulation skills, ability to regulate stress, positive ways of thinking, social and adaptive skills, and learning strengths.

While acknowledging the positive impact that a caregiver-child relationship can have on resilience through the enhancement of a youth's individual capabilities, several authors have also recognized instances in which this relationship can become a source of adversity. For example, several studies have found that poor mental health of a parent or caregiver is a significant risk factor threatening youth resilience (Reinherz et al. 2003; Erdem & Slesnick 2010; Scott, Wallander, & Cameron 2015). However, Kane and Garber

(2004) found that parent or caregiver depression was most significant when also coupled with marital discord or family violence. Similarly, Sheeber, Hops and Davis (2001) argue adverse family environments in general pose a significant risk to the development of depression and poor mental health in youth. While this conclusion is based on studies conducted in the United States, one aspect of this research project, which will be discussed in chapters 5 and 6, is to examine the dynamic of parent-child relationships and the development of capabilities favourable to resilience both before and after the conflict in northern Uganda. Furthermore, while understandings of what these capabilities should be and what a positive caregiver-child relationship looks like are subjective, the family is nonetheless a powerful site for the promotion or destruction of youth resilience in all contexts.

3.3.2: The Exosystem

While the family is an important system in promoting youth resilience, there is a growing emphasis on the roles of additional and external systems such as those within the community. Through an extensive literature review Khanlou and Wray (2014) determined that there is sufficient evidence to assert that community interventions have a powerful influence on child and youth resilience. However, these authors argue that much of the focus in support of this claim is based on evidence gathered within schools *versus* the wider community.

Firstly, schools are generally recognized as being a positive factor impacting resilience insofar as they are a space where children and youth have access to positive role models in their teachers (Sanders, Munford, and Liebenberg (2016), are exposed to peer groups that can act as social supports (Hammack, Richards, Luo, Edlynn, & Roy

2004), and can access extracurricular activities that help to build a positive self-image and self-confidence (Criss et al. 2009; Jones & Lafreniere 2012). It is influences such as these, coupled with the importance of the skills and knowledge gained through schooling, that have likely led Werner (2005) to claim that education opportunities are the most potent force for positive change in youth that face significant risk. However, just as families can both facilitate and obstruct youth resilience, schools can also act as a source of adversity for youth. Students may be subjected to social isolation or bullying by peers and neglect or abuse from teachers which can, in turn, threaten their resilience.

Some of the aspects that can make schools positive facilitators of resilience can arguably also be found elsewhere in the community. For example, Bowen and Chapman (1996) argue that the importance of teacher-student relationships is predicated on values of caring, respect, and appreciation. Thus, so long as an individual has access to relationships founded on these principles, they may in turn be accessing the aspect of schools that are favourable to resilience. While the social support gained from school peer groups is a positive facilitator of resilience, Resnick, Harris, and Blum (1993) argue it is the connectedness and feelings of closeness gained from these relationships that is the most critical component facilitating resilience. In this sense, any peer relationships, be they in schools or elsewhere in the community, are significant in building youth resilience. Lastly, Jain, Buka, Subramanian, and Molnar (2012) found that the time spent by youth in any structured activities where they are able to explore and utilize talents and skills, positively impacts their ability to build emotional resilience. As well, these authors argue that it is vitally important that youth explore competencies outside of school, such as technical and artistic abilities, thereby recognizing the significance of extracurricular activities that take place outside of an academic school setting.

Within the existing literature that seeks to examine the roles of the wider community, the concept of social capital has gained significant traction. This concept generally refers to the social networks, civic and community participation, and perceptions of trust and reciprocity that are available to an individual (Colletta and Culllen 2000, Hall et al. 2014) and can mitigate against risk factors. In this sense, not only are wider members of the community, such as those outside of schools, important for youth resilience, but the overall level of cohesion and trust within a community is also significant. Thus, while it is necessary for youth to have outlets and resources of social capital, these authors also argue that these must operate in conjunction with a greater sense of cohesion and belonging within a community as the youth under study were found to be more likely to seek out social capital resources when they possess a sense of community belonging. This argument, therefore, highlights accessibility as a key aspect of resilience, insofar as resilience is also the "ability to mobilize personal and social resources to protect against risk" (Kidd & Shahar 2008). This is to say that while important resources may exist, they are not influential in promoting resilience unless an individual has the ability and agency to access and make use of them.

Like the literature reviewed in the previous section, most of the studies used in this section were conducted in the United States, Canada or other comparable countries. Regarding the context in northern Uganda, these studies are limited in the insights they offer concerning the types of initiatives that may be desirable in promoting youth resilience. Yet they provide a valuable position from which to begin investigating the context in northern Uganda. Firstly, they demonstrate the powerful role that community and a sense of communal belonging has on youth resilience and the importance of including the community in interventions aimed at promoting youth resilience. Secondly,

they highlight that the mere existence of programs or services for the community alone is not sufficient, and that they must be combined with initiatives to help youth feel a sense of belonging within that community in order to benefit from such programs or services. In the context of post-conflict northern Uganda this second point is particularly important given that many initiatives have been or are currently carried out by external actors such as foreign NGOs. The importance of a sense of belonging highlights the need for initiatives that are both conceptualized and carried out by and within the community itself.

3.3.3: The Macrosystem

Despite their importance to a child's development, structures within the macrosystem have not been studied with the same rigor that has been dedicated to those within the micro- and exosystems in investigations of youth resilience. One explanation for this may be that as it is the farthest removed system from the individual, drawing causal links between the two spheres is difficult. However, as an exploratory study, this research seeks to draw preliminary correlations as to how the macrosystem may affect the resilience of an individual. While the role of church groups and faith-based institutions have received greater attention within academic literature, they have been conceptualized more readily as an exosystem structure than as an overarching structure belonging to the macrosystem. The roles of cultural values and norms, as well as government functioning in either promoting or inhibiting youth resilience have been studied far less.

Firstly, church groups and affiliation with other such faith-based institutions have been found to have a positive impact on youth resilience. However, this correlation has largely been based on the social interaction with peers and positive role models that these

institutions provide, and the positive relationships that they facilitate, rather than the content of the faith itself. For instance, Mitha and Adatia (2016) found that participation within faith-based groups positively impacted the mental health resilience of youth due to the sense of belonging, peer bonds, and practical support they provided. Similarly, Cook (2000) found that church involvement had a positive impact on youth resilience insofar as it provided a stable and supportive community and relationships of love and caring.

However, Cook (2000) also found that youths' self-worth and sense of identity was positively impacted by church involvement given that it provided an alternative identity for youth struggling with gang participation and activity. In this sense, religion may positively impact youth resilience to the extent that it can offer a system of overarching values and norms that an individual may use to positively shape and guide their life. Yet it is important to note that such structures may also adversely affect resilience. For instance, Akello, Ritchers, and Reis (2006) argue that the insertion of Christian values into northern Uganda society negatively impacted reintegration efforts insofar as it was at odds with pre-existing cultural values regarding justice and reconciliation for children born in captivity. While the intricacies of this relationship will be expanded upon in forthcoming chapters, it is evident that macrosystem structures such as culture and faith can act as both facilitators and inhibitors of youth resilience.

There is less literature pertaining to the role of government policies and functioning as macrosystem structures influencing youth resilience. Of the few studies of this nature that do exist, there is a strong argument in favour of correlations between government policies that are centered on positive youth development and resilience. For example, after an extensive review of various policy program in the United States, Swanson and Spencer (1991) argued that significant changes at a federal government

level to adjust the current education and social services systems would better promote resilience amongst impoverished African-Americans. Furthermore, Sanders et al. (2015) found that services that adopt positive youth development practices, such as those that focus on the encouragement of personal agency, strengths and competencies, active involvement in decision making processes, and positive relationships, are likely to increase youth resilience and well-being. In the process of presenting this argument, these authors acknowledge that the provision of services aimed at increasing youth resilience alone are not sufficient, but that there is also a need for services to work in conjunction with each other and with the other systems to which youth belong. In this sense, the authors argue in favour of a regulatory or oversight body, such as a government branch, that is able to facilitate the sharing and implementation of best practices.

3.4: Youth Resilience in Violent or Conflict Settings

Within resilience research there is a considerable emphasis on the impact that exposure to community violence can have on youth resilience. Generally, exposure to violence is associated with various risks to youth resilience such as poor mental health outcomes including depression and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), engagement in violent behaviour, as well as various other emotional and behavioral problems (Ozer & Weinstein 2004; Fitzpatrick & Boldizar 1992; Kliewer et al 2004; Choe, Zimmerman, & Devnarain 2011). Many of the findings from these types of studies regarding the role and function of the various ecological systems are consistent with the findings of the previous sections. For example, Kliewer et al. (2004) found that strong caregiver-child relationships acted as protective factors against exposure to violence. In this sense, exposure to violence can be understood as a risk factor that can be influenced by

protective factors in much the same way that other risk factors can be mitigated. However, many of these studies conceptualize community violence as relating to instances of gang violence, crime, and other types of acute violence. As such, there is significantly less investigation into the impacts of other types of violence on youth resilience, such as the chronic and persistent violence that occurs within a conflict setting.

It is broadly accepted that armed conflict has many negative impacts on youth that are similar to those associated with other forms of violence. These include various psychological and behavioural problems, poor mental health outcomes, and a propensity to become violent themselves (Jain & Cohen 2013; Hall et al. 2014; Betancourt, McBain, Newnham, & Brennan 2013). However, there is much less known about the impacts that ecological systems have on either inhibiting or promoting these outcomes in conflict and post-conflict contexts. Yet, as Boothby, Strang, and Wessells (2006) argue, conflict settings and war zones necessitate their own line of investigation within resilience research given that they disrupt many of the systems that would function as supports in times of peace, to the extent that they become sources of adversity or risk.

For example, regarding the microsystem, war and conflict have been found to be most significant in terms of their negative implications for youth resilience when they separate youth from their family systems or caregivers (Ressler, Boothby, & Steinbock 1988; Levy et al. 2005). However, while families can act as buffers in the context of war, their protective capabilities are not always assured, given that family structures are more likely to become sources of adversity in war time than they are in peace time given the immense trauma and adversity that they are exposed to (Loughry et al. 2006; Cummings et al. 2009). As well, Hepburn (2006) found that children are able to recover relatively well from the negative impacts of war when they had stable family environments prior to

the conflict, and are able to return to them, and forge new, healthy relationships with adults after the conflict. Yet, this author also argues that rapid and successful family reunification often does not happen in post-conflict contexts, given the significant institutional challenges in doing so, as well as the inefficiency, interagency discord, poor collaboration, and lack of sustained donor support for the services necessary to do so. Moreover, post-conflict contexts often have the unique attribute of large foreign or external support providers in the form of NGOs and development workers, that may alter the way social ecological systems respond to youth. For example, Kostelny (2006) argues that western models of psychosocial support provided in many post-conflict conflicts, while rampant, are not necessarily the most effective way of supporting victims of conflict and trauma. Rather, Kostelny argues that using local and cultural resources is significantly more appropriate for many post-conflict contexts.

Thus, the important line of inquiry to draw from this limited body of research is that conflict is significant to youth resilience insofar as it can change the role and function of social ecology systems and thus alter their abilities to act as protective factors to youth. In addition, throughout these studies there is little investigation of the intergenerational effects of violence and conflict. While this is likely because the study of youth resilience in conflict zones is a relatively new field of study, there is a need to understand how the resilience of children such as those born in captivity in northern Uganda will be affected over a longer period of time. In this sense, it is important that studies concerning children born in captivity, both in Uganda and elsewhere, do not cease once relative peace and stability is attained.

3.5: Conclusion

This chapter has demonstrated the gaps that exist within two bodies of literature and the subsequent need to address these gaps simultaneously. Firstly, while there is increasing attention being paid to conflict-affected youth, children born in captivity remain understudied. Moreover, of the studies that do exist, there is an overwhelming emphasis on the challenges they face. While these have been necessary to uncover, it is now important to shift the conversation to the factors that either inhibit or promote their resilience. Yet within resilience research, particularly that which studies resilience in conflict and post-conflict settings, children born in captivity remain on the peripheries of research. While they share commonalities with other groups of conflict affected youth, given the unique circumstances in which they are born, children born in captivity need to be investigated as a distinct category of 'at risk' youth. Thus, this study will act as a bridge between these two bodies of literature, while beginning to fill the gaps which exist in both.

Chapter 4: Research Methods

4.1: Research Design

This study adopts a social constructivist view of reality which assumes that individual realities are created and shaped by the social contexts in which they exist (Creswell 2003). Unlike naturalism, which delves into the heart of social realities, social constructivism is primarily concerned with how these realities are produced and what their potential impacts are or could be (Silverman 2014, 24-25). In consequence, qualitative methods in the form of semi-structured interviews were chosen as the most suitable method for this project.

Firstly, qualitative methods were chosen in order to capture the significant properties of social ecology, namely its emphasis on understanding the environments within which people, and in particular youth, exist. This is because qualitative methods emphasize understanding phenomena both holistically and in their natural settings, thereby encouraging the researcher to investigate various perspectives and factors, a tactic which is suitable for the objectives of social ecology (DePoy & Gitlin 1998, Creswell 2008). As well, qualitative research is interpretive in the sense that it places the responsibility on the researcher to arrive at interpretations of what is heard and said, while also focusing on learning how participants themselves make sense of the phenomena or contexts under study (Silverman 2014, 5). Thus, qualitative research is an appropriate approach for examining the construction of the various ecologies of children born in captivity from the perspective of those who make up such environments themselves.

Secondly, interviews were selected as the most useful method for this research primarily because they are more open and flexible than the surveys or questionnaires commonly used in quantitative research, and therefore are particularly apt at exploring

potentially sensitive topics such as children born in captivity. As well, while methods

such as participatory observation directly engage the researcher within a social

phenomenon (making it more suitable to the objectives of a naturalist-based

methodology), interviews allow for a degree of separation between the researcher and the

phenomena of interest allowing for a critical, yet informed study of a particular

phenomenon. Moreover, the conscious decision was made to conduct interviews with the

adults and professionals who comprise environments surrounding young people rather

than the young people themselves whom the environments are centered around. While

this decision was in part based on ethical and resource limitations which prevented

interactions with young people, given the emphasis within social ecology on an

individual's surroundings, interviewing those within such surroundings was both

appropriate and necessary. As well, while resilience research acknowledges the

importance of individual traits and capacities, it also emphasizes that environments and

an individual's surroundings are of much greater significance in determining the potential

for resilience than has been traditionally understood (Ungar 2012). Thus, while engaging

with the young people themselves would have potentially fulfilled the needs of a

naturalist perspective, limiting interviews to those within surrounding environments is

more fitting for a constructivist approach.

Lastly, interviews were conducting using a pre-determined interview guide (see

Appendix 4). The initial interview guide was constructed based on themes found in

relevant literature and in consultation with an advisor in Uganda who has had significant

experience conducting research on similar topics. However, a strength of qualitative

research is that it allows for themes and ideas to emerge through the course of the

research (Creswell 2003). Therefore, the interview guide was continually refined as new

themes became apparent, and to best capture the experiences and expertise of particular participants, as will be discussed further in the following section.

4.2: Field Work

Field work for this study was conducted primarily in Gulu, Uganda over a three-month period between September and December 2016. Gulu was selected as an appropriate location for this study given its history as the epicentre of conflict in northern Uganda, and as the heart of NGO activity following its aftermath. As such, the town is home to a high number of children born in captivity. As noted in chapter 1, some estimates place the number of children abducted to the LRA as high as 80,000. It should be noted however, that due to the desire of ex-combatants and CBCs to remain unidentified when they return to their communities, an accurate estimate of how many former child soldiers and CBCs are currently residing in Gulu is difficult to determine.

As well, there is a high number of current and former humanitarian, aid, and development workers in the region. While official statistics on the number of NGOs operating in the region are not readily available, one unverified source estimated that there were around 100 organizations in 2011, and noted that estimates by residents were much higher (approximately 300) and that those numbers had decreased since the end of the conflict (Writings from Across the World 2011). The Uganda Radio Network also estimated that at one point there were over 500 registered NGOs and CBOs in the region (Uganda Radio Network 2014). It is therefore a region with an abundance of knowledge and expertise regarding children born in captivity, their environments, and the relationships between them.

Participants for this study were recruited using a purposeful snowball technique in which academic and professional advisors in Canada provided initial contacts. These contacts were primarily experts in the field in Canada, but also included NGO workers in Uganda, many of whom had experience working for a variety of organizations and have conducted or participated in research on similar topics. While the names and job titles of contacts in Gulu cannot be listed due to confidentiality restrictions, those who provided the greatest support for this project included staff at the Justice and Reconciliation Project referred by Erin Baines at the University of British Columbia, members of Ker Kwaro Acholi Cultural Institution referred by Linda Dale at Children/ Youth as Peacebuilders, and a personal colleague of Shelly Whitman, Executive Director of the Romeo Dallaire Child Soldier Initiative.

Many of the initial contacts provided information for further important and relevant personnel in Gulu who were then invited to participate in the research project. If the participant expressed a willingness to participate, an initial meeting was scheduled in which further information and details regarding the project were provided. While some participants wished to have the interview conducted immediately following the initial meeting, in most cases the interview was scheduled a few days later. This opportunity was given to all participants in order to allow them time to reflect on the research project and ask further questions prior to the interview.

This snowball technique was used throughout the research process by asking participants following the interview if they knew of other potential participants and if they were willing to provide contact information or a direct referral. While most of the contacts that were provided were in Gulu proper, some lived and worked in surrounding regions such as Pader, Karamoja, and Nwoya. Given that the history and experiences in

these areas is different from those within Gulu, as well as the high number of referrals to others within Gulu, the decision was made to not contact referrals in surrounding regions. The type of participants that were ultimately recruited and engaged in this study encompassed a variety of both local and expatriate people working in a variety of fields to support or care for children born in captivity and young people more generally in Gulu. Such fields included health and wellness, care for street children and orphans, education and teacher training, trauma healing and wellness activities, livelihood support, and religious or cultural support, amongst others. As well, some participants from the informal sector, such as leaders of cultural institutions, were also included in this study. It should also be noted that many of the participants interviewed were or had been involved in some combination of the listed fields of service.

Once the target number of 30 participants had been reached, participant recruitment ceased. While this decision was made in part to avoid accumulating an amount data that would outweigh the time restrictions that bind this project, it was also made in response to the declining security situation in the region. Thus, in order to ensure personal safety, the last weeks of the study were spent in Kampala, Uganda where data was transcribed and the initial analysis begun.

Initial interviews were conducted using the interview guide drafted prior to arrival in Uganda. However, as interviews were conducted and new themes emerged the interview guide was refined in order to capture these emerging ideas and topics. As well, based on feedback from a local advisor, the guide was further refined to capture the experiences of the particular participant by asking questions specific to their experiences and work history. This was done in recognition of the fact that many development and humanitarian workers in Gulu were employed on short-term contractual agreements,

often times working for a variety of organizations and in a variety of fields during the course of their career.

Interview questions were in part designed based on information gathered during informal conversations prior to the interview, as is discussed above and expanded upon in regards to ethical considerations in the following section. Despite slight alterations to the guide, all interviews touched on topics concerning the impact of the conflict on young people, challenges that young people and children born in captivity face, the best way to care for children born in captivity specifically as well as young people more generally, and challenges faced when working to support young people in the region. Moreover, interviews were conducted in a variety of locations in Gulu, all of which were selected by the participant, as will also be discussed below.

4.3: Ethics

Prior to conducting this research, ethics approval was sought and obtained from the Dalhousie University Social Sciences and Humanities Research Ethics Board. The primary ethical concern for this study arose from the potentially sensitive subject matter discussed in interviews. Several measures were taken in order to minimize any potential discomfort for participants. Firstly, the objectives and parameters of the study were explained in an initial meeting prior to conducting the interview and potential participants were given the opportunity to decline to participate. Emphasis was placed on ensuring that participants were aware that the focus of the study was not their personal involvement with the conflict in northern Uganda, but rather on their professional and work related experiences and observations concerning children born in captivity. For those who agreed to participate and to be interviewed, they were given the opportunity

both prior to and immediately following the interview to ask questions and raise concerns. As well, all participants were assured that they could refrain from answering any questions that they were not comfortable with, as well as discontinue their participation in the study at any point during the interview. My contact information was given to all participants and they were encouraged to reach out to me if they had any further questions or concerns following the interview. Lastly, to ensure the comfort of participants, interviews were conducted in a location of their choosing. However, to ensure personal safety for myself as well as for participants, interviews were always conducted in public spaces such as restaurants or cafes, or at the participant's place of work during regular business hours.

Given the high volume of foreign researchers and humanitarian workers in the region, issues of informed and voluntary consent were also of paramount concern for this study. In order to ensure that informed and voluntary consent were obtained the *Information Sheet* and *Consent Form* were explained to participants prior to conducting the interview. Participants were then given the opportunity to ask questions or raise potential concerns. Emphasis was placed on ensuring that participants were aware that participation in the research project was entirely voluntary, that they could refrain from answering any questions they were uncomfortable with, and that they could remove their data from the study at any point after the interview up until April 30, 2017. For the complete *Information Shee*t and *Consent Form* used for this study please refer to Appendix 1, Appendix 2, and Appendix 3. As well, consistent communication with research supervisors in Canada, as well as with other academics and professionals with experience conducting research in the area was maintained in order to mitigate any unforeseen ethical issues throughout the research process.

Lastly, issues of confidentiality were of paramount importance given the close-knit nature of the humanitarian and development community in Gulu. Several measures were taken in order to mitigate any potential issues in this regard. Prior to their consent, participants were informed that all potentially identifying information would be stripped from transcripts, field notes, and this final report and stored in a secure code book for the purpose of my reference only. As well, giving participants the ability to choose the location of the interview ensured that they were in a place where they felt comfortable with the level of publicity and exposure associated with the interview.

4.4: Strengths

As was noted in the previous chapter, there have been limited studies that have focused on the circumstances of war-affected youth from a social ecological perspective. Moreover, of the few studies that have done so, even fewer have emphasized the particularities of children born in captivity and how they may compare or contrast to other groups of war-affected youth. As such, the greatest strength of this study is that it seeks to understand the lives of children born in captivity from the direct perspectives of those who make up some of their various environments. While recognizing the importance of speaking to and learning from these young people themselves, the original aspect of this research is the decision to focus on those comprising the various contexts within which these young people exist. In this sense, the research has encompassed the viewpoints and voices of individuals who are often ignored or omitted, yet are of critical importance in studies concerning war-affected youth and children born in captivity in particular.

Furthermore, a strength of this research is the variety of participants interviewed and therefore the relative breadth of perspectives incorporated into this analysis. While by

no means an exhaustive account of the situation concerning the ecologies and resiliency of children born in captivity in Gulu, given the small sample size of 30 participants, this study encompasses a relatively high degree of variety in participants. Individuals who chose to participate in this study included both locals and expatriates working in fields such as education and teacher training, livelihood training and assistance, orphanage care, women's empowerment, radio outreach, and trauma healing through sport, amongst others. This variety allowed for many voices who are not generally heard to be incorporated into existing and growing literature.

Thus, this study contributes to the growing body of literature that seeks to explore the ecologies of war-affected youth. While the state and context of children born in captivity in northern Uganda is in many respects unique, particularly because of the scope of youth directly or indirectly affected, this study adds directly to our understanding of post-conflict environments and their impact on the resiliency of youth and young people. Therefore, this study has the potential to answer calls for greater research into both youth resiliency and children born in captivity, as well as to provide critical insights into the practical implementation or improvement of future programs targeted at war-affected youth.

4.5 Limitations

The two most significant limitations of this research are the limited scope of the study and the lack of inclusion of perspectives from children born in captivity themselves.

Firstly, as was noted in the previous chapter there is a growing recognition of the value of including the voices and perspectives of young people themselves in studies concerning their well-being. As such, many emerging studies have used various

techniques aimed at fostering youth expression, while advocating for others to follow suit. Yet due to resource and ethical restrictions, this study did not interview or interact directly with children born in captivity. Given that children born in captivity themselves were not included in this study, there was no formal resiliency assessment measure distributed and therefore no concrete conclusions regarding the levels of resiliency of children born in captivity are drawn. However, the purpose of this study is to draw preliminary insights into the ways that the environments of children born in captivity in northern Uganda may potentially impact their ability to exercise resilient behaviour, rather than to assess or evaluate their actual resiliency. The distribution of such a measure would be more appropriately included in a study with emphasis on the children born in captivity themselves.

Secondly, the small sample size included in this study does not allow for an exhaustive analysis of the environments of children born in captivity in northern Uganda. Yet, the purpose of this study was not to provide such an account, but rather to provide initial insights and observations. While in part shaped by the limited time and resources of this study and its consequent inability to exhaustively explore the views of the extensive development and humanitarian community in Gulu, the purpose of this study was also determined by the absence of such an investigation in the past. This study was intended to provide a foundation on which later studies may build and potentially investigate the issue more comprehensively, at which point it would be both possible and necessary to include the views and opinions of children born in captivity themselves.

Chapter 5: The Impacts of Post-Conflict Initiatives

This chapter will focus on the various impacts that post-conflict initiatives have had on Gulu society in general. While the sections that follow will make reference to the impacts on particular ecological levels, a full and ordered analysis will be provided in the following chapter. The objective of this chapter, therefore, is to examine the broader impacts that post-conflict initiatives have had in order to provide context to the ecological changes discussed in the following chapter. The central argument presented in this chapter is that post-conflict initiatives have disrupted the protective capabilities of various ecological systems such as the family structure and communities in Gulu. While not all post-conflict initiatives have had negative impacts, with some providing new avenues for positive support and post-conflict rehabilitation, this chapter highlights the ways that initiatives have altered the landscape in which youth develop.

This chapter first examines the changing relationship between and roles of NGOs and government in Gulu to demonstrate how the increased participation of NGOs in the post-conflict context has in some ways reinforced the reluctance of the central government in Kampala to support the northern region. Secondly and related, this chapter demonstrates how a lack of oversight by government, or any other overarching authority, has led to a lack of consistency in the quality and accessibility of initiatives offered in Gulu. Thirdly, this chapter looks at the lack of consistent engagement with culture and cultural institutions by post-conflict initiatives, and the repercussions this has on positive cultural identity of youth. The final two sections investigate the project-based structure and the use of hand-outs or 'free things' by many initiatives, focusing their ability to effect positive long-term change.

5.1: The Changing Roles of NGOs and Government

As the Ugandan military and the LRA continued to wage war throughout the 1990's and early 2000s, millions of people were forced into IDP camps. At its height, the conflict forced approximately 90% of the Acholi sub-region (comprised of Gulu and the surrounding districts of Kitgum and Pader) into such camps (Global IDP Project 2005). As well, the abduction of children continued, particularly during the period between 2002-2004, as did the Iron First Operations[4]. In response, hundreds of humanitarian and aid agencies flocked to the region, and to Gulu in particular, providing much needed relief and support that, at the time, was not being provided by the nation's government. Many participants pointed to this rapid influx of NGOs, and its relatively sustained presence, as a reason for the current lack of government involvement and investment in the region. The argument commonly presented by participants is that the government in Kampala, as well as the local government, has come to heavily rely on the presence of NGO support, to the extent that they were failing to provide many services and supports that are believed to be within their capabilities. One participant who grew up in Gulu and now works in a senior position at a CBO in Gulu felt that the activities of their organization, and many similar organizations, should in fact be carried out by the government, stating that "the government should be the one actually doing all these activities that you know NGOs are doing and given its limitations if all the NGOs fold their arms then all these communities will be in shit" (Personal communication via interview). Another participant who also grew up in Gulu and now works for a small CBO that they founded with their partner stated that they feel like the government has left some sectors entirely within the hands of NGOs. Their

---

[4] While these operations were intended to put a definitive end to the LRA insurgency, they not only failed in their objective but also incited renewed violence and counter attacks by the LRA, including increased abductions during this period.

partner was in general agreement with this statement, adding that they felt that NGOs are expected to do a significant amount of work with minimal support from the government.

Interviews revealed that one area that has been particularly impacted by this trend was the education sector. School systems and the way they function are an important point of investigation given their importance to social ecology and the socialization process of adolescents. Firstly, while many initiatives by international organizations during the immediate aftermath of the conflict focused on building schools, one participant noted that despite these investments, the quality of education itself has remained largely unimproved. They stated that this was a result of significant amount of investments being made to projects with tangible outcomes such as the construction of schools, at the expense of investments into the education that would be carried out after the completion of these buildings. Another participant shared this sentiment with reference to one NGO in particular that was heavily engaged in post-conflict aid and development:

> "They have some awesome classroom buildings, it's really great, there's not many schools around here that have that and they genuinely have, as far as I can tell, they have enough space for all the kids that they have. But the quality of education at that school is not great, a lot of people don't want to send their kids there" (Personal communication via interview)

Despite their recognition of these issues, individuals working for NGOs within the education sector noted that they face considerable challenges in their efforts to improve the quality of education in Gulu. For instance, several participants highlighted the inadequacy of the current curriculum, stating that it had severe implications on the individual capabilities of students later in life. In general, participants agreed that the current curriculum placed an overwhelming emphasis on rote learning and memorization, rather than critical thinking and problem solving. While one participant did recognize that

critical thinking and problem solving were in theory part of the curriculum, they were not seen as being implemented with any degree of consistency. The following comments describe the severity of the situation:

> "So, you take science for example, science is just learning facts, every science lesson the chalkboard will be full of facts, kids will like copy them, […] I've never once seen a practical science experiment in a primary school and it's never in the test. […] it's just how much you can memorize […] I've seen minimal problem solving skills." (Personal communication via interview)

> "So, the curriculum, there's no creativity, no problem solving, no life skills. […] You could try and have a conversation with a child in P7 and you wouldn't be able to have conversation with them because they're not taught to think basically, that's the biggest problem with the education, they're not taught to think." (Personal communication via interview)

Yet the ability for NGOs to fundamentally alter the curriculum is limited, given that they are unable or reluctant to interfere dramatically with government policies. As a result, some organizations have attempted to remedy the situation, but few of these have seen meaningful change. One participant described a situation in which an international donor invested a large amount of money in a literacy program with the intention of improving the quality of education in the region. However, they criticized this effort insofar as it did not tackle the fundamental curriculum itself, but rather added additional components without altering the underlying structure. While the participant acknowledged that this was done with the intention of not interring in a foreign government's affairs, they argued it did little to accomplish the ultimate goal of improving the quality of education. Many participants argued that greater investments by government were needed to improve the situation. Two common areas that participants argued would benefit from greater government investments were increasing the affordability of education, and raising the quality of instruction given at the teacher's college.

First, when asked about Universal Primary Education (UPE), all participants were in agreement that rather than making primary education free, UPE only partly subsidized costs for families. Families are required to pay additional fees and make in-kind contributions to the school in order to enroll their children, which many participants recognized as being burdensome for many struggling families in Gulu. Thus, given that many families are still unable to afford subsidized education for their children, NGOs have continued to provide scholarships and opportunities for education to ensure that children are enrolled. As one participant noted, "the only way kids, most kid access education here is like through scholarships and ya like some form of help from like non-government organizations" (personal communication via interview). Moreover, in several of my personal conversations with participants and other locals, I was asked about scholarships and other scholastic support mechanisms available to people in Gulu from bodies within Canada. These comments reinforce the observation that for many people in Gulu an accepted way to access education is through external bodies and actors.

Secondly, many participants described the deficiencies in the teacher's college in Gulu. The major weaknesses of the college they highlighted were the low admission standards resulting in many entering even if they were unable to finish school themselves, the lack of oversight in how teachers were being taught, and the lack of resources available to help teachers become successful educators. While participants identified the college as a primary reason for poor teacher quality, they also cited low salaries and the declining value of teachers in society as exacerbating factors. In response to this, NGOs have begun to provide supplementary teacher training programs to enhance the quality of teachers, and thereby (it is hoped) positively affect the quality of education.

Thus, one interpretation of the situation is that while NGOs responded to a critical need during the conflict and its immediate aftermath, arising from the inability for the government to provide essential services such as education, their sustained presence has acted as a disincentive for government to take on the responsibilities that many of these NGOs have come to fill. Several participants stated that despite their struggles to maintain funding, they felt that government officials generally assumed that they had money. In response to this it can be argued that some NGOs are resistant to working with the government, thereby inhibiting its ability to make meaningful contributions, as speculated by the above quote. However, one participant working in the field of education and teacher training, described immense difficulties that they had faced in attempting to lobby to the central government to update the current curriculum. In short, their experience amounted to a small presentation to several policy and decision makers after several months of attempting to make contact, which ultimately in their opinion has since been forgotten or disregarded.

CBCs in particular have not fared well as a result of the limited government investment and involvement. For instance, regardless of the deficiencies of the education that is available, one participant noted that CBCs have a particularly difficult time functioning within the formal education system given the years of lost education during their time in the bush. If such an individual was able to overcome the limited accessibility of UPE, they face further challenges insofar as they are likely to be older than their classmates and encounter stigmatization, amongst other challenges. Thus, while the limitations of UPE affect all youth in northern Uganda, CBCs face an additional set of barriers which make them particularly vulnerable. The same participant called on the government to specifically invest in special education for such children. Several

respondents recalled such an initiative in the form of a school that had been opened specifically for CBCs, yet due to a lack of sustained funding, was later closed. As well, while NGOs have provided programming and support for CBCs, one participant argued that government interventions would be more effective given that they are more readily able to influence larger policy shifts that are needed for long-term, sustainable change.

In conclusion, based on the data provided, the link between NGO presence and government investment is self-reinforcing in nature. The lack of governmental support is partly perpetuated by the lack of incentive and motivation for the government to invest, given that NGOs continue to provide educational support and investment (albeit at times ineffectually). However, one reason that NGOs continue to provide such support is the lack of investment by the government itself and the fear that if they were to leave that the people of northern Uganda would be much worse off.

5.2: Funding and the Lack of Consistent Quality and Accessibility of Care

While the influx of aid and development funding to Gulu has enabled important and necessary programming to take place, it has also had significant negative implications on the quality and accessibility of available support for CBCs, as well as for youth more broadly. Most significantly, competition for funding has created a culture of secrecy and mistrust amongst NGOs which has fuelled a lack of coordination.

Firstly, participants recognized that the provision of financial support from donor agencies has impacted the way NGOs relate to each other. One participant stated that the "donor terrain has really spoiled organizations," and that organizations "think that okay if so and so gets to know what I do and where I get my funding and all those things he will go behind my back and get my share of the funding" (personal communication via

interview). As a result, this participant felt that organizations "have a problem disclosing some of things they do" to other organizations and coordinating their activities, since they are all competing for the same funds. Another participant added that this lack of coordination has resulted in the duplication of activities amongst NGOs to the extent that "you find 5, 6, 7, 10 organizations doing training in agronomy […] And then you find maybe 3, 4, 5 organizations working in the same school facilitating the same kind of activity" (personal communication via interview). This is not to say that there is no coordination, but rather that it is often limited to small pockets of collaboration. Several participants, while acknowledging the lack of overall NGO coordination, referenced small networks that they routinely collaborated with. As well, some participants did state that a formal NGO forum in which all operating organizations can come together to share experiences and techniques, is in existence. However, several participants noted that not all organizations would consistently participate.

The duplication of activities, fueled by competition for funds, has implications for CBCs insofar as it has not encouraged the sharing of best practices on the most effective approach to programming for CBCs. For instance, most participants agreed that the majority of CBCs had been reintegrated into their communities, with the need now being to help them address the longer-term impacts of reintegration such as access to land, education, and employment, and the "second wave of violence" suffered by CBCs[5]. However, interviews revealed that organizations have differing opinions on how best to adapt to these changing needs and what method of intervention is most appropriate for

---

[5] While children born in captivity often faced violence while held in captivity, following the conflict many have been exposed to a second wave of violence in the form of discrimination and stigmatization by the communities to which they return . As such, part of the longer term rehabilitation of these children includes combating the ways in which they are viewed and treated by the communities within which they exist.

CBCs. Some felt that specific programming that addressed the unique needs of CBCs was most appropriate. For example, one participant felt that CBCs have unique challenges that result from being born into a very unique context and, therefore, advocated for specialized programming. This view was shared by another participant who stated that the specific identity challenges faced by CBCs made them a unique category necessitating specialized programming:

> "You know there are those specified needs, their case is different, […] this is a strange category of people, they're homeless, they don't know where they belong because culturally you belong to your father's family, not the mother's family. So, when are you born you must know where your father comes from because that is where you have a land to dig […] So, if they don't know they become a specialized people who need more specialized engagement" (Personal communication via interview)

Yet others argued that it is more effective to include CBCs in broader youth programming so as not to further stigmatize or isolate them. One participant felt that this approach was most appropriate because "people struggle in life and they need support systems, and these support systems can be gotten in different forms". Similarly, several participants noted that many of the challenges faced by CBCs were challenges that many youth in Gulu more generally faced and therefore it is necessary to address CBCs as part of the wider youth demographic to which they belong.

In addition, there were different opinions amongst participants as to whether the most viable opportunities for CBCs were in schools or in vocational training programs, regardless of whether these programs address CBCs as a unique group or in conjunction with other youth. Yet amongst those who advocated for vocational training, there are a variety of opinions as to what types of skills training should be provided. For instance, one participant who has founded a vocational training school stated that the decision to teach hairdressing, catering, and tailoring was based on demand and therefore that these

courses were offered because they are what people like. When pressed, many of the participants involved in this type of skills training admitted that there was little to no market for the skills that they were teaching. Another participant criticized these types of skills training programs given that they do not properly equip individuals for the types of programs that are available in reality, being predominantly agricultural, mechanic, and construction jobs. They criticized trainings in the fields of baking, tailoring, and hair dressing on the basis that they cater to a market in Gulu that is made up of temporary foreign workers, and therefore is not a sustainable market to target.

What is important to note is that while this participant has recognized the need to alter the types of vocational training provided, given the lack of collaboration and sharing of best practices amongst NGOs, others continue to deliver ineffectual training programs. As well, these statements highlight an important gendered dichotomy in the sense that the jobs that are noted to be more likely to result in successful job creation are mechanics and plumbing which are traditionally male jobs. The vocational training programs that more directly target women, such as home economics and hair dressing, are also those which do not necessarily offer the same promise for economic stability. However, it should be noted that several participants highlighted the transition of agricultural work to women during the conflict, and particularly in the IDP camps. Thus, more extensive training in agricultural labour, as well as trades such as mechanics and plumbing, is one way to enhance the quality of vocational training.

While not an exhaustive account, what the above examples indicate is a general lack of consistency in the type of care that is provided. As a result, there are a variety of protective factors available to CBCs, with varying levels of benefit. Given that CBCs face a multitude of challenges, there is a need for some degree of variety in programs and

services. For this reason, standardized care is not necessarily desirable. However, greater

consistency in the quality and accessibility of care would likely be beneficial. It should

also be noted that opinions regarding the best approaches to caring for CBCs are not

limited to those operating NGOs on the ground. Rather, local operations are also

influenced by, or in some cases compete with the opinions of the larger funding

organizations. For instance, one participant noted that in accepting much sought-after

funding an organization must also be prepared to implement the priorities of the funding

institution, even when these are incongruent with the organization's own priorities:

> "But because the organization wanted to keep with funding opportunities that were
> available they went into very big programs in water and sanitation so eventually the core
> which was […] the psycho-social support became diluted so that is the challenge. Like
> now if organizations hear there is money on sexual and gender based violence they want
> to run for that money at the expense of the original goal of the organization." (Personal
> communication via interview)

Another participant stated that funding organizations may also have different mandates,

potentially fueling conflict and competition amongst the NGOs operating in Gulu:

> "Remember as NGOs also operate, they also operate at the back there is also the influence
> of the funding organization, the funding donors, the so-called donors. Not all donors also
> agree amongst themselves, some come with their own motives and then the mode of
> approach may vary and then that can bring maybe conflict." (Personal communication via
> interview)

Thus, the terrain of different (and in some cases conflicting) opinions is further

complicated by the significant influence of funding organizations.

Programming is most impactful to CBCs when coupled with accessibility to these

initiatives because competition for funding also limits the ability for the most effective

initiatives to be made accessible to the most vulnerable populations, such as CBCs. At the

most rudimentary level, organizations with reliable funding sources are in theory the best

equipped to support the most vulnerable, often times also the poorest, insofar as adequate

funding allows an organization to provide its programming for little to no cost. For

example, one participant described how in the immediate aftermath of the conflict, when NGO activity and funding to the region was at its peak, he and many other conflict affected youth were able to benefit from free skills training and were taught basic construction skills which have helped them provide a basic income for themselves and their family.

In contrast, several of the organizations offering vocational training programs interviewed for this project discussed the impediments that current funding limitations place on their organizations. One participant stated that in order to sustain their organization, they were required to charge fees for their extended skills training program, limiting their ability to provide it to those who arguably need it the most. In another case, one participant who founded a small CBO described how rather than charging fees, they utilized the productive labour of those enrolled in order to subsidize costs. This participant would train the enrolled students to farm and harvest quail eggs, make shoes, purses, jewelry, and sweaters but would then would sell these items and use the profits to pay for various fees associated with the running and maintenance of his CBO. One participant described the limitations of their work, which receives funding from several large donor institutions such as CARE through UNFPA, and Action Aid Uganda, highlighting that even some of the more well-funded organizations are limited in their reach, given the large number of people and affected areas they aspire to support.

Yet as described above, while organizations with access to donor institutions and funding in theory have the potential to access the most vulnerable, they are also, to some extent, constrained by the priorities and mandate of the funding institution. While in some cases these initiatives benefit CBCs, if the priorities change and the funding is allocated elsewhere, CBCs run the risk of being left in the hands of organizations without solid

funding sources. While this funding may not guarantee the delivery of the best standard of care, given the various opinions as to what this encompasses, consistent funding will no doubt help increase the quality of care that can be administered. This is particularly exemplified through the various psycho-social support programs that participants described. For instance, the organization cited above is able to offer professionalized psycho-social support by hiring staff who possess university degrees in related fields and work experience delivering psycho-social support. This is contrasted to psycho-social support administered by two other organizations with no external funding sources. When asked about how these organizations provide psycho-social support, two respondents in particular indicated that they relied primarily on temporary, unpaid volunteers to carry out this vital component of their program.

Many participants stated in interviews that increased funding to their organization would better enable them to deliver their service. However, the context of limited government intervention described in the preceding section also needs to be accounted for. In this sense, the lack of coordination and collaboration amongst NGOs is further perpetuated by the lack of government oversight, which as described above, can in part be linked to the sustained presence of NGOs. One participant in particular called on the government to increase such oversight, stating that "it would be much easier if it would be just the government doing it because then at least you could oversee what is going on. It's really scattered still and […] that's just the general government, NGO kind of thing" (personal communication via interview). Thus, increased funding without increased oversight and management of the various activities would likely be insufficient to meet the many needs of the community. Increased oversight may also result in greater sharing

of best practices amongst initiatives, which in turn would help increase the quality of care that is administered.

5.3: Culture and Cultural Identity

When asked their opinions on the most significant effect of the conflict, many participants argued that the loss of culture and cultural identity has been detrimental to the people of northern Uganda. The most commonly referenced impacts of this loss were the breakdown of the family structure, the loss of cultural conflict resolution mechanisms, and the increased susceptibility of young people to negative external influences. Based on the data collected, the responses by post-conflict initiatives to remedy these impacts have ranged in their success, with few seeing positive results and many failing to revitalize cultural ties, or at worst actively contributing to the distance between the people of Gulu and their pre-conflict culture.

While this study is focused on the impacts of post-conflict initiatives, to assess their impacts it is first necessary to delineate the challenges created by the conflict that they are responding to. To begin, many participants recognized that a loss of culture during the conflict is most evident in the breakdown of the family structure. While the conflict directly impacted family structures through the abduction of children and separation of families, many participants stated that the conflict most severely impacted the family structure indirectly through a loss of culture. For instance, several participants argued that CBCs were often not absorbed into family structures upon their return, given that they are unable to identify their patrilineal ties.

However, one participant indicated that this was not a sufficient explanation, and that the underlying cause is that families are economically unable to absorb new members due to the ensuing poverty of the post-conflict context:

> "Number one, tradition and culture says that any child with a questionable identity, for instance a child born out of wedlock which includes even children born in captivity, assumes the identity of their *maternal* relations unless that child is fully claimed for by the paternal relatives. […] So, all these children born in captivity, born out of wedlock, born in conflict crisis, rape, and all these, are absorbed as duly absorbed in their maternal families. Where is the problem now? The problem now is that […] household economies are no longer [able to] support extra persons." (Personal communication via interview)

This is not to say however, that the economic situation for many was sufficient prior to conflict, given the devastating dictatorial regimes from prior to the conflict. Rather, this participant indicated that the conflict has placed additional economic strains on many households which has resulted in their inability to care for additional children. As a result, and as noted by various participants, there has been an increase in the number of street youth, orphans, and otherwise abandoned children. While statistical data is lacking, participants generally believed there to be a disproportionate number of CBCs within the population of abandoned or neglected youth.

In response to the high numbers of abandoned or neglected youth, the town has seen an influx of orphanages and similar types of institutions. Yet as several participants noted, orphans without adult caregivers are a relatively new concept to Gulu/Acholi society given that such children were previously absorbed within extended family networks. Moreover, one participant argued that the existence of places like orphanages perpetuates the cycle of neglect, rather than remedying it, stating that some people "think if they dump the child there the child will you know be taken" by an orphanage. Moreover, some such organizations were also believed to perpetuate the erosion of traditional family structure and culture. One participant describes this situation as follows:

"[…] these institutions are in my opinion very western. When kids are finished at the orphanage at 18 years it is difficult for them to adapt to life within Uganda. For example, a child mother I was working with was really upset because when an orphanage her child attended shut down and sent the kids home she didn't know what to do with her child because he didn't know how to live in the village, do housework and dig in the fields. The kid was suddenly put into a totally different environment that was unfamiliar to him and he hadn't been adequately prepared." (Personal communication via interview)

As well, the same participant felt that many of these organizations are religiously based, requiring children to "attend church and participate in discipleship". Indeed, several of the organizations that participated in this study had significant religious components to their programming, often times incorporating bible teachings and sermons into their psycho-social support service. Yet as argued by the leader of a cultural institution, such religious affiliations are often at odds with the Acholi culture, thereby further distancing children from their traditional cultures. He noted that "religion directly competes for space with tradition" and that he has encountered "a conflict of ideologies" with such initiatives.

Secondly, many participants recognized that the conflict impacted the ability of parents to pass on important cultural values and traditions, as well as land and property to their children. For instance, one participant noted that "culture has to be practiced for it to be-remain viable" and that "with conflict you don't have time and space for doing all that. Now that meant that people had to go into an emergency mode and not focus so much on what tradition and culture proscribed but on survival, how do I survive until the next day" (Personal communication via interview).

Post-conflict initiatives have addressed this loss of culture in a variety of ways, with varying degrees of success. Many of the organizations that were interviewed have incorporated a life skills component into their programming, recognizing that many youth are not being taught these foundational skills and lessons elsewhere. For instance, sports teams, a rope course, vocational training programs, and small CBOs covering a wide

range of activities, all claimed to provide some type of life skills training for the young

people they work with. However, the lack of consistency in and oversight of such life

skills trainings has resulted in a range of different training available, each with varying

degrees of cultural relevancy. This variation is exemplified by the following two models,

the first of which emphasizes teaching life skills through community and family dialogue,

the second a structure in which youth learn independently by overcoming mistakes and

failures:

> "But we are saying literally yes we used to sit around the fireplace but it does not mean when you don't have a fireplace you don't have to have informal education. At best, it says you've got to have time every day to sit as a family to talk about the issues that matter to clan, to the family. So, we're pushing that through in every communication, through the media, through meetings, through our other programs that we implement, we keep on pushing for the aspects of both formal and informal education." (Personal communication via interview)

> "[…] So, to us it's experiential and its challenge by choice and we do it in a way that it will tell you that much as you have gone through difficulties, you need to let that go, you need to face new life and much as you have difficulties in life because even now they are going through lot of difficulties and we challenge them through these activities." (Personal communication via interview)

While the first example calls for a return to traditional systems in which life skills are

passed down within families by elders to younger generations, the second calls for a

different model in which young people are taught life skills through their own personal

experiences. While both are intended to benefit struggling young people, one participant

noted that different approaches as to how best to encourage life skills education can

potentially lead to conflict and expressed dissatisfaction with initiatives with religious

connotations that are in direct conflict with traditional cultural beliefs and practices. As

such, it can be inferred that they would likely be less opposed to the examples given

above, which do not have a religious component but rather emphasise the individual

capabilities of the youth they work with. However, it is important to note the

commonality amongst these initiatives in teaching lessons and skills that were previously taught primarily in the home, demonstrating a fundamental change in the function of families.

Thirdly, the conflict strains the ways in which communities interact with each other. For instance, recognizing the declining use of traditional conflict resolution mechanisms and practices, several participants discussed the attempts by their organizations to reintroduce such techniques into communities as a way to help their members heal. While some were directly engaged in helping communities to carry out these ceremonies, such as Mato Oput or Gomo Tong, others were involved in facilitating greater cross-generational dialogue in which elders taught youth about these traditional conflict resolution means. Yet some participants argued that these mechanisms were ill-equipped to address injustices such as rape and murder that were abundant during the conflict. Therefore, rather than relying on specific traditional conflict resolution mechanisms one participant was involved in using radio as a way for people in Gulu, particularly young people, to reconnect with their culture and heal from the traumas incurred during the conflict. This individual runs a radio program in which former child soldiers and CBCs were able to call in and express themselves and tell others about the challenges that they face, in hopes of creating greater awareness and understanding. While this individual felt that they are able to reach vulnerable youth through radio, others felt that young people no longer listen to radio, particularly not to talk shows, and therefore such means are limited in their scope. While there are efforts such as these to connect young people, and particularly CBCs, with their culture, another participant argued that some initiatives, while well intentioned, 'de-link' youth from traditional support systems:

"[…] organizations have sprung up, saying "now these are children born in captivity, we are going to form an institution, a bursary fund to pay for these children". What do they do? They are delinking these children from the relationships that would in the long run remain supporting them, they become children of [organization name] […]" (Personal communication via interview)

Lastly, several participants recognized that in the absence of strong cultural ties, youth in Gulu are more susceptible to negative external influences, commonly referring to Westernization and western values as one such influence. One participant stated that many young people in the area were beginning to adopt the types of behaviours they are exposed to through Western movies, television, and media. Yet others warn that such lifestyles are incompatible with the reality for many youth in Gulu:

"[…] but what you see on tv is not yours, is not practical to your life because you live in your own reality, the children must learn their reality you see. So, we find children practicing what is not in their reality" (Personal communication via interview)

This is not to say that Westernization is the sole causal factor influencing negative behaviour in youth, nor that lessening connections to cultural heritage is the sole reason for susceptibility to the negative impacts of Westernization. Rather, the argument which participants highlighted is that there is correlation between these factors and, therefore, that they are important to consider.

The extent to which post-conflict initiatives have engaged with cultural revitalization had been highly varied, demonstrating the diverse range of sentiments regarding the importance of culture in post-conflict reconstruction and development. While the impacts of declining ties to cultural heritage are numerous and will be examined in more detail in the following chapter, it is clear that CBCs are not exposed to the Acholi culture in the same way as preceding generations due to the disruptive effects of the conflict and the many initiatives that have emerged in its aftermath.

5.4: An Ineffective Model of Intervention

The preceding sections call into question the effectiveness of the structure of many initiatives in Gulu, both past and present. Several participants argued that the foundational structure of many post-conflict initiatives has been problematic, generally referring to the project based and outcome oriented nature of these initiatives. The following comment reflects such sentiments:

> "Anyone can have the output, anyone can deliver output. But what about the process? […] Some organizations get into a community and before you know it they are out of it, for them they're about like "yes we have delivered x number of trainings, we have delivered x amount of desks" […] for some organizations by the time these people now get used and are willing now to open up that is the time they say "we are phasing out", then […] like "okay was there really impact" yes you could have like given the handouts, given trainings and all those things but then it hasn't helped, right?" (Personal communication via interview)

This participant continued that there was need to "stop running a country like it's a big project," and to instead focus on the much needed long-term and sustained support, an argument that many participants shared. For instance, many participants recognized that although the conflict has ended in the region, there is still significant work to be done to remedy its long-term implications, with one participant stating that "the guns have fallen silent, but the war that is within the community is still unresolved".

Another participant argued that project-based and outcome oriented initiatives are ineffective, since meaningful long-term change in the form of altering cultural perceptions and attitudes cannot be easily quantified. Yet as another participant recognized, international funding organizations, which support many of the activities in Gulu, have had a tendency in the region to support initiatives with tangible outcomes, regardless of whether such activities are less important than long-term sustainability. This participant recalled serving as a peace advocate with a large international NGO and

seeing millions of dollars flooded to tangible projects such as building schools, churches, universities, and homes. However, they expressed dissatisfaction with the lack of investments in the people that these projects were intended to help, such as providing mentors to war-affected students or better training for teachers.

One participant recalled the high demands that were placed upon the organization they were working for following the end of the conflict in that there was an explicit focus on the quantity of people served, rather than the quality of the service. Another participant reflected on their time working with GUSCO and regretfully admitted that much of the psycho-social programming lacked the necessary long-term support, since the organization was overwhelmed with the immediate needs of people returning from the bush:

> "But me in my heart I know these children, especially the ones that came at the rehabilitation centres when they were young I know we did not do any much healing support for them because at that time they were so young but we were also overwhelmed, our focus was on every day, hospital, this one is admitted, this one is on oxygen. So, and it kept going like that, they have grown, so they've not had also very good opportunity for psycho-social support provided for them." (Personal communication via interview)

Another participant made similar remarks about NGOs and the psycho-social support provided:

> "When the war ended there are so many NGOs that went in and said okay we are doing psycho social support but with all these challenges you find that well-intentioned NGOs did not actually get impact, did not create impact […] and it really pains me that you know you try to like seek for funding and then the donor is like "but the LRA ended [in] 2006 and there is no need anymore" you're like wait a minute there's still so much need, there's still so much need." (Personal communication via interview)

However, while the limited capacity of organizations to address the totality of needs immediately following the conflict is clear, there is evidence that similar models continue to be adopted in current initiatives. Much of the evidence collected in this project to this effect concerns vocational schools. Firstly, amongst all the participants who were

engaged in administering some form of vocational training, each emphasized the quantity of youth that they had served, with one boasting that they trained over 2 million students since 2005. Yet when pressed, this same participant noted that many students are unable to use their learned skills and most return to "digging" and agriculture to provide for themselves. Thus, as indicated in section 5.2, the quality of skills training, measured by its ability to adequately equip a person with the appropriate skills for the available markets, has in some cases been sacrificed for higher numbers of students enrolled.

Participants argued that in order to remedy these deficiencies and to provide more appropriate long-term care, there needs to be an increased emphasis on the process by which objectives are achieved. One such participant describes what this change would look like in relation to the efforts of their own organization:

> "Over the years I've learned that sometimes people don't need you to do anything, just be there and give them that audience, just give them the audience. […] I think that's what makes [organization name] unique is that for us it's about the process, we build trust, we build relationships." (Personal communication via interview)

Yet various other participants who were engaged in similar efforts described the challenges they encounter when trying to take this type of approach. One example is efforts by one organization to implement a therapeutic ropes course program[6]. Staff from this organization felt that the activities that they were promoting had many benefits for young people in the region, particularly those who have been impacted by the conflict. These include promoting positive relationships with peers through teamwork, increasing coping skills and positive self-image through overcoming fears and physical challenges, and learning creative problem solving skills through navigating the obstacle course. One

---

[6] This is an obstacle course with elements both on the ground and suspended in the trees or on utility poles and includes activities such as zip-lining, climbing a wall, walking across a suspended balance beam, jumping from elevated platforms, amongst others. The therapeutic nature of the course is derived from its emphasis on team building, facing one's fears, and gaining confidence by overcoming challenges.

senior staff member stated that the rope course provided a much needed, yet rare

opportunity for youth to "discover themselves", and express their creativity. However, the

same staff member described the resistance that they have faced from the community

when trying to implement their project:

> "I think the community does not understand the importance of this yet, importance of play in real life, the importance of play in the development of a child. That's what I think. […] I went to this neighboring school and I was like "I think I need to get your kids here to do this life skills education in a fun way through play" and the teacher was like "no, my children they don't have time to play" so here the schools they are focusing like on education only without thinking about other part of development in childhood development. So, people tend to think like you just need to go to school, sit in class and do what you can do so that you can perform." (Personal communication via interview)

In this description, the participant also highlights that an emphasis on outcomes and

tangible and quantifiable results permeates much of society. This is not to say that post-

conflict initiatives have necessarily caused this, but rather that they are evidence of a

much wider phenomenon. Further, while initiatives such as the ropes course attempt to

challenge and alter this status quo, they face immense difficulties given the pervasiveness

of the current model of interventions. In an informal conversation following an interview,

another participant described similar challenges in their attempts to implement more

avenues for creative expression in schools, such as creative writing, drama, and artistic

expression.

In conclusion, from this data it can be argued that some of the models of

intervention used by post-conflict initiatives have been ineffectual or antagonistic to

sustained and meaningful development and reconstruction. Given the lack of data that is

available on the quantity and range of initiatives present in Gulu, it is difficult to

determine what the most common method of intervention is. However, when considered

in conjunction with the preceding arguments concerning lack of oversight in initiatives,

this section demonstrates that ineffective models of intervention do not have the opportunity to learn from the best practices of more successful initiatives. As a result, without consistent knowledge sharing, ineffective models of intervention cannot be replaced with more successful and effective methods.

5.5: 'Free Things', IDP Camps, and Dependency

One aspect of the model described above that is worthy of attention is the frequency with which "free things" and "handouts" were distributed, with many participants arguing that such an approach by NGOs and aid organizations has had a severe impact on the lives of the people in northern Uganda. This was particularly referenced in relation to the Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camps. While numbers vary, it is estimated that upwards of 1.7 million people in northern Uganda were moved to IDP camps, often forcibly, at the conflict's height. While this action was defended on the grounds that it was necessary for the Ugandan army to combat the LRA with as few civilian causalities as possible, the IDP camps generated several negative consequences. One participant stated that whole generations were in essence lost in these IDP camps, where "you wake up and you sit, you're not supposed to be outside of the protected area. So, you don't really have much to do, you're squatting in a small hut […]" (Personal communication via interview). This comment is supported by another participant who said that "the body adapted to doing nothing and basically waiting for a handout, food or support" (Personal communication via interview).

Yet the repercussions of this behavior goes beyond the IDP camps. Several participants noted that substance abuse, particularly alcoholism, became rampant in IDP camps. Some participants inferred that the increases in alcoholism were partly related to

increases in domestic abuse as well. However, one participant acknowledged that alcoholism was only one factor leading to increased domestic abuse, with changing gender roles in the IDP camps being another element. They commented that:

> "[…] in the camp men became sort of redundant people, all the work was left, the household work and keeping the children was left to women and even when you are giving food supplies they are giving it to women knowing men would sell those food items and drink. So, they were targeting the women as the household head so they give the ratio; the posho, the beans, the cooking oil, to a woman. So, men became defensive: "this is mine, you are my wife and you are my property whatever is given to you, belongs to me, so I have authority over it" so that is a driving force that I saw because at first I started working we had a component of work incentive and hygiene promotion within the camp, when you see how women were suffering- they have been given food to feed the family but the men are beating them for the food for selling." (Personal communication via interview).

As well, many participants recognized that life in the IDP camps had negative repercussions on family dynamics, with parents neglecting or becoming unable to pass down important values and skill sets to their children. One participant described how parents learned unproductive or harmful habits during the many years they spent in IDP camps, such as drinking, taking drugs, and gambling. In addition, they noted during these years a "culture of laziness" was learned in which many became dependent on external organizations to meet their basic needs as a result of not having the ability to meet such needs themselves. They further stated that:

> "The values that the families used to instill in us, the social structure is completely broken down, you don't have control over anything, the family that used to raise their children, certain values are no longer there, the parents themselves don't have the time to teach or sit with their children and talk issues you know that would be for the betterment of their futures. […] there's a lot of sexual violence amongst them, they kill, they do a lot of things simply because they have not been shown what direction to follow in life." (Personal communication via interview).

In the absence of a strong set of values and beliefs inherited from their parents, participants felt that young people came to adopt the behaviours and values that they were exposed to in the camps, such as stealing, looting, and generally deviating from hard

work to satisfy a person's needs. Participants generally referenced this behaviour as the

growing 'laziness' of young people, resulting from their time in the camps. One

participant stated that children who were born in the camp came to learn that "food is

given it is not worked for, it's given by the World Food Program and then other

humanitarian agencies" (Personal communication via interview). Another participant

talked about the widespread effects that this had on people, particularly young people's

interest in farming, which was typical amongst people in northern Uganda before the war:

> "Most of the young people they are lazy because of this war they are used to free things, they just give for you a blanket, just give you mattresses, saucepan, food, everything thing and you just sit and line up to get those things. So, you find most of the young people have been born in the camp, they don't know that there is digging, they don't know anything, what they learn more is drinking, you find young children at this time in the villages they are drunk, they are lazy to dig, they are even lazy to study because they are used to free things. Even parents they are now very lazy in the community because of free things, they cannot even learn even if you try to advise to tell her they cannot because they have taken a lot of time in the camp just getting free things." (Personal communication via interview).

These comments demonstrate deficiencies in the way that the IDP camps

functioned and suggest that much of the negative behaviour adopted within the camps

resulted from the lack of avenues available for people to be active and productive. As

well, it demonstrates that the 'laziness' described by respondents is not an inherent trait of

those who have been exposed to camp life, but rather is a result of the ways in which

living in the camps both inhibited and suppressed people's abilities to remain productive.

In this sense, while handouts and 'free things' had serious implications themselves, they

are also symbolic of more widespread dependencies that became rampant within the

broader society both during and following the conflict. While most notable in the IDP

camps, other participants referenced the distribution of handouts and its effects as being

more widespread through emergency relief programs during the conflict and in its

aftermath. One participant stated that, "you know during the war our communities in

northern Uganda were… used to handouts, right? Every organization that used to come used to give handouts, handouts, handouts […]" (Personal communication via interview). Another participant discussed the general attitude towards NGOs, aid workers, and expatriates that has developed since the conflict ended, stating that it was often assumed that expatriates are equated with having a high degree of relative wealth. Some examples of the types of materials and services given out that participants noted included: startup material after completing vocational training, vocational and skills training itself, food stuffs, and educational materials, as discussed in more detail elsewhere in this chapter.

Thus, what is demonstrated by this research is the perpetuation of a sense of dependency amongst the people in northern Uganda, with its origins in the goods and services given through relief efforts by NGOs, aid organizations, as well as the Ugandan government. One participant understands this dependency to be the most significant impact of the conflict and the way it was responded to:

> "Dependency syndrome has come out of the conflict because during the conflict the government was trying to provide […] for the community through giving food, there are a number of services which has been given to them to hard to reach areas. So, most people still have that mentality that it's the government still […] Some people still really don't believe that the NGOs are going away, they still need that NGO […] to provide for them what they really need." (Personal communication via interview).

Moreover, several participants associated this general sense of dependency to the shift in the attitudes towards work, most notably amongst younger generations. Yet this attitude described by participants cannot solely be attributed to post-conflict aid and development initiatives, including the IDP camps. Many participants also recognized that for the many young people who were born into or grew up in 'the bush', looting, theft and robbery were actively promoted as means to meet basic needs. For instance, one participant who works with demobilized soldiers mentioned that they often see former soldiers reverting

to tactics that were learned in the bush once aid or NGO support was no longer available. Therefore, while IDP camps were recognized as a source of 'laziness' and other negative behaviours, there were evidently also other influences that were at worst promoting, and at best failing to prevent such behaviours.

Thus, given these multiple influences, issues of and resulting from dependency have been widely felt by many young people. However, this is not to say that all young people in Gulu have experienced the effects of dependency, nor to overshadow the many positive contributions that young people in Gulu have made. For instance, several of the NGOs and CBOs that participated in this study were founded and run by youth or young adults who grew up during the time of the conflict, ultimately demonstrating their resilience (as discussed in the following chapter). Yet for the purposes of this study it is important to highlight that the factors that ultimately created dependency greatly increased during and after the conflict, and fundamentally altered the environments that young people were exposed to as a result.

As well, some groups of youths, such as CBCs, have been particularly vulnerable and disproportionately exposed to these influences. This is because unlike other groups of youths, all CBCs began their life in a conflict setting in which theft, looting, and violence was normalized. One participant describes the extent to which growing up in such a setting affects the rest of a person's life in the aftermath of the conflict:

> "[…] they do not know what peace is, they even do not know what is called violent, it's you and me probably who is able to compare what peace is and what it is not. These are the people who lived in the times of violence, they do not know that there is an opportunity where people live in peace [..] if they fight it is normal, if they hear people are killed it is normal because they have never lived in a situation where there is no abduction as in our time." (Personal communication via interview).

Therefore, whereas other young people may have a viable reference point which precedes the conflict to draw from, CBCs have been deprived of such references. Moreover, for those that have successfully returned to Gulu, the landscape had been considerably altered from that which existed prior to the conflict, thereby limiting their ability to access similar positive references. This new environment is one in which NGO, aid, and human development activity became relatively commonplace. With far fewer pre-existing protective factors to mitigate against the negative effects of these initiatives, CBCs have generally been left significantly more vulnerable than other groups of youths.

While the changes to various ecological systems discussed above cannot be solely attributed to post-conflict initiatives, it is evident that these initiatives not only failed to mitigate these negative effects, but often actively contributed to a growth in dependency, with various and often severe negative implications. As well, it is important to note that this argument does not contend that the support provided by aid, humanitarian, and government organizations was unwarranted, or to be resisted. Without a doubt, emergency relief was needed during and immediately following the conflict. Thus, a potentially more accurate interpretation is that the failure to adequately transition *away* from emergency relief over time has been the ultimate stimulus for the on-going dependency that many participants referred to. The central point of this section has been to demonstrate the pervasive sense of dependency and its origins in the continued distribution of handouts.

5.6: Conclusion

This chapter has demonstrated how post-conflict initiatives have disrupted some aspects of the social fabric of Gulu society, in some cases damaging the protective

capabilities of various ecological systems. It has also shown that there is a significant lack of oversight to post-conflict initiatives in the region, and that this in turn has resulted in variations in the quality and accessibility of initiatives. Consequently, there is a broad range of care and support opportunities for CBCS in which some are able to receive effective interventions, while others are only able to access less effective or ineffective initiatives. Section 5.3 demonstrated this by way of the varying degrees and types of engagement with culture and cultural identity which arguably leads to inconsistencies in the types of environments in which youth develop. Moreover, evidence in section 5.4 suggests that the protective capabilities of cultural institutions and other ecological systems have been hindered by the ineffective models of intervention that focus too heavily on outputs and short-term outcomes rather than processes and long-term objectives. Lastly, this chapter has demonstrated how the use of hand-outs by some initiatives and organizations has created an immense sense of dependency amongst youth that does not favour long-term and sustainable resilience. The following chapter will draw on these analyses to demonstrate how changes influenced by the conflict and post-conflict initiatives have impacted the ecologies, and ultimately the resilience of children born in captivity.

Chapter 6: The Ecologies of Children Born in Captivity

Drawing on the context established in the preceding chapter, this chapter delineates the ways that post-conflict initiatives have impacted various ecological systems. In general, the data presented in this chapter indicates that the ecological systems have changed since the conflict in a way that is not favourable to the resilience of children born in captivity. Yet this chapter also provides evidence of various initiatives that are attempting to confront and repair a number of these negative impacts. The structure of this chapter will flow from an analysis of the largest and most encompassing system (the macrosystem) through to the most individualized system (the ontogenic system) and the ways that each system has been impacted by the changes prompted by post-conflict initiatives that have been described in the preceding chapter.

This chapter first examines the macrosystem and argues that post-conflict initiatives have to some extent perpetuated the marginalization of Uganda's northern region, while also disrupting the ability of cultural practices and institutions to act as protective factors for youth. Secondly, this chapter argues that post-conflict initiatives have introduced a variety of new actors into the exosystems of youth in Gulu, not all of which are necessarily beneficial to supporting their positive development and enhancing resilience. Thirdly, it is argued that the conflict and post-conflict initiatives have altered the structure and function of the microsystem and that these changes have negatively impacted the family's ability to positively support children born in captivity. Lastly, the chapter argues that while the conflict has, to a large degree, negatively impacted individual capabilities, post-conflict initiatives have varied in their ability to adequately support CBCs.

6.1: The Macrosystem

As detailed in chapter two, the macrosystem encompasses both the systems of cultural values and norms, and the overarching political priorities which together influence and shape everyday life. The conflict and the response to it has impacted both spheres insofar as it has sustained the political marginalization of the northern region, as well as contributing to a shift away from the cultural values present in the region prior to the conflict.

With regard to policy, one participant described the importance of centering all government decisions around the needs of youth, stating that "the political decisions they [government officials] make they should consider this child, the policies they make should be favourable for the growth of these, to create good environment for bringing up this child" (personal communication via interview). Yet this participant, as well as others, pointed out that while such policies exist in theory, they are not adequately implemented in Gulu. Another participant described the situation as follows:

> "[…] there's so many policies, child friendly policies put in place by government but it's not matched by action. So, most of the policies are there, you'll go to the government office, you'll see ah this is what the policy says, there is the child statute, there's everything, we have everything. But it must be matched by action, there must be deliberate action." (Personal communication via interview)

This is similar to the phenomenon discussed in section 5.1 in which, while adequate educational curriculums exist, they are not being implemented to the point where they are virtually non-existent. Furthermore, several participants noted the relatively greater opportunities available elsewhere in the country, particularly in Kampala and particularly in relation to education. Other participants indicated that in order to access the best opportunities in life, it was helpful to explore avenues that would grant access to other parts of the world. For instance, the participants engaged in sports clubs often emphasized

the need to have players "exposed" to coaches and clubs overseas and that for many of their players, sport is an opportunity to use this exposure to increase their opportunities for success in life. Similarly, following an interview with the founder of a successful vocational school, this individual indicated to me their desire to leave Gulu and find work overseas, a sentiment that was not uncommon amongst other participants. These examples demonstrate a pervasive view in Gulu that in order to access opportunities for success it is helpful, if not necessary, to go elsewhere. Lastly, one participant argued that the lack of prioritization of the north, and the resulting lack of meaningful opportunities has not been due to a lack of resources, citing significant investments made elsewhere in the country (such as the central region) and in other sectors (such as oil extraction and national defense).

Thus, despite the wide international attention garnered by the conflict in northern Uganda, the influx of aid and development initiatives in the region have failed to alter the political marginalization of the North that existed prior to the conflict (and as described in chapter one, was a factor in its outbreak). Rather, as described in section 5.1, the sustained presence of NGOs has to some extent perpetuated or at least enabled the lack of government investment and involvement in the region. The results of this are significant insofar as they shape the interactions among the exo, micro, and ontogenic systems discussed below.

Government priorities have also impacted the second aspect of the macro-system insofar as a lack of government investment and support has weakened the role of cultural institutions. Cultural institutions in this sense refer to the traditional leaders, chiefdoms, and kingdoms that carried out important functions such as mediation, adjudication, restitution, and punishment before they were largely overshadowed by new, Western

systems of governance during colonial rule. Despite their reinstatement in 1995, cultural

institutions still struggle to fulfill their roles in a changed, post-conflict environment. The

leader of one such institution stated that despite the formal acknowledgment of cultural

institutions by the government, they still lack the essential resources needed to carry out

basic functions such as peacebuilding and reconciliation activities. As well, participants

described the cyclical nature of the challenges they face in the sense that while the

conflict eroded the attachment by many to their Acholi culture, this has made it difficult

for cultural institutions to function given that their significance is not necessarily

understood within the community. For instance, one participant noted that during the

conflict when cultural institutions were not active, "so many people lost their

understanding and their roles to take care of their cultural institutions and their leaders"

thereby creating difficulties in the ability to reassert the significance of these institutions

and leaders after the conflict. As one participant argued, without concerted political will

to not only symbolically reinstate these institutions, but to support and enhance their

capabilities, their role will arguably continue to be restricted. Thus, the argument

presented above in which NGO initiatives have perpetuated a lack of political

engagement in the region, can also be applied to the lack of political support for the

cultural institutions of Acholiland.

Many participants also felt that people's perceptions of agricultural labour had

changed since before the conflict, with many young people preferring to work in towns

rather than to engage in farming or cattle rearing. While partly related to the loss of land

and livestock during the conflict, this trend is also related to the culture of dependency

that some initiatives have fuelled which has propelled a sense of disdain amongst young

people towards their farming and agricultural roots. Several participants stated that many

young people prefer "quick money" such as gambling or prostitution. Participants also related this behaviour to the increasing influence and visibility of the west. For instance, one participant noted that advancements in technology and the accessibility to Western film, tv, as well as the growing presence of social media, have resulted in young people in Gulu seeking a lifestyle that does not necessarily meet the confines of their reality. Such a lifestyle is characterized by lavishness, wealth, and urbanization, that is unattaianable for many. Related, urbanization was also found to be influenced by the types of skills training offered by many post-conflict initiatives. As described in section 5.2, while many of these initiatives provided training in skills that were desired, these were sometimes misaligned with the types of jobs that are actually available.

In the absence of strong connections to cultural values and practices participants argued that youth, being particularly distant form the Acholi culture, are more susceptible to western influences, indicating the second change in the system of cultural values. Yet several participants indicated that such influences were dangerous in Gulu's society, since the realities they project are incompatible with the reality for many in Gulu. One participant attested to this, stating that "what you [a young person in Gulu] see on TV is not yours, is not practical to your life because you live in your own reality, the children must learn their reality you see. So, we find children practicing what is not in their reality" (personal communication via interview). Another participant reinforced this view and described its potentially negative implications:

> "So, like even those who- sometimes people studying they get no opportunities for them to work, […] so people are so, so frustrated and when they see things like the lifestyle on television, they think that's the best way to live and most times unfortunately only destroying them." (Personal communication via interview)

Thus, while decreasing ties to traditional culture are in part propelling young people in Gulu to western behaviours and lifestyles, the increased visibility of these foreign values further perpetuates this trend. In summary, the systems of cultural values and traditions have changed to the extent that there has been a general distancing from the systems present prior to the conflict, accompanied by an increase in the visibility of western cultural systems. When these factors are coupled with the general lack of viable opportunities for people to be successful and earn a living, they become particularly detrimental.

6.2: The Exosystem

As per theories of social ecology and resilience, actors and environments within the exosystem are significant insofar as they provide opportunities for social support and positive peer relationships. In Gulu the exosystem which exists for CBCs has been fundamentally altered from that which existed prior to the conflict. This is due to the emergence of NGOs and non-profits as significant actors within the community landscape, as well as the ways that they have changed the relationship between individuals and traditional social support systems.

Firstly, despite the departure of several large international NGOs, it was abundantly clear during my time in Gulu that NGOs and other humanitarian and development groups still make up a significant and influential portion of the community landscape. In addition, the advent of newer NGOs and CBOs beyond those that have been active since the height of the conflict, demonstrates that NGO activity is still very much an integral component of Gulu society. As discussed in the previous chapter the sustained existence of NGOs in Gulu has increased the number of supports available to youth,

particularly CBCs. While some of these supports have seen great successes in helping youth and CBCs overcome adversity, others have either failed to do so, or in some cases become a source of adversity themselves.

Sports groups in particular have acted as positive supports for CBCs in a variety of different ways. A local soccer coach described how their soccer club promoted positive peer relationships amongst its players, encouraging them to be empathetic and understanding. He revealed that if a player confides in him that they were born in captivity, or affected by the war in some other serious manner, he will disclose this information to the other players. While other coaches disagreed with this method, this particular coach felt that rather than shying away from the potential conflict that doing so may cause, they use the information as an opportunity to teach his players to be respectful and empathic towards their teammates. Another participant described their taekwondo club as a place where CBCs and other war-affected youth can come together to heal from their traumatic pasts. They felt that by focusing primarily on taekwondo and the fun aspects of the sport, they were creating a space in which his players may then feel comfortable enough to reveal to the group the ways that they have been affected by the conflict. They expressed the view that if someone chooses to do so, the atmosphere is maintained and their past is discussed in a casual and friendly way that they felt helps to negate stigma and shame around people's past experiences. A senior staff member at a ropes course described similar types of positive peer relationships that are promoted at their outdoor facility, describing the emphasis they place on team-work and group cooperation in their activities.

Thus, while these types of activities promote the individual characteristics of resilience (to be discussed further in section 6.4) they are also significant for their

contributions to the promotion of positive peer relationships and encouraging social support amongst war-affected youth and CBCs. As well, staff from both soccer and rugby clubs stated that their sports helped to foster acceptance of CBCs within their broader communities given that focusing on their positive athletic abilities helps people to recognize that CBCs are not defined merely by their past experiences. these participants saw sports as showcasing the positive contributions that CBCs can offer their communities, thereby mitigating the stigma and discrimination that is commonly felt by CBCs.

However, as described in the previous chapter, beneficial supports, such as these, face barriers in their ability to make their programming accessible to those who need it the most, such as CBCs. As well, due to a lack of oversight, as described in the preceding chapter, not all the supports provided by NGOs and other such groups are equally beneficial. Thus, while the inclusion of NGOs into the composition of the community has provided more opportunities for social supports and areas for the development of positive peer relationships, so too has it opened the door for ineffectual or negative influences. Some of the less effective supports that have been provided by NGOs are most noticeable in the types of reintegration and rehabilitation that were supported. Many respondents pointed out that the programs implemented in the immediate aftermath of the conflict were the most problematic. One participant noted such programs were noteworthy for focusing too narrowly on the physical reintegration of former child soldiers and CBCs, rather than on building the capacity of the community to function as a support system for the returning individuals. They argued that such programs are able to boast great program success after the initiative has ceased operation, given that in the immediate years after reunification, families are in a "honeymoon" phase. However, he also noted that after the

initial years, problems within the family start to arise as the family is faced with gravity

of supporting that child long-term in multiple ways. This participant stated that

> " So a lot of our NGOs like because they want to be on the front page "ya we're doing this, look at how successful, we are starting a business, they're running it so well", cause families are still like protecting him and like... but then when people move he doesn't know how to run the business anymore and the business collapses and he's very devastated, nobody comes to support him anymore, even if you gave him money that would have disappeared, they don't have anywhere to go, and they're alone. They will say that is successful reintegration." (Personal communication via interview)

Evidently this participant has linked this to the phenomena discussed in section 5.4 in

which the structure of many initiatives has emphasized tangible outcomes, in this case

physical reintegration, over long-term sustainability. This same participant noted that a

lack of long-term reintegration support has in some cases led to the abuse of CBCs when

the 'honeymoon phase' of aid and development support has ended.

Based on the data collected it appears that there has been a shift in the types of

programming available to CBCs and their communities, with a more explicit focus on

ensuring the community is able to function as a support system for war-affected youth

such as CBCs. For instance, the mandate of one locally founded organization emphasizes

the self-sufficiency of communities and empowering them to satisfy their own needs

rather than to seek out or rely on organizational support. In this sense, the role of NGOs is

not to act as a support system itself but rather to facilitate the actors in a child's

environment in their ability to act as a support system. Another possible interpretation is

that programs such as these have had a long-standing presence in Gulu but are more

readily visible now, given that some large NGOs have now departed. For instance,

Invisible Children, which was responsible for the Kony 2012 campaign was a dominant

NGO in region, with many of its initial sites and signs still visible around Gulu. However,

while once one of most active organizations in the region, it no longer operates in Gulu in any capacity.

Yet for those who are adopting this new model, they still face significant challenges, namely encouraging communities to see the value in their work. For example, the participant cited above noted the challenges they face in trying to adopt more grassroots, capacity building projects in communities that were used to the more short term solutions previously provided by NGOs:

> "[…] As we always said that "we give you the hook to go and fish, we don't give you the fish" and people don't like that, people want you know the easy way out "give me the fish, let me go and eat." (Personal communication via interview)

As well, other participants felt that in a town still rebuilding itself from a decade of brutal conflict, it is difficult for some communities to recognize the value that sport and recreation have for youth, as described in section 5.4. Moreover, as argued in section 5.2, competition for limited funding places strains on organizations' abilities to provide care and support for those who need it most, such as CBCs.

While the influx of NGO activity in Gulu has changed the landscape for many communities by adding new services and supports, it is also significant in the ways that they have altered people's relationship with traditional social support systems. As cited in section 5.3, one participant felt that heightened NGO activity was delinking people from cultural institutions that acted as social support networks prior to the conflict. This is congruent with broader sentiments noted in section 5.3 which highlight the lack of cultural engagement by youth. Yet, based on the mandates of several organizations interviewed for this project, it is apparent that there is a renewed effort to revitalize cultural social supports, such as those cited in section 5.3, that aim to facilitate cross-generational dialogue and learning.

One possible interpretation of the renewed focus on culture is that many organizations in the immediate aftermath of the conflict were overwhelmed with the immediacy of people's current needs, such as medical care, food, and returning families to their homes. As a result, the significance of cultural support systems was inevitably overlooked. Yet now that immediate needs of people have been met there is evidently a greater recognition of the need to revitalize the Acholi culture. However, as demonstrated in the previous chapter, the Acholi culture is not recognized and taught uniformly amongst all post-conflict initiatives.

Aid and development initiatives have fundamentally altered the structure and function of the exosystem and the various actors within it. While resulting in an increase in the availability of positive support systems for CBCs, they have also led to potentially ineffective or negative systems as well. In addition, the influx of initiatives has changed the way that people interact with traditional support systems, which many respondents acknowledge as being particularly detrimental to the future well-being of individuals and communities. Yet as this section has demonstrated, it appears that there are significant efforts being made to focus the mandates of current initiatives on addressing the long-term needs of people in Gulu generally, and CBCs specifically.

6.3: The Microsystem

As described in chapters two and three, the family unit, particularly the relationship with caregivers, is critical in a child's socialization process. The data collected indicates that at the level of the microsystem there has been a general breakdown both in its function and structure. With regard to structure, the typical family unit has shifted towards a nuclear family, thereby limiting its ability to absorb new

members. This has been particularly detrimental for CBCs. With regard to function, the ability for the family to provide a space where children learn positive relationships as well as important values and skills has been disrupted.

The conflict in northern Uganda has impacted family structures through the weakening of household economies and degrading of cultural ties. One participant argued that when household economies are strong, they are more readily able and willing to absorb new members. This participant further stated that

> "Culture absorbs these people but there are contemporary challenges that families and people are getting through so if we strengthen household economies, improve on livelihoods, we could see many more of these children being absorbed." (Personal communication via interview)

In this context, the responses by post-conflict initiatives have either perpetuated or at least failed to reverse these changes to the structural makeup of families. As described in section 5.3, initiatives have engaged with cultural values and institutions to various degrees, with some making efforts to revitalize principles of extended kinship and the absorption of new members into the family structure, and others failing to do so. Yet based on the comment above, the most well-intentioned efforts to rejuvenate cultural values will be ill-equipped to reverse the current shift in family structures unless coupled with livelihood programs that can improve household economies. Thus, the combination of people's disintegrating ties to their cultural heritage, and the lack of adequate livelihood resources and support, has evidently resulted in a shrinking of the typical household size. As such, to reconstitute extended family structures in order to better support CBCs, a combination of activities would be need to address the challenges of both household economic stability and of cultural values.

This change in the structure of families is particularly detrimental to CBCs given that they are often the ones to be marginalized and excluded from smaller families. When participants were asked what happens to CBCs that are excluded from the family structure, two responses were commonly given. The first response is that they "are just there", indicating that the exist without a real or meaningful place in society. As such, they are denied the potential protective factors that a family structure could offer. The second response given was that they are absorbed into new community support systems. Yet as described above, these support systems vary in their quality and accessibility. More specifically, one participant felt that "other 'sponsorship programs' […] actually interfered with the relationship between guardian and child with the organization taking on a parental role for the child" (personal communication via interview), rather than the mandate of their own organization which is to support the guardian to better care for the child. Moreover, as described in section 5.2, some organizations lack the ability to provide consistency to their psycho-social programming, relying on short-term volunteers to carry out counselling for children. Thus, while some supports are able to foster positive relationships, they lack sustainability, which in turn may influence a child's ability to form positive relationships. For those CBCs who continue to exist within a family system, moreover, its function is much different than it was prior to the conflict.

As described in chapters two and three, positive child-caregiver relationships impact youth resiliency insofar as they provide the foundations from which individuals learn positive associations and healthy ways of interacting with others, as well as fundamental coping skills. Conversely, there is a positive correlation between negative caregiver-child relationships and poor youth resilience. The conflict in northern Uganda had detrimental impacts on the function of the family in terms of the ability for guardians

to showcase healthy and positive relationships and interactions. This is especially the case for CBCs given that by their very definition they are born into a conflict setting where violence and abuse are relatively normalized. Despite the ending of the conflict, many participants noted that for those CBCs that exist in family structures, they continue to face abuse and stigmatization from within the family.

Several participants commented that they had noticed a link between substance abuse and domestic abuse, with some relaying personal stories to support this. As described in section 5.5, initiatives from the immediate aftermath of the conflict propelled a sense of uselessness amongst the recipients which fuelled alcoholism and drug use, which in turn was believed to increase the likelihood of domestic abuse. Participants also acknowledged that substance and domestic abuse remain significant issues in contemporary Gulu society. This can be partly linked to the inability for initial responses to consider long-term consequences, given the overwhelming urgency of satisfying people's immediate needs. For instance, domestic abuse, both directly and indirectly through substance abuse, was believed by some to be linked to the inadequacy of psycho-social supports provided to those affected by the conflict, and the on-going trauma that many experience. Yet as described in section 5.2, many initiatives still face challenges in providing adequate psycho-social support. As further described in section 5.4, despite the efforts of some initiatives to change the problematic yet dominant structure of intervention, many current initiatives are still focused on short-term and outcome-oriented mandates. Such an emphasis has made it difficult for these initiatives to tackle the underlying issue of the lack of meaningful opportunities, which many participants saw as ultimately fuelling substance and domestic abuse.

In this sense, there is a complex relationship in which both a lack opportunity and on-going trauma are linked to domestic abuse, directly and indirectly through substance abuse, which threaten the relationship between CBCs and their caregivers. Post-conflict initiatives are implicated in this trend insofar as they have largely failed to transition away from emergency relief to an increased focus on aiding in people's self-sufficiency, predicated on sufficient mental health, and creating meaningful and sustainable opportunities. As well, the failure to create meaningful opportunities is also linked to changes at the macro-level in which there has been a lack of government involvement and investment, in part due to the sustained presence of NGOs, as described in section 5.1. Some participants also pointed to changes in the macro-system, in the form of Westernization, as playing a role in influencing behaviours such as drinking and drug use.

As described in chapters two and three, the family unit is also an important space in which children are taught the skills and values needed to properly function within their given communities, and ultimately to become viable members of their societies. Yet the conflict severely eroded this function as there was a lack of time and willingness to continue 'fireside' talks. One participant stated that, "before the war people used to stay, families would sit together with the members by the fireplace learning the culture, learning this was the right thing, they would dig, fend for themselves", (personal communication via interview) while another recognized that "with conflict you don't have time and space for doing all that […] people had to go into an emergency mode and not focus so much on what tradition and culture […] prescribed but on survival, how do I survive until the next day" (personal communication via interview). In response to this situation, post-conflict initiatives have attempted to accommodate for the void left in the absence of this important function of the family. In this sense, there is a strong

relationship between the exosystem and the microsystem insofar as new actors within the community have assumed a function that was previously filled by the family system. For instance, the previous chapter described various post-conflict initiatives that have incorporated life-skills training into their mandates. While some are able to deliver these trainings more effectively than others, all such efforts exemplify the assumption of a role that was previously held by the family, to actors within the larger exosystem.

As described in section 5.2, initiatives, particularly those in the immediate aftermath of the conflict, were focused simply on getting people back on their feet and provided them with the skills and tools they needed to do so. While still prevalent to some extent, it has also been recognized that there are various initiatives that seek to provide more sustainable support such as empowering the family and facilitating cross-generational dialogue. Thus, the responses of post-conflict initiatives are twofold: those which focused on immediate needs often at the expense of facilitating the family as a system in which important skills and values are taught, and those which focus on the long-term capabilities of the family unit. As well, it is important to emphasize that much of the data indicated that while many of the initiatives in the immediate aftermath were unable to implement family empowerment and capacity building, it appears that in recent years there has been an increasing desire to do so.

While it is not possible with the given data to draw correlations between particular aspects of caregiver and child relationships, several participants gave examples of the ways in which poor relationships with caregivers have impacted the behaviours of CBCs. For instance, a staff member at a ropes course recounts the following experience with a CBC:

> "One of the kids really does not want like maybe to interact with the rest, basically because of what he has witnessed in the bush. I think that the mother was shot when he was at the back and the mother died. So, I think they came and picked him from the back of the mother and I think he witness also some other things there in the bush. So, when he's here in the forest and with the group he always like stands back a lot, he doesn't want to interact, he wants to do his own thing." (Personal communication via interview)

Evidently, losing a caregiver, particularly in such a violent way, had repercussions on the child's ability to form relationships with others, leading to anti-social and isolated behaviour. As well, one sports coach described the CBCs they have worked with as resistant to changing their negative behaviours, stating that "they say "after all I'm alone, I'm by myself, my parents or maybe my family is gone"" (personal communication via interview). While partly influenced by their relationships with their family or caregiver, as will be described in the following section, these individual behaviours are also influenced by a variety of other factors. This is not to say that all CBCs experience negative relationships with their caregivers, as there has been evidence of positive bonds particularly between mothers and CBCs. The purpose of this section has been to demonstrate the correlation that participants indicated between post-conflict initiatives and the degrading function and structure of the families of CBCs in general.

6.4: The Ontogenic System

The post-conflict initiatives which participants took note of that most readily target individual capabilities are psycho-social support, life skills, and vocational skills training programs. As discussed in previous sections, many of these initiatives have faced challenges in their ability to support CBCs. Yet more importantly, many participants alluded to changes in the delivery of these programs, with more recent efforts targeting the capacities of CBCs' various environments as a way to ultimately support CBCs themselves.

Firstly, the conflict itself had severe negative implications for the mental well-being of CBCs. As described in chapter three, given that CBCs are born into a conflict setting they experience trauma in a variety of ways from the onset of their lives. In response to this, as well as to the trauma experienced by others, post-conflict initiatives have focused on providing psycho-social support programs to help individuals heal. Yet, many participants noted that CBCs continue to face on-going mental health challenges. One participant stated that "people are really traumatized […] they have just celebrated recently independence but I don't see any independence in Uganda, people are still disturbed by the past […]" (personal communication via interview). Another participant stated that:

> "you know the trauma part of it, trauma is not- it's not a one-day thing that you know you're -going to get there and counsel people and walk out think that everything is resolved, no it's a gradual process, yes the war ended technically in 2006 but I tell you right now that the levels of trauma are still varied." (Personal communication via interview)

These statements indicate both a deficiency in the way that psycho-social support has been, and to some extent continues to be provided, as well as the magnitude of the challenge they are faced with.

The data collected indicates that there has been a combination of psycho-social support programming which targets individual healing, and emphasizes healing the larger structures such as the community and the family. For example, when participants were asked about how their organization provides psycho-social support, some indicated that they follow an individualized model in which people's experiences of trauma are assessed and counselling and support is provided based on those events. For instance, one participant describes the psycho-social support at their organization as focusing on individual behaviour change to be achieved through prayer:

"[…] we have our pastor here who prays with them, we want them to know God, to be a good children, that is why the spiritual part of it is also there, so we pray with them, so at least they feel they are reformed. […] You talk to the child, you ask her or him ya actually you find more about the child, you try to counsel so that a child can be a good, can forget other problem behind and become a new person, you know in life." (Personal communication via interview)

Another participant attested to a similar model stating that, "for us we also try our best as a religious community to make sure we're counselling them well and make them truly know who they are and their future, then they control it" (personal communication via interview). Yet these strategies fail to account for the structural challenges that these children may face once they are returned to their communities, such as stigmatization and discrimination from their communities or rejection from their families. Yet the focus on individual experiences has in some cases come at the expense of recognizing these other effects of war, such as social exclusion, familial breakdown, and the disintegration of community ties.

However, other participants indicated that they have recognized the limitations of providing individualized psycho-social support in the absence of providing support for larger structures, and have responded accordingly. For instance, one participant indicated that the organization they founded has responded to this realization by now supporting children born in captivity through empowering and supporting the family to care for the given child. Another participant recognized the deficiencies of distributing handouts, as described in section 5.5, and has embarked upon a process of re-teaching communities important agricultural practices and cultural conflict resolution mechanisms. These types of initiatives arguably are better equipped to reach vulnerable groups such as CBCs insofar as they are focused on rebuilding and revitalizing the larger structures within which CBCs exist, which will in turn be better enabled to provide sustainable support.

This is because rather than relying solely on the continuation of uncertain or inconsistent funding, initiatives such as these seek to empower support systems to regain the ability to look after individuals without external assistance.

Secondly, as has been described thus far in various places, the conflict had significant impacts on the ability for CBCs to obtain the life skill competencies necessary to function within society. The preceding section demonstrated how the function of the family has deteriorated in its ability to pass down these important life skills. As well, as described in sections 6.1 and 5.3, the erosion of cultural ties has also influenced the general failure of support systems to pass down these skills. In response, various post-conflict initiatives have included life-skills training as part of their programming, such as those described in section 5.3. Yet, as has also been demonstrated in section 5.3, many of these initiatives face significant challenges thereby limiting their ability to provide adequate and effective life skills support. For instance, as described in section 5.1, the education sector not only lacks the ability to teach students vital problem solving and critical thinking skills, but based on the failure to provide universal access to education, is also limited in its ability to reach CBCs.

There is variation in the extent to which these initiatives have simply taught CBCs and other war-affected youth these skills, or encouraged and supported family and community structures to do so, as occurred more generally prior to the conflict. Based on the data collected many initiatives have emphasized individualized skills training, given the pervasive model of many initiatives described in section 5.4, which focused on short-term tangible outcomes such as the number of youth trained in a particular skill. As well, the need for external actors to fulfill this role, previously carried out within the family, will likely continue to exist so long as some family units remain incapable of taking on

this function. Yet, the self-perpetuating nature of aid and development initiatives is demonstrated in this case since, as described in the preceding section, these initiatives also continue to compromise the ability for the family to function as it had prior to the conflict.

Thirdly, in the aftermath of the conflict various initiatives were implemented to help people begin to rebuild their lives by training them in basic income-generating activities. One participant described the logic behind such initiatives as stemming from the recognition that those who returned from conflict were heavily stigmatized and ostracized with their families, communities, and formal education. Therefore, they were offered skills training as a way to earn a livelihood and support themselves in the face of adversity.

However, many of these skills training programs continue to exist with little change, and often with little success for the individuals trained. Participants involved in delivering such training programs admitted that many of their students were unable to use their skills in hairdressing, tailoring, or other similar activities, and instead reverted to agriculture and "digging". One participant noted that graduates of these skills programs may struggle to afford the start-up costs to implement their new skills, and as a result will turn to agricultural production to provide subsistence for themselves. Another participant corroborated to this, stating that in the absence of long-term support, basic skills training programs will remain ineffective. They argued that after their skills training has ended, there is no additional support to ensure that they are able to utilize their skills in their communities, and to further support them if they are unable to do so.

Furthermore, one informant admitted that despite training over 2 million students in various skill such as hair dressing and tailoring, the individuals who have been the

most successful are the handful who have opened their own skills training centres, rather than utilizing the skills they have learned directly and selling the products that they have learned to create. This further highlights the notion that skills such as tailoring and hair dressing have a limited market that is over-saturated with qualified individuals, to the extent that it can no longer absorb more similarly trained individuals. While this in part highlights the innovation and entreneurship of some individuals, it is also problematic in so far as it perpetuates a model of vocational training that has been demonstrated to be ineffective.

Moreover, participants indicated that a focus on training people for short-term success has become pervasive throughout Gulu society. One participant described how this is foundational to the design of the education system in Gulu, stating that "much of Uganda's education system doesn't focus much, or push you towards what you really want to become but towards what you can become or could become as soon as possible and try to make a living right away". Thus, it is evident that there has not yet been a transition away from emergency subsistence support to rebuilding the larger structures and systems which will ultimately provide sustainable support. For example, one participant indicated that training individuals will be futile unless larger household economies are also rejuvenated. Yet to do so involves not only re-teaching the values and skills of traditional agricultural production, but also healing the family to function as a cohesive and supportive unit. As well, several participants recognized that skills training programs churn out large quantities of students but very few are able to utilize these skills given the lack of markets for their trades. These training programs are further hindered by the fact that the north continues to be politically disenfranchised and therefore lacks investment and opportunity for economic growth. Thus, the success of skills training

programs is largely predicated on the well-being and successful functioning of the larger systems within which these individuals are embedded, such as their families, communities, culture, and political system. However, as described in the preceding sections, many of these structures have been significantly weakened by the conflict and post-conflict initiatives and efforts aimed at rebuilding them continue to face significant barriers.

6.5: Conclusion

In summary, this chapter has argued that some post-conflict initiatives have disrupted both the structure and function of various ecological systems within which CBCs exist. While some of these disruptions have undoubtedly had positive impacts, they have also in many ways had negative, albeit often unintentional, consequences. Based on the data presented it is evident that post-conflict initiatives are varied in their ability to support the resilience of CBCs and that there is still room for post-conflict initiatives to improve and better equip ecological systems to provide support for CBCs.

At the level of the macrosystem, this chapter has argued that post-conflict initiatives have in part perpetuated the general unwillingness of the central government to support the northern Acholi regions. As well, while the conflict disrupted the ways in which individuals, families, and communities practice their culture, post-conflict initiatives have arguably failed to restore the protective capabilities of the Acholi culture. With regard to the exosystem, the landscape of resources and support for youth has been altered with the emergence of post-conflict initiatives that have introduced new actors. While some of these have been beneficial for youth, not all are adequately equipped to support youth in general, and CBCs in particular, in a long-term and sustainable way. As

well, this chapter noted that these new actors have led to a distancing of youth from traditional support systems within their communities. Finally, it has demonstrated that the changes to both the function and the structure of the microsystem have negatively impacted CBCs through the inability or unwillingness of families to absorb CBCs, or the inability of family systems to adequately support CBCs in their care as a result of the trauma and poverty caused by the conflict.

Chapter 7: Conclusion

Given that this project has been exploratory in nature, with no similar studies of its kind, it has produced numerous and wide ranging results. The answer to the primary research question, "what impacts have post-conflict aid and development initiatives had on the resilience of children born in captivity?" has been developed throughout the body of this thesis, nevertheless, it can be summarized in two overarching points: 1. That in many cases they have either failed to remedy, or in some instances perpetuated the negative impacts of the conflict; and 2. That there are some initiatives that recognize the necessity of social ecologically based interventions and are seeking to implement programs based on this model, ultimately resulting in more positive results. These conclusions provoke insights that are significant for the future of policy development in the region. Thus, several brief policy recommendations will be provided towards the end of this chapter.

7.1: The Failure or Harm of Post-Conflict Initiatives

The preceding chapters have given various examples which support the first conclusion that many initiatives have either failed to remedy, or at worst perpetuated some of the negative impacts of the conflict. This is largely a result of the negative effects that both the conflict and the initiatives which emerged in response to it have had on the structures and systems that surround children born in captivity. For example, as discussed in chapter five, the conflict significantly eroded people's connections to their cultural heritage, while post-conflict initiatives have largely failed to sufficiently rectify this loss. To properly address this lost, an important aspect of programming would be to facilitate a space where families and communities are able to come together to pass on this knowledge and these traditions. However, as many people continue to struggle with

meeting their more immediate needs, the ability to create such a space is limited. Related, as explained in chapter five, while the conflict disrupted the practice of many relevant conflict resolution mechanisms, post-conflict initiatives have in some cases also failed to adequately re-establish these mechanisms.

Moreover, many of the ecological systems surrounding children born in captivity have in some cases become sources of adversity themselves. For example, while much of the existing resilience literature, particularly concerning conflict settings, has acknowledged the importance of positive family relationships in building youth resilience, it also recognizes the frailty of these relationships in conflict and post-conflict settings. Findings from this study are congruent with this insofar as participants frequently referred to instances of child neglect, abuse, and abandonment. As well, while the literature discussed in chapter 3 described the positive influence that a strong sense of belonging within a community can have on youth resilience, examples given in chapters 5 and 6 demonstrate that the community itself is not uncommonly a source of adversity for children born in captivity given the stigmatization and discrimination experienced by CBCs in their communities. As demonstrated in the previous two chapters, such adversity has in some cases been exacerbated by post-conflict interventions. This is not to say however, that these initiatives are the cause of these sources of adversity, as in many cases this can be more accurately related to the effects of the conflict itself.

Based on the data collected, two possible explanations for why post-conflict initiatives have functioned in this way can be offered. First, as noted in section 5.4, many of the initiatives in the immediate aftermath of the conflict were overwhelmed with the current, emergency needs of the people affected by the conflict, not limited to those born in captivity, and therefore were unable to provide sufficient care for those that they were

intended to help. Aa a result, people continue to suffer from both physical and mental ailments, as they had not been adequately cared for. A lack of sufficient resources to tackle the scale of people affected may explain why such initiatives were unable to properly meet people's needs. Despite the millions of dollars in aid and development money that has been poured into the region since the conflict, participants noted in interviews and informal conversation that corruption is rampant across Uganda, thereby limiting the percentage of funds that reach their intended recipients. Of the funds and resources that did find their way to Gulu, they were not always distributed in a way that was best suited to meet people's needs. For instance, as described in section 5.1, much of the funding and resources that emerged as a result of the infamous Kony 2012 campaign was funnelled into tangible projects such as the building or upgrading of schools or temporary sports leagues[7]. This is similar to trends noted in post-conflict Sierra Leone where the rehabilitation of conflict-affected youth has not been as attractive to foreign donors as infrastructure construction and other tangible and readily measurable projects. Thus, while some large donors have contributed in some ways to post-conflict reconstruction in Gulu, the benefits of these contributions are not felt by some of the society's most vulnerable members as the ways these donors have chosen to contribute are not necessarily consistent with the needs of the people they are targeting.

A second explanation that supports this first conclusion is that the influx of aid and development into the region following the conflict has created a cycle in which government agencies and bodies are dis-incentivized from intervening. However, positive government engagement in the region's post-conflict reconstruction and rehabilitation

---

[7] During an informal conversation, one participant described a volleyball league that was established by the organization receiving funding from the Kony 2012 campaign and how due to mismanagement and a lack of engagement with the community, it was cancelled not long after it had been established.

was cited by several participants as being necessary to effect meaningful and sustainable change. Consequently, for instance, while political disengagement from the region has been cited as a stimulus for the conflict, as described in section 5.1 the persistence of aid and development initiatives in the region has failed to change this insofar as it has enabled the further disengagement of the government from post-conflict reconstruction in the region. Thus, a paradox currently exists in which humanitarian and development organizations are unable to provide the best standard of care, given that it would require a higher degree of government and political action, yet cannot exit the region for fear of causing more harm to those they have been intending to support in the process. Therefore, the reality for some initiatives may be that although they recognize the need for greater government engagement, they continue to operate in its absence, thereby continuing to make minimal or ineffectual change.

7.2: The Increase of Socio-Ecologically Based Interventions

Based on the data collected a second conclusion can be drawn, which is that some initiatives have recognized the necessity to provide interventions that are based on a social ecological approach[8], and such interventions are being implemented more frequently than in the past. Almost all the initiatives from which data was drawn for this study had some component of community mobilization, engagement, or capacity building, or to a lesser extent family empowerment and reconciliation. One possible explanation for this is that people's needs in northern Uganda have changed since the immediate aftermath of the conflict. Where once the most pressing need was to heal

---

[8] While these initiatives may not be familiar with the formal theory of social ecology and its various intricacies, this project has provided evidence that its main principle, highlighting the importance of the structures surrounding individuals, is being put into practice through these initiatives.

physical ailments, return to one's land, and reunite with family, the people of northern Uganda are now faced with addressing the longer-term impacts of the conflict. Consequently, the focus of current interventions is on rebuilding the larger systems and institutions that were damaged or destroyed during the conflict. Part of attending to these long-term impacts is starting to rebuild and revitalize some of the larger environments that empower and support individuals, and that act as positive facilitators of resilience. Thus, it is arguable that these types of needs are more conducive to interventions which incorporate the various systems that surround individuals. Therefore, more initiatives are seemingly starting to work with communities, albeit with varying degree of success. Thus, while I cannot draw any definitive conclusions in this regard, given that I was not present in the region during the immediate aftermath of conflict and therefore did not witness the types of initiatives that took place then, there are at least some indications that there is a shift in the way some post-conflict initiatives function in the current era.

However, the types of initiatives that seek to build the capacity of individual, families, and communities represent a shift in the way that aid and development initiatives have thus far been carried out. As described in section 5.5, for many people in northern Uganda the norm of initiatives has been that of handouts in the form of free subsistence materials, free vocational training, free start up kits, and education scholarships. As such, and as previously quoted, some recipients are resistant to longer term, more social ecological types of interventions, instead preferring the more hand to mouth style that they have grown accustomed to. This resistance, and the challenges that some initiatives face in attempting to implement interventions based on supporting and revitalizing the larger structures that will ultimately support individuals far past the

mandate of any one initiative, provokes broader questions about the way we do development and give aid.

In order to better support the resilience of children born in captivity and other conflict-affected youth, and to promote greater post-conflict reconstruction and rehabilitation, this project has presented a case for shifting away from reliance on foreign or external actors and towards enhancing the capabilities of existing internal structures such as families, schools, communities, kinship and faith networks, and local political structures. Yet, in addition to the challenges noted thus far in attempting to do so, such a model is also likely to be relatively incongruent with the current system of humanitarian and development work as it is founded on an undeniable degree of self-preservation. This is to say that if post-conflict initiatives were to function in the way that this thesis has argued in favour of, they would inevitably put themselves out of existence given that they exist only so long as there is an issue that demands their intervention and assistance. To have various existing ecological systems regain their abilities to act as support structures would be to obviate the need for development and aid initiatives, at least to some degree.

It cannot be denied that some initiatives do operate in such a manner. One indication of this which became evident throughout the course of this research, is the adoption of the NGO or non-profit model by local people in Gulu. On the one hand this can be interpreted as a powerful sign of the people of Gulu taking ownership of their well-being and attempting to implement more grass-roots based solutions. Yet it is also a stark reminder of the extent to which NGOs, non-profits, and other such organizations have become entrenched in the fabric of Gulu society, with many choosing to base their livelihood in forming their own organizations. For instance, several of the local organizations that participated in this study were formed by Ugandans who had benefitted

from post-conflict skills training programs delivered by international humanitarian and development agencies and then chose to open their own similar organization rather than, or in addition to, practicing the skill they had learned. Similarly, as cited in section 6.4, the most successful graduates from one large vocational training school in Gulu were those that were able to open their own training school or program themselves.

However, this is not to say that all initiatives in the region are fuelled by motivations of self-preservation. Rather, many of the participants that took part in this study expressed the long-term vision for the initiative in which they were participating as enabling community, kinship, and other local structures to resume their roles as facilitators of support and resilience for the people of northern Uganda. Until such initiatives - defying the self-propagating norm of humanitarian and development work, and functioning with the understanding that success is achieved when they are no longer needed - become the majority of those in operation the cycle of ineffectual change will likely continue. In essence, this thesis calls for a dramatic reconceptualization of how development and aid work is carried out and for the future of such work to be one in which its very existence is temporary and based on restoring the supportive capabilities of the communities it works within. While this may appear to be an idealized or overzealous proposal, it is a necessary one to bring about meaningful change for the very people that humanitarian and development work claims to serve.

7.3: Policy Recommendations

In order to advance initiatives that resemble a social ecological approach to resilience building, there are several policies that would likely need to be enacted. The following is a brief description of some of the types of policies that could potentially aid

in achieving such an end. At the core of many of these recommendations is a need for greater engagement from political actors within the central government in Kampala.

Firstly, more funding that originates from a more local source, rather than from external or foreign actors for humanitarian and development initiatives in Gulu has the potential to positively impact how initiatives are carried out. Decreasing the reliance on foreign donors and funding agencies would ideally minimize the degree to which local organizations are required to abandon or reconfigure their own goals and what they perceive to be the best course of action in favour of the goals and priorities of the funding agency, which have been shown to be at odds with what local organizations perceive to be needed in some cases. However, given the degree of indifference that Kampala has historically demonstrated towards the northern regions and the Acholi people in particular, this type of engagement from the capital, while ideal, would undoubtedly be difficult to achieve.

In some respects, Gulu represents a region ripe with potential and the opportunity for investment. Based on the argument introduced in chapter one, Gulu's large youth population represents significant developmental capability and potential capacity for economic growth, albeit with the right types of investment. As well, its position as the hub of the northern region, coupled with the presence of international actors and bodies, provides opportunities for new partnerships and developments. For instance, in an informal conversation with one respondent, he discussed how he has developed friendships with various expatriates from Europe that helped him establish business relationships that have recently resulted in a new business opportunity in which he will be importing large number of dairy products to Gulu. Such new economic investments in the region by external actors may assist in enticing further investments from the historically

apathetic central government. Thus, while Gulu is in some ways in a good position to negotiate new partnerships and investments with Kampala, rebuilding the relationship between Uganda's northern and southern regions will inevitably take time.

As well, there can be no guarantee that funding and investments from the Ugandan government would reflect different priorities from those of international contributors. The hope in greater engagement from the central government is that any requirements tied to funding for humanitarian and development opportunities would better reflect the needs of Ugandans in Gulu. Yet there is not necessarily any guarantee that this would be a feasible reality for the present period. Consequently, greater efforts by the international community and foreign donor agencies to engage with local partners in Uganda's northern regions to provide funding and support that aligns more closely with the needs of local people and local organizations may be a more viable resolution in the short term. While more productive ways to engage with the central government in Kampala remain a priority to be pursued, addressing the deficiencies in the ways that donor agencies currently engage with the region also need to be simultaneously pursued.

Secondly, with increased funding comes a need for greater regulation and oversight of the humanitarian and development activities taking place in Gulu. Given the historical marginalization of the north by the capital region, the central government in Kampala may not be a viable option for this oversight. It stands to reason therefore, that this oversight could come from the regional and local governments of the Acholi region. Greater oversight should most importantly include stricter standards for the creation and operation of NGOs or other such organizations in the region. Doing so would not only reduce the amount of program and activity duplication taking place, but would also ensure that organizations have the necessary funding and resources to carry out their

mandates without risking greater harm to those they seek to help. Greater oversight would also include a revitalization of the NGO forum to ensure that best practices are shared and adhered to. Given that the forum in its current form is not well attended, it is likely that participation would need to be made a mandatory requirement to retaining an organization's certification, in order to prompt greater attendance.

Thirdly, the education system in Gulu needs significant reforms that must originate from policy and decision makers within the government. While such a response from Kampala may not be a reasonable expectation, many of these reforms would inevitably fall to local and regional decision makers. Most importantly, UPE needs to be reinstated in some fashion to match people's needs and expectations in Gulu. This would involve shifting from a system of enrollment based subsidies to schools, to truly universal education in which students are not required to make monetary or in-kind payments. While this would likely increase student enrollment and retention rates, simultaneous changes to both the teacher's college and the curriculum would also be required. In addressing the deficiencies of the teacher's college, higher entrance requirements would need to be established in order to ensure only the highest quality applicants are accepted. While teaching is not currently a highly desired profession, many of the reasons given for this stemmed from the fact that the requirements to do so are low. As such, increasing the enrollment standards for teachers' colleges, is an initial step to begin changing perceptions of teaching as a career choice. Many participants acknowledged the need for a curriculum overhaul, while also recognizing that such a change would need to come from the central government in Kampala and cannot be achieved by aid and development agencies alone. Such a new curriculum would need to be premised on a greater emphasis towards understanding concepts rather than the memorization of facts. As participants

noted, the quality of education was significantly better in Kampala than in Gulu, in part given that the quality of teachers' colleges and therefore the quality of teachers themselves, was regarded to be higher in the urban centre. A new curriculum with adaptations to suit the ethno-regional context of northern Uganda, is a viable starting point to enact such changes.

Fourthly, the reopening of the school which was initially built specifically to assist children born in captivity to re-enter the formal education system is essential. As several participants noted, children born in captivity face several distinctive challenges when attempting to reintegrate into formal education, including being far behind other students of a similar age, facing stigmatization and discrimination, and grappling with psychological trauma that may impair their ability to function in a classroom setting. As such, there is a pressing need for an institution that is dedicated solely to children born in captivity and the unique academic and learning difficulties that they may face. The re-establishment of this school would likely increase the number of children born in captivity that are able to attain, at minimum, a primary level of education which would in effect increase their ability to gain legitimate employment, thereby lessening their reliance on more precarious means of subsistence such as prostitution or gambling.

Lastly, greater funding and political support needs to be given to the cultural institutions in Gulu, in order to ensure that they are able to carry out much needed traditional conflict and dispute resolution practices. More significant, however, is the need for greater collaboration between leaders of cultural institutions and leaders within the central government. As argued in section 5.3, there are a variety of different understandings of what justice should look like in northern Uganda, some of which conflict with each other. In addition, participants noted that the ability for cultural

institutions to carry out some traditional practices, such as various mediation rituals, is limited by the fact that they may conflict with more conventional justice seeking mechanisms such as formal trials and jail sentences for perpetrators. Thus, greater collaboration between state authorities and cultural institutions is needed to reconcile different perceptions what appropriate justice looks like and implement methods that are culturally appropriate and meet the needs of the people of northern Uganda.

While these policies in no way form an exhaustive list of the measure that need to be taken, they are a small indication of some of the first steps needed to begin to foster positive change. They are also the policies that can be most readily discerned from the data provided in this thesis, and in some cases, represent the policies that participants themselves advocated. While they demonstrate a small fraction of the work that still needs to be done, they are also a reminder that Gulu and much of the northern region of Uganda is still very much a society in transition. As one participant stated, "the guns have fallen silent but the war that is within the community is still unresolved, the community needs healing". The international community has seen many crises since the onset of the war in northern Uganda; funding, media attention, and the concern of the general public in western donor countries has since moved on. Yet the people of northern Uganda are still healing from the immense traumas they endured and fighting to rebuild a sense of normalcy. This thesis offers a reminder that while Gulu may no longer dominate our social media feeds, the headlines of our newspapers, or our class discussions, its people continue to endure pain and suffering that cannot be overcome as easily as pressing unfollow, flipping the page, or handing in a paper.

Appendix 1: Information Sheet

**Understanding Ecologies: Post-Conflict Service Provision
and the Resilience of Children Born in Captivity**
Information Sheet

Introduction- I am a graduate student studying International Development Studies at Dalhousie University in Canada and I invite you to take part in my research project. This research is in no way connected to any other governmental, institutional, or educational research studies, past or present. While this project is funded by the Social Science and Humanities Research Council of Canada, and the Queen Elizabeth Scholarship program, neither body has influence over the questions that will be asked in the interview, nor will they have influence over the final analysis and report resulting from this research. Your participation in this research project is entirely voluntary and you may withdraw your participation at any time until it has been analyzed (June 30, 2017). If you decide to participate you will be one of approximately 20-30 participants who will be interviewed. You will not be compensated for your participation in this project.

Study Purpose- The purpose of this study is to better understand the lives of children born in captivity, as well as the environments that they are exposed to by examining perceptions of, interactions with, and responses to the needs of these children. This interview should take between one and 1.5 hours and will be conducted at a time and place that is most convenient for you. With your consent the interview will be audio recorded and handwritten notes will be taken throughout the interview in order to verify content and ensure accuracy in understanding your responses.

Who Will Conduct the Research- I, Alina Dixon, will be carrying out this research project under the guidance and supervision of my two research supervisors, Dr. David Black and Dr. Shelly Whitman, both of whom are from Dalhousie University in Canada. The Romeo Dallaire Child Soldier Initiative and the Justice and Reconciliation Project (JRP) are providing only logistical support and will not be privy to any information related to this project.

How Respondents Were Selected- You were selected to participate in this project because I was given your name by _____, and you or the organization that you are affiliated with either currently works or supports children born in captivity, or youth in general, or has done so in the past. As such you are in a position to a) describe the way in which you and your organization engage and interact with children born in captivity and youth more generally and b) discuss what you and your organization have seen to be some of the most significant circumstances and challenges that these children face. I have no official relationship with any of the organizations that have helped with the facilitation of this project and no organization is privy to any information related to this research.

Anonymity & Confidentiality- All information that you share during this interview will remain confidential. Your name, address, and other personal and potentially identifying

information will not be used in the final report of this project, nor will it be shared with anyone else. Where direct quotes are used, it will only be done with the use of a pseudonym (false name) so that your identity is protected. All audio-recordings, transcripts, and notes from the interview will be kept in a secure location at all times and audio-recordings will be destroyed following transcription. Upon your request on the following *Consent Form*, you will be given a copy of your transcribed interview to review for accuracy.

Potential Risks and Benefits- While it is not anticipated that this research project will pose any risk to you, should you feel uncomfortable or distressed at any point during, or following the interview you are free to withdraw your participation and any information that you have provided will be destroyed. You may withdraw your information at any point up until the data has been analyzed (June 30, 2017). After this point, you may not withdraw your data. As well, while it is not anticipated that this project will provide any direct benefits to you, it is my hope that by participating in this project you will have an opportunity to contribute to the limited existing knowledge on children born in captivity. During the research project all electronic data will be encrypted, password protected, and stored on a Dalhousie approved online server. All hard copy data will be scanned to an electronic version and stored on the same aforementioned server. All hard copy data will them be destroyed. All data will remain on this server for 5 years following the completion of this project. After this point all data will be destroyed.

Voluntary Participation- Your participation in this research project is entirely voluntary. If you agree to participate you may choose not to answer any questions and you are free to withdraw your participation from the study at any point. If you wish to withdraw your participation any information that you have provided will be destroyed.

Consent- Following this page is the *Consent Form*, on which you will be able to indicate your agreement to participate in this study. You may either sign your consent on the *Consent Form*, or you may indicate that you will give your consent verbally. If you choose to give verbal consent this will be audio-recorded prior to the interview. You will be given a copy of this Information Sheet and the Consent Form, signed by myself as the principal investigator, for your information.

Research Results- On the following Consent Form you will be able to indicate whether you would like a copy of your interview transcript for you to review. If you wish to have a copy of your transcript it will be either emailed or post mailed to the address of your choice. As well, you may indicate on the Consent Form is you wish to have a condensed version of the final report sent to you. I welcome any feedback that you would like to share with my throughout the research process. If you have any questions please feel free to contact myself (Alina Dixon) in the Department of International Development Studies (256-793-407-668 (Uganda), 000-1-902-579-2419 (Canada)), David Black in the Department of Political Science at Dalhousie University (000-1-902-494-6638 or david.black@dal.ca), or Shelly Whitman at the Romeo Dallaire Child Soldier Initiative at Dalhousie University (000-1-902-494-6846 or shelly@childsoldiers.org)

Problems or Concerns- If you have any difficulties with, or wish to voice concern about any aspect of this research project you may contact Catherine Connors, Director of Dalhousie University's Office of Human Research Ethics Administration at 0-1-902-494-1462 or Catherine.connors@dal.ca, or Dr. Martin Ogwang, Chairperson of the Lacor Hospital Institutional Research and Ethic Committee (LHIREC) at 256-772-593-901 or ogwang.martin@lacorhospital.org.

I am very grateful for you time and thank you in advance for participating in this project.

Sincerely,

Alina Dixon, Principal Investigator
Dept. of International Development
Studies
Dalhousie University
6135 University Avenue, Room 3038
Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada, B3H 4R2
Phone: 256-793-407-668 (Uganda)
Phone: 000-1-902-579-2419 (Canada)
Email: al871381@dal.ca

David Black, Research Supervisor
Dept. of Political Science
Dalhousie University
6299 South Street, Room 301
Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada, B3H 4R2
Phone: 000-1-902-494-6638
Email: david.black@dal.ca

Shelly Whitman, Research Supervisor
Romeo Dallaire Child Soldier Initiative
Dalhousie University
6299 South Street, Room 343
Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada, B3H 4R2
Phone: 000-1-902-494-6846
Email: shelly@childsoldiers.org

Appendix 2: Consent Form (Interviewer Copy)

Understanding Ecologies: Post-Conflict Service Provision
and the Resilience of Children Born in Captivity
Consent Form (Interviewer Copy)

My verbal or signed consent indicates that I have agreed to participant in this research project. The project has been explained to me and I have read the Information Sheet or had it read out loud to me. I have been given a copy of both the Information Sheet and the Consent Form to keep. I have been given the opportunity to discuss either form and my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I understand that I have been asked to take part in one interview that will occur at a location acceptable to me, and that that with my agreement the interview will be audio-recorded and the interviewer will take hand written notes. I understand that unless I request that my actual name be disclosed, any information that I provide will be used in research reports in a non-identifying manner. I understand that direct quotes of things I say may be used in the final report but without identifying me. I also understand that the final interpretation and analysis of the data remains with the principal investigator. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw from the study at any time prior to June 30, 2017. I understand that if I choose to withdraw my participation from this study, any information that I have provided will be destroyed. I understand that I cannot withdraw my data after June 30, 2017. I also understand that I am free to not answer any questions that I am uncomfortable with or choose not to disclose answers to. Lastly, I understand that although this project is being funded by the Social Science and Humanities Research Council of Canada, and the Queen Elizabeth Scholarship program, neither body has influence over the questions that will be asked in the interview, nor will they have influence over the final analysis and report resulting from this research.

I agree to have this interview audio-recorded: Yes □ No □

When quoted directly in research reports I would like my real name to be used: Yes □ No □

When quoted directly in research reports I would like a false name to be used: Yes □ No □

If yes, I would like the following alias to be used:

_____

I would like a copy of my transcribed interview to be emailed or mailed to be for review: Yes □ No □

I would like a copy of the initial draft report to be emailed or mailed to me: Yes □ No □

I would like a condensed version of the final research report to be emailed or mailed to me: Yes □ No □

_____
(email or post address)

Participant Signature: _____ Date: _____

Principal Investigator Signature: _____ Date: _____

Appendix 3: Consent Form (Interviewee Copy)

**Understanding Ecologies: Post-Conflict Service Provision
and the Resilience of Children Born in Captivity**
Consent Form (Interviewee Copy)

My verbal or signed consent indicates that I have agreed to participant in this research project. The project has been explained to me and I have read the Information Sheet or had it read out loud to me. I have been given a copy of both the Information Sheet and the Consent Form to keep. I have been given the opportunity to discuss either form and my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I understand that I have been asked to take part in one interview that will occur at a location acceptable to me, and that that with my agreement the interview will be audio-recorded and the interviewer will take hand written notes. I understand that unless I request that my actual name be disclosed, any information that I provide will be used in research reports in a non-identifying manner. I understand that direct quotes of things I say may be used in the final report but without identifying me. I also understand that the final interpretation and analysis of the data remains with the principal investigator. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw from the study at any time prior to June 30, 2017. I understand that if I choose to withdraw my participation from this study, any information that I have provided will be destroyed. I understand that I cannot withdraw my data after June 30, 2017. I also understand that I am free to not answer any questions that I am uncomfortable with or choose not to disclose answers to. Lastly, I understand that although this project is being funded by the Social Science and Humanities Research Council of Canada, and the Queen Elizabeth Scholarship program, neither body has influence over the questions that will be asked in the interview, nor will they have influence over the final analysis and report resulting from this research.

I agree to have this interview audio-recorded: Yes □ No □

When quoted directly in research reports I would like my real name to be used: Yes □ No □

When quoted directly in research reports I would like a false name to be used: Yes □ No □

If yes, I would like the following alias to be used:
_____

I would like a copy of my transcribed interview to be emailed or mailed to be for review: Yes □ No □

I would like a copy of the initial draft report to be emailed or mailed to me: Yes □ No □

I would like a condensed version of the final research report to be emailed or mailed to me: Yes □ No □

Participant Signature: _____ Date: _____

Principal Investigator Signature: _____ Date: _____

Appendix 4: Interview Guide

**Understanding Ecologies: Post-Conflict Service Provision
and the Resilience of Children Born in Captivity**

Interview Guide

Interviewee Code: _____

Date: _____   Place: _____

Interview time- Start: _____   Finish: _____

Comments on the Interview:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Section A: Intro/ Background

A1: How long have you been working with [*name of organization*]/ doing [*name of activity/ service involved in*]
A2: Can you tell me about how you got involved in [*line of work of interviewee*]?
A3: What's the most rewarding part of your work?

Section B: Conflict

B1: [If not already answered] How long has [*name of organization, school, etc.*] been working here in Gulu? [*pre or post conflict*]

-[*If pre-conflict*] Did the conflict change the work you do or the way you do it? If so how?

-[*If post-conflict*] What brought you/ [*name of organization*] here?

B2: Based on your experience, what was the biggest impact that the conflict had on youth in general in Gulu?

B3: What were some of the biggest challenges the conflict created for youth here?

-Do those challenges still exist?

-[*If yes*], have they changed at all since then?

-[*If no*], are there any other significant challenges that youth face today?

[*probe for more detail if appropriate*]

Section C: CBC Service/ Care Provision

C1: What kind of support do you provide for children who are born in captivity?
C2: Are there other organizations that are providing the same or similar service?

i) [*If yes*] What have your interactions with them been like?

-Is there anything that makes what you do unique?

ii) [*If no/ follow-up*] Do you have interactions with any other youth support services or groups?

-Can you tell me a bit about what those interactions have been like?

C3: Are there any obstacles that you/ your organization face in trying to deliver your service?

Section D: Children Born in Captivity

D1: Do you think there are unique challenges that only children born in captivity face?

i) [*If yes*] What are they?

ii) [*If no*] Why not?

D2: From your perspective, what does successful integration of children born in captivity into communities look like?

i) What kinds of of things might get in the way of this?

D3: What do you think children born in captivity need the most when they are integrating into a community?

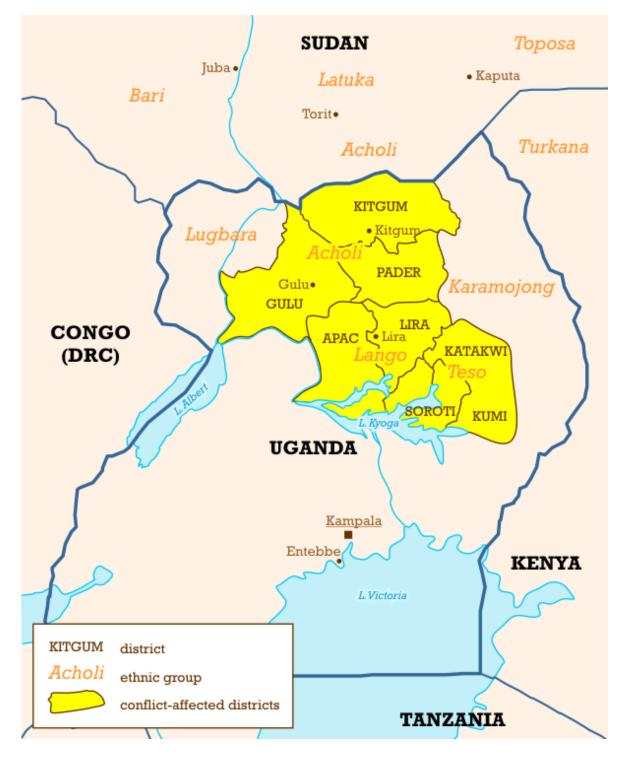i) Are they getting/ being provided with this? [*If no*] Why not?

D4: From your experience what are some of the reactions in a community when a child born in captivity comes?

i) What kind of factors effect/ cause this?

Section E: Concluding Remarks

E1: Is there anything that would like to add that you feel is significant that I either didn't touch on or you feel that we did not discuss in enough detail?
E2: Do you have any remaining questions for me about this project

Appendix 5: Map of Northern Uganda Regions

Vormdicht, M. D. (2012, April 6). Uganda districts affected by Lord's Resistance Army [Digital image]. Retrieved February 10, 2018, from https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File: Ugandan_districts_affected_by_Lords_Resistance_Army.png

Bibliography

Aguto, M. O. (2012). *Children's participation in peace building process in Gulu District, northern Uganda* (master's thesis). Norwegian University of Science and Technology.

Akello, G. (2013). Experiences of forced mothers in northern Uganda: the legacy of war. *Intervention*, (11)2, 149-156.

Akello, G., Richters, A., & Reis, R. (2006). Reintegration of former child soldiers in northern Uganda: Coming to terms with children's agency and accountability. *Intervention*, 4(3): 229-243.

Akena, C. (2013). *Rehabilitation centre for Uganda's LRA returnees to close*. Retrieved from http://www.irinnews.org/news/2013/01/18/rehabilitation-centre-uganda's-lra-returnees-close.

Amony, E. (2015). *I am Evelyn Amony: Reclaiming my life from the Lord's Resistance Army*.

E. Bains (Ed.). Madison, WI:The University of Wisconsin Press.
Apio, E. (2007). Uganda's forgotten children of war. In R. C. Carpenter (Ed.), *Born of war: Protecting children of sexual violence survivors* (94-109). Connecticut: Kumarian Press Inc.

Apio, E. (2008). *Bearing the burden of blame- The children born of the lord's resistance army, northern Uganda*. Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers. Retrieved from http://mhpss.net/?get=54/1367708997-ChildrenofFormerlyAbductedGirls-Uganda-Opio-2008.pdf.

Bender, G. (2011). Post conflict reconstruction in Africa: Lessons from Sierra Leone. *Insight on Africa*, 3(1): 71-90.

Betancourt, T. S., McBain, R., Newnham, E. A., & Brennan, R. T. (2012). Trajectories of internalizing problems in war-affected Sierra Leonean youth: Examining conflict and post conflict factors. *Child Development*, 84(2): 455-470.

Betancourt, T. S., McBain, R., Newnham, E. A., & Brennan, R. T. (2014). Context matters: Community characteristics and mental health among war-affected youth in Sierra Leone. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry*, 55(3), 217-226.

Bevan, J. (2007). The myth of madness: Cold rationality and 'resource' plunder by the Lord's Resistance Army. *Civil Wars*, 9(4), 343-358.

Boothby, N., Strang, A., & Wessells, M. (2006). Introduction. In N. Boothby, A. Strang, M. Wessells (Eds.), *A world turned upside down: Social ecological approaches to children in war zones* (pp. 1-18). Bloomfield: Kumarian Press Inc.

Bowen, G. L., & Chapman, M. V. (1996). Poverty, neighborhood danger, social support, and the individual adaptation among at-risk youth in urban areas. *Journal of family issues*, 17(5): 641-666.

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1977). Toward an experimental ecology of human development. *American Psychologist*, 32(7), 513-531.

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1979). Contexts of child rearing: Problems and prospects. *American Psychologist*, 43 (10), 844-850.

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1986). Ecology of the family as a context for human development: Research perspectives. *Developmental Psychology*, 22(6), 723-742.

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1989). Ecological systems theory. In A. Vasta (Ed.), *Six theories of child development: Revises Formulations and current issues*. Connecticut: JAI Press.

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1994). Ecological models of human development. In *International Encyclopedia of Education, Vol. 2, 2nd Ed.* (pp. 1643-1647). Oxford: Elsevier.

Carpenter, R.C. (2007). *Born of war: protecting children of sexual violence survivors in conflict zones*. Bloomfield, CT: Kumarian Press, Inc.

Carpenter, R. C. (2009). 'A fresh crop of human misery: Representations of Bosnian 'war babies' in the global print media, 1991-2006. *Millennium- Journal of International Studies*, 38(1), 25-54.

Carpenter, R. C. (2010). *Forgetting children born of war: Setting the human rights agenda in Bosnia and beyond*. New York, NY: Columbia University Press.

Children as Peacebuilders International. (2015). Children born in captivity: Analysis of database findings. Linda Dale.

Choe, D. E., Zimmerman, M. A., & Devnarain, B. (2012). Youth violence in South Africa: Exposure, Attitudes, and Resilience in Zulu Adolescents. *Violence and Victims*, 27(2): 166-181.

Cincotta, R. P. (2009). *How democracies grow up: Countries with too many young people may not have a fighting chance at freedom*. Retrieved from http://foreignpolicy.com/2009/10/09/how-democracies-grow-up/.

Colletta, N. and Cullen, N. 2006. *Violent conflict and the transformation of social capital*. New York: World Bank.

Cook, K. V. (2000). "You have to have somebody watching your back, and if that's God, then that's mighty big": The church's role in the resilience of inner-city youth. *Adolescence*, 35(140): 717-730.

Crawley, K., & Simic, O. (2012). Unintended consequences: Representations of Rwandan women and their children born from rape. *Australian Feminist Law Journal*, 26(1), 87-106.

Creswell, J. W. (2003). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches, Second Edition.* California: Sage Publications Ltd.

Creswell, J. W. (2008). In *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches, Third Edition*. California: Sage Publications Ltd.

Criss, M. M., Pettit, G. S., Bates, J. E., Dodge, K. A., & Lapp, A. L. (2002). Family adversity, positive peer relationships, and children's externalizing behaviour: A longitudinal perspective on risk and resilience. *Child Development*, 73(4), 1220-1237.

Cummings, E. A., Goeke-Morey, M. C., Schermerhorn, A. C., Merrilees, C. E., & Cairns, E. (2009). Children and political violence from a social ecological perspective Implications from research on children and families in Northern Ireland. *Clinical Child and Family Psychological Review*, 12, 16-38.

Daniel-Wrabetez, J. (2007). Children born of war rape in Bosnia-Herzegovina and the Convention on the Rights of the Child. In R. C. Carpenter (Ed.), *Born of war: Protecting children of sexual violence survivors in conflict zones* (pp. 21-39). Connecticut: Kumarian Press.

DeLaet, D. (2007). Theorizing justice for children born of war. In R. C. Carpenter (Ed.), *Born of war: Protecting children of sexual violence survivors in conflict zones* (pp. 128-148). Connecticut: Kumarian Press.

Denov, M., & Lakor, A. (2017). When war is better than peace: The post-conflict realities of children born of wartime rape in northern Uganda. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 65: 255-265.

DePoy, E., & Gitlin, L. (1998). *Introduction to research: Understanding and applying multiple strategies*, 2nd Edition. St. Louis: Mosby Inc.

Earls, F., & Carlson, M. (2001). The social ecology of child health and well-being. *Annual Review of Public Health*, 22, 143-166.

Ensor, M. O. (2013). Drinking the bitter roots: Gendered youth, transitional justice and reconciliation across the south Sudan-Uganda border. *African Conflict & Peacebuilding Review*, 3(2): 171-194.

Erdem, G. & Slesnick, N. (2010). That which does not kill you makes us stronger: Runaway youth's resilience to depression in the family context. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 802): 195-203.

Erjavec, K. (2010). Living with the sins of their fathers: An analysis of self-representation of adolescents born of war rape. *Journal of Adolescent Research*, 25(3), 359-386.

Erjavec, K., Volcic, Z. (2010). Living with the sins of their fathers: An analysis of self-representation of adolescents born of war rape. *Journal of Adolescent Research*, 25(3), 359-386.

Fitzpatrick, K. M., & Boldizar, J. P. (1993). The prevalence and consequences of exposure to violence among African-American youth. *Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry*, 32(2): 424-430.

Global IDP Project. (2005, August 10). *Profile of internal displacement: Uganda*. Retrieved from http://www.internaldisplacement.org/assets/library/Africa/Uganda /pdf/Uganda-August-2005.pdf

Gorman-Smith, D., Tolan, P., & Henry, D. (2005). Promoting resilience in the inner city: Families as a venue for protection, support, and opportunity. In R. Dev. Peters, B. Leadbetter, & R. J. McMahon (Eds.), *Resilience in children, families and communities: Linking context to practice and policy* (pp. 137-155). New York: Kluwer Academic/ Plenum Publishers.

Hammack, P. L., Richards, M. H., Luo, Z., Edlynn, E. S., & Roy, K. (2004). Social support factors as moderators of community violence exposure among inner-city African America young adolescents. *Journal of Clinical Child and Adolescent Psychology*. 33(3): 450-462.

Hall, B. J., Tol, W. A., Jordans, M. J. D., Bass, J., & de Jong, J. (2014). Understanding resilience in armed conflict: Social resources and mental health of children in Burundi. *Social Science & Medicine*, 114: 121-128.

Harris, R. (1993). The "child of the barbarian": Rape, race and nationalism in France during the First World War. *Past & Present*, 141(1), 170-206.

Hayden, P. (2001). Introduction to Part One: Histories and Theories of Human Rights. In P. Hayden (Ed.), *Philosophy of Human Rights* (pp. 3-10). Michigan: Paragon House.

Hepburn, A. (2006). Running scared: When children become separated in emergencies. In N. Boothby, A. Strong, & M. Wessells (Eds.), *A world turned upside down: Social ecological approaches to children in war zones* (pp. 63-88). Connecticut: Kumarian Press, Inc.

Hoffman, D. (2006). Disagreement: Dissent politics and the war in Sierra Leone. *Africa Today*, 52(3): 3-22.

Human Rights Watch. (2005). *Uprooted and forgotten: Impunity and human rights abuses in northern Uganda*. Retrieved from https://www.hrw.org/report/2005/09/20/uprooted-and-forgotten/impunity-and-human-rights-abuses-northern-uganda.

International Centre for Transitional Justice. (2015). *From rejection to redress: Overcoming legacies of conflict-related sexual violence in Northern Uganda*. Virginie Ladisch. Accessed from https://www.ictj.org/publication/rejection-redress-overcoming-legacies-conflict-sexualviolence-northern-uganda.

International Labour Organization (ILO). (2011). *Youth employment interventions in Africa: A mapping report of the employment and labour sub-cluster of the regional coordination mechanism (RCM) for Africa.* Retrieved from http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---africa/documents/publication/wcms_206325.pdf.

Invernizzi, A. (2003). Street-working children and adolescents in Lima: Work as an agent of socialization. *Childhood*, 10(3): 319-341.

Ishaq, A. (2006). Essay: Development of children's creativity to foster peace. *The Lancet*, 368: S26-S27.

Jahn, G. (2005, May 31). Bosnian children born of war rape asking questions. *NBC News*. Retrieved from http://www.nbcnews.com/id/8007740/ns/world_news-europe/t/bosnia-children-bornof-war-rape-asking-questions/#.VhPNLtbzjIo.

Jain, S., Buka, S. L., Subramanian, S. V., & Molnar, B. E. (2012). Protective factors for youth exposed to violence: Role of developmental assets in building emotional resilience. *Youth, Violence, and Juvenile Justice*, 10(1): 107-129.

Jain, S., & Cohen, A. K. (2013). Fostering resilience among urban youth exposed to violence: A promising area for interdisciplinary research and practice. *Health, Education & Behavior*, 40(6): 651-662.

Jones, G., Lafreniere, K. (2014). Exploring the role of school engagement in predicting resilience among Bahamian youth. *Journal of Black Psychology*, 40(1): 47-68.

Joshi, S. (2012). '*Youth bulge': Calling for higher public investment on child and youth development for greater future returns.* (Working Paper No. 2012/19). Retrieved from https://ideas.repec.org/p/msm/wpaper/2012-19.html.

Joshi, P. T., & O'Connell, D. A. (2003). Consequences of child exposure to war and terrorism. *Clinical Child and Family Psychology Review*, 6(4), 275-292.

Kane, P., Garber, J. (2002). The relations among depression in fathers, children's psychopathology, and father-child conflict: A meta-analysis. *Clinical Psychology Review*, 24: 339-360.

Kasaija P., A. (2008). The international criminal court & the Lord's Resistance Army insurgency in northern Uganda. In A.G. Nhema & P.T. Zeleza (Eds.), *The resolution of African conflicts: The management of conflict resolution & post-conflict reconstruction* (52-71). Addis Ababa: OSSREA.

Kidd, S., & Shahar, G. (2008). Resilience in homeless youth: The key role of self-esteem. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 78(2): 163-172.

Khanlou, N., & Wray, R. (2014). A whole community approach toward child and youth resilience promotion: A review of resilience literature. *International Journal of Mental Health and Addiction*, 12:64-79.

Kidd, S., & Shahar, G. (2008). Resilience in homeless youth: The key role of self-esteem. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 78(2): 163-172.

Kliewer, W., Cunningham, J. N., Diehl, R., Parrish, K. A., Walker, J. M., Atiyeh, C., Neace, B., Duncan, L., Taylor, K., & Majia, R. (2004). Violence exposure and adjustment in inner-city youth: Child and caregiver emotion regulation skill, caregiver-child relationship quality, and neighborhood cohesion as protective factors. *Journal of Clinical Child and Adolescent Psychology*, 33(3): 477-487.

Kohrt, B. A., Jordans, M. J. D., Tol, W. A., Perera, E., Karki, R., Koirala, S., & Upadhaya, N. (2010). Social ecology of child soldiers: Child, family, and community determinants of mental health, psychosocial well-being, and reintegration in Nepal. *Transcultural Psychiatry*, 47(5), 727-753.

Kostelny, K. (2006). A culture-based integrative approach: Helping war-affected children. In N. Boothby, A. Strong, & M. Wessells (Eds.), *A world turned upside down: Social ecological approaches to children in war zones* (pp. 19-37). Connecticut: Kumarian Press, Inc.

Kurtenbach, S., & Pawelz, J. (2015). Voting is not enough: Youth and political citizenship in post-war societies. *Peacebuilding*, 3(2): 141-156.

Leadbetter. B., Dodgen, D., & Solarz, A. (2005). The resilience revolution: A paradigm shift for research and policy? In R. Dev. Peters, B. Leadbetter, & R. J. McMahon (Eds.), *Resilience in children, families and communities: Linking context to practice and policy* (pp. 47-61). New York: Kluwer Academic/ Plenum Publishers.

Lesley, P. (2011). Music, youth, and peacebuilding in Northern Ireland. *Journal of Global Change, Peace & Security*, 23(2): 207-222.

Levy, E. J., Oppenheim, C. E., Lange, B. C. L., Plasky, N. S., Harris, B. L., Lekpeh, G., … & Borba, C. P. C. (2016). A qualitative analysis of factors impacting resilience among youth in post-conflict Liberia. *Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and Mental Health*, 10(26).

Liebenberg, L., Theron, L., Sanders, J., Munford, R., van Rensburg, A., Rothmann, S., & Ungar, M. (2016). Bolstering resilience through teacher-student interaction: Lessons for school psychologists. *School Psychology International*, 37(2), 140-154.

Liebenberg, L., Ungar, M., & Van de Vijver, F. (2012). Validation of the Child and Youth Resilience Measure-28 (CYRM-28) among Canadian youth. *Research on Social Work Practice*, 22(2), 219-226.

Loughry, M., Ager, A., Flouri, E., Khamis, V., Afana, A., & Qouta, S. (2006). The impact of structured activities among Palestinian children in a time of conflict. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry*, 47(12): 1211-1218.

Ludwig, M. (2013). *Youth bulge and mid-life moderation: Large cohort size effects, economic perspectives and civil conflict in Sub-Saharan Africa*. Retrieved from Munich Personal RePEc Archive (53088).

Luther, S. S., & Cicchetti, D. (2000). The construct of resilience: Implications for interventions and social policies. *Development and Psychopathology*, 12, 857-885.

Lynch, M., Cicchetti, D. (2002). Links between community violence and the family system: Evidence from children's feelings of relatedness and perceptions of parent behavior. *Family Process*, 41(3): 519-532.

Masten, A. S. (2001). Ordinary magic: Resilience processes in development. *American Psychologist*, 56(3), 227-238.

Matloff, J. (1995, March 27). Rwanda copes with babies of mass rape. *The Christian Science Monitor.* Retrieved from http://www.csmonitor.com/1995/0327/27014 .html.

Maton, K. I. (2005). The social transformation of environment and the promotion of resilience in children. In R. Dev. Peters, B. Leadbetter, & R. J. McMahon (Eds.), *Resilience in children, families and communities: Linking context to practice and policy* (pp. 119-135). New York: Kluwer Academic/ Plenum Publishers.

Martin, A., Gardner, M., & Brooks-Gunn, J. (2012). The mediated and moderated effects of family support on child maltreatment. *Journal of Family Issues*, 33(7), 920-941.

McClain, L. (2012). Artistic suggestions for peaceful transition in Northern Uganda: What youth are saying. *African Conflict & Peacebuilding Review*, 2(1): 152-163.

McEvoy-Levy, S. (2007). Human rights and children born of wartime rape. In R. C. Carpenter (Ed.), *Born of war: Protecting children of sexual violence survivors in conflict zones* (149-179). Bloomfield: Kumarian Press, Inc.

McKinley, J. C. (1996, September 23). Legacy of Rwanda violence: the thousands born of rape. *The New York Times*. Retrieved from http://www.nytimes.com/1996/09/23/world/legacy-of-rwanda-violence-the-thousands-born-of-rape.html?pagewanted=all.

Mitha, K., & Adatia, S. (2016). The faith community and mental health resilience amongst Australian Ismaili Muslim youth. *Mental Health, Religion & Culture*, 19(2): 192-207.

Mochmann, I. C., & Larsen, S. U. (2008). "Children born of war": The life course of children fathered by German soldiers in Norway and Denmark during WWII-Some empirical results. *Historical Social Research*, 33(1): 347-363.

Mochmann, I. C., & Lee, S. (2010). The human rights of children born of war: Case analyses of past and present conflicts. *Historical Social Research*, 35(3), 268-298.

Newman, C. 2016. *No-one to stand by us: Resolving on-going reintegration challenges facing formerly abducted child-mothers in northern Uganda*. Unpublished manuscript.

Ochen, E. A. (2015). Children and young mothers' agency in the context of conflict: a review of the experiences of formerly abducted young people in northern Uganda. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 42(1), 183-194.

OECD. (2015). *Uganda social institutions and gender index (Uganda-Sigi)*. Retrieved from https://www.oecd.org/dev/developmentgender/Uganda%20SocInstitut%20SIGI%2020x20-web-2.pdf.

Onono, O. J. (2013, June 24). The future of children born in LRA captivity uncertain, say their mothers. *Acholi Times*. Retrieved from http://acholitimes.com/2013/06/24/939/.

Ozer, E. J., & Weinstein, R. S. (2004). Urban adolescents' exposure to community violence: The role of support, school safety, and social constraints in a school-based sample of boys and girls. *Journal of Clinical Child and Adolescent Psychology*, 33(3): 463-476.

Peters, K. (2011). The crisis of youth in postwar Sierra Leone: Problem solved? *Africa Today*, 58(2): 129-153.

Powell, S. (2001, March 10). East Timor's children of the enemy. *The Weekend Australian.* Retrieved from http://etan.org/et2001b/april/01-7/00etchild.htm.

Reinherz, H. Z., Paradis, A. D., Giaconia, R. M., Stashwick, C. K., Fitzmaurice, G. (2003). Childhood and adolescent predictors of major depression in the transition to adulthood. *American Journal of Psychiatry*, 160: 2141-2147.

Ressler, E. M., Boothby, N., & Steinbock, D. J. (1988). *Unaccompanied children: Care and protection in wars, natural disasters, and refugee movements*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Resnick, M. D., Harris, L. J., & Blum, R. W. (1993). The impact of caring and connectedness on adolescent health and well-being. *Journal of Pediatric Child Health*, 1: S3-S9.

Riley, J. R., & Masten, A. S. (2005). Resilience in context. In R. Dev. Peters, B. Leadbetter, & R. J. McMahon (Eds.), *Resilience in children, families and communities: Linking context to practice and policy* (pp. 13-25). New York: Kluwer Academic/ Plenum Publishers.

Rimmer, S. H. (2007). "Orphans" or veterans? Justice for children born of war in East Timor. *Texas International Law Journal*, 42(2), 323-344.

Sanders, J., Munford, R., Liebenberg, L. (2016). The role of teachers in building resilience of at-risk youth. *International Journal of Educational Research*, 80:111-123.

Sanders, J., Munford, R., Thimasarn-Anwar, T., Liebenberg, L., & Ungar, M. (2015). The role of positive youth development practices in building resilience and enhancing wellbeing for at-risk youth. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 42: 40-53.

Save the Children. (2014). *Framework for the future: Ending poverty in a generation*. Retrieved from http://www.savethechildren.org/atf/cf/%7B9def2ebe-10ae-432c-9bd0-df91d2eba74a%7D/FRAMEWORK_FOR_THE_FUTURE.PDF.

Scott, S. M., Wallander, J. L., & Cameron, L. (2015). Protective mechanisms for depression among racial/ ethnic minority youth: Empirical findings, issues, and recommendations. *Clinical Child and Family Psychology Review*, 18: 346-369.

Seto, D. (2015). Children born of wartime sexual violence and the limits of existence. *Peacebuilding*, 3(2), 171-185.

Shanahan, F., & Veale, A. (2016). How mothers mediate the social integration of their children conceived of forced marriage within the Lord's Resistance Army. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 51, 72-86.

Sheeber, L., Hops, H., & Davis, B. (2001). Family processes in adolescent depression. *Clinical Child and Family Psychology Review*, 4(1): 19-35.

Shepler, S. (2010). Youth music and politics in post-war Sierra Leone. *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 48(4): 627-642.

Silverman, D. (2014). *Interpreting Qualitative Data*. SAGE Publications Ltd: California.

Siobhan McEvoy-Levy (2007). Silenced voices? Youth-peer relationships in armed
conflict and its aftermath. In N. Boothby, A. Strang, & M. Wessells (Eds.), *A
world turned upside down: Social ecological approaches to children in war zones*
(pp. 133-153). Connecticut: Kumarian Press, Inc.

Smith, H. (2000, April 16). Rape victims' babies pay the price of war. *The Observer*.
Retrieved from http://www.theguardian.com/world/2000/apr/16/balkans.

Sommers, M. (2011). Governance, security and culture: Assessing Africa's youth bulge.
*International Journal of Conflict and Violenc*e, 5(2), 292-303.

Steinberg, L. (2001). We know some things Parent-adolescent relationships in retrospect
and prospect. *Journal of Research on Adolescence*, 11(1), 1-19.

Sukarieh, M., Tannock, S. (2008). In the best interests of youth or neoliberalism? the
World Bank and the New Global Youth Empowerment Project. *Journal of Youth
Studies*, 11(3): 301-312.

Swanson, D. P., & Spencer, M. B. (1991). Youth policy, poverty, and African-Americans:
Implications for resilience. *Education and Urban Society*, 24(1): 148-161.

Theidon, K. (2015, September 30). Hidden in plain sight: children born of wartime sexual
violence. *Open Democracy*. Retrieved from https://www.opendemocracy.net/
opensecurity/kimberly-theidon/hidden-in-plain-sight-children-born-of-wartime-
sexual- violence.

Thorpe, H., & Ahmad, N. (2015). Youth, action sports and political agency in the Middle
East: Lessons from a grassroots parkour group in Gaza. *International Review for
the Sociology of Sport*, 50(6): 678-704.

Uganda Radio Network. (2014, April 9). *Gulu lists inactive NGOs*. Retrieved from
https://ugandaradionetwork.com/story/gulu-lists-inactive-ngos

Ungar, M. (2010). What is resilience across cultures and contexts? Advances to the theory
of positive development among individuals and families under stress. *Journal of
family psychotherapy*, 21(1), 1-16.

Ungar, M. (2011). The social ecology of resilience: Addressing contextual and cultural
ambiguity of nascent construct. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 81(1), 1-
17.

Ungar, M. (2012). Social ecologies and their contribution to resilience. In M. Ungar (Ed.),
The social ecology of resilience: A handbook of theory and practice (pp. 13-32).
New York: Springer.

Ungerleider, J. (2012). Structured youth dialogue to empower peacebuilding and
leadership. *Conflict Resolution Quarterly*, 29(4): 381-402.

United Nations Economic and Social Council Youth Forum. (2017). *Youth engagement in eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity: Voices from the field*. Retrieved from http://www.un.org/youthenvoy/2017/01/2017-ecosoc-youth-forum-role-youth-poverty-eradication-promoting-prosperity-changing-world-30-31-january/.

University of Toronto, Trudeau Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies. (2012). Perceptions of children born in war and transitional justice in Northern Uganda. Toronto: ON, Sima Atri and Salvator Cusimano.

UNHCR. (2012). *UNHCR closes chapter on Uganda's internally displaced people*. Retrieved from http://www.unhcr.org/news/briefing/2012/1/4f06e2a79/unhcr-closes-chapter-ugandas-internally-displaced-people.html.

UN News Centre. (2014). At UN-backed forum, Latin American, Caribbean nations pledge robust efforts against child labour. Retrieved from http://www.un.org /apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=49082#.Wgh31MbMyb8.

USAID. (2011). *USAID/ Uganda's youth assessment key findings*. Retrieved from http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/Pnady157.pdf.

USAID (2012). *Youth in development: Realizing the demographic opportunity.* Retrieved from https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1870/Youth_in_ Development_Policy_0.pdf.

Valentia, B. (2015). Building peace through social change communication: participatory video in conflict-affected communities. *Community Development Journal*, 50(1): 121-137.

Van Acker, B. (2004). Uganda and the Lord's Resistance Army: The new order no one ordered. *African Affairs*, 103(412), 335-357.

Walsh, F. (2016). Family resilience: A developmental systems framework. *European Journal of Developmental Psychology*, 13(3), 313-324.

Weitsman, P. A. (2008). The politics of identity and sexual violence: A review of Bosnia and Rwanda. *Human Rights Quarterly*, 30(1), 561-578.

Werner, E. E. (2005). Resilience research: Past, present, and future. In R. Dev. Peters, B. Leadbetter, & R. J. McMahon (Eds.), *Resilience in children, families and communities: Linking context to practice and policy* (pp. 3-12). New York: Kluwer Academic/ Plenum Publishers.

Wessells, M. (2006). A living wage: The importance of livelihood in reintegrating former child soldiers. In A. Strang & M. Wessells (Eds.), *A world turned upside down: Social ecological approaches to children in war zones* (179-197). Connecticut: Kumarian Press Inc.

Woodhead, M. (1998). *Is there a place for work in child development? A conceptual paper*. Stockhom: Radda Barnen.

World Bank. (2007). *World development report 2007: Development and the next generation.* Retrieved from http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/556251468128407787/pdf/359990WDR0complete.pdf.

World Bank. (2016). *Unemployment, youth total (% of total labour force ages 15-24) (modeled ILO estimate)*. Retrieved from https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.UEM.1524.ZS?end=2016&start=2016&year_high_desc=false.

World Economic Forum. (2014). *Rethinking Arab Employment: A systemic approach for resource-endowed economies.* Retrieved from http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_MENA14_RethinkingArabEmployment.pdf

World Vision. (2015). *No shame in justice: Addressing stigma against survivors to end sexual violence in conflict zones*. Retrieved from http://9bb63f6dda0f744fa4449471a7fca5768cc513a2e3c4a260910b.r43.cf3.rackcdn.com/files/1614/4888/7012/WVUK_No_Shame_in_Justice_low_res.pdf.

Writings from Across the World. (2011, May 17). Reflections on the NGO Industry in Gulu Uganda. Retrieved from http://simaatri.blogspot.ca/2011/05/reflections-on-ngo-industry-in-gulu.html.

Wyman, P. A., Cowen, E. L., Work, W. C., Raoof, A., Gribble, P. A., Parker, G. R., & Wannon, M. (1992). Interviews with children who experienced major life stress: Family and child attributes that predict resilient outcomes. *Journal of American Academic Child Adolescent Psychiatry*, 31(5): 904-910.

Zhang, X. (2014). Family income, parental education and internalizing and externalizing psychopathology among 2-3-year-old Chinese children: The mediator effect of parent-child conflict. International *Journal of Psychology*, 49(1), 30-37.