# CHILD MARRIAGE AND ITS IMPACT ON DEVELOPMENT:

THE CASE OF KASESE DISTRICT, UGANDA





Isis-Women's International Cross-Cultural Exchange
We Link Women Internationally

AN Isis-WICCE RESEARCH REPORT

# CHILD MARRIAGE AND ITS IMPACT ON DEVELOPMENT:

# THE CASE OF KASESE DISTRICT, UGANDA

An Isis-WICCE RESEARCH REPORT

November 2011

# Supported by:









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# **Foreword**

# Restoring self worth and building a prosperous generation

Child marriage has become a common feature in most communities in Africa. This means that young girls who have not attained the minimum age for marriage of 18 years are married off; sometimes to men who are fit to be called their fathers or their grand fathers. In other situations and in some communities, a boy and a girl who are not 18 years old get married; thus forming a young couple, that itself becomes a social burden. In some communities, child marriage of children is regarded as a norm, the basic foundation of purity, of economic survival or even a basis for continuation of relationships and enhancement of family lineage.

This is further exacerbated in post conflict situations where overwhelming evidence shows that both boys and girls become sexually active early due to rape, forced sex, and need to survive in situations where the basics of life are minimal. The incidence of child marriage impacts more on the girl child when she begins to bear children early before some parts of her body are fully developed for this purpose. The reproductive health consequences are disquieting; often with a high percentage of child mothers suffering from sexual and reproductive health complications; including inability to cater for the children and denying them the ability to exploit the available life's choices like education .

In Kasese district in western Uganda, child marriages are a socially established practice that has gone on from generation to generation. In the hilly terrain, with most parts inaccessible, child marriage remains a form of defilement promoted through social norms and hidden from legal probity and redress. Young girls ranging from 10-17 years are married off to men of over 50 years or to young boys that are just their age mates. As a post conflict area, the situation is even worsened by the poverty at the family level where children that are mostly minors are forced by their parents to marry early, while others through peer pressure engage in early sex and just drop off from school.

Development discourse has clearly categorised this as a form of human rights abuse and a formalised method of defilement that denies the young girls opportunities

in life. In Kasese district however, the community still looks at the young girl as a form of wealth generation where marrying her off early provides the parents with gifts and money for survival. If on the other hand the young girls are not given away in marriage early, they are regarded as a family burden that involuntarily encroaches on the meagre family resources like food and everything that goes with child upbringing.

Isis-WICCE's research on 'Child marriage and its impact on development: The case of Kasese District, Uganda' clearly demonstrates that child marriage especially in post conflict communities like Kasese district is not only a human rights violation but has devastating effects on the community. It denies the young girls the opportunities for education, leads to drug abuse, creates social conflict in form of separation and divorces and perpetrates the scourge of poverty in a population and families that every day witness dwindling means of survival. Worse still, a child married under age does not only have her rights abused irretrievably but she becomes part of an abused generation that has no hope in a bright future.

The study provides the needed information on the problem of child marriage and its socio economic impact on the society. It directly shows that young children should instead be nurtured for development programmes and progress of society. Involving the child mothers and fathers at every stage of development calls for looking at the issue of child marriage with holistic lenses; especially ensuring that victims and survivors get self esteem, and are provided with means to enhance their well being. It is therefore a loud reminder to policy makers, parents, cultural leaders, religious leaders and the whole community to be part of the great strides Isis-WICCE is taking to end child marriage and restore self worth in the affected that have lost hope in the future. An abused generation cannot contribute to future progress.

Ruth Ojiambo Ochieng

Executive Director, Isis-WICCE

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# **Acronyms and Abbreviations**

ADF Allied Democratic Front/Forces

CAO Chief Administrative Officer

CEDAW Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women

DRC Democratic Republic of Congo

HIV & AIDS Human Immunodeficiency Virus infection and Acquired

Immunodeficiency Syndrome

IDP Internally Displaced People

Isis-WICCE Isis-Women's International Cross Cultural Exchange

KATWOTA Kasese Teachers Training Association

LC Local Council

NGO Non Government Organization

NRA/M National Resistance Army/Movement

PTA Parents Teachers Association

RDC Resident District Commissioner

SPSS Statistical Package for the Social Sciences

TBAs Traditional Birth Attendants

TFR Total Fertility Rate

UAIS Uganda AIDS Indicator Survey

UBOS Uganda Bureau of Statistics

UNFPA United Nations Population Fund

UPC Uganda People's Congress

UPDF Uganda People's Defense Force

UPE Universal Primary Education

URSB Uganda Registration Services Bureau

WHO World Health Organisation

# **Executive Summary**

Child marriage refers to any marriage of a child younger than 18 years, in accordance to Article 1 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the Uganda Constitution. While child marriage affects both sexes, girls are disproportionately affected as they are the majority of the victims. This report presents the findings of the study on "Child Marriage and its impact on Development" which was carried out in Kasese district (Western Uganda) in two counties; Busongora North and Bukonzo East.

The study team reached out to 304 respondents (291 female and 13 male) who got married before 18 years and were still in those marriages or had moved out of the marriages at some point. Out of these, 4.9% were aged 12-14 years, 75.7% were between 15-17 years and 19.2% were between 18 – 24 years. The youngest child in marriage was 12 years. In terms of education, 69.4% had acquired primary level education and only 29.9% had attempted secondary school education. Majority of the respondents were peasant farmers at 82.89%, 5.9% were students and the others were engaged in small businesses in their communities.

#### **Key Findings**

- 1. Reasons for Child marriage: The major push factors for child marriage were early pregnancy (31.25%), peer pressure (24.85%), failure of parents to pay school fees due to poverty (20.45%), personal willingness (13.4%), parents forcing children to get married (10.5%), having no home to live in (4.55%), and armed conflict and fear of contracting HIV (0.65%).
- 2. Marriage Process: It was also noted that the process of marriage included payment of dowry (40.05%), fines (24.45%), traditional wedding (16.8%) and church/mosque/civil marriage (1.3%). The payment of fines had been normalized in the community and this ranged from providing Uganda shillings 10,000 to shs. 600,000 (equiv.US\$4 –US\$244), goats, crates of soda, among others. Parents preferred the mode of fines because it is non refundable compared to dowry. The delays in delivering justice with regard to defilement cases also contributed to the normalizing of the practice since parents believed

that settling defilement cases out of court and marrying off the child in the shortest time possible was more practical and financially rewarding. The research team observed that almost every home in Kasese district had a young girl who had either been defiled, had an early pregnancy or married at an early age.

- 3. Economic Status: With regard to the economic status, the young girls in these marriages were very poor. They did not own or control any asset; the families had no land and were dependant on their parents, neighbours or friends; the houses were in a pathetic state (roofed using banana fibres, grass or old tins and were leaking); and others were sharing the same house with their parents. Agricultural production was limited and only enough for the household. On the other hand, the husbands to these girls had resorted to alcoholism and had shied away from productive work. A few had taken on motorcycle riding or were absentee husbands working on distant farms.
- 4. Maternal and Child Health: Respondents had access to some information on pregnancy and child birth from health centres, churches, radios and traditional birth attendants. However, only 34.2% were using family planning; 57.4% delivered their babies either in a hospital or health centre, and 20.35% delivered at the traditional birth attendants' homes. Registration of births was at 75.9% and those who had not registered their babies after birth noted that they had no money to pay for the certificate or were not aware that registration was important. Majority of the respondents with babies ensured that they were immunized (92.05%) due to the mass campaigns on immunization by the Ministry of Health. It was also noted that 97.05% had information on HIV transmission and 89.15% had had an HIV test.
- 5. Intimate Partner Violence: The child marriages as in any other forms of unions and marriages were not void of intimate partner/domestic violence. 46.7% were forced to have sex without consent as they had not anticipated that occasional or daily sexual intercourse was central in a marital relationship. 37.5% had been threatened to be thrown out of the homes, and others had been physically hit using an object or threatened to be killed. The major reasons for this violence were linked to sexual denial, alcoholism, polygamy and failure on the side of the husbands to provide for the home.

6. Participation: All the above hinder the effective participation of the young married girls in development. Majority of the girls (52.3%) did not belong to any form of organized community group due to movement restrictions by husbands and lack of money.

#### **Implications for Development**

Uganda's population is at 33 million and 50% of the population is below 18 years (Population Secretariat, 2011). To have a community where girls get married as early as 12 years, do not acquire the required levels of education, have no means of production, do not use family planning, and where the male population has resorted to alcoholism and not engaged in productive work raises great development and security concerns for the country. This means that the population growth will not be curtailed, HIV infection rates will continue to raise, food insecurity will escalate, the women's leadership base will be eroded, and there will be an increased burden of care and overstretching of government resources. If a state cannot promote, protect and respect human rights and especially women's rights, democracy and good governance will be at question.

Delaying marriage and child birth confer major benefits to girls and may lead to improved health of children and faster economic growth. Policy makers, government and decision makers concerned with socio-economic development should give greater priority to addressing child marriage in order to improve women's status and reduce poverty.

This therefore entails that government structures at all levels, cultural and faith based institutions, parents and the community structures to rethink and adopt an appropriate approach that uphold the rights of young girls and boys. Whereas it is still important to ensure that all children are taken to school for formal education, deliberate steps should be taken to uphold the rights of the girl child through enforcement of laws that are specific on elimination of sexual and gender based violence, in addition to taking strict measures to punish offenders, including parents who promote the vice. These should go hand in hand with initiating livelihood support programmes for victims and whole communities to address poverty that remains the major driver of child marriage. It remains a major fact that ending child marriage is crucial for sustained development.



# BACKGROUND

# 1.0 Background

Child marriage refers to any form of marriage that takes place before a child has reached 18 years. The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against women (CEDAW) is the most comprehensive international bill of rights for women, and it states that any betrothal or marriage of a child should not have any legal status. The committee that monitors the CEDAW convention affirms that the minimum age for marriage for both male and female should be 18 years, the age when "they have attained full maturity and capacity to act" (UN, 1994). The Pan African Forum against the Sexual Exploitation of Children further identifies child marriage as a type of commercial sexual exploitation of children, (Mikhail, S., 2002).

Child marriage affects millions of children throughout the world. It is widely practiced in developing countries where every year, millions of girls (preteens and teens) become the wives of older men or fellow age mates. Young girls are married when they are still children and as a result are denied fundamental human rights. Child marriage means the individual becomes sexually active early and begins to raise children while still a child. The marriage of a young girl affects not only her life but that of the children she will bear. Child marriage compromises the girls' development and often results in early pregnancy and social isolation. With little education and poor vocational training, it reinforces the gendered nature of poverty beginning early in the girls' growth. Required to perform heavy domestic work and under pressure to prove fertility, married underage girls and child mothers face constrained decision-making and reduced life choices. Both boys and girls are affected by child marriage but the issue impacts girls in far larger numbers, with more intensity and wide ranging ramifications (UNICEF, 2005).

Child marriage is a socially established practice that has been carried on from generation to generation in different societies. This is despite the existence of international and regional instruments. Most governments have settled upon 18 years as the minimum legal age at marriage. However, they are often either unable to enforce existing laws, or rectify discrepancies between national laws, customary and religious laws. Most often, child marriage is considered as a family matter and governed by religion and culture, which ensure its continuity. It remains therefore,

a widely ignored violation of the rights of girls and women which exposes them to multiple risks, including sexual abuse and exploitation.

In Uganda, marriage is still common among young girls. The median age at marriage among women is just before 18 years and it has been stable for the past 30 years. Many girls in Uganda marry by age 15 (UBOS/ORC Macro 2001, 2006). According to UBOS/ORC Macro (1995, 2000/01 and 2006), Western Uganda's age at first marriage has been 17.4, 18.2 and 17.3 and Total Fertility Rate (TFR) of 6.98, 6.9 and 7.3 respectively. This low age at first marriage leads to high TFR as a reduction in age at first marriage by a year in 2001 led to an increase in total fertility rate from 6.9 to 7.3 in 2006, UBOS/ORC Macro (2001, 2006). The high fertility has been an obstacle to the country's development since there is a need to put up more social structures like schools and health centers to meet the needs of the children produced (UBOS/ORC Macro, 2006).

In an effort to deter child marriage the government of Uganda put emphasis on educating the girl child through the introduction of Universal Primary Education (UPE) in 1997. This has helped to some extent to put and keep children in school especially girls who are normally married off early. Coupled with education, is the minimum legal age for marriage at 18 years. Uganda has a very young population, with nearly half (47%) of its people under 15 years old. The choices these young people and their parents make will affect the country's future. Delaying marriage and childbirth confer major benefits to girls and may lead to societal benefits, such as improved health of children and faster economic growth. Addressing child marriage in relation to improving women's status will lead to a healthy environment and reduced poverty.

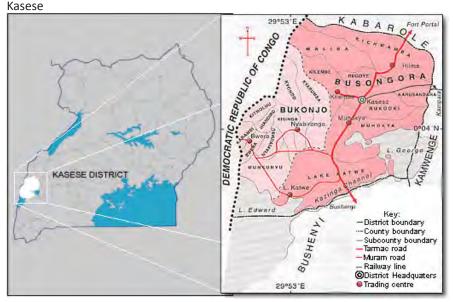
International consensus on the need to protect the rights of young people, particularly young girls, is now growing. The Millennium Development Goals adopted by governments in 2000¹ and recent international agreements, national laws and policies on young people and gender-equity issues present an opportunity to rectify the situation of young married girls. All these interventions highlight the need to create an enabling environment, where young married girls and girls at risk of child marriage can be empowered. Access to a range of social, economic and political resources, as well as access to information and livelihood skills, is necessary to reduce the gender-based inequalities that exist between married girls and their spouses.

<sup>1</sup> UN (2002a) Implementation of the United Nations Millennium Declaration: Report of the Secretary-General, General Assembly, Fifty-seventh session

#### 1.1 Kasese District

# 1.1.1 Geographical profile of Kasese

Kasese district was formed in 1974 under the Provincial Administration of Rwenzori district that was carved out of Tooro. Prior to this, it was part of Toro kingdom that comprises the present districts of Bundibugyo, Kabarole, Kyenjojo, Kamwenge and



Map showing location of Kasese District

Kasese District is located along the Equator in the western region of Uganda. It is bordered by Kabarole District to the north, Lake George and Kamwenge District to the east, Rubirizi District and Lake Edward to the south and the Democratic Republic of the Congo to the west. The district headquarters at Kasese are located approximately 359 kilometres (223 miles), by road, west of Kampala, Uganda's capital and largest city. The coordinates of the district are: 00 11N, 30 05E.

The district has a total land area of 2,724 square kilometres (1,052 sq miles), of which 885 square kilometres (342 sq miles) is reserved for Queen Elizabeth National Park

and 652 square kilometres (252 sq miles) for Rwenzori Mountains National Park, leaving 1,187 square kilometres (458 sq miles) for human habitation and economic utilization. Kasese District is part of the Rwenzururu Kingdom, which is coterminous with the Rwenzururu sub-region, home to an estimated 750,000 inhabitants in 2002, according to the national census conducted that year. Kasese land is also occupied by government projects such as prison farms, mining institutions and irrigation farming. The population density in Kasese is 183 persons per square kilometre (450 persons per square kilometre in the area actually occupied by people). The sub region consists of Bundibugyo District, Ntoroko District and Kasese District. It receives an average rainfall ranging between 900-1600mm annually and two rain seasons that come between March to May and August to November. Temperatures normally range between 23.9°c and 30.0°c.

In 2010, Kasese District was estimated to have approximately 649,400 people with a population growth rate of 3.6% per annum. Of this 51% (329,805) are females and 49% (316,872) are males. This population is projected from the population census of 2002 with a growth rate of 3.6%, where Kasese had approximately 533,000 people, which was 2.1% of the Ugandan total population. It is estimated that there are 133,992 households with an average of 4.9 people per household. But there are also other groups in the district who include the Banyankole, Basongora and Bakiga. There is also common usage of English, Swahili and Luganda.

The district is endowed with many water sources that include lakes, rivers and streams. Mountain Rwenzori is one of the major sources of water to the water bodies: Rivers include Mubuku, Rwimi, Nyamba, Ssebore that harbours Mubuku Irrigation Scheme, Nyamugasani and River Lhubiriha that harbours Bwera Water Scheme at the Uganda-Congo border. The Lakes include Lake George, Lake Edward and Lake Katwe, while the crater lakes on top of Mt. Rwenzori provide extra water.

# 1.1.2 History of armed conflict in Kasese district

The Mountainous Rwenzori region has not been an exception to armed conflict. The Rwenzururu movement, which started during the colonial times but became an open conflict soon after independence was a political struggle by the Bakonjo population to attain economic and political autonomy from the Toro kingdom (both ethnic groups were part of what was called kingdom of Toro, which later became Toro district). The British colonial masters had used Batooro to administer the area,

and exploit the vast mineral and other natural resources in the then kingdom of Tooro. Led by clan leaders and the royal family, which was still in its infancy, the Rwenzururu fighters fought bitter battles with the government of Uganda until the government granted them autonomy as a separate Kasese District in 1974. The granting of autonomy status to Kasese district generally placated the area until the mid-1980 when the National Resistance Army (NRA) rebel forces identified its strategic importance in occupying and controlling the Rwenzori Mountains. The NRA invaded the area in 1985. This enabled NRA rebels to spread the conflict to the rest of western Uganda, and provided a base for recruitment and training of fighters and provision of food for the rebellion.

Soon after the overthrow of the General Tito Okello Government by the NRA/M in 1986, the Rwenzururu movement led by Amon Bazira, a former minister in 1980-1985 UPC government was revived. The Rwenzururu fighters then started fighting hit and run battles aimed at government installations in the district of Kasese and Bundibugyo until their leaders including Amon Bazira were killed.

The most widespread and destructive form of armed conflict ever experienced in Kasese District was the Allied Democratic Front (ADF) insurgency. The ADF was a Ugandan rebel group purportedly led by youths with Islamic fundamentalist tendencies that started operating in 1996 from the bases established in Eastern Congo. The rebels attacked Kasese and Bundibugyo districts in November 1996 from the Eastern parts of the Democratic Republic of Congo and continued to launch hit and run operations using the Rwenzori Mountains and the forests of Eastern Congo as their bases.

Thousands of people were displaced from their homes. In the first year of the insurgency, over 100,000 people were displaced from the areas of the district along the border with the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Soon, the armed conflict between the ADF rebels and the government forces led to the displacement of the population to nearly all rural sub-counties in the district. At least 30,000 people were living in internally displaced persons (IDP) camps at any one time.

While many of the men joined the fighters on either side or fled the area, the women and children were forced to run for safety among relatives in the more peaceful parts of the districts or in Kasese Town. Where this was not possible, the women, children and the elderly run into administrative centres of government facilities or into trading centres where the government forces were able to offer

some protection. As the war continued and the numbers grew, these centres were recognized by the district administration as IDP camps. With NGO assistance, these camps became centres for distribution of relief and accessing organized public health utilities such as water and toilet facilities. According to the district emergency plan of 1998, of the 59,884 people living in IDP camps at the end of 1997, 63% were below the age of 18 years and those above constituted 21% of this total population.

Many people were killed and up to 200,000 people were herded into the 84 IDP camps. Landmines were planted in the most productive areas thereby denying the population the opportunity to produce or harvest food. Women were raped and girls defiled into motherhood. At the height of the war in 1998, the insurgents attacked Kicwamba Technical College and burnt a dormitory in which more than 80 students perished.

The displacement of people and continuous scarcity of food and poverty opened doors for parents to 'trade'/force their daughters into child marriage for survival. Having left their home areas and settled in the lowlands without much to do; no education and land to cultivate, girls found themselves marrying young as some had lost their parents and have nowhere to return.

According to Rev. Benson Baguma, the Director of Kagando Rural Development Centre that runs Kagando Hospital, by 2004 "the magnitude of destruction done by the ADF war had not been captured and therefore, it is difficult to address the postwar situation effectively" <sup>2</sup>

The conflict quickly spread to other parts of western Uganda and at one time covered not only the districts of Kasese, Bundibugyo, Kabarole, Kyenjojo, Kamwenge, Kibaale and parts of Hoima district. The rebellion was quelled by the Uganda people's Defense Force (UPDF) in 2001.

<sup>2</sup> Kasese: Coping With Post-War Challenges, 05.10.2004, Anti-Mines Network-Rwwenzori (AMMNET-R)

## 1.2 The Study Problem

Child marriage has continued to be one of the major factors affecting the achievement of development indices and targets in Uganda. Whereas government has put in place efforts like the Universal Primary Education, Universal Secondary Education, affirmative action, and legal age of marriage (18 years), the rate of girls and boys getting married early continues to increase.

Child marriage has been identified as a form of child abuse, and a formalized avenue for defilement. It is normally girls who would not have attained the age of 18 that are forced to marry mainly because the parents are interested in the bride price that would accrue to them at the expense of the well being of their daughters (Ramachandran, 2002). On the other hand, boys are expected to marry at an older age when they are in position to look after their wives and children. In Uganda, most girls are out of school by the age 16 and some of those who complete the primary education do not join post primary institutions. Besides, there is belief in some communities that a girl child who is not in school will get "spoilt" if not married off soon. Whereas it is a widely acknowledged practice and problem in the community, there is a lack of documented data on the prevalence of child marriage and how it impacts on development.

A close review of the evidence on the links between poverty and the pressure to marry early reveals that in wealthier countries, where girls have equitable access to education, further training and other employment opportunities, child marriages are rare. Poverty is recognized as a major contributing factor to child marriage of girls in poorer households. Where girls are viewed as an additional burden on family resources, they tend to be married off earlier as a family survival strategy (UNICEF, 2001).

# 1.3 Objectives

# 1.3.1 General objective

To establish the impact of child marriage on development in Kasese District.

#### 1.3.2 Specific objectives

The specific objectives were:

- To examine the conditions and factors that sustain child marriage in Kasese.
- To document the experiences of child marriage among affected girls and how it impacts on their rights.
- To establish the extent to which child marriage has impacted on economic and social development in Kasese district
- Make feasible recommendations.

# 1.4 Key Questions

The key research questions included;

- i) What factors sustain child marriages?
- ii) How does child marriage affect girls in Kasese district?
- iii) How does child marriage affect development in Kasese district?
- iv) What should be done to eradicate child marriage?

# 1.5 Utility of the Research

This study has a lot to contribute to the social and economic development of Uganda especially with regard to the needs of women and girls.

It contributes in the following ways:

- The data will inform the design of appropriate interventions and community services by district leaders, local leaders and organizations to address the identified needs and challenges.
- Stimulate more appropriate response and dialogue by other stakeholders for informed action.

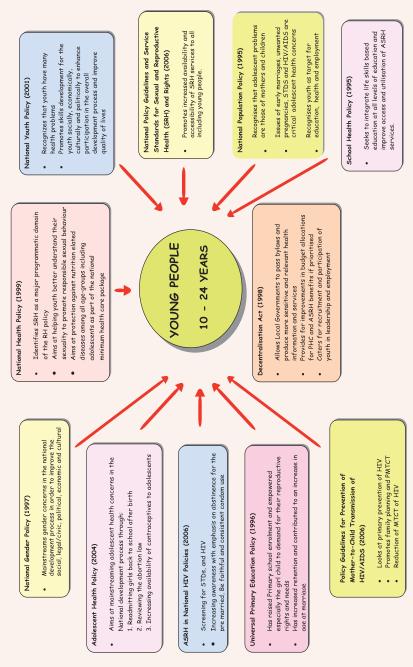
- The study will set the pace of discussing the issue of child marriage publicly.
   Marriage is regarded as a private and sensitive subject. In some traditions discussing sexual relations openly is considered a taboo but with the research on child marriage made public, advocacy initiatives will be initiated to address the problem.
- The study will articulate and make linkage between child marriage and violation of rights of children.
- The data will contribute to building a knowledge data bank on the subject of child marriage in Uganda.

# 1.6 Policy Environment and Legal Framework

Following the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development held in Cairo, a number of policies backed by law in support of adolescent health and development were discussed. At the government of Uganda level, many policies have been developed within this context, by different line ministries. These include;

- The National Youth Policy (2001)
- The National Population Policy (1995)
- The National Gender Policy (1997)
- The National Policy on Young People and HIV & AIDS
- The Sexual and Reproductive Health Minimum Package (2006)
- The Affirmative Action Policy
- The Decentralisation Act (1998)
- The Sexual Offences Bill; a policy setting the minimum age for sexual consent at 18
- The Universal Primary Education Policy (1996)
- Various laws prohibiting harmful customary practices such as child marriage.

# Ugandan policies that influence young people's health and development



Source: National Adolescent Sexual and reproductive health strategy, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development 2009/10 – 2014/15.





# RESEARCH PROCESS AND METHODOLOGY

# 2.0 Introduction

This chapter describes the steps and methods utilized while conducting the study. It highlights the conceptualization and consultation process, training process for the research team, study design and sampling procedure, data collection methods and challenges faced.

# 2.1 Study Conceptualisation and Consultations

The process entailed pre-research visits and consultative meetings with the Isis-WICCE staff; the Isis-WICCE Institute Uganda Alumni Coordinators from Eastern, Central, Northern and Western regions; and the leadership in Kasese district. A meeting was held in Kasese from  $2^{nd}$  -  $4^{th}$  May 2011 with the objective of;

- Discussing child marriage to confirm its estimated prevalence in the district and solicit support from the district leadership.
- Seeking information about the geography of the areas of study as well as available background information.
- Ensuring that the leadership and administration authorities of Kasese district were informed of the activity in order to elicit their approval and collaboration.
- Arranging for logistical support and services for the study.



Consultative meeting on the study held in Kasese district

Following the deliberations of the consultative meeting, a proposal was developed and submitted to the National Council of Science and Technology for review and approval.

# 2.2 Training of the Research Team

The research team constituted 11 women (9 women leaders and two female Isis-WICCE staff). The research team was trained for three days from 20<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup> July, 2011 in Kasese Municipality prior to the data collection. The purpose of the training was to build the capacity of the research team on research methodologies and the tactics of interviewing the community. The methods used in this training were mini lectures, brainstorming and role plays.



The research team with Kasese Teachers Training Association (KATWOTA) at Kasese primary school

## 2.3 Study Design and Sampling Procedure

The research and documentation adopted a multi-stage purposive sampling design in the selection of study areas and respondents.

#### 2.3.1 Stage one: study areas

Table 1 shows the study areas (counties, sub-counties and villages) where the research was carried.

Table 1: Study areas

COUNTY	SUB-COUNTY	PARISH
Busongora North	Maliba	Bikone, Buhunga Isule, Nyabisusi, Mubuku, Nyangorongo
	Bugoye	Bugoye, Katooke, Ibanda, Kibirinzi, Muhambo
Bukonzo East	Kisinga	Kagando, Nsenyi, Nyabirongo, Rwenguhyo, Kajwenge
	Munkunyu	Kacungiro, Katojo, Kayanja, Kicucu/ Kitsutsu, Kinyamaseke T/C, Nyakatonzi

The following criteria was used as a basis for the selection of the counties.

#### Cross border interactions and dynamics

Bukonzo East was selected because of its border location with Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Existing literature shows that there was a lot of movement both by fleeing civilians as well as fighting troops to and from Democratic Republic of Congo which exposed young girls to early sex for survival and also contributed to the impoverishment of the area.

#### *Isolation and inaccessibility*

Busongora North and Bukonzo East are some of the most remote, isolated and inaccessible counties. In addition, to the mountainous terrain, poor communication networks and lack of social service facilities, the status of the population is further deprived.

# 2.3.2 Sampling and study population

The total sample size was 304 respondents; of whom 291 were girls and 13 boys in the age range of 12 to 24 years. The respondents had got married below 18 years and were in the following categories;

- Those still in their marriage
- Those who were married but divorced
- Those who divorced and went back to school or were still married but went back to school

The study population also comprised of women and men from the following categories;

- Boda-boda riders
- Women in leadership
- Opinion leaders (religious, cultural, mayors, among others)
- Government officials including CAO, RDC, Local Council Leaders, Probation Officials, Child Protection Unit
- Students
- Medical and health workers
- Traditional Birth Attendants (TBAs)
- Head teachers and teachers
- Parents of young mothers
- Members of women organisations, including social and community workers

#### 2.4 Data Collection Methods

The study employed both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods and techniques. These included:

- Individual household interviews, using a structured questionnaire;
- Focus group discussions;
- In-depth interviews/narratives;
- Key informant interviews;
- Community meetings

The thematic areas for each method are detailed below.

#### 2.4.1 Quantitative methods

#### Individual household interviews

Individual interviews using a structured questionnaire (appendix 1) were carried out in the homes of the individual young mothers and fathers by the trained research team.



A researcher interviewing one of the child mothers

The structured questionnaire sought information on:

- Socio-demographic characteristics of young mothers and fathers;
- Economic status of these families;
- Household power relations, roles, responsibilities, rights, perceptions, and division of labour among and between women, men and children;
- Access to basic needs such as food, water, health care, shelter, production assets, etc.
- Age at which one got married;
- The process of marriage;
- HIV and AIDS awareness;
- Intimate Partner Violence;
- Recommendations on the required types of interventions.

#### 2.4.2 Qualitative methods

#### i. Focus group discussions

Eleven focus group<sup>3</sup> discussions were carried out including five with women groups, one with school going girls, one with male parish chiefs, and others with teachers, paralegals and parents. The discussions attracted 118 women and 28 men. Each focus group comprised of 10- 25 respondents.

<sup>3</sup> Yellow Group of Peace, Mothers Union Maliba, Women Leaders Maliba, Parish Chiefs Maliba, St. Andrew Kinyamaseke Teachers, Mothers in Munkunyu sub-county, Women Religious Leaders – Kasese Municipality, Kacungiro Primary School Teachers, Kacungiro Primary School girls, Fathers in Munkunyu sub-county, Katabukenene Women's Group



A women's focus group discussion

From these groups the following information was sought:

- Causes of child marriages
- Effects of child marriage
- Efforts in place to deter child marriage
- Observations/questions
- Recommendations
- Community support system and protection mechanisms and their effectiveness

#### ii. Key informant interviews

A number of interviews were conducted with different key informants using semi-structured questionnaires. These included representatives of different government departments, community based and non-government organisations. The interviews sought information on the following:

- Perceptions towards child marriage and its impact on development in Kasese district;
- Efforts in place to deter child marriage
- Response to culprits and roles played by state and non-state actors to address the issue:
- Policy and implementation gaps and challenges of existing legal system.

#### iii. In-depth interviews

In-depth interviews included testimonies of young mothers and fathers who were still in their marriages, those who had returned to school, and those who had divorced and returned to their parental homes. These categories were identified during the focus group discussions and key informants who knew about the ordeals those people went through. The interviewees were asked questions to which they responded and gave their experiences. The questionnaire guided the interview process on the following aspects: socio-demographic characteristics; reasons for marriage; process of marriage, state of maternal and child health; HIV and AIDS awareness; level of participation in household and community affairs and the required support to improve their welfare.

#### iv. Community meeting

One community meeting of 54 women was conducted. The moderator of this meeting enabled community members to give their opinions on the impact of child marriage on development, efforts in place to curb the vice, and what they think should be done by the community, religious leaders and the government.

# 2.5 Data Analysis

# 2.5.1 Quantitative data analysis

The analysis of the quantitative data consisted of data cleaning, and frequency runs. Multivariate classification and analysis was applied using SPSS, a statistical package for social sciences. Statistical measures to establish the margin of error and reliability were used.

# 2.5.2 Qualitative data analysis

Descriptive analysis of the qualitative data was carried out using the following approaches;

Thematic analysis of qualitative data from focus group discussions, key
informants and testimonies from young mothers, which included identifying
prevalent codes, making summaries, extracting direct and verbatim quotations
and making comparisons between interviews. The data was analyzed to
determine an in-depth understanding of the context of child marriage and its
impact to development in Kasese district.

# 2.6 Constraints and Challenges

The following challenges were encountered during the field work process;

- Inaccessibility: The mountainous terrain of Kasese district created a challenge to the research team. In many cases, researchers had to use specialized motorcycles to access the hill tops.
- Kasese district being a post conflict area and given its mountainous nature, it was not easy to find decent accommodation in some areas.
- Language: Most young mothers were using their native language. This required
  use of interpreters for members of the research team who were not conversant
  with the local lingua.



The research team returning from the mountains



# **FINDINGS**

### 3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents analysis of social-demographic situation of the respondents interviewed during this study.

# 3.2 Socio-Demographic Characteristics

A total of 304 respondents; 291 female and 13 male were interviewed in a quantitative survey of two counties, namely Bukonzo East and Busongora North.

Table 2: Demographic characteristics of respondents (N-304)

Age in complete years	Bukonzo East (n=149)		Nor	Busongora North (n=155)		Total (N=304)	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	
12-14	11	7.4	4	2.6	15	4.9	
15-17	121	81.2	109	70.3	230	75.7	
18-24	17	11.4	42	27.1	59	19.4	
Sex							
Female	141	94.6	150	96.8	291	95.5	
Male	8	5.4	5	3.2	13	4.3	
Tribe							
Mukonzo	137	91.9	152	98.1	289	95.1	
Muganda	0	0	2	1.3	2	0.7	
Munyankole	2	1.3	1	0.6	3	0.98	
Munyabindi	7	4.7	0	0	7	2.3	
Mutoro	3	2.0	0	0	3	0.98	
Religion							
Protestant	67	45	71	46.5	138	45.4	
Catholic	72	48.3	40	25.8	112	36.8	
Moslem	3	2	13	7.7	16	5.3	

Pentecostal	7	4.7	31	20	38	12.5
Education						
None	4	2.7	4	2.7	8	2.6
Primary	110	73.8	101	65.2	211	69.4
Secondary (1-3)	35	23.5	50	32.3	85	27.96
Employment status						
Peasant farmer	131	87.9	121	78.1	252	82.89
Market vendor	4	2.7	8	5.2	12	3.9
Hawker	1	0.7	2	1.3	3	0.98
None	4	2.7	9	5.8	13	4.3
Artisan	3	2.0	2	1.3	5	1.6
Student	6	4.0	12	7.7	18	5.9
Fish monger	0	0	1	0.6	1	0.3

## 3.2.1 Age in complete years

Majority of the respondents were in the age group of 15-17years where Bukonzo East constituted 81.2% and Busongora had 70.3%. This was followed by age group 18-24 years with Busongora North having 27% and Bukonzo East having 11.4%.

## 3.2.2 Sex of the respondents

With regard to sex of the respondents, majority, were women (95.5%) and 4.5% were male.



A young couple (husband 17 years old and the wife 16 years)

### 3.2.3 Tribe

Majority of the respondents were Bakonzo. Bukonzo East had 98.1% and Busongora North 91.9%. The Baganda, Banyankole, Batoro and Banyabindi were the minority in both counties.

# 3.2.4 Religion

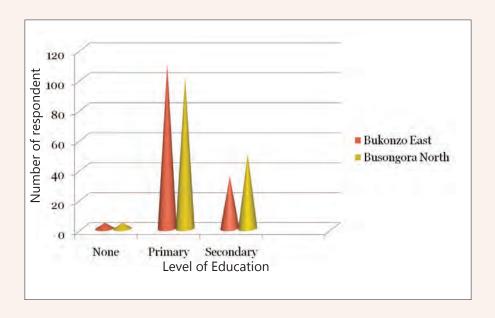
According to the study, majority of the respondents in Bukonzo East County were catholics (72%) and Busongora North had more Protestants with 71%.

#### 3.2.5 Education

The study findings indicated that majority of the respondents dropped out of school at primary school level in both counties, where Bukonzo East had 78.3% and Busongora North with 65%. Some had attained secondary school education to the level of Senior one to Senior three. Bukonzo East had 23.5% and Busongora

North had 32.5%. In addition, 2.7% of the respondents in both counties did not have any formal literacy.

Figure 1: Education level

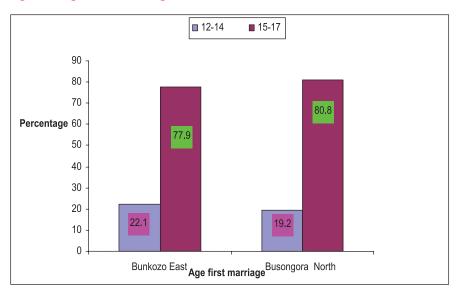


# 3.2.6 Employment Status

The highest number of respondents were engaged in peasant farming with Bukonzo East constituting 87.9% and Busongora North at 78.1%. Those who had gone back to school and were currently students included 4.0% (Bukonzo) and 7.7% (Busongora North).

### 3.3 Age at First Marriage





According to the survey, girls entered marriage as early as 12 years. Those within the age range of 12-14 years constituted 22.1% in Bukonzo East and 19.2% in Busongora North. Those who got married between 15-17years were 80.8% in Busongora North and 77.9% in Bukonzo East.

In Uganda, the median age at first marriage among women is just before 18 years and it has been stable for the past 30 years. Many girls in Uganda marry by age 15 (UBOS/ORC Macro 2001, 2006). According to UBOS/ORC Macro (1995, 2000/01 and 2006), Western Uganda's age at first marriage has been 17.4, 18.2 and 17.3 and Total Fertility Rate of 6.98, 6.9 and 7.3 respectively.

As observed in figure 2 and table 2, the age at first marriage of 12 years in Kasese district is far below what had been documented by the Uganda Bureau of Statistics (2006).

# 3.4 Factors and Reasons for Child Marriage

Table 3: Factors/reasons advanced for child marriage

Factors for child marriage	Bukonzo East		Busongora North		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Early pregnancy	58	40.4	35	22.1	93	30.6
Peer pressure	37	24.1	40	25.6	77	25.3
My parents could not afford school fees/ poverty	18	12.1	44	28.8	62	20.4
I was of age/Personal willingness I had no home to stay	21	14	20	12.8	41	13.4
My parents forced me	8	5.4	7	5.1	15	10.5
I had no home to stay	6	4.0	8	5.1	14	4.55
Armed conflicts	1	0.7	0	0	1	0.7
Fear of HIV & AIDS	0	0	1	0.6	1	0.6

The respondents indicated various reasons that resulted into their getting married at a tender age as highlighted in table 3 above.

# 3.4.1 Early pregnancy

Early Pregnancy was the major push factor leading to child marriage. 40.4% of the respondents in Bukonzo East and 22.1% in Busongora North cited early pregnancy as one of the major reasons as shared below;

"I became pregnant when I was 14 years and my parents chased me from home. I had to go to my husband's home and had a child with him. We lived in absolute poverty and he could not manage to provide for the family so I decided to divorce. I again got married to another man and had another child but the situation was the same. I again left him because he was also very poor. I now stay with my grandmother who has spent three years sick in bed and nobody gives us any help apart from some neighbours. I don't get any assistance from these two husbands yet I have their children. I have no clothes to put on, blanket or bed sheets to cover myself and the children. We sleep on banana dry leaves". Female respondent, Munkunyu.

### 3.4.2 Peer pressure

Peer pressure among adolescent girls was cited as yet another factor. As they observed fellow girls getting gifts and favours from older men and others getting married, they tended to be lured to follow the same path. In Bukonzo East, 24.1% got married as a result of peer pressure and 25.6% in Busongora North. Respondents shared testimonies;

"I got married at 17 years to a 28 year old man due to peer pressure. This man used to buy for me gifts and I thought life was good. But to my surprise, I realized that he was a drunkard. He could not listen to any form of advice. He could come in the night shouting, and threatening to kill me if he finds another man in the house. I regret why I got married". Female respondent, Kinyamaseke.

"I got married at 15 years to an 18 year old man due to peer pressure. I had a friend who got married to a very rich man. Unfortunately, this was not the same story on my side. When I got to this man's home, there was nothing but only suffering. I had one child with him and decided to leave him and went back to my parents' home". Female respondent.

# 3.4.3 Inability to access school fees and poverty

In January 1997, the Government of Uganda introduced Universal Primary Education (UPE) with the aim of achieving poverty reduction and human development. The main objectives were to provide the facilities and resources to enable every child to enter and remain in school until the primary cycle of education is complete and to make education equitable in order to eliminate disparities and inequalities. Following its introduction, gross enrolment in primary school increased from 3.1 million in 1996 to 7.6 million in 2003.

Having introduced UPE, the government of Uganda abolished tuition fees and Parents and Teachers Association (PTA) charges for primary education. Despite the abolition of tuition and PTA charges, primary education was not made compulsory. Neither was it made entirely free, since parents were still expected to contribute pens, exercise books, uniforms, and in some cases bricks and labour for classroom construction through community work. For parents who could not afford anything, this still remained a constraint on them.

According to the study findings, 21% in Bukonzo East and 28.8% in Busongora North got married at an early age because their parents could not afford school fees as shared below;

"I got married in 2009 at the age of 14years to a 21 year old man. My parents could not afford paying my school fees and I decided to get married to get some comfort and help. However, I instead landed in further poverty and we are always quarreling and fighting. I wish I could go back to school". Female respondent, Busongora North.

"I got married at the age of 16 years to a man who was 18 years old. I loved school but my parents could not afford school fees. My parents could send me to school without books, pens, shoes and any other scholastic material. I was always chased because of school fees thus decided to get married. But my husband is poor. He can't even afford to buy food, clothes for me and other basic necessities. We are always quarreling and he beats me a lot." Female respondent, Busongora North.

In addition, the mountainous terrain in Kasese is another hurdle for children as most schools are located in the lowlands. Having two rain seasons between March to May and August to November which fall in the period of school terms makes it very hard for these children to come down and attend school. This could be one of the factors contributing to the high school drop-out rate especially for those living in the mountains.



Young girls traversing the complicated terrain to go to school

### 3.4.4 Personal willingness

Some of the respondents went into marriage on their own will and with the assumption that they had matured. Busongora North had 12.7% of girls who got married out of their own will and Bukonzo East had 14%.

"I live in Katande village and I am 20 years old. I am a divorced mother of a 3 year old girl and a P.7 drop out. I willingly went into marriage at the age of 17 years because my father was a drunkard and did not provide school fees or any basic necessities. I also believed that my mother never loved me since she showed more love to the younger sisters then". Female respondent, Busongora North.

"I willingly got married at the age of 14 years to a young boy of 17 years. We loved each other and after sometime I got pregnant and everything was going on well. Even when I gave birth, my husband was the one cooking. As we continued to live together, I realized that we were too poor, we did not own anything, and everything belonged to the in-laws. One day I requested my husband to start saving so that we can buy land of our own. This conversation became regular in our home and things did not go well as we started quarreling almost every day. When my mother-in-law saw what happened, she advised my husband to run away and when he did I also packed my things and went back to my parents home. I am happy my parents accepted me and they are also paying my school fees at Holy Dove secondary school. Female respondent, Busongora North.

"I willingly got married at the age of 17 years to a bodaboda man whom we used to call uncle. I got married thinking that this man was rich but what I found is not what I had expected. This man was poor. After sometime, I got pregnant and delivered but my baby passed away. After this incidence, my husband became violent and started beating me almost daily. He would force me into sex even when I am sick". Female respondent, Busongora North.

## 3.4.5 Forced by parents

Parents were accused of forcing girls into marriages as a means of enabling the family to acquire some extra income. 5.4% of girls in Bukonzo East and 5.1% in Busongora North had been forced by their parents to get married as shared below;

"I come from Congo. I got married when I was 13 years old to a 17 year old man. I gave birth to a baby at 14 years. My parents let me get married because they believed my husband would look after me well. However, we live with my in-laws; have a grass mattress, one blanket, 4 sauce pans, 10 plates and a hoe. We grow a few crops for our food. I wish we can get money and buy our own land and live away from my in-laws". Female respondent.

"I got married at 15 years to a 43 year old man in 2008. My parents forced me into marriage because they wanted to get money for survival. It was a traditional wedding. I am the third wife out of four wives. I have had challenges in this marriage arising from quarrels with my co-wives and poverty". Female respondent, Maliba Sub-County.

#### 3.4.6 No home to live in

Some of the young girls indicated that they did not have family homes and therefore sought out marriages to secure space to live in. This included 4% in Bukonzo East and 5.1% in Busongora North. By getting married, they were seeking a place of solace and shelter. Respondents shared their encounters;

I live in Kyanya village. I got married in 2007 at the age of 15 years to a 26 year old man. I got married because I had no home to stay in. I used to stay with my friend Peruse. When she got a job in Kampala, she left me in the house to look after it and I remained lonely. My friends then advised me to leave Peruse's home and get a partner. By then I was in S.2. By good luck, I got a man who helped and took me back to school and now I am in S.4. I keep praying that he continues paying my school fees so that I can have a bright future. Female respondent from Maliba.

I am 18 years old. I stopped in S.1 when my parents separated and my father married another woman. Our step mother used to mistreat us (my siblings and I). She made me do a lot of work, and to make matters worse both my step mother and father never provided us with basic needs. After some time, I was chased away from home and had nowhere to stay. So I decided to go into marriage. Female respondent from Bukonzo East.

## 3.4.7 Other factors

Others got married due to the disruption of the armed conflict in Kasese and the fear of being infected with HIV and AIDS.

"I stopped in primary 5 and got married at 16 years. My husband paid a fine of one goat and shs.150, 000 (US\$61). I got married because I feared being infected with HIV & AIDS. I wanted to have a permanent man". Female respondent, Maliba Sub-County.

## 3.5 The Process of Marriage

The marriage process includes payment of dowry, traditional wedding, church wedding, Islamic wedding, civil marriage, fines and elopement. Table 4 below gives the specifics.

**Table 4: Marriage process** 

Marriage Process	Bukonzo East		Busong	ora North	Total		
	N	%	N	%	N	%	
Dowry	50	33.6	72	46.5	122	40.05	
Fines	45	30.2	29	18.7	74	24.45	
Traditional wedding	27	18.1	24	15.5	51	16.8	
Eloped/ co-habiting	21	14.1	24	15.3	45	14.7	
Church wedding	3	2.0	4	2.6	7	2.3	
Islamic wedding	2	1.3	1	0.6	3	0.95	
Civil marriage	1	0.7	1	0.6	2	0.65	

In both counties, dowry ranked highest as the major process that sealed the marriage. Busongora North had 46.5% and Bukonzo East with 33.6%. Payment of fines in Bukonzo East was at 30.2% and in Busongora North at 18.7%. This was mainly done after a young girl had eloped or was impregnated. The man responsible was penalized with a specified amount of money ranging from Ug. Shs. 10,000 to Shs.600, 000/- (equiv. US\$4 - US\$244), goats, crates of soda, among others. Once this was honoured, the girl would be handed over to the husband for marriage. Parents preferred the mode of fines because it is non-refundable in comparison to dowry<sup>4</sup>.

<sup>4</sup> With regard to dowry, if a girl decides to leave the marriage, her parents are required to refund the items they received in exchange of the girl.

It was also observed that the practice of paying fines had been normalized as an ordinary practice despite the awareness about the defilement law. This was mainly due to the delays in providing justice and the assumption that law enforcement officers were receiving bribes and letting offenders free. As a result, parents resorted to demanding for fines in order to benefit financially and settle cases in the shortest time possible. Below are some of the voices from the respondents;

"I was impregnated while in Primary.6 by a young man dealing in purchase and sale of coffee. When he took me to his home, I found there two more girls as his wives (one who stopped in senior one and the other in Primary.7). My husband was fined shs. 60,000/(US\$24) which was shared between my parents and the police officer. He also brought 4 goats.

The parents of the other two girls reported to police and our husband was imprisoned for 3 months. His parents sold ½ acre of land they had given him to get him out of prison. The 3 wives were taken care of by the father & mother in law. The only thing the boy owned was one chicken. Two weeks after he was released from prison, another girl who was in Senior 1 was brought home with a 7 months pregnancy. He decided to run away to Kampala". Female respondent.

"I left school while in primary six at 16 years due to an early pregnancy. The man paid one goat and Ug.Shs.10, 000 (US\$4) as a fine to my parents". Female respondent.

Girls who had gone through a traditional wedding ceremony were 18.1% in Bukonzo East and 15.5% in Busongora North. In addition, 14.1% in Bukonzo East and 15.3% of girls interviewed in Busongora North eloped and were co-habiting. Those who went through the church wedding, Islamic wedding and civil marriage were the least with 4% in Bukonzo East and 3.8% in Busongora North.

"I got married at 15 years to a 24 year old man. We were married in church and received a lot of gifts. The goat we got on the wedding day has delivered three times." Female respondent, Katabukenene.

### 3.6 Economic Demographic Status

### 3.6.1 Household property ownership

Table 5: Household property ownership

Household Property Ownership	Busongora North (n=155)		Bukonzo (n=149)	East	Total		
	N	%	N		N	%	
Cooking saucepans	140	90	132	88.6	272	89.3	
Sponge mattress	137	88.4	126	84.6	263	86.5	
Plates	135	87.1	127	85.2	262	86.15	
Bed	115	74.2	87	58.4	202	66.3	
Blanket	104	67.1	80	53.7	184	60.4	
Furniture	72	46.5	62	41.6	134	44.05	
Radio	61	39.4	62	41.6	123	40.5	
Mobile phone	59	38.1	60	40.02	119	39.06	
Bicycle	10	6.5	23	15.4	33	10.95	
Cassette player	3	1.9	6	4.02	9	2.96	
Television	0	0	2	1.3	2	1.3	

With regard to property ownership, majority of the women in the two counties had above 80% ownership of cooking saucepans, plates and sponge mattresses. It was also observed that a number of women did not have or own communication tools like radios, mobile phones and cassette players. This implies that they have minimal sources of information and remain isolated. Control of communication tools has been known to be a preserve for men who have the sole mandate to decide when and how to use them for instance the radio.

Only 6.5% of respondents in Busongora North and 15.4% in Bukonzo East owned a bicycle. In addition, 67.1% in Busongora North and 53.7% in Bukonzo East owned a blanket. It was also observed that some young married girls were in a bad state and hardly owned anything.

"My husband died and left me 3 children (eldest is 4 yrs and youngest 9 months). I sleep in my father in-law's sitting room on a polythene bag stuffed with dry banana leaves. I have only one bed sheet". Female respondent.

# 3.6.2 Housing status

Respondents were asked to describe the nature of their houses. Majority of the houses were roofed with corrugated iron sheets (which were very old and had rusted). Bukonzo East was at 59.7% and Busongora North at 61.3% (Table 6). Other house roofs were made of grass/thatch or banana fibres.

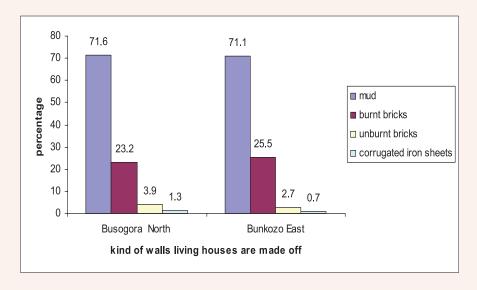
### i) Roofing

Table 6: Nature of roof

Nature of roof	Bukonzo East (n=149)		Busongo (n=155)	ra North	Total		
	N	%	N	%	N	%	
Corrugated iron	89	59.7	95	61.3	184	60.5	
Grass/ thatch	59	39.6	55	35.5	114	37.55	
Banana Fibres	1	0.7	3	1.9	4	1.3	
Tiles/ asbestos	0	0	2	1.3	2	1.3	

#### ii) Walls

Figure 3: Nature walls



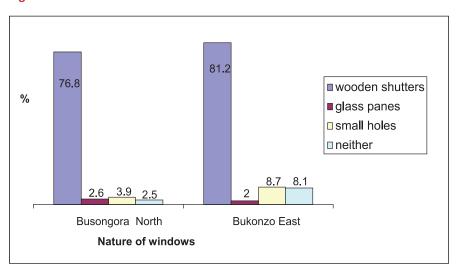
With regard to the nature of walls of the houses, 71% were made of mud in both counties. 23.2% in Busongora North and 25.5% in Bukonzo East had burnt bricks and the rest of the houses were made of unburnt bricks and old iron sheets.



House roofed with grass thatched and has no windows

### iii) Windows

Figure 4: Nature of windows



Majority of the windows on the houses were made of wooden shutters (76.8% in Busongora North and 81.2% in Bukonzo East). A minimal number of houses were made of glass panes, small holes and others had no windows at all.

The state of housing was very poor and definitely a health hazard. Some of the houses were too small, were leaking and had only a single old bench in form of furniture. The same room that was acting as a sitting room doubled as the kitchen. Some of the respondents had no houses for themselves and had to share with their in-laws as shared below;

"I got an early pregnancy at 15 years and that is why I got married. My husband had no house. It is my mother in-law who gave him one room in her house. The house has four rooms". Female respondent.

"I got married at 14 to a 21 year old man. I am not comfortable at all. This grass thatched house is in a poor condition and it is leaking. When the rain comes, it is only misery. I regret because poverty has proved to be the blanket in my life". Female respondent, Maliba.

"My husband and I live with his parents in their grass thatched house. The house has reed shutters and we sleep in one of the rooms. Our mattress is made of grass." Female respondent, Katabukenene.



Young mother seated in front of her house roofed with banana fibres

## 3.6.3 Land ownership

Table 7: Land ownership

	Busongora North		Bukonzo	East	Total		
	N	%	N	%	N	%	
Customary	118	76.1	113	75.8	231	75.95	
Rented	12	7.7	6	4.0	18	11.7	
Freehold	6	3.9	10	6.7	16	5.3	
Squatters	3	1.9	6	4.0	9	2.95	
Lease	3	1.9	2	1.3	5	1.6	

In terms of land ownership, 76.1% in Busongora North and 75.8% in Bukonzo East relied on customary land provided by the parents and grandparents.

"We do not have any land. The neighbours gave us a small grass thatched house with no windows and no toilet. We are not allowed to till the land. We have two saucepans and two plates". Female respondent.

"My father in-law gave us one acre of land where I cultivate food crops to feed the children and the family. I barely save enough to sell and buy clothes for myself and the children or any basic necessity we may need. Though we cultivate together with my husband, he is the one who controls the harvest. When he sells the coffee, you never see where the money goes. All he does is to drink alcohol". Female respondent.

# 3.6.4 Agricultural production

## i) Agricultural tools used

Table 8 : Agricultural tools used

Agricultural Tools used	Busongora North		Bukonzo	East	Total		
	N	%	N	%	N	%	
Hoes	134	86.5	128	85.9	262	86.2	
Panga	68	43.9	64	43.0	132	43.4	
Axe	28	18.1	29	19.5	57	28.5	
Ox-plough	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Tractor	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Generator	0	0	0	0	0	0	

The major agricultural tools used for production was the hand hoe (86.2%), the panga (43.4%) and axe (28.5%). None of the respondents owned either an oxplough, or tractor or generator.



Grandmother and grand-daughter carrying their harvest from the garden

## ii) Major crops grown

The major crops grown in Busongora North included cassava (67.7%), beans (38.1), coffee (36.8%), Bananas (35.5%), groundnuts (32.3%) and maize (29%). In Bukonzo East, cassava was the major crop grown at 70.5%, followed by maize (58.4%), groundnuts (48.3%), coffee (42.3%), bananas (34.2%) and cotton (24.2%).

Table 9: Major crops grown

Major crops grown	Busongo North	Busongora North		o East	Total N=304		
	N	%	N	%	N	%	
Cassava	105	67.7	105	70.5	210	69.1	
Groundnuts	50	32.3	72	48.3	122	40.3	
Coffee	57	36.8	63	42.3	120	39.55	
Maize	45	29.0	87	58.4	132	43.7	
Bananas	55	35.5	51	34.2	106	34.85	
Beans	59	38.1	27	18.1	86	28.1	
Potatoes	27	17.4	23	15.4	50	16.4	
Cotton	7	4.5	36	24.2	43	14.35	
Millet	11	7.1	5	3.4	16	5.25	
Irish potatoes	18	11.6	6	4.0	24	8.8	
Simsim	4	2.6	11	7.4	15	5	



A woman walking with her children from the garden

The burden of garden work was left to the women. Majority of the women and girls complained of long working hours and the lack of appropriate tools and additional labour force to support them. Due to the small sizes of land, they have to move long distances to their gardens with the children. They spend the entire day on empty stomachs and looked hungry and malnourished. Men had shunned agricultural work and resorted to alcoholism, idleness and riding motorcycles (boda bodas).

### iii) Animals/Birds reared

Table 10: Animals/birds reared

Animals/ birds reared	Busongora North		Bukonz	o East	Total		
	N	%	N	%	N	%	
Ducks	46	29.7	53	35.6	99	32.65	
Pigs	44	28.4	51	34.2	95	31.3	
Cows	16	10.3	11	7.4	29	9.55	
Goats	12	7.7	17	11.4	27	8.85	
Chicken	1	0.6	4	2.7	5	1.65	
Sheep	1	0.6	3	2.0	4	1.3	

With regard to poultry keeping, the duck was at 29.7% in Busongora North and 35.6% in Bukonzo East followed by chicken. The animals included pigs, cows and goats in both counties. All this was at household level and quantities ranged from 1-4 birds/animals. None of them had the capacity to engage in small or large scale farming.

# 3.6.5 Energy sources

### i) Lighting

**Table 11: Sources of lighting** 

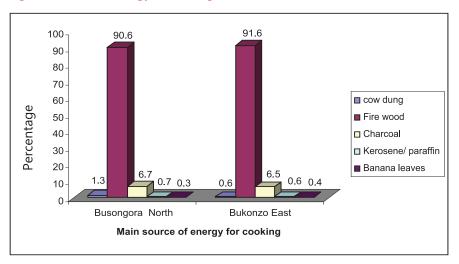
Source of lighting	Bukonzo East		Busongo	ra North	Total		
	N	%	N	%	N	%	
Tadooba	125	83.9	138	89	263	86.45	
Paraffin/Kerosene lamp	12	8.1	8	5.2	20	6.65	
Candles	5	3.4	6	3.9	11	3.65	
Fire	2	1.3	1	0.6	3	1.9	
Gas lamp	2	1.3	1	0.6	3	0.95	
Rechargeable lamp	0	0	1	0.6	1	0.6	
Electricity	3	2.0	0	0	3	2.0	

The majority of the respondents use tadooba<sup>5</sup> with 89% in Busongora North as compared to 83.9% in Bukonzo East. This was followed by the use of Kerosene lamps at 8.1% in Bukonzo East and 5.2% in Busongora North. It was also observed that 3% of the respondents in Bukonzo use electricity while no respondent had electricity in Busongora North.

#### ii) Cooking sources

The respondents reported that the major source of energy for cooking was firewood at 91% in both counties. However, it was observed that the hill tops and lowlands hardly had any trees to sustain the demand for firewood. This means that women have an added burden of searching for firewood. About 6.5% were using charcoal, and the rest use paraffin, banana leaves and cow dung.



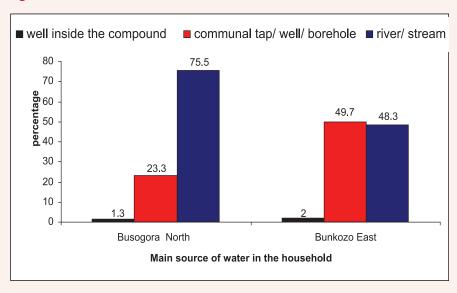


<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Parrafin candles made out of small tins.

#### 3.6.6 Water and sanitation

#### *i)* Water sources

Figure 6: Source of water



Water is a very important resource in all aspects of life. The major source of water in Busongora North were rivers or streams (75.5%) followed by communal taps/borehole (23.3%) and 1.3% had a well within their homesteads. All waterpoints in Busongora North were in the low lands. In Bukonzo East, 49.7% accessed water from communal taps or wells, 48.3% used rivers or streams and 2% had water sources in their compound. It was observed that Bukonzo East had piped water even in the hills and this eased the task on the side of women.

On the overall, water collection was a role left for the women, girls and children. For those who had to slope down the hills to access water, the burden was even bigger. It was also reported that water points had become insecure trapping points for young girls as shared below;

"The boys way lay girls on their way to the water source or even wait by the water source itself. This is normally in the evening when girls come to fetch water after school". Female respondent.

"I got married at the age of 13. One day I had gone to fetch water late in the evening and I was defiled by the Local Council 1 (LC1) Chairperson of my village. Unfortunately, I conceived and when my parents got to know about it, they asked me to pack and go to the LC1 Chairperson's home. Now I have three children whom I have had through caesarean section. I am expecting the fourth one" Female respondent.



One of the water sources in Katabukenene

#### ii) Toilet Facilities

Figure 7: Toilet facilities in Busongora North

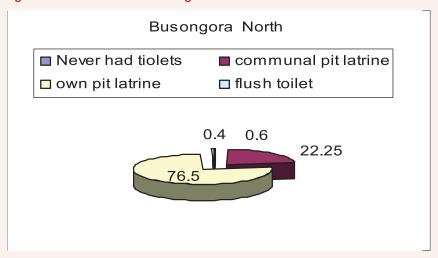
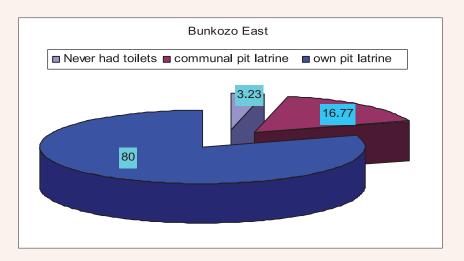


Figure 8 : Toilet facilities in Bukonzo East



Availability of toilet facilities is one of the measures that enhance sanitation in communities. In Bukonzo East (80%) and Busongora North (76.5%) had pit latrines in their homesteads. Others used communal pit latrines (16.7% in Bukonzo East and 22.1% in Busongora North) while 3.23% in Bukonzo East had no latrines.

#### 3.7 Maternal and Child Health

#### 3.7.1 Introduction

Maternal and Child health are key public health and development concerns. This study looked at the following aspects; access to information on pregnancy, source of information on pregnancy and child health, family planning, child birth, child registration, child immunization, knowledge about HIV & AIDS, Intimate partner violence and women's participation in communal activities.

## 3.7.2 Access to information

Table 12: Access to information on pregnancy (N=297)

Access to information	Buk	conzo East	Busongora North		
	N %		N	%	
	143 96.0		154	99.4	

Table 13: Source of information on pregnancy and child birth

Source of lighting	Bukonzo East		Busongora North		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Health centre	53	35.6	67	43.6	120	39.6
Radio	41	27.5	43	27.6	84	27.55
Church	21	14.1	27	17.3	48	15.7
Traditional Birth Attendant	20	13.4	11	7.1	31	10.25
Market	4	2.7	2	1.3	6	2
Women group conference	1	0.7	2	1.3	3	1
News paper	2	1.3	1	0.6	3	0.95
Village	0	0	1	0.6	1	0.6

On the overall, respondents from both counties had access to information on pregnancy (97%). The major sources of this information were the health centres, radios, churches and traditional birth attendants.

## 3.7.3 Family planning

Family planning refers to the planning intended to determine the number and spacing of one's children through effective methods of birth control. Family planning allows individuals and couples to anticipate and attain their desired number of children and the spacing and timing of their births. It is achieved through use of contraceptive methods and the treatment of involuntary infertility. A woman's ability to space and limit her pregnancies has a direct impact on her health and well-being as well as on the outcome of each pregnancy (WHO).

Table 14: Use of family planning

Use of Family	Bukonzo East		Busongo	ra North	Total	
Planning	N	%	N	%	N	%
Yes	36	24.2	69	44.2	105	34.2
No	113	75.8	86	55.8	199	65.8

Majority of the respondents; 75.8% in Bukonzo East and 55.8% in Busongora North respectively had never used family planning.

"I got married in 2003 at the age of 15 and I have four children now (two girls and two boys). I would like to have 8 children but I am now reconsidering 6 children given the current economic difficulties. I have however, not thought of using family planning". Female respondent.

"At the time of marriage, I was 16 years and this man was 18 years. I would like to have 12 children and I cannot use family planning". Female respondent.

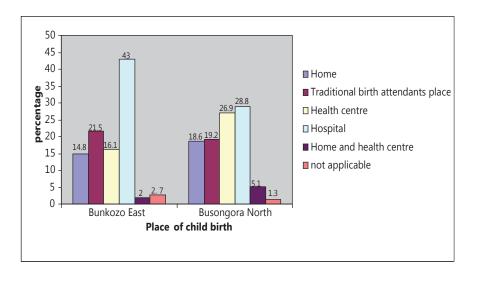
It is only 44.2% in Busongora North and 24.2% in Bukonzo East who were using any form of family planning. The methods used (table 15 below) included modern contraceptives and traditional methods.

Table 15: Method of family planning used

Family Planning method	Bukonzo East (n=36)			gora North n=69)	Total (N= 105)	
	N	%	N	N %		%
Modern contraceptives	31	20.8	62	39.7	93	30.25
Traditional contraceptives	4	2.7	5	3.8	9	3.25
Both modern and traditional contraceptives	1	0.7	1	0.7	1	0.7

## 3.7.4 Child Birth

Figure 9: Place of Child birth



Majority of respondents indicated that they delivered their babies in hospital with 43% in Bukonzo East and 28.8% in Busongora North. This was followed by 26.9% in Bukonzo East and 16.1% in Busongora North delivering in health centres. It was revealed that most respondents also go to traditional birth attendants - 21.5% in Bukonzo East and 19.2% in Busongora North.

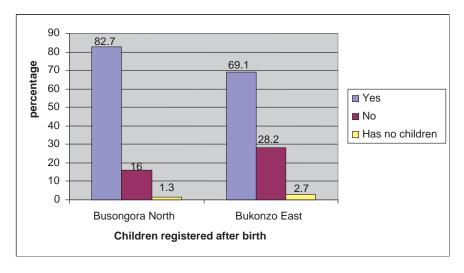
The health workers at Kagando hospital noted that they encounter several challenges in supporting the child mothers. Majority of them come to hospital not prepared with the required necessities due to the low economic levels and they conceal the identity of the husbands. As a result, the hospital bills are not paid up which constrains the running of the hospital. Other problems include unsafe abortions and fistulae, among others.

## 3.7.5 Birth Registration

Registration of births is the first legal acknowledgement of a child's existence. In addition to issues of protection, a functioning system of birth and civil registration ensures that a country has an up to date and reliable database for planning (UNICEF). This is useful for national planning as it is for local government bodies that are responsible for maintaining education, health and other social services for the community.

Article 18 of the 1995 Constitution of the Republic of Uganda states that: "The state shall register every birth, marriage and death occurring in Uganda." This is regulated by the Birth and Death Registration Act of 1970, Cap 309, and implemented by the Office of the Registrar General in the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs. The law is administered by the Attorney General. It is a mandatory obligation for everyone in Uganda to be registered at birth, and the office of the Registrar General is responsible for ensuring that registration is carried out in all districts in the country. Birth registration records are kept by district registrars and are supposed to be sent to the Office of the Registrar General for the issue of certificates.

Figure 10: Birth registration



The study indicated that majority of the children, 82.7% in Busongora North and 69.1% in Bukonzo East were registered after birth. However, in Bukonzo East; 28.2% and in Busongora North 16% were not registered. The reasons given for not registering children after birth included lack of money to pay for birth certificates, lack of knowledge about birth registration and not having delivered from the hospital or health centre (table 16).

Table 16: Reasons for non birth registration

Reasons for non birth registration		zo East 41 )	Busongora North (N= 25)		
	N %		N	%	
Never had money to pay for the certificate	18	12.2	10	6.4	
Did not produce in the hospital	10	6.7	5	3.2	
Did not know that they register children after birth	5	3.4	5	3.2	
Produced at the Traditional birth attendant's facility	6	4.0	3	1.9	
No response	1	0.7	2	1.3	
Still pregnant	1	0.7	0	0	

#### 3.7.6 Child Immunization

Immunization of children can prevent morbidity and mortality. According to WHO, a child is considered fully vaccinated if he or she has received a BCG vaccination against tuberculosis, three doses of DPT vaccine to prevent diphtheria, tetanus, and measles. These vaccinations should be received in the first year of life. The six immunisable diseases attack mostly children below the age of 6 years because their immunity against those diseases is still weak. These include measles, polio, whooping cough/pertusis, tetanus, diphtheria and tuberculosis.

Table 17: Children fully immunized

	Bukonzo East		Busongo	ra North	Total		
	N	%	N	%	N	%	
Yes	132	88.6	149	95.5	281	92.05	
No	13	8.7	5	3.2	18	5.95	
Have no children	4	2.7	2	1.3	6	2	

Majority of the respondents reported that their children had been fully immunized with 95.5% in Busongora North and 88.6% in Bukonzo East.

Health workers noted that women were vigilant in bringing children for vaccination due to the mass campaigns on immunization by Ministry of health. They also observed that the number of mothers seen during immunization were higher than those who deliver in hospitals and health centres. This implies that majority of young mothers and elder women may be delivering at home or at the traditional birth attendants' facility.

#### 3.8 HIV and AIDS

The study sought to establish the level of awareness with regard to HIV & AIDS. 97.3% of girls in Bukonzo East and 96.8% in Busongora North revealed that they had knowledge about the disease. Only 3.2% in Busongora North and 2.7% in Bukonzo East had no information at all.

Table 18: Knowledge about HIV & AIDS

Knowledge about HIV & AIDS	Bukonzo East		Busongora North		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Yes	145	97.3	150	96.8	295	97.05
No	4	2.7	5	3.2	9	2.95

The survey indicated that majority of the girls had tested for HIV & AIDS; 90.4% in Busongora North and 87.9% in Bukonzo East (table 20). This is due to the fact that most pregnant women who go for maternity care before delivery have to be tested for HIV. This is attributed to the government of Uganda policy that requires pregnant women to be tested for HIV as a measure to prevent mother to child transmission (PMTCT). With regard to HIV & AIDS testing places, health centres (table 19) ranked highest (70.25%). However, some health centres like Kabingo Health Centre II reported lack of HIV testing facilities and yet it has a large catchment area.

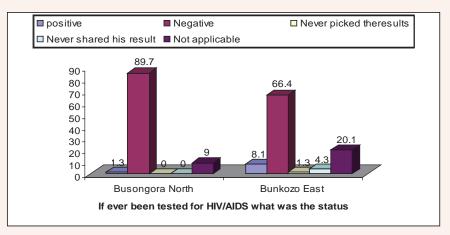
Table 19: HIV & AIDS testing venues

	Bukonzo East			ngora rth	Total	
	N	%	% N %		N	%
Health centre	88	59.1	127	81.4	215	70.25
Trading centre	23	15.3	7	4.5	30	9.9
Hospital	18	12.1	10	7.1	28	9.6
Villages	18	12.1	6	3.8	24	7.95
At school	2	1.4	5	3.2	7	2.3

Table 20: HIV & AIDS test conducted

	Bukonzo East		Busongo	ra North	Total	
	N %		N	%	N	%
Yes	131	87.9	140	90.4	271	89.15
No	18	12.1	15	9.6	33	10.85

Figure 11: HIV status of those who tested



When asked about their HIV status; majority of the respondents indicated that they were negative; 89.7% in Busongora North and 66.4% in Bukonzo East (figure 11).

"I got married at 16 years to a 20 year old man. He took me to Masaka and we started living together. When I got pregnant, I went to the health centre where I was examined. I was then informed that I was HIV positive. I did some investigation from my neigbours and found out that my husband had lost three wives to HIV. I was shaken. I stayed and had my baby. When I got my second child, I decided to come home to my sister's place. The good news is that the children are negative." Female respondent, Kinyamaseke.

#### 3.9 Intimate Partner Violence

Intimate partner violence or domestic violence is one of the most common form of violence against women inflicted by a husband or intimate partner in an intimate relationship such as marriage, dating, family or cohabitation. It includes acts of physical aggression, psychological abuse, and forced intercourse, among others. It is a serious, preventable public health problem that affects millions of people globally and also enhances poverty in households and communities.

Respondents in this study reported having experienced various form of violence inflicted by their partners. The most common form of violence was related to being forced to have sex without consent (46.7%). Most of the young mothers did not anticipate that occasional or daily sexual intercourse was central in a marital relationship.

"When I got married, I found my husband had built a grass thatched house on his mother's land. We later had a baby boy. The worst thing is that this man forced me to have sex on several occasions. I did not know this is what marriage meant". Female respondent, Kisendera.

"I got married at 14 years to a 28 year old man. He was a camera man and he used to take my photos at no cost. I thought camera men had a lot of money but I was wrong. When I got to his home, there was even no single saucepan and plates to use and no land. The camera he had was someone else's. This man forces me to have sex and each time I complain, he says 'I married you for sex only'. I am not happy with this forced sex". Female respondent.

"I got married at 16 years to a man who was 27 years old. I thought that when one is married, everything is provided. This man would demand sex everyday without providing food and other household requirements. I could not bear this anymore. I decided to apologise to my parents and pleaded to be taken back to school. I am happy am back in school." Female respondent.

"I got married at 13 years to a 25 year old man. I did not know how to cook and no idea about sex. This made life so difficult for me and I could not cope. I ran and went back to my parents. I am glad they took me back to school. I am now in Senior Three." Female respondent.

The 37.5% of respondents further reported that they had been threatened to be thrown out of the homes in addition to incidences where the husband gave household property to a new lover without consultation. This raises a security risk for the girls in these forms of marriage given that they do not have any form of control either ownership of any form of household property.

"I wish my husband would use the money from the coffee sales to build a decent home and look after the family. When I ask about the money that accrues from the sale of coffee, he threatens me and says 'who are you in this home, who gave you the right to ask such a question?' I am a man, I do not account to a woman" Female respondent.

**Table 21: Experience of Intimate Partner Violence** 

n=304

Form of Violence	No.	%
Forced to have sex when you do not want	142	46.7
Threaten to hurt you	73	24
Threaten to chase you out of marital home	66	21.7
Says it is your fault if he hits you then promise it won't happen again	50	16.4
Given away property without your consent to a new lover	48	15.8
Put you down in public or stop you from contacting family or friends	47	15.5
Throw you down, push, hit, kick or threaten you with a weapon	46	15.1
Threaten to hurt your children	28	9.2

Another form of violence included being physically hit using an object, kicked, pushed down or threatened to be killed using a weapon.

"I got married at 16 years to a 19 year old man. I stayed with him for two years and realized that life was not easy. I talked to my parents and they agreed to pay my school fees. But when I told this man that my parents were taking me back to school, he started beating me. I live with my parents and I am now in Senior One." Female respondent.

A number of reasons attributing to intimate partner violence were linked to alcoholism (11.4%), sexual denial (8.6%), polygamy and failure to engage in productive work.

"My husband is a drunkard, he drinks from morning to evening and beats me a lot. There is a lot of domestic violence in our home and this forced me to divorce for two years until he came and pleaded that I return. My family encouraged me to go back to my marriage, wondering who would take care of my son." Female respondent.

"I shoulder all the family responsibilities. My husband's job is taking alcohol the entire day and beating me. I harvest the coffee then sell at a profit to enable me buy soap and clothing for the children. If he finds out that I sold his coffee however small it may be, he threatens me with a panga that he will cut off my head." Female respondent.

# 3.10 Community Participation

Community participation is the process by which individuals, families, or communities assume responsibility for their own welfare and develop a capacity to contribute to their own and the community's development (Oakley and Mardsen, 1987). Most community development work involves the participation of the communities or beneficiaries involved. Therefore, community participation is an important component of community development and reflects a grassroots or bottom up approach to problem solving. This study inquired whether women were active members of any form of organized groups in their community. Forty

seven point seven percent (47.7%) reported that they were members of the following groups; Katabukenene Women's Group, Silk Women's Group, Church Choirs, Maliba Mothers Union, Isule Women Savings and Credit Group, Farmers Associations, and Savings and Credit Cooperative Organisation (SACCO).

Table 22: Membership in community groups

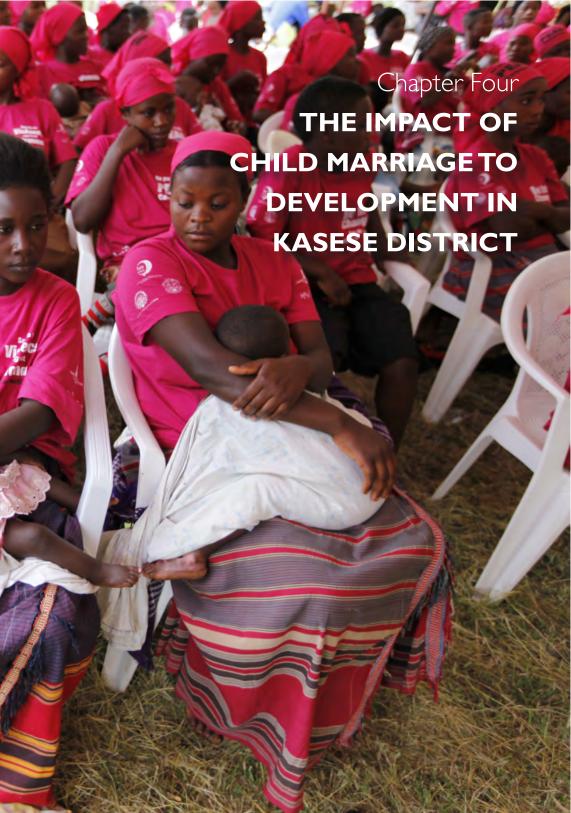
n=304

Membership in Community Groups	No.	%
Yes	145	47.7
No	159	52.3

However, majority of the women and girls (52.3%) did not belong to any community group. They attributed this to lack of money to pay for subscription or saving which is a requirement for most groups. Others reported that their husbands had restricted them from leaving home to visit friends and family. They therefore could not join or participate in any form of community organizing. This was also reflected in table 21 as one of the major reasons that contributed to intimate partner violence.

Others have lost trust in being part of groups due to poor leadership and accountability of those entrusted to head the groups. This has resulted into loss of savings and thus distrust in the viability of working as groups. Another reason for failure to participate in community groups was attributed to lack of knowledge on existing community groups and their values.





# THE IMPACT OF CHILD MARRIAGE TO DEVELOPMENT IN KASESE DISTRICT

# 4.1 Introduction

Development is conceived as a multi dimensional process involving changes in structures, attitudes and institutions as well as the acceleration of economic growth, the reduction of inequality and eradication of absolute poverty (Todaro, 1992). There are three basic components which serve as a conceptual basis and practical guideline for understanding the inner meaning of development. These are life-sustenance, self esteem and freedom, representing goals sought by all individuals and society.

**Life-sustenance:** All people have certain basic human needs without which life would be impossible. These life sustaining needs include, food, shelter, health and protection. When any of these is absent or in critically short supply, then a condition of 'absolute underdevelopment' exists.

**Self esteem:** This refers to a sense of self worth, self respect, and of not being used as a tool by others for their own ends. All peoples and societies seek some form of self esteem. The nature and form of this self esteem may vary from society to society and from one culture to another.

Freedom from servitude: Freedom here is not to be understood in the political or ideological sense but in the more fundamental sense of freedom or emancipation from alienating material conditions of life and freedom from social servitudes of men/women to nature, ignorance, misery, institutions and dogmatic beliefs. Freedom involves the expanded range of choices for societies and their members, together with the minimization of external constraints in the pursuit of some social goal.

Development is therefore both a physical reality and state of mind in which society as, through some combination of social, economic and institutional processes, secures the means for obtaining a better life. In all societies, development must have at least the following three objectives;

- To increase the availability and widen the distribution of basic life sustaining goods such as food, shelter, health and protection to all members of society.
- To raise levels of living, including, in addition to higher incomes, the provision
  of more jobs, better education and more attention to cultural and humanistic
  values. These all serve not only to enhance material well being but also to
  generate greater individual and nation self esteem
- To expand the range of economic and social choice to individuals and nations by freeing them from servitude and dependence not only in relation to other people and nation states but also to the forces of ignorance and human misery.

Globally, a promise to free people from extreme poverty and multiple deprivations was made in 2000 through the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). These are eight international development goals that all 193 United Nations member states and at least 23 international organizations agreed to achieve by the year 2015 i.e.

- Eradicating extreme poverty and hunger,
- Achieving universal primary education,
- Promoting gender equality and empowering women
- Reducing child mortality rates,
- Improving maternal health,
- Combating hiv & aids, malaria, and other diseases,
- Ensuring environmental sustainability, and
- Developing a global partnership for development

The Uganda MDG Progress Report (2010) indicates that the country is on track to meeting its targets on Universal Primary Education and HIV & AIDS, although it may not hit the 2015 target on the other six goals. The target here is to ensure that by 2015, children will be able to complete full course of primary schooling. To achieve this goal, free primary education was introduced in 1997. At the time of

introducing UPE, there were 2.2 million pupils in primary school, but by 2007; the number had risen to 7.5 million. The report further notes that this tremendous success is threatened by challenges of quality of education under UPE in the absence of adequate facilities and teaching resources especially in rural areas. With regard to combating HIV and AIDS, malaria and other diseases, Uganda faces a challenge with the increasing rate of HIV infection.

#### 4.2 The Scenario in Kasese District

Looking at the state of events presented by the practice of child marriage in Kasese district as discussed in chapter three, it is evident that Uganda and the district in particular still have a lot to do to accelerate development efforts. There are several implications to the development of Kasese that emerge basing on the normalized practice of child marriage.

# 4.2.1 Population growth

Uganda has an unmet need of family planning that runs at a rate of 45%, by far the highest in Eastern and Southern Africa. It is the very absence of comprehensive family planning that has contributed to a runaway population growth rate, the third highest in the world. Currently, Uganda's population is at 33 million and 50% of the population is below 18 years (Population Secretariat, 2011). According to projections by the Uganda Bureau of Standards (2012), Uganda's population is projected to reach 40 million by 2017, and 80 million by 2040, which is not far away. Although it is argued that a big population is good in building a market base, there are many complexities that come with it. The natural resources are by and large not elastic and are therefore bound to run out. Unfortunately, the well off and educated tend to have fewer children, whom they give a more than decent life, while the poorer people have the bigger families. The consequences are a vicious cycle of poverty with its attendant problems of disease, poor diets, little or no education, and an inability to cope in a modernizing world. Given that the girls in Kasese district get married at an early age of 12 years, are not educated and do not use family planning, is enough justification that Kasese's population growth may be at a higher rate in comparison to the national rate. If child marriage is not addressed as a priority area of intervention, Kasese district is set to encounter a population explosion.

#### 4.2.2 HIV & AIDS

Uganda has been internationally lauded as a role model in reducing the HIV & AIDS prevalence. However, Uganda's HIV & AIDS prevalence rate has shot up from 6.4% in 2005 to 7.3% in 2011 (Ministry of Health, 2012) and over 130,000 new HIV infections are recorded in the country on an annual basis. The new findings show an increase in the prevalence rate and ring an alarm bell although still low when compared to many other Sub-Saharan African countries. According to the 2011 Uganda AIDS Indicator Survey (UAIS) (Uganda AIDS Commission, 2012), the prevalence rate has increased from 7.5% to 8.3% among women, while the increase among men is from 5 to 6.1%. In terms of regional variance, the rate ranges from 8% to 8.2% in South Western Uganda in which Kasese district is located.

Increase in HIV prevalence has been attributed to promiscuity, whereby more people are having multiple sex partners. This study on child marriage reported high levels of illicit sex, girls moving from one partner to another in search of a man who will provide better life, and young men running away from their homes to other towns after failing to meet their household responsibilities and obligations. This type of lifestyle; if not checked predisposes young women and men to the risk of HIV infection.

"When I was still in school, I fell in love with a soldier and ran away with him. We had our first child and I discovered that I had HIV. This man chased me away. I again moved to another soldier and conceived again. When he realized that I was HIV positive, he also chased me away. I almost died. I worry about my children's future in case I died. I had a radio which I sold to raise capital to start-up a business but it did not work out well. My parents have been very supportive but as someone living positive; I have very many needs and I feel inferior; always depending on my parents". Female respondent, Maliba Sub-County

"I got married at the age of 14 years to a 32 year old man. I stayed with this man for a few years but after having one child, he started mistreating me. I used to go gardening in people's homes to earn some money. I then decided to go back to my parents. I again re-married and produced three more children. We still did not have land, no bed, no mattress; the mattress we used at home was for my mother in-law. We were sleeping at my husband friend's house. Even amidst this poverty, my husband still married a new wife". Female respondent, Kinyamaseke

It has also been reported that in Uganda married couples are the most at risk population of HIV infection (Ministry of Health, 2012). The fact that child marriage is high in Kasese district is a manifestation that there is a risk for the young girls and women in marriage to contract HIV. The district leadership needs to be very keen and find practical ways of stopping this practice.

#### 4.2.3 Alcoholism

Alcoholism was one of the major challenges presented by the young women in marriage. The men had shunned work and resorted to taking alcohol the entire day without engaging in productive work. In most cases, this resulted into quarrels and fights at the household level thus leaving the young girls and women highly insecure. Some of the men in these marriages noted that they resorted to alcoholism as an escape route for failure to cope as husbands,

"Our parents force us to marry and all they give you is a small piece of land on which you cannot grow food. You struggle to break the rocks on the hill to create level for your new home. Your wife also expects you to come home in the evening with something. When you fail to find anything in the course of the day, you resort to taking alcohol and drugs (mairunji) so that you come home at night when your wife and children are asleep. In the event that your wife questions whether you brought food, this sparks a quarrel and fights. It is very challenging for us young men". Male respondent.

# 4.2.4 Women leadership base eroded

The effort to uplift the status of girls and women has been a global drive that is championed mainly by women activists and other development practitioners. In Uganda, through affirmative action policies, more girls have been able to access University Education and to take up political and leadership responsibilities from the village to the national level. Child marriage denies women in Kasese district from exploiting these opportunities. For instance, in Uganda, for one to contest for a Parliamentary position, one should have a minimum of Advanced Level Education or its equivalent. The fact that 69.4% of the young women interviewed in this study had only accessed primary education, implies that a number of women who could have been exemplary leaders in their communities lost the opportunity. This is a critical gap and wasted opportunity of building the women's leadership base.

"We are just humble parents and sacrificed all the money we had to take this girl to school. We even took her to a boarding school in Kasese town so that she could get quality education which is not possible in these schools in the mountains up here. We were shocked when our daughter disappeared and we found her at a man's home as a third wife. We thought she was still young. Although she later came back home, no amount of words could convince her to go back to school. We thought that she would grow up into one of the great women leaders to change the situation in this community". Parent, Bukonzo East.

# 4.2.4 Poverty

Child marriages accelerate the vicious cycle of poverty. All the respondents interviewed in this study were too poor and living desperate lives because their parents had given them away into marriage for as little as Ug. Shs. 10, 000 (US\$ 4). If a mother and father never went to school and have no resources to enable them improve on their situation, they will not be able to send their children to school, cannot access quality health care and cannot demand for better service provision. This leads to a community of illiterate people for generations. This has a great impact on the entire district given that its taxation and revenue base will equally be affected and yet the demand for provision of social services is high. Taxation is one of the major sources of revenue for the districts. With the abolition of graduated tax, men have lost their sense of responsibility, accountability and resorted to alcoholism and gambling. A population that has a low attitude to work cannot have any income and thus no extra disposable money.

# 4.2.5 Burden of care

From the study findings, a number of young girls who could not cope in marriage returned back to their parents homes. This has created an additional burden of care to the parents in their middle and old age thus straining the already low economic levels in these homes. Some of the girls ran away and abandoned their children.

# 4.2.6 Culture is dynamic

Majority of respondents attributed the practice of child marriage as a historical and acceptable cultural practice in Kasese district. In a way, this has been normalized and contributed to the underdevelopment of different communities in the district.

The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women Article 5(a) calls upon States Parties to take appropriate measures to modify the social and cultural patterns of conduct of men and women, with a view to achieving the elimination of prejudices and customary and all other practices which are based on the idea of the inferiority or the superiority of either of the sexes or on stereotyped roles for men and women. Article 16 emphasizes that state parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in all matters relating to marriage and family relations and in particular shall ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women; (a) the same right to enter into marriage (b) the same right to freely choose a spouse and to enter into marriage only with their free and full consent. The revival and recognition of the Rwenzururu Cultural Institution which has been in existence for the past 50 years and the fact that the King Charles Wesley Mumbere and his officials are highly educated gives hope that traditional practices that undermine the rights of children and women will be done away with.

# 4.2.7 Food security

Uganda is predominantly an agricultural country with 80% of the labour force provided by women. The rural agriculture is predominantly subsistence and semi-subsistence farming. It is mainly rain fed and therefore susceptible to rainfall fluctuations. Kasese district produces coffee, cotton, maize, cassava and bananas among others. However, the land tenure system which is predominantly customary denies the population the production of food crops in large quantities.

This study reports that women could only grow food crops on pieces of land which are not more than an acre and just enough for household consumption. Young girls and women do not have the capacity to grow adequate food stocks for own consumption and in excess for sale or storage. At the national level, food security has become a critical issue of concern due to changes in climatic patterns, dependency on the hand hoe and subsistence farming. Kasese district is therefore prone to experience food insecurity given the low levels of food production.

The government of Uganda, in an effort to boost agricultural production initiated the National Agricultural Advisory Services (NAADS) as a means for providing a decentralised, farmer-owned and private sector extension system. This programme also focuses on poverty and gender with a vision of changing the conditions for the

rural poor, especially for poor women, at all levels of society. The NAADS project uses farmer institutions as an entry point for increasing incomes by reducing the social isolation and vulnerability of members. This approach encourages formation of groups and working together. However, it was evident during this study that majority of young women did not belong to any form of organized group. This means that even with such government programmes, the intended objective of uplifting the status of communities may not be met.

# 4.2.8 Human rights observance

It is evident that the observance of human rights in Kasese district has not been adhered to by duty bearers and rights holders. Human rights abuse is a daily phenomenon manifested through child marriage. From the study findings, it was observed that the following rights for young women and girls had been violated;

- The right to education
- The right to be protected from all forms of physical or mental abuse and from all forms of sexual abuse
- The right to enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health
- The right to educational and vocations information and guidance
- The right to seek, receive and impart information and ideas
- The right to rest, leisure and to participate
- The right to protection against all forms of exploitation affecting any aspect of the child's welfare
- The right to own property; among others.

Without a culture that respects, protects and promotes human rights, development in such communities will be skewed. Development should take a human rights approach.

# 4.2.9 Peace and security

Kasese district is a post conflict area which borders the Democratic Republic of Congo which still has pockets of conflict. Having a populace of young men and women who are not educated, have no form of employment and are poor poses security risks for the communities. It becomes a very fertile ground for recruiting young persons into different rebel factions that emerge.

At the household level, women are highly insecure due to the daily intimate violence, intimidation and poverty.

### Conclusion

In conclusion, child marriage is a major threat to Peace and Security as well as the entire development of Kasese district and Uganda at large.



# **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

# **5.0** Introduction

This chapter presents recommendations as suggested by the respondents in Kasese, the research findings and observations of the research team.

#### 5.1 Conclusion

Child marriage is one of the worst forms of human rights violations of the girl child and a major detriment to the empowerment of women. In Kasese district it was evident that almost every household has had a girl child who had been defiled, had an early pregnancy, got married at an early age and separated, or was still in the marriage.

Child marriage has had devastating effects, not only to individual survivors but to whole communities. They include high levels of poverty, high levels of illiteracy, high school drop-out rate, early pregnancies, alcoholism and drug abuse, and high separation/divorce rates. The situation is made worse by poor social networks and cultural structures which have collapsed.

Further still, child marriage has negative implications on young mothers' psychological, reproductive and gynaecological health and exposes them to HIV infection. It is however unfortunate that this vice has been embraced by the community, parents and local leaders. Child marriage has been normalized under the disguise that it is an old traditional practice.

From the development perspective, child marriage is a major public health concern and one of the underlying factors for underdevelopment.

#### 5.2 Recommendations

Based on the research findings and respondents views, the following recommendations are proposed:

#### Laws and policies

- All male offenders who promote the practice of child marriage should be arrested and face punitive measures. These include parents who demand and receive fines, parents who provide fines, the boys/men who marry underage girls.
- There is need for a positive policy climate to transform the situation of married girls. It is necessary to create an enabling environment for reducing gender inequities and biases and to improve the bargaining powers and rights of girls and women so that they can contribute to improving society.
- Awareness-raising and education should be prioritized to inform communities on national laws on the legal minimum age of 18 years; marriage, the rights of women and children.
- National legislation and policies should be supported with adequate resources
  to enable the government, NGOs and Civil Society to play supportive roles in
  ensuring that conditions that push girls into child marriage are deterred. This
  will create a conducive working environment.

#### **Education sector**

- Majority of the married young girls have no education or stop their education
  at primary level. There is need for alternative forms of education to enable
  girls acquire literacy and life skills necessary to enhance their capabilities to
  be able to support their families and their communities. These skills should
  be geared at creating opportunities, increase self-esteem and independence
  of girls by improving their access and control over productive and social
  resources and be able to make their own decisions.
- There is a need for innovative and gender-sensitive programmes that are tailored to provide education and vocational training for both unmarried and married girls. Vocational schools should be brought in the vicinity of the community for those boys and girls who cannot go back to school.
- Girls who are willing to go back to school for formal education should be supported and provided with scholarships.

- Improve communication between parents and children by providing them with
  relevant information and skills for open dialogue on sexuality, relationships
  and sexual well-being. This is critical especially in rural communities where
  discussions on sexual matters are often seen as a taboo/sacred issue that can
  only be discussed by elderly people and behind closed doors.
- A pro-active campaign needs to begin now for attitude change on role and value of the girl child, value of the marriage institution, family planning and evoke the importance of hard work for improved livelihoods.
- Human rights education with emphasis on laws related to community sanity should be initiated or up scaled. The component of responsibility Vs rights should be emphasized.

#### Economic empowerment

- Child headed households require urgent support.
- Assisting young mothers to start up businesses by providing skills training and quality career counseling.
- Engaging women to form groups that can be easily supported by government and other stakeholders.

#### Government and local leadership

- Leaders especially at community level should be availed specialized training to enable them appreciate their roles as change agents and prioritise service for development.
- Affirmative action is required for homes with young married girls especially with regard to government programmes geared to poverty eradication.
- Government and local leaders should focus on changing community attitudes towards child marriage and to get commitment and support from the family and the wider community, as this is where individual decisions are made.
- Use of advocacy means to address the situation of girls and women affected by child and forced marriages. These advocacy initiatives include the following:
  - Use research results to highlight child marriages as a public health concern which is detrimental to individuals, communities and the country at large;
  - Work with government and health providers to develop policies to

meet the special needs of young married girls and those at risk of child marriage;

- Mobilize action to improve gender equity and protect the rights of young girls and women to have education, vocational and livelihood skills;
- Work with community/women's groups and local political and religious leaders to increase awareness and address misconceptions and myths around women's rights in marriage and change attitudes and behavior towards girl child marriages.
- There is need for institutional structures for capacity-building and strengthening service providers to acquire the relevant skills and approaches of working with young mothers and young girls. This will help improve gender equity, empowerment, and women participation in decision making.

#### Health sector

- Basic services should be brought nearer in the hard to reach hilly terrain especially water, education, electricity, health, among others
- Specialist services will be needed to address the health specific concerns of girls and women, for example specialist care for fistula sufferers.

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# **APPENDICES**

# **Appendix 1: Questionnaire**

## CHILD MARRIAGE AND ITS IMPACT TO DEVELOPMENT IN KASESE DISTRICT

Name of	fInte	erviewer:	Date
Start Tin	ne:		Ending Time
100. IDE	100. IDENTIFICATION		FORM NUMBER
101. Nar	ne o	f Respondent	
Family N	lame	2	First Name
200.	soc	CIO –DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTE	RISTICS
201.	Curi	rent Residence	
	1.1	Village	
	1.2	Sub-county	
	1.3	County	
	1.4	District	
202.	Resi	idence of Birth	
	a.	Village :	
	b.	Sub-county:	
	c.	County:	
	d.	District :	
203	Sex	1 = Female 2 = Male	
204	Hov	w old are you (age in completed	years?)

205	۵, ۵	, , , ,		_	certificate?	
	Yes	= 1 No =2				
	b) If	No, why not	?			
206 Trib	e (tio	k the relevan	it one)			
	a).	Mukonzo	b).	Mutoro c)	. Muganda	
	d).	Munyankole	e).	Mukiga f)	Munyabind	i
	g).	Musongora				
	h).	Others (spec	ify)			
207 Reli			.,			
	_	Protestant	2)	Catholic 3)	. Moslem	
		ottostant	<b>∠</b> 1.	Catholic 3		
	,		۷).	catholic 3)		
	4).	Pentecostal	·			
200 11:-	4). 5.	Pentecostal Others (spec	ify)			
208 Hig	4). 5.	Pentecostal	ify)			
208 Hig	4). 5. hest	Pentecostal Others (spec	ify)	ion and clas		
208 Hig Level	4). 5. hest	Pentecostal Others (spec	ify)	ion and clas		
	4). 5. hest Plea	Pentecostal Others (special level of formations only	ify)	ion and clas	s attained	
1. 2.	4). 5. hest Plea	Pentecostal Others (special special sp	ify)	ion and clas	s attained	
1. 2. 3.	4). 5. hest Plea	Pentecostal Others (special special sp	ify)	ion and clas	s attained	
1. 2.	4). 5. hest Plea	Pentecostal Others (special special sp	ify)al educat	ion and clas	s attained	
1. 2. 3.	4). 5. hest Plea	Pentecostal Others (special special sp	ify)al educat	ion and clas	s attained	
1. 2. 3.	4). 5. Pleas No Pri Se Ins	Pentecostal Others (special special sp	ify) al educat one ans	ion and clas	s attained	

4. Hawker	
5. Proffessional (specify)	
6. None	
7. Others (specify)	

# **300 ECONOMIC STATUS**

301: Property owned. Yes = 1 No = 2

		Yes/No	Quantity	Ownership	Control
i)	Household				
	Property				
Α	Radio				
b)	Cassette Player				
c)	Mobile phone				
d)	Television				
e)	Bicycle				
f)	Furniture				
g)	Bed				
h)	Sponge mattress				
I)	Blanket				
j)	Cooking saucepans				
k)	Plates				
ii)	Agricultural tools				
Α	Hoes				
В	Panga				
С	Axe				
D	Ox – Plough				
Ε	Tractor				
F	Generator				
		Yes/No	Quantity	Ownership	Control
iii)	Land				
Α	Customary				
В	Lease				
С	Squatter				
D	Rented				
Е	Freehold				

:\	Autorala /Diuda		
iv)	Animals/Birds		
	Reared		
	1 = goats		
	2 = Pigs		
	3 = Cows		
	4 = Sheep		
	5 = Chicken		
	6 = Ducks		
	7 = Others		
	(specify)		
V	Major Crops		
	grown (in acreage)		
	1=Maize		
	2=Cassava		
	3=Millet		
	4=Irish Potatoes		
	5=Potatoes		
	6=Ground nuts		
	7=Simsim		
	8=Bananas		
	9=Coffee		
	10=Cotton		
	11=Others specify		

302 Kind of living house. Yes = 1 No = 2

a)	Roof	Yes/No
	1=Grass/thatch	
	2=Corrugated Iron	
	3=Tiles/asbestos	
	4= Other (specify)	
В	Walls	
	1=Mud	
	2=Burnt bricks	
	3=Unburnt bricks	
	4=Corrugated iron sheets	
	5=Wood	
	6=Cement blocks	

	7=Others (specify)
С	Windows
	1=Wooden shutters
	2=Glass panes
	3=Neither
	4=Others (specify)

#### Main source of water in the household 303.

	Yes /No
1=Well inside the compound	
2=Communal tap/well/borehole	
3=River/stream	
4=Other (specify)	

#### 304 Main source of fuel for lighting

Yes = 
$$1$$
 No =  $2$ 

Source of fuel for lighting	Yes/No
1 = Fire	
2 = Candles	
3 = Tadooba	
4 = Paraffin/Kerosene lamp	
5 = Gas Lamp	
6 = Electricity	
7 = Other (specify)	

#### 305 Main source of fuel for Cooking

Source of fuel for cooking	Yes/No
1 = Cow dung	
2 = Firewood	
3 = Charcoal	
4 = Kerosene/Paraffin	

5 = Gas	
6 = Banana leaves	
7 = Banana fibres	
8 = Other (specify)	

#### Toilet facilities within the household 306

Toilet facility	Yes/No
1 = None	
2 = Communal pit latrine	
3 = Own pit latrine	
4 = Flush toilet	
5 = Other (specify)	

## **400 MARRIAGE**

401	Age at marriage\	Year of marriage
402	Reasons for marriage	

Reason	Yes/No
1 = I was of age (willingness)	
2 = Peer pressure	
3 = My parents forced me	
4 = My parents could not afford school fees Poverty	
5 = I had no home to stay	
6 = Early pregnancy	
7 = Fear of HIV and AIDS	
8 = Armed conflict	
9 = Others (specify)	

403	Marriage	Process
<b>TUJ</b>	Widiliuge	1 10003

	4				$\overline{}$
Yes	= 1	ľ	Νo	=	2

		Yes /No
1 = Dowry		
	onal Wedding	
3 = Church	-	
4 = Islamio		
5 = Civil M		
6 = Other	specify	
b) Reas	married, no of times remarried sons for remarrying re household chores divided in your	
Woman (v	vife)	Man (Husband)
Girl child		Boy child
	no is the head of the household? Woman	
2=	Man	
3=	Other (Specify)	
40	7 (a) Pregnancy and Child Birth	
	many children would you like to hav	e?
ii) Do	you have the power to make decision would like to have?	
Υe	es = 1 No = 2	

iii) If No, why?				
iv) How many children have you had?				
	Female	Male		
Number of Live births				
Number of still births (births after 7 months but born dead)				
Number of miscarriages (births before seven				
months) – Probe cause				
No of deaths after birth				
407 (b) Birth Registration				
i) Were your children registered after birth?				
Yes = 1 No = 2				
ii) If not registered, why?				
(c) Immunization				
i) Are the children fully immunized? Yes = 1 No	o = 2			
ii) If not immunized, why?				

(	d)	Access	tο	information	on	pregnancy	and	child	hirth
١	u	ACCESS	ω	IIIIOIIIIatioii	OH	pregnancy	anu	CHILL	DILLI

		Yes /No
a)	Access to Information	
i)	Access to information about pregnancy and child birth	
b)	If Yes, Source of Information	
ii)	Radio	
iii)	Newspaper	
iv)	Church	
v)	Traditional birth attendant	
	Health centre	
	Market	
viii	Others (specify)	
408.	a) Have you ever used any family planning met	hod?
	Yes = 1 No = 1	
	b) If yes, which method have you used?	
	1. Modern contraceptives 2. Traditional co	ntraceptives
	3. Both modern and traditional contracept	ives
409.	HIV and AIDS	
a)	Do you have any knowledge about HIV & AIDS?	)
	Yes = 1 No = 2	
b)	Where do people test for HIV in your communit	ry?
c) l	Have you been tested of HIV & AIDS? Yes = 1 No	o = 2
d)	If Yes, what is your HIV status? 1= Positive 2=Negative	
	3=I never picked my results	
e)	If never taken the HIV test how do you assess you AIDS over the next few years.  1 = High	our risk of contracting HIV &

0. i) Ha N ii) If y	B = Low B = None s your husband tested for HIV & Ges = 1 No = 2	AIDS?	
.0. i) Ha Y ii) If y	s your husband tested for HIV & es = 1 No = 2	AIDS?	
ii) If y	'es = 1 No = 2	AIDS?	
1	es, what is his HIV status?		
-	= Positive	2 = Negative	
3	B = Never picked his results	4 = Never shared h	is results
1. Intim	nate Partner Violence		
) Does	your spouse/partner		Yes = 1 No = 2
1.	Threaten to hurt you?		
2.	Threaten to hurt your children		
3.	Say it is your fault if he hits you won't happen again (but does i		
4.	Put you down in public or stop family or friends?		
5.	Throw you down, push, hit, kicl you with a weapon?	k, beat or threaten	
6.	Force you to have sex when you	u do not want to?	
7.	Has your partner ever threaten of your matrimonial home?	ed to chase you out	
8.	Does your spouse give away proconsent to a new lover?	operty without your	
If you h	nave ever been threatened, wha	t are the causes of the	ese threats?
0. Parti	cipation		
)1. Are y	ou part of any organized group	in your community?	

502. If Yes, which groups are these?

Interviewe	e's Signature W	itness' Signature			
I consent	or I do not consent (Tick whe	re applicable).			
for purpose	t you to allow us to utilize the informuses of finding strategies of uplifting to pment of Kasese district.				
SHARING Y	OUR EXPERIENCE.				
THANK YOU	U FOR ACCEPTING TO HAVE THIS CO	NVERSATION WITH ME AND			
900. Do you	u have any questions? (Researcher t	o give response)			
e) Go	overnment?				
d) By	y community members				
c) By	y your family members				
b) By	y your husband				
a) By	y yourself				
800. What	should be done to improve your situ	uations?			
700. What	problems do you experience as a yo	ung married woman?			
600. Share	600. Share with us the good experiences in your marriage?				
503. If No, v	why?				



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