

Abstract

Title of Dissertation: THE CULTURAL ECOLOGY OF YOUTH AND GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE IN UGANDA

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Twenty years of conflict in northern Uganda has resulted in high rates of gender-based violence, unintended pregnancy and a generation exposed to a lifetime of violence. Understanding gender socialization is critical because gender role differentiation intensifies during adolescence, and hierarchies of power in intimate relationships are established.

Life histories with 40 adolescents in transitional life stages; puberty, older adolescents, newly married and new parents give voice to gendered experiences of puberty, sexuality, reproduction and violence. 35 in-depth interviews were conducted with individuals nominated by youth as significant in their lives. The Cultural Systems Paradigm (CSP) offers an organizing framework to understand the intersectionality of the components of cultural systems within which youth develop.

Social settings, systems and processes shape the acquisition of gender identities. Adolescents depend on others for care and resources, and their networks play influential roles manifesting idea systems and imposing or mediating historical and economic context. Boys and girls recognize that social norms are gendered and identify mechanisms for “learning” gender. Less evident enculturation processes include gendered time and space, experiences of violence, kinship systems and political and historical

influences. Social sanctions maintain gender norms/roles, making it difficult for youth to forge new ways of interacting. Study results elucidate the ways masculine and feminine identities are shaped by observation and experience of intimate partner violence and harsh physical punishment. The experience of internal displacement solidified inequitable gender norms, fostering masculinities rooted in violence. Results also suggest that gender is stamped on the bodies of developing boys and girls during puberty. This stage also marks the beginning of vigilant enforcement of increasingly rigid gender roles by family, peers and community.

Recognition of the power of hidden influences and social sanctions for gender role transgressions informed an intervention which encourages youth to reflect critically on the examples in their lives and amplifies the voices of gender equitable role models. Building on pathways of resistance to hegemonic gender identities identified during the research, a life course approach was developed to provide differentiated, yet complementary, interventions at key transition points.

THE CULTURAL ECOLOGY OF YOUTH AND GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE IN
NORTHERN UGANDA

by

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vi. List of Abbreviations

CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CSP	Cultural Systems Paradigm
FP	Family planning
GBV	Gender-based violence
GREAT	Gender Roles, Equality and Transformation
IDP	Internally displaced person
IRH	Institute for Reproductive Health, Georgetown University
LRA	Lord's Resistance Army
MGLSD	Ministry of Gender, Labor and Social Development
NGO	Non-governmental organization
PRDP	Peace, Recovery and Development Plan
SRH	Sexual and reproductive health
STI	Sexually transmitted infection
UHRC	Uganda Human Rights Commission
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VHT	Village health team
VYA	Very young adolescent
WHO	World Health Organization
YEAH	Young, Empowered and Healthy

Chapter 1. Introduction: Understanding the Genesis of Gender-Based Violence

Around the world, as many as one in every three women has been beaten, coerced into sex, or abused in some other way – most often by someone she knows, including her husband or another male family member (UNFPA 2011). Globally, gender-based violence (GBV) is viewed as a violation of human and legal rights and a key social determinant of health. According to the Beijing Declaration and Platform for action, “Violence against women both violates and impairs or nullifies the enjoyment by women of their human rights and fundamental freedoms. In all societies, to a greater or lesser degree, women and girls are subjected to physical, sexual and psychological abuse that cuts across lines of income, class and culture” (United Nations 1995, paragraph 112). Defined by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) as “Violence involving men and women, in which the female is usually the victim; and which is derived from unequal power relationships between men and women,” GBV is recognized as a significant barrier to reproductive health – one that prevents women, families, and countries from achieving their full potential (Feldman 2010).

Over the last decade international agencies have adopted preventing GBV as a high priority not only because it violates women’s human rights and fundamental freedoms and harms women and children on an individual level, but also because it places a heavy and unnecessary burden on health services (UNFPA 2011). In 2012, for example, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) issued a new gender policy recognizing GBV as a pervasive public health problem with implications for health policies and programs around the world.

The increasing focus on GBV may be due in part to accumulating evidence on its widespread prevalence. A seminal multi-country study by the World Health Organization (WHO) found that the proportion of ever-partnered women who had ever experienced physical or sexual violence, or both, by an intimate partner in their lifetime ranged from 15% to 71% among the countries studied (Ellsberg et al. 2008). In Uganda, for example, a 2011 study reveals that 56 percent of young women ages 15 to 19 have experienced physical violence (UBOS and Macro International 2007). Furthermore, prevailing social norms support beating under certain conditions. A recent study in northern Uganda found that 60% of men and 87% of women considered beating justifiable if the woman was unfaithful, and 16% of men and 28% of women considered it justified when a woman refuses to have sex (Kitara et al. 2012).

The sheer magnitude of the number of women who experience GBV makes it a significant public health problem, and its consequences are far reaching. Evidence suggests that GBV is related to maternal and child morbidity and mortality, HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and unintended pregnancies (Heise, Pitanquy, and Germaine 1994). Women who experience GBV often have difficulty using family planning (FP) effectively and may experience higher rates of unintended pregnancies, unsafe abortions, and adolescent pregnancies (Feldman 2010). Abuse during pregnancy poses risks to the mother and unborn child, and also increases chronic illness (Ronsmans and Graham 2006). Children of abused women have a higher risk of death before reaching age five and violence during pregnancy is associated with low infant birth weight. Data is accumulating demonstrating that relationship power inequity and

intimate partner violence increase the risk of STIs and HIV infection among young women (Dunkle et al. 2004, Feldman 2010).

Gender norms – social expectations of appropriate roles and behaviors for men (and boys) and women (and girls), as well as the transmission of these norms by institutions and cultural practices – underlie GBV, as well as other health-related behaviors (Barker 2005; Courtenay 2000; Greene and Barker 2011; Whitehead 1997). Wies and Haldane (2011) remark in the introduction to their book “Anthropology at the Front Lines of Gender-Based Violence” that acts of violence result from culturally specific ideologies of gender roles and norms. Evidence has shown that inequitable gender norms are related to a range of health-related issues, including FP use, reproductive health decision-making, unintended pregnancy, parenting practices, health-seeking behavior and transmission of HIV and other STIs (Feldman-Jacobs, Yeakey, and Avni 2011; Kirkman, Rosenthal, and Feldman 2001; Marsiglio 1988; Marston and King 2006). In Jamaica, for example, Whitehead found that gender constructs related to masculinity had clear implications for reproductive health programs (1992). Women and girls living in conflict or post-conflict settings such as northern Uganda are particularly vulnerable to GBV, unintended pregnancy and STIs (USAID 2012).

This study is a contribution to the growing anthropological literature on the relationship between gender norms and interpersonal and sexual violence. Peggy Sanday (2010) suggests that anthropologists have avoided this topic because of their inclination to overlook harmful and violent aspects of the culture they study, and the difficulty of reconciling GBV with cultural relativism. Most existing literature is related to legal, policy and practice issues (Merry 2006; Plesset 2006; Wies 2008). Notable exceptions

include ethnographies by Laura McClusky (2001), Sonja Plesset (2006) and Peggy Sanday (2007). A small group of anthropologists today are contributing to understanding of intimate partner violence from a cross-cultural perspective (Merry 2009), however their work tends to focus on sexual violence rather than considering a broad range of violence from verbal harassment or bullying to rape (Sanday 2007; Wies and Haldane 2011). An additional gap in the literature is the paucity of data on the perspectives of males as either victims or perpetrators, or on women beyond their role as victims. Finally, there is little information on the perspectives and experiences of children, other than retrospective accounts of child sexual abuse (Sanday 2010). This research was designed to address these gaps.

Eliminating GBV will depend on long-lasting, widespread changes in gender norms. These changes can best be achieved by harnessing the processes through which these norms and attitudes are transmitted. Adolescence, and early adolescence in particular, represents an opportunity to promote more equitable norms and behaviors: it is during this life stage that gender norms and identities begin to coalesce. However, in order to develop effective initiatives to increase gender equity, we need to know more about how boys and girls come to experience and define themselves as men and women and how hegemonic constructions are and might be contested. As Whitehead (1997) points out in an article on low-income African American men and HIV/AIDS, conducting effective gender transformation efforts depends on understanding the sociocultural meanings attached to masculinities and related phenomena. A deep understanding of these meanings and the ways in which individuals are situated within sociocultural contexts is necessary to develop interventions that transform inequitable gender norms.

An example of this is the work of Aronson, Whitehead, and Baber (2003) analyzing the challenges faced by a program that addressed the fatherhood needs of low-income urban African American males. This dissertation research was designed to provide information to help address the challenge of developing effective and sustainable strategies to achieve widespread changes in social norms.

Early adolescence presents a window of opportunity to intervene before most youth become sexually active and gender roles and norms with negative consequences for sexual and reproductive health (SRH) become solidified. In fact, many of these younger adolescents are already beginning to be sexually active and believe that their close friends are sexually active (Bankole et al. 2007). Over the past few years, the global community has come to recognize the importance of investing in this life phase in order to ensure health, create prosperity, and fulfill human rights (Chandra-Mouli et al. 2013, Igras et al. 2014, Sommer 2011). Reaching this age group, however, will be no small task. There are 1.2 billion adolescents aged 10–19 in the world today and almost 90% live in lower- and middle-income countries. Half are very young adolescents (VYAs) between the ages of 10 to 14 (UN Population Division, 2011). The knowledge, attitudes, and skills boys and girls acquire during early adolescence will set the stage for their future relationships and communication with sexual partners about rights and responsibilities by developing self-care practices and behaviors to prevent unwanted sexual relationships, unintended pregnancy, and disease (Avni and Chandra-Mouli 2014).

Gender norms and attitudes established during this phase of the life course are particularly influential for future SRH outcomes. Gender and social expectations shape how boys and girls think about themselves and others, and how they relate to members of

the same and opposite sex. For example, data from ten countries reveal that rigid gender attitudes are formed early, with 50-83% of boys (15-19 years old) reporting that it is justifiable for a man to beat his wife under certain circumstances (UNICEF 2012).

Deeply ingrained gender roles and unequal power relationships hinder the ability of girls and young women to refuse unwanted sex, negotiate condom use, make contraceptive choices, and discuss FP and child spacing with their partners. Gender inequality also affects the ability of youth to seek and obtain the health services they need, leaving many to face serious health consequences. Fortunately, however, evidence is accumulating that interventions for this age group can effectively support the development of more equitable gender norms and behaviors (Lundgren et al. 2012).

This study aims to advance the anthropology of adolescents and children with regards to culture transmission and the formation of gender identity by providing a detailed and nuanced view of the experiences of young people as they navigate the physical, social, and emotional changes of puberty. Using a systems framework, the CSP (Whitehead 1984, 2002), this study views the experiences of youth through the lens of the influence of interacting elements of the cultural system (social and ideational systems, historical processes, and physical and social environments) that inscribe gendered meanings to male and female bodies and reproductive lives. Analysis of the gendered meaning of puberty contributes to theory situated at the intersection of the anthropology of children, gender, and the body.

Anthropology has produced a rich body of literature on children. From 1928 to 1950, anthropologists led by Mead and Malinowski, and inspired by Edward Sapir, created an anthropology of childhood grounded in ethnographic fieldwork in diverse

cultures and critical of psychological theories of universal developmental theories. During this period, the collection of ethnographic data on childhood became part of the ethnographer's toolkit while anthropologists experimented with interpretive frameworks from psychiatry, psychoanalysis, and the child's acquisition of culture. Beginning in the 1950s, John and Beatrice Whiting (1975) led ethnographic research to study socialization and enculturation and test hypotheses relating to child rearing in six different cultural settings. Whiting also conducted cross-cultural research on male identity hypothesizing an association between child rearing, including coming of age rituals and aggressively masculine adult roles (Levine 2007). Although interest in children was high in the early years of the discipline, research waned after this initial ethnographic work. Renewed interest in the anthropology of childhood came in the 1980s and 1990s with growing concern for the welfare and treatment of children (Froerer 2009). Research during this period addressed children's social relationships and social participation and continued to study child rearing and socialization (Froerer 2009). More recently, children's play and sociolinguistic approaches to understanding cultural acquisition have become major foci of study (Schieffelin and Ochs 1987).

Current work in the anthropology of children aims to understand shifting cultural constructions of childhood, children's role in how culture is defined, and the ways in which local, national and global politics impact children's daily lives (James 2007, Aagaard-Hansen 2003). With a commitment to interdisciplinarity, this field of study is united by a concern for the socially constructed character of childhood and focuses on understanding childhood as a socio-structural space as well as children's own perspectives as social actors. Research in this area has been complemented by cross-

subdisciplinary studies that combine a sociocultural anthropological approach to children with linguistic anthropology in studies of language socialization, biology, and biological anthropology and developmental psychology.

The body of work by anthropologists illustrates that child rearing and socialization practices are varied, and cannot be well understood in the absence of detailed understanding of the wider contexts in which they take place. Interestingly, however, since the groundbreaking work of Margaret Mead (1929; 1930), anthropologists have done relatively little exploration of the intersections of gender and puberty. Moreover, although the anthropological focus on children is experiencing resurgence; there is a general call for more attention to children's perspectives and experiences within the discipline (Froerer 2009; Hirschfeld 2002; James 2005). This research expands understanding of the acquisition of gender roles during puberty and will advance the view that children play an active, transformative role in the process of socialization and the transmission of cultural knowledge and practices, by developing research methods that enable children's active participation and lead to greater understanding of culture from their perspective.

Greater understanding of how gender and sexual norms are formed among youth is needed to guide initiatives to foster more equitable gender norms and healthy sexual relationships. Violence rooted in gender inequality is compounded by notions of masculinity, including the need to dominate women, therefore it is important to support efforts to resist hegemonic masculinity and nurture alternative forms of masculinity. While there is an extensive body of literature on masculinity, gaps in theory and knowledge are notable. For example, almost all of the literature addresses sexually active

young adults; there is little information available about boys under the age of twelve, despite the obvious relevance of this age group to the formation of gender norms. There is also inadequate understanding of the factors that might motivate individuals and social institutions to change gender norms, despite the advantages they may enjoy as a result of current gender systems. Increased understanding in this area may elucidate potential pathways of change.

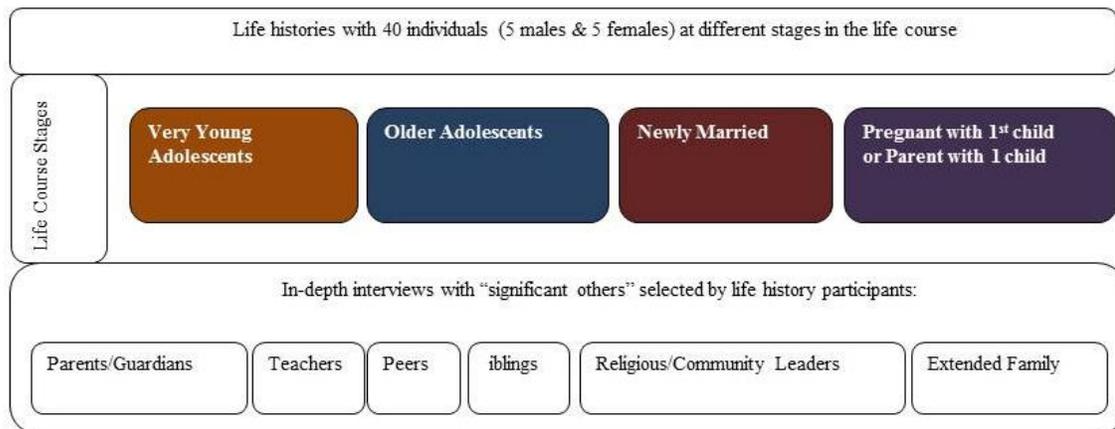
Although boys and girls are enculturated into gender roles beginning at birth – or even earlier – puberty is an especially formative period because of the rapid development of sexual and gender identity at this time and the cultural meanings associated with their changing bodies (Dixon-Mueller 2011, Blum et al. 2012). Adolescence represents one of the most rapid phases of development in the life span, and it is during this time that gendered bodies are constructed out of young people’s social relationships and social power (Igras et al. 2014).

This dissertation research was embedded in a six-year initiative, the Gender Roles, Equality and Transformation Project (GREAT), designed to develop and test scalable strategies to prevent GBV and improve the SRH of adolescents in northern Uganda. It represents an example of anthropological engagement in intervention science, a term used to describe the application of theory-based strategies for social change in specific local settings. In this endeavor, I seek to guide implementation practice while also building understanding of cultural systems and their influence on youth. As Schensul and Butler explain (2012), anthropologists working in applied efforts build theory both inductively and deductively, drawing from their local setting and from the literature. GREAT is implemented by the Institute for Reproductive Health at Georgetown

University (IRH) under my direction, in partnership with Save the Children and Pathfinder International, with funding from USAID. The study took place in two districts of northern Uganda that are recovering from 20 years of civil war: Pader in the Acholi sub-region and Lira in the Lango sub-region. After more than a decade living in internally displaced person (IDP) camps, most families had returned to their villages by the end of 2011, the year fieldwork took place, and were struggling to regain their economic capacity and revitalize cultural values and traditions.

Data were collected by a team of Ugandan fieldworkers over a six-month period (January-June 2011) in Pader and Lira districts of northern Uganda. Fieldwork included collecting life histories from youth (ages 10-19) and conducting in-depth interviews with individuals nominated by youth as significant influencers, as well as participatory observation on youth centers and villages.

Figure 1. Life History and In-Depth Interview Participants



The general objective of this research was to identify opportunities to promote the formation of gender equitable values, norms, attitudes, and practices among adolescents in order to build a strong foundation for lifelong SRH. This dissertation provides information on how gender norms are learned, internalized, and passed on in Acholi and

Lango communities, explores the ways that gender and other social and structural factors influence youth outcomes, and identifies opportunities to support youth development.

The specific objectives of this research are to:

- Describe the pathways of boys and girls as they enter puberty and transition into adulthood, navigating school, livelihoods, and family formation;
- Identify individuals and social, economic and cultural factors which influence the journeys of youth in the realms of education and economic success, sexual relationships, and family formation;
- Elucidate the range of possible gender roles and standards within Acholi and Lango communities and explore the opinions of young people toward these roles;
- Identify individuals and social structures which influence the formation and transformation of gender roles and the ways that gender attitudes and norms are passed on and enforced;
- Better understand the gendered world of youth with respect to SRH and violence; and
- Explore the ways youth exert agency over their lives, as well as the ways they are constrained, and identify opportunities to support youth agency and increase their social capital.

Chapter 2. The Human Ecology of Adolescence: A Cultural Systems Approach

This research applies an ecological perspective to examine how the varied systems children are born into and grow within shape their gender identity, and ultimately their attitudes, norms, and behaviors related to SRH. It draws upon the CSP, developed by Tony Whitehead (1984; 2002) to better understand the complex and intertwined factors which influence the trajectories of young people as they make their passage through adolescence. The CSP offers an organizing framework to understand and interpret the intersectionality of the components of cultural systems within which youth develop into adults and engage in healthy or risky behaviors. According to Whitehead (2005), “...in order to understand why health and resiliency behaviors emerge and persist it is necessary to understand the sociocultural contexts in which these behaviors occur, the sociocultural processes of behavioral contexts, and the sociocultural meanings that these contexts and processes have for those who practice them.”

2.1. Ecological Approaches

The CSP comprises four major systems: the cultural system, physical and social environments, human needs, and historical processes. Embedded within the cultural system are the human individual, behavioral systems, idea systems, social systems, material culture, and expressive culture. The social systems consist of households and families, formal and informal networks, organizations, dyads, and society. Idea systems comprise the sociocultural meanings that individuals and their significant social systems apply to systemic social relationships, their physical environments, individual and shared historical patterns, and patterns of human need fulfillment. The sociocultural processes of

the CSP include interactions of individuals with and within their significant social systems and physical environments, the influence of individual and shared histories and patterns of individual and group human needs fulfillment.

Applying the CSP to the passage of children to adulthood, boys and girls grow up within social contexts (parents, family, peers), shared ideational systems (beliefs, values, ideas) and a system of normative behaviors which influence their ability to meet their organic, instrumental and expressive needs. Children's identities (sexual, gender, and other), ideas, and behaviors are shaped by their interaction with the components of their ecosystem, including the influence of historical processes and their physical and social environment.

In the working paper "What is Ethnography? Methodological, Ontological, and Epistemological Attributes," Whitehead (2002) introduces the CSP as an ontological approach for applied anthropological practice. He conceptualizes culture as a holistic, flexible and non-constant system with continuities between its interrelated components, which include shared *ideational systems* (knowledge, beliefs, attitudes, values, and other mental predispositions), and *preferred behaviors and structural (social) relationships*" (Whitehead 2002: 9). Whitehead also explains that culture provides rules and routines that facilitate order and help new members understand how to behave. These rules are reproduced both horizontally (within generations) and vertically. Cultural systems are continually changing due to the process of reproduction as well as the influence of significant historical events and processes (Whitehead 2002: 10).

The CSP guides understanding of the different attributes of individual human organisms and their behaviors, and how these are influenced by shared ideational or

cognitive structures, social systems, physical, social, and material environments, real and perceived human needs, and historical processes and events. My research focuses specifically on interrelationships between individuals and their perceptions of their bodies as they are influenced by social systems and historical processes in an effort to better understand how gender meanings are inscribed upon the bodies of developing boys and girls during early adolescence. I also seek to understand how this process influences their life outcomes, drawing upon gender, embodiment and life course theory. While changes during adolescence are universal, every person will experience them differently and in relation to the norms and values of their own cultural systems, and as transmitted through socialization processes unique to their culture. As such, this study explores adolescence in the post-conflict setting of northern Uganda among Acholi and Lango boys and girls raised in IDP camps.

This inquiry is shaped by the principle underlying the CSP that it is necessary to understand sociocultural contexts, processes and meanings in order to explain the emergence and persistence of certain behaviors, both risky and resilient (Whitehead 2002). It is further guided by a view of culture, including gender norms, attitudes, and identities, as constructed by boys/men and girls/women. The social constructivist paradigm grounds the methods and concepts that shape this research: the life course perspective, ecological models, and the concepts of gender and embodiment which recognize that although the body is a biological entity, it is also a sociocultural construction. For the purposes of this study, gender is defined as socially constructed roles and relationships, personality traits, attitudes, behaviors, values, and the relative power and influence that a particular cultural system ascribes to the two sexes on a

differential basis. Gender is also viewed as an acquired identity that is learned, changes over time, and varies widely within and across cultures. And finally, gender is viewed as relational and refers not simply to women or men but to the relationship between them (Moser 1993).

There is general agreement that socially constructed gender identities interact with factors such as poverty, war, and globalization which are products of particular historical relations, and as such can best be understood within the changing power contexts in which they emerge (Bonvillain 1995; Kimmel 2008). Social ecological models are powerful frameworks to examine the multiple effects and interrelatedness of elements such as gender within a particular environment, thus establishing a holistic view of a social system. The strength of ecological approaches is their ability to situate individuals within the various subsystems of larger social systems, and to guide the development of interventions that broaden their sphere of influence beyond the individual. For example, Bob Aronson and colleagues (2003) combined Whitehead's model of masculine transformation with a social ecology framework to interpret attitude and behavior changes and identify challenges faced by intervention participants at intrapersonal, community, and broader societal levels.

The application of ecological or systems approaches to understanding health behaviors and guiding intervention efforts is widespread. Although public health was founded on the recognition of the importance of environmental influences on health outcomes, with the increasing prevalence of chronic "lifestyle" disease, over time attention has become more narrowly focused on understanding individual determinants of behaviors. The discipline's emphasis on theory building and hypothesis testing resulted in

dominance of psychologically driven theories such as the Health Belief Model and Social Learning Theory (Green, Richard, and Potvin 1996). However, discontent with the ability of these models to address socially produced health problems has prompted a resurgence of holistic models better suited to understand the sociocultural contexts, processes and meaning systems inherent in complex health problems and inform programs to address them. In the early 1980s, Urie Bronfenbrenner focused on understanding the multiple levels of influence on behavior, describing three levels of environmental influences that interact with individual variables (1979). Almost twenty years later, a special issue of the *American Journal of Health Promotion* was devoted to social ecological approaches to health promotion, recognizing that health behaviors are embedded in social systems that influence and maintain behaviors (Green, Richard, and Potvin 1996). In a review of the evolution of the cultural ecology of health and change, Whitehead suggests that while these models highlighted the interdependence between individual and various sub-systems, they were overly mechanistic and deterministic, and failed to fully account for factors such as culture, values, and ideational and subjective quality of life (2004). In the evolution of the CSP, Whitehead drew on the work of former professor and medical anthropologist Horacio Fabrega, who attempted to address this concern by developing the Illness Behavior Model (the IBM), which proposed four categories of behavior for understanding illness behavior, including the biological system, the social system, the phenomenological system (individual's awareness and self-definition), and the memory system (Fabrega 1973).

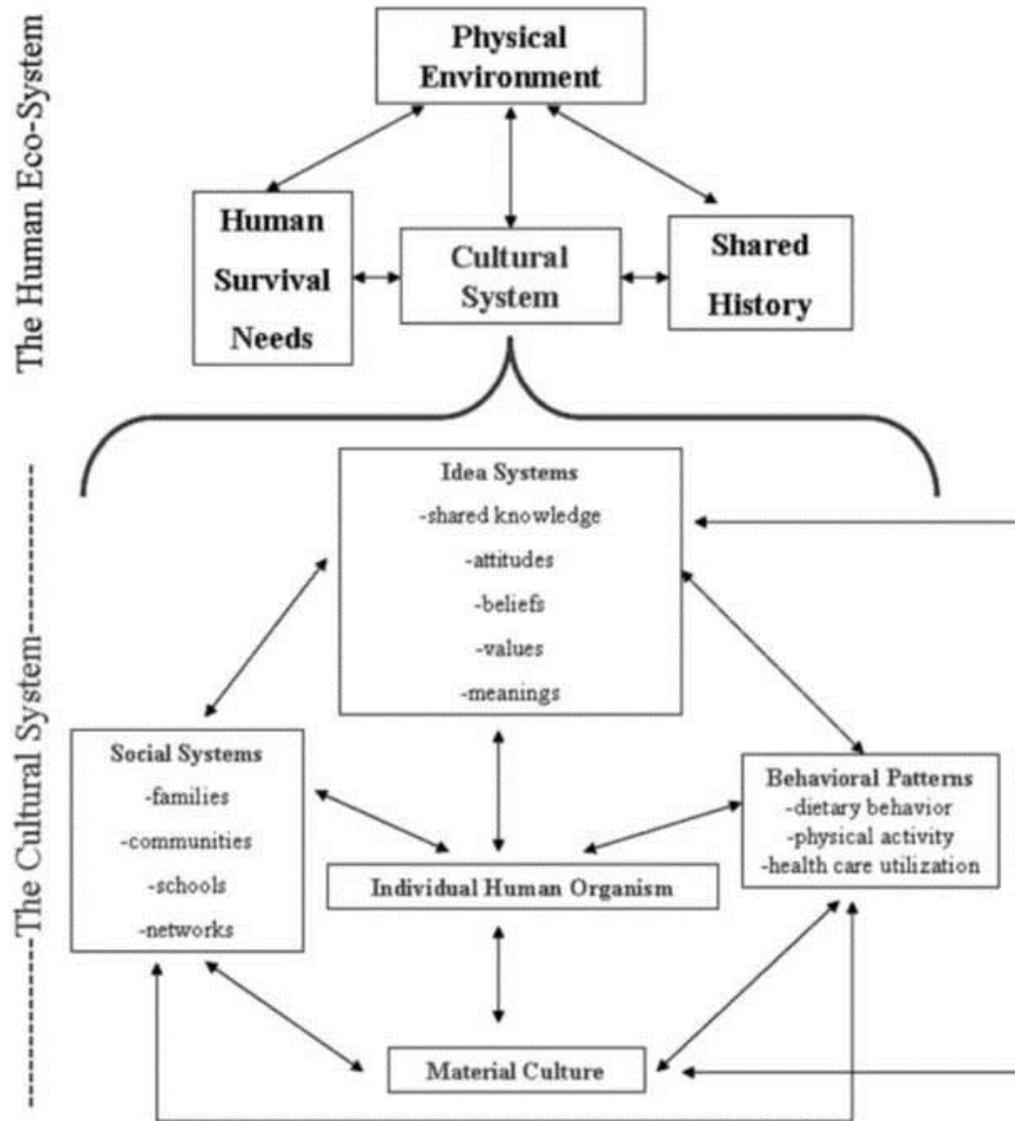
The recognition that individual behavior is influenced by embedded levels of influence within social systems is shared across many disciplines. Indeed, the CSP is

informed by a number of the ecological models from several fields, most notably those from public health. It is most influenced however, by the systems, ecological, and holistic models that are the bedrock of anthropology. In developing the CSP, Whitehead drew on theoretical models that apply a systems perspective such as ecological approaches that can be traced back to the beginning of the discipline (Morgan 1877; Tylor 1865), and continue today in the work of many applied anthropologists (personal communication, 2004). British anthropologist Gregory Bateson was a proponent of systems theory in the social sciences as early as the 1940s, recognizing its application to human societies with their many variables and the flexible but sustainable balance they must maintain (Bateson 1972). Julian Steward (1972) coined the term “cultural ecology” as a methodology for understanding how humans adapt to a wide variety of environments. The concept of cultural ecology is also consistent with the perspectives of the functionalist approaches of Malinowski (1944), the structural functionalism of Alfred Radcliffe-Brown (1952) and cultural materialism of Marvin Harris (1968). This systems approach has been expressed in work on cognitive constructs and processes which he also referred to in ecological terms as “ecology of the mind” (Bateson 1972), cultural modeling approaches (Holland 1987) and the relationships between culture, environment and social structure. Many anthropologists do not refer to their work as ecological, but cognitive or symbolic anthropologists view culture as systemic, including cognition, social structure, environment, history, and political economy (Bourdieu 1977; Geertz 1973; Levi-Strauss 1974). Applied anthropologists also apply a systems lens to their work, especially those working with a critical perspective (Baer 1990; Farmer 1999; McElroy 2009; Saussy 2010; Singer 2006).

Ecological models developed by anthropologists move beyond an understanding of society as nested levels of influence to a view of human individuals as biological, cognitive, social, and cultural beings who must be understood within their contexts. One example of an ecological model, Whitehead's CSP, was first used to describe the complexities underlying food-related behavior in a southern US community. While informed by systems and ecological theories from a range of disciplines, in particular public health, the CSP is primarily grounded in theories of culture developed by anthropologists from the inception of discipline. Anthropologists have always conceptualized culture as a holistic system with feedback loops between its interrelated components to provide rules and routines that facilitate order, regularity, familiarity, and predictability, characteristics which make it possible for new members to learn to operate within its rules (Whitehead 2004b, p.9).

Figures 2, 3, 4, and 5 below show three iterations in the evolution of the CSP. Figure 2 presents a reinterpretation of the original 1984 schematic, developed by Robert Aronson (2007) in an article reporting on the results of an evaluation of a complex community-based intervention in Baltimore. While Aronson's interpretation of the original served his purposes in evaluating a program in an urban setting in the United States, it left out components of the original CSP that were intended to address human complexity in cross cultural settings – which is the objective of my research.

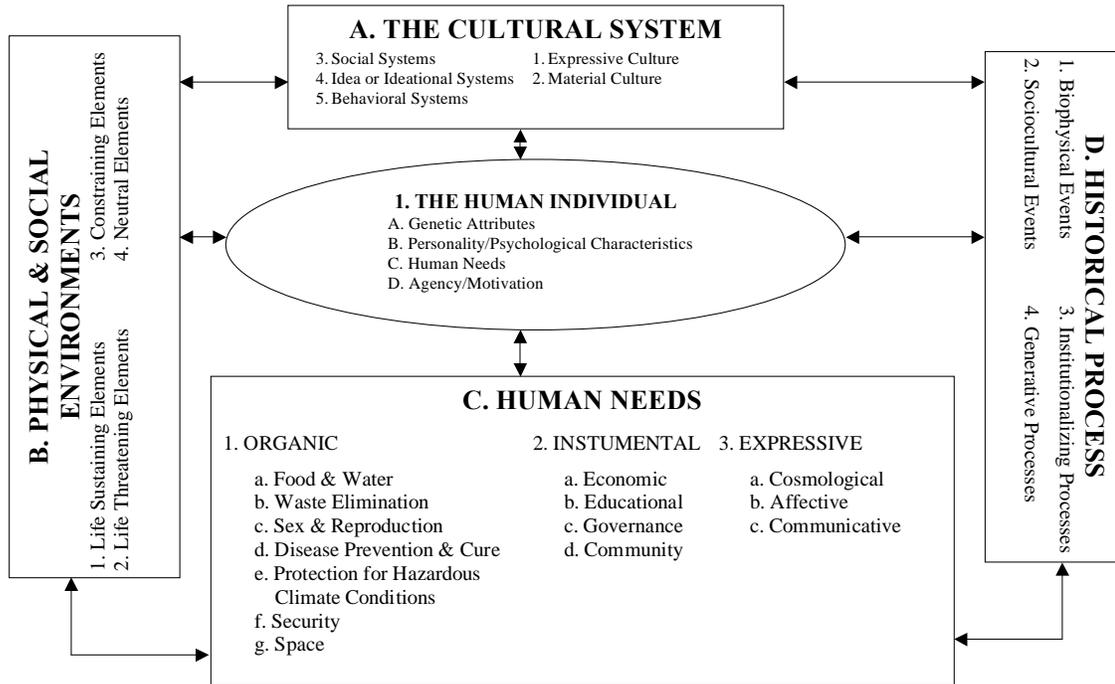
Figure 2. Cultural Systems Paradigm (CSP) - Aronson 2007



Figures 3 and 4 show a recent modification of the original 1984 CSP schematic including the categories not included in Aronson’s schematic, which I found useful in interpreting the data presented in this dissertation. The strength of Aronson’s schematic over the original, and over its modification as found in Figures 3 and 4, is that it provides a one-page version of Whitehead’s recent two-page revision of the original schematic. The two-page version represents an attempt to capture the complex systemic qualities of

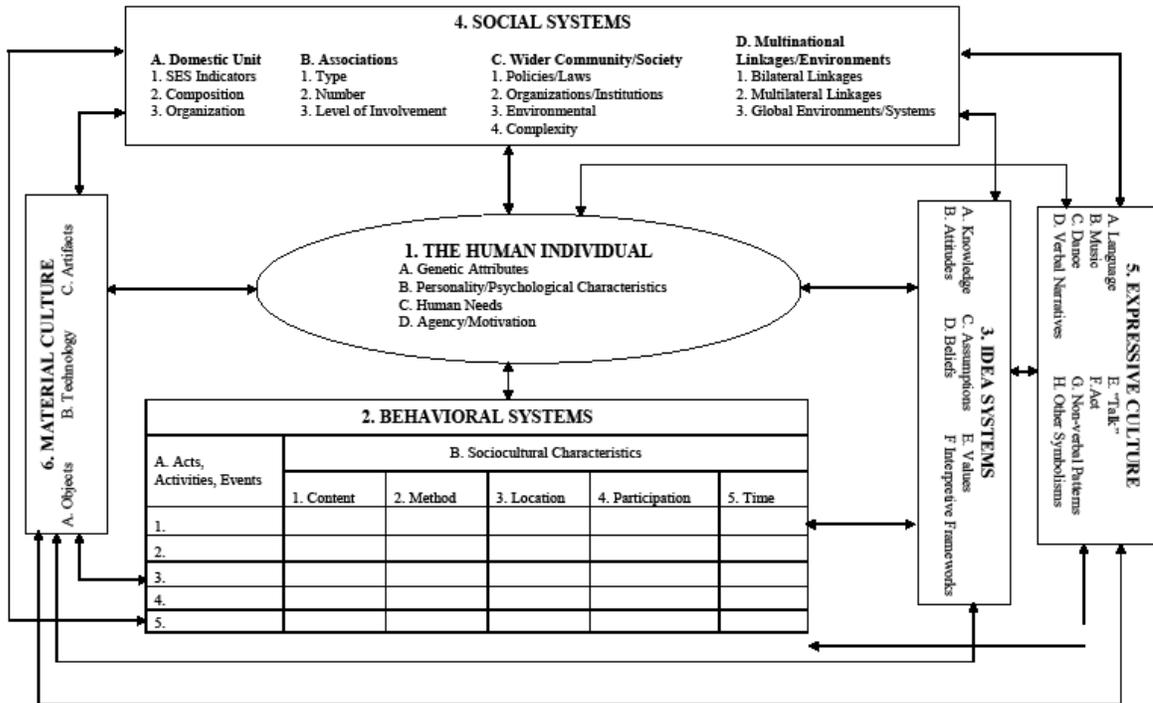
any cultural setting, with not only the major categories but also the minor subcategories within each; while at the same time drawing lines between the major categories to imply intersectionality.

Figure 3. CSP "The Human Ecosystem"



Source: Whitehead 1990a; Modification of Whitehead 1984

Figure 4. CSP "The Cultural System"

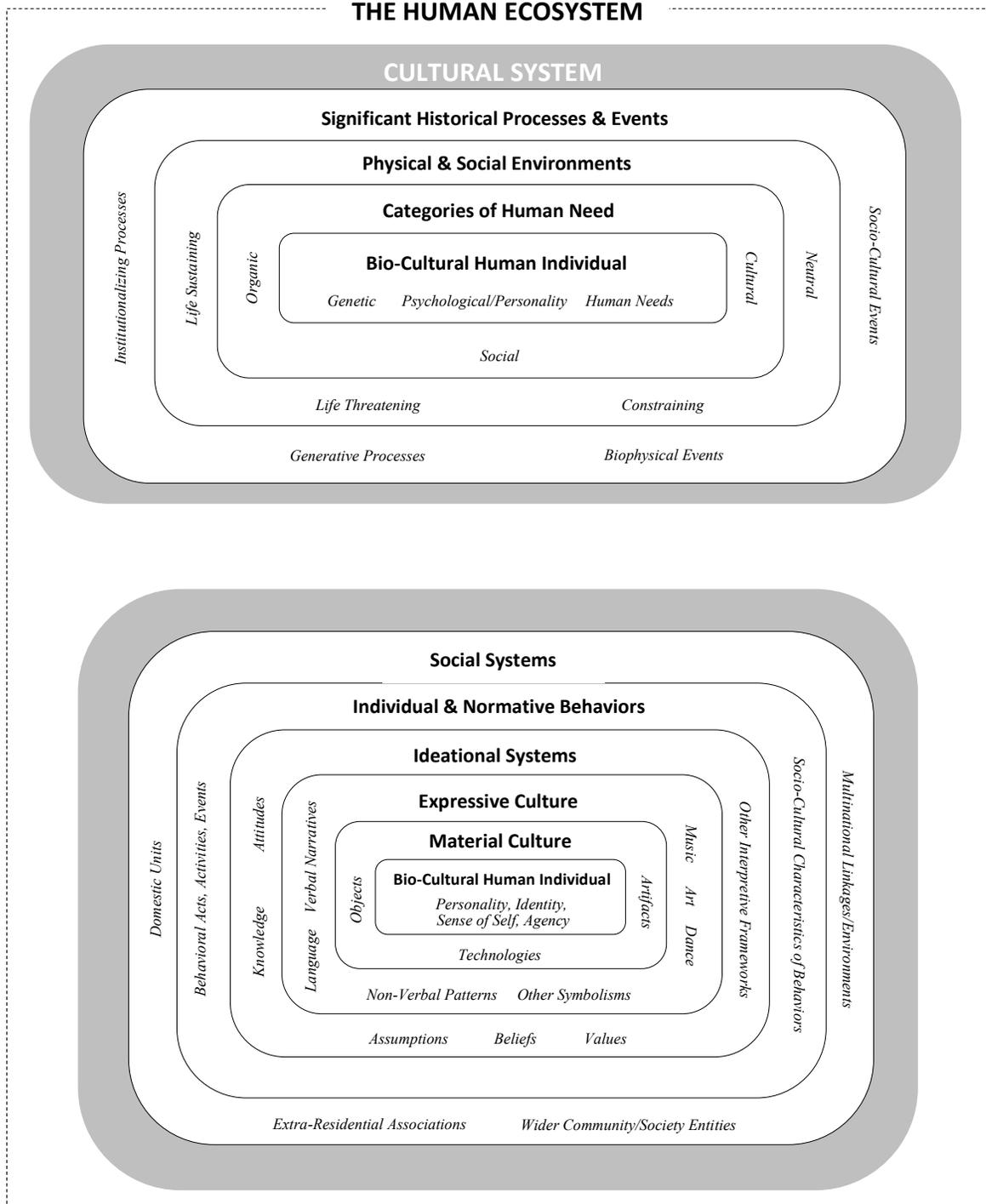


Aronson's schematic (Figure 2) captures Whitehead's original intent of showing the systemic qualities of culture by presenting the Cultural System as a subsystem of the larger Human Ecosystem, and then illustrating the subcategories of the Cultural System, and even subcategories within each of the Cultural System's subsystems. However, Aronson's schematic does not portray certain elements relevant to my research. Within the Human Ecosystem, for example, it leaves out subcategories of Physical and Social Environment, Human Needs (which is the largest CSP category, and the most relevant to physical, social, and psychological survival), and Significant Historical Events and Processes (e.g., the ongoing conflict between the Ugandan military and the Lord's Resistance Army, its devastating impact on the youth in my study, and its impact on village life pre-and post-conflict). Aronson's depiction of the CSP does not include subcategories of the Human Individual (a mistake often made by scholars criticizing medical and health professionals for their overemphasis on the individual, while ignoring

significant sociocultural contexts). Finally, after Aronson published this schematic, Whitehead added a category of Expressive Culture (language, music, dance, verbal narrative [e.g., stories, proverbs, etc.], “talk” and debate, art, gestures, and other non-verbal and meta-lingual forms of communication and other significant symbolic forms) that may be relevant to specific cultural groups.

Aronson’s depiction of the CSP captures the major categories, but not the subcategories included in Whitehead’s overall conceptualization of the CSP as found in Figures 3 and 4 (Whitehead 2002; Whitehead, Monograph in Preparation, 2015), which are relevant to my research. Moreover, Whitehead has shared with me that his original boxes and arrows in Figures 3 and 4 do not adequately reflect the systemic nature that the CSP was intended to portray – and included in its name – which is crucial to my research. As such, I have worked with Dr. Whitehead to revise the CSP to suggest these systemic relationships or intersectionalities between the various categories and subcategories of the CSP (Whitehead and Lundgren, Monograph in Preparation, 2015).

Figure 5. Systems or Intersectional Qualities of the Cultural Systems Paradigm (CSP)



2014 Modification of Whitehead, 1984

Regarding the focus of my research topic – gender identity and sexual behavior – ecological models such as the CSP offer a framework to organize exploration of the complex, interrelated processes that influence SRH, including the tacit and explicit meanings and values shared by members of a cultural group, and deeply held as a consequence of enculturation.¹ These cultural patterns are reproduced within generations as well as inter-generationally, and evolve through interaction with other elements in the system. Accepted ways of being a boy/man or girl/woman are constantly changing, and are highly influenced, although not determined by various components of the cultural system.

A central focus of this study is how ideational structures related to gender interact with the biological processes of adolescence to frame interpretations and meanings that underlie behaviors² that influence SRH, including GBV. The health and health-related behavior of youth is intricately bound up with the evolving social systems within which they live. The domestic unit³ in northern Uganda, for example, is in flux during this period of resettlement from the IDP camps. Young people may live in households with their parents, spouse, husband's family, other relatives, or they may head their own

¹ For example, the CSP category of *Historical Process* includes the experiences of individuals as they interact with their family, community, and society as they go through different phases in the life course. The category of *Ideational Systems* includes explorations in “meanings and values,” while *Human Needs* included the need to socialize or “enculturate” the young and new cultural members into the rules and routines of the specific culture being studied.

² This offers an example of intersectionality between three other analytical categories of the CSP: 1) the biological make-up and transitional process as experienced by *Individual Humans* and age cohorts; 2) interpretations and meanings analyzed through categories of the *Ideational System*, and behaviors as viewed through the CSP categories of the *Behavioral System*.

³ As illustrated in Figure 2B, the *Social System* category includes: 1) the domestic, or residential unit (which is referred to as a household in the US, but may exist as multiple dwelling compounds in some more traditional cultures); 2) Significant Dyads whose members may occupy the same residence (e.g., husband and wife) or not (e.g., employer-employee); 3) Non-residential Associations, which may include extended kinship systems, and volunteer associations such clubs, fraternities, professional organizations, etc; 4) Institutions and Policies of the Wider Community and Society; and 5) Multi-national Alliances or Influences.

household, caring for their younger siblings, with no surviving relatives available to support them. The clan and church are other social systems that have significant influence on the ideation and behavior of young people related to gender, sex, and reproduction.

The Human Ecosystem of the CSP includes two additional components relevant to gender and SRH: human needs and historical processes. Human needs encompass organic needs for food, security, space and health, as well as sex and reproduction. Meeting instrumental needs for economic sustenance, education, governance, and a sense of community is difficult for many northern Ugandans during this period of reconstruction. Finally, expressive needs such as a gendered self-identity, affective bonds with others, and a sense of a community and meaning are all intimately related with gender-identity and normative attitudes.

The remainder of this chapter will review literature and theory related to understanding the behaviors, processes and meanings situated within key components of the human ecosystem conceptualized by the CSP, namely Social Systems, particularly the dyadic relationships between males and females, Ideations (constructions of gender and the need for a strong sense of self) and attributes of the Individual Human Organism (e.g. the biological, neurological, and social aspects of puberty). Relevant theoretical perspectives related to idea systems will be discussed such as the social construction of gender (especially in situations of conflict), hegemonic masculinity and the relationship between gender and violence. Key perspectives on the concept of embodiment are also presented, as a way of theorizing the intersection between idea systems and the physical body.

The remaining elements of the human ecosystem will be discussed in Chapter 4, which will describe the Human Ecosystem of the study setting – physical location, ethnic groups, and a discussion of the origins, experiences, resolution and consequences of the long-lasting the civil war in northern Uganda, as well as current reconstruction efforts. It will provide a closer look at the Acholi and Lango people, reviewing extant literature on social systems and the prevalence and causes of unwanted pregnancy, HIV, and GBV.

2.2. Human Organism: The Liminal Period of Adolescence

The discussion thus far has focused on the range of sociocultural contexts that may influence the biology, behavior, and psychology of the human individual. As such, at the center of the CSP as an analytical tool is the category of the Human Organism which encompasses subcategories such as biological makeup, which includes genetically-based attributes (genotype and phenotype), biological processes, psychological characteristics, drives for human need fulfillment, and personality characteristics such as self-esteem, sociability, and the motivation to improve one's situation or level of human agency. The remainder of this chapter will discuss scholarly and other literature related to youth as a human organism such as the multiple and overlapping definitions that have been applied to this life phase; the biological, neurological, and social processes associated with puberty; social and idea systems and the concept of embodiment; and how these issues play out in the Lango and Acholi sub-regions of northern Uganda.

The United Nations defines youth as persons between the ages of 15-24, while adolescents are those between the ages of 10-19. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child defines children as persons under the age of 18. Despite the existence of international definitions, adolescence remains a socially constructed concept that

changes across time, space, and culture. In much of sub-Saharan Africa, the transition from childhood to adulthood, which is typically used to characterize adolescence, is less about reaching biological age and developmental markers than it is about achieving relevant social milestones (e.g. marriage, ability to earn a living, bearing and rearing children, etc.). The multiple and overlapping international and local definitions of youth can make them a difficult social group to grapple with in theoretical terms. Adolescents are neither fully adults nor fully children and thus are often treated in the theoretical and empirical literature as beings in a perpetual state of transition.

Between the ages of 10 and 14, boys and girls are beginning to solidify their identities and develop attitudes and skills that lay the foundation for future SRH and well-being. Yet SRH programming for girls and boys in this age group – often called VYAs – is in its infancy. During this period, boys and girls experience a variety of changes to their bodies and brains, emotionally and socially. It is also a time of developing sexuality, including the exploration of masculine and feminine roles and the acquisition of gender identity (including sexual orientation). While these changes during adolescence are universal, every person will experience them differently and in relation to the norms and values transmitted through socialization, a process unique to every society. SRH programs for VYAs are therefore challenged to help young girls and boys navigate these physical, emotional, and social changes in diverse cultural contexts around the world.

Puberty. Pubertal development describes the physical changes that lead to the development of secondary sex characteristics, the ability to have children and adult appearance and physical capabilities. Although timing varies widely within and between cultures, influenced by genetics, geography, nutrition and social factors, puberty

processes are universal, with nearly all changes initiated between 8 and 14 years of age. In general, puberty among girls begins 12 to 18 months before male puberty with early breast development, and pubic hair preceding a growth spurt followed by menarche. Early puberty changes among boys are less socially obvious and it is later in puberty that facial hair, voice change, and growth spurt occur. In healthy populations, the growth spurts of girls begin at about ages 10-13 and end at 16 or later; among boys they begin at 12-15 and end around 18. Departures from developmental norms in early adolescence affect the attitudes, behaviors, and experiences of boys and girls and are often discussed as a source of concern for youth (Dixon-Mueller 2011).

The way that menarche – and menstruation in general – is treated by families (and whether girls are prepared for it in advance) has been a research topic of some interest with respect to whether it is viewed as a natural transition, a cause for celebration (as a passage to womanhood), or a condition to be concealed because it is shameful and unclean (Dixon-Mueller 2011; Sommer 2010a). In some low- and middle-income countries, negative attitudes towards menstruation constrain the lives of millions of girls and may lay the foundation for life-long disempowerment (Sommer 2010b). In many countries, girls are unaware and unprepared for menarche (Sommer 2009, Golub and Catalano 1983). In places like Nepal, menstrual blood is believed to be polluted; as a result, girls and women are often forbidden from cooking, praying and participating in social activities during menstruation (Oster and Thornton 2011, Bista 2008). Because many schools across rural Africa do not have functional toilets or running water, girls have no option but to stay at home during their periods (Sommer and Sahin 2013; Chandra-Mouli et al. 2013).

Boys' first experience of ejaculation or nocturnal emission (semenarche) has received little attention in the literature even though it is a significant psychological (if not social) event. Ages at semenarche range widely from 16.8 in Mali on average to 13.4 in the Americas (Dixon-Mueller 2011). Boys may engage in penetrative sex quite early though, long before their genitals have reached adult size. In rural Transkei in South Africa, for example, middle-school boys (of whom 90% were sexually active) reported first ejaculation at a mean age of 15, but first intercourse at 13.4 (Buga et al. 1996).

While less visible than pubertal maturation, this age period is marked by profound brain development that fundamentally alters how young people think and engage the world. Concurrent with the hormone shifts that result in puberty is a set of changes in brain development that allow the adolescent to reason with more complexity. These neurologic changes are accompanied by cognitive changes. Piaget and Inhelder (2013) describe early adolescence as a shift from concrete to abstract thought which for the first time allows the young person to think through multiple options before selecting one. So too, for the first time developmentally, young people are able to think using words that do not have concrete equivalence (Spear 2000).

Puberty and gender roles. Understanding the ways in which gender and sexual identities and norms are formed requires study of the interaction of physical and developmental changes during puberty with the cultural and social meanings overlaid on female and male bodies and their reproductive functions. In one of the few studies exploring puberty and the acquisition of gender roles, Messerschmidt (1999) finds that boys are acutely aware of their pubertal changing selves and the responses of others to those changes inform their masculine identity. In the context of school, height and

musculature increase self-esteem, prestige, and a more positive body image among boys. In middle school and high school, masculine social hierarchies develop in relation to body type. He concludes that this differentiation affirms that inequality among boys and diverse masculinities are constructed in relation to biological development. According to Messerschmidt, “Adolescents ‘make bodies matter’ by constructing some bodies as more masculine than others” (1999, 214). The body intervenes in social interaction as a personal resource that socially symbolizes a boy’s masculine identity.

2.3. Gender Norms and Identities: Intersections between Biology, Ideational Systems, and Behavior

Idea systems permeate the entire cultural system, influencing the decisions and actions of boys and girls during their growing up years. Of particular relevance to this study are theoretical perspectives related to the social construction of gender. The foundation of this research is a social constructionist perspective that views individuals as active agents constructing and reconstructing gender norms. Current anthropological perspectives which view gender as defined and redefined in interactions as it is performed for different audiences is a useful tool for understanding the relationship between gender and violence in diverse settings. The recognition that femininities and masculinities are historically, socially, and economically constructed, and that the development of gender norms and identities is a process, grounds the conceptualization of strategies to encourage positive gender formation and offers the basis for efforts to challenge harmful gender norms. Increasingly, scholars studying the development of gender identities agree that despite the imposition of social structures, young people

shape gender roles both as individuals and as a group and they can create new ones that alter the trajectory of their lives and their communities (James 2007).

The concepts of sex and gender are typically treated as separate but complementary. Traditionally in humans, sex is viewed as a biologically determined dualism consisting of males and females, identifiable based on the presence of specific biological traits and developmental markers. Where sex is viewed as a biological construct fixed by nature; gender, is seen as its culturally constructed manifestation. Gupta (2000) describes gender as, “shared expectations and norms within a society about appropriate male and female behavior, characteristics, and roles.”

Men and women think and act in certain ways not because of biological or psychological traits, but because of concepts of femininity and masculinity that they adopt from their culture. In this view, gender should not be viewed as binary categories, but rather as a set of socially constructed relationships that are produced and reproduced through dynamic relationships. Virtually all societies manifest differences between men and women, and most exhibit some form of male domination, despite variations in gender definitions. Social theorists throughout history have struggled to understand gender, with a particular interest in the link between gender difference and gender inequality. Some anthropologists argue that gender ideologies have indirect adaptive structural consequences and many identify structural factors such as the impact of private property, the demands of war, or the importance of male bonding as factors explaining gender differences (Gilmore 1990; Rosaldo and Lamphere 1974; Whitehead 1997). The theoretical perspectives frequently employed in studies of gender include evolutionary theory (gender grounded in biological/physical characteristics), sex role theory (gender

understood in terms of norms differentiating male/female qualities and behavior), and social construction theory (gender as a set of practices and performances constituted through language or discourses). Today, biological factors are generally downplayed and social construction theory, in particular the concept of hegemonic masculinity introduced by Robert Connell (1995), is the predominant paradigm in research on gender identities.

In the 1970s anthropological research focused on exploring the roles of woman and men in every society. Roles were defined as expectations for behaviors that involved sanctions when an individual failed to conform. Anthropologists recognized that gender roles differed in each society, although gender seemed to be a key factor in the division of labor across most, if not all societies. Ultimately, however, the concept of role proved too simple and static to describe the way gender operates in social situations. Since the 1980s, anthropologists have increasingly theorized gender as a performance directed at an audience (see Butler and Williamson 1994). Whitehead (1992), for example, observed some years ago that men across cultures spend considerable time in male gatherings proving themselves to be men by proving that they are not women, both through narratives and performance. Sally Engle Merry observed that as women “do work”, particularly in female-dominated roles, they also “do gender” (2009, 10). She further explains that from a performative perspective, doing violence is a way of doing gender (Merry 2009). In some settings, the performance of gender identities means perpetrating or accepting violence. Thus when men batter women, they are performing masculinity not only for the woman but for other men, who assess their masculinity by the performance (Connell 1995).

Gender identity. There are differing theoretical perspectives regarding how gender identity – a person’s inner sense of being a girl, boy, woman, or man – is formed. Categorical approaches to gender identity formation view masculinity or “manliness” and femininity or “womanliness” as inherent, fixed by nature, and constant across time and space. An alternative approach to gender identity formation is that of socialization or sex-role theory, which proposes that the appropriate behaviors for males and females in a society are not inherent but learned and internalized through exposure to different socializing agents such as family, media, and social institutions (Giddens 2006). Critics of sex-role theory, however, question the assumption that individuals are passive objects simply absorbing and embodying social messages. A third and more recent perspective on gender identity formation is that of social constructionism which views gender identity formation as an ongoing process and recognizes an individual’s agency in actively negotiating and engaging with societal norms in the construction of those norms and their gender identity. Judith Lorber (1994: 13) describes the formation of gender identity as being “constantly created and re-created out of human interaction, out of social life, and is the texture and order of that social life.” She goes on to state, “In social interaction throughout their lives, individuals learn what is expected, see what is expected, act and react in expected ways, and thus simultaneously construct and maintain the gender order.”

Within the CSP, Whitehead defines gender identity as an affective need, related to the concept of the “self,” which he calls the “gender self.” He explains that our sense of who we are as persons (thus the concept of personhood) is strongly influenced by our sense of who we are as a male or female, which for most people is strongly influenced by

our culture's prescription for the ideal adult gender role or cultural scripts assigned to his or her sex. Thus he argues, what is often referred to as self-esteem is actually a reference to having a strong or healthy sense of the gender self (Whitehead 1997; Aronson, Whitehead, and Baber 2003; Whitehead and Hall, Monograph in Preparation, 2015). Like others, however, he does not view gender identity as static, but as evolving due to different experiences over the life course, as well as individuals taking action to change their identities, or to achieve a stronger sense of the gender self (Whitehead 1992).

Masculinities. I use the term “masculinities” in contrast to “masculinity” as a means of acknowledging the plurality of manifestations that “being a man” can take, and of recognizing how these manifestations change across culture and time and are hierarchical in their relationships with each other. At the top of the gender hierarchy is hegemonic masculinity or the dominant form of masculinity that is most valued and/or desired in a society or culture. Hegemonic masculinity is one of the multiple ways that manhood is socially defined across historical and cultural contexts and refers to the power differences between specific versions of manhood (Connell 2005). Whitehead (1992, 1997) observes that cross-culturally, ideal masculinity seems to revolve around constructs of sociopolitical, sexual, and in some cases economic power. He points out that male sociopolitical power is usually expressed in terms of social status vis-à-vis other men; while sexual power is most often characterized by the social subordination of females to males and male control over female sexuality. Compared to the body of literature on masculinities, few studies explore femininities, addressing instead the problematic nature of men.

This research employs a gender relational perspective, recognizing that gender does not refer to either women or men, but to the complex social system of power imbalances between males and females that may constrain women and men and girls and boys, limiting their rights and choices. A relational perspective is critical because patterns of gender, such as masculinity, are often defined in comparison to models of femininity. In fact, female identities often serve as the central point of conscious and unconscious reference for men in the development, maintenance, and transformation of their own sense of what “being a man” does and does not mean, and what it can and cannot mean (Guttman 1997). Women are also central in constructing masculinity – as mothers, peers, girlfriends, sexual partners, and wives. This is particularly relevant to work among youth, who are often largely controlled by their female kin.

Anthropologists have long recognized that femininities and masculinities are not deeply biological, but are learned, and once learned become part of the ideology that perpetuates them. Margaret Mead (1929; 1930), for example, explored differences in gender definitions as well as the processes by which males and females become the men and women their cultures prescribe. The conceptualization of gender norms and identities as historically, socially, and economically constructed makes it possible to conceive of participatory processes to foster more equitable gender norms within a framework of cultural respect and autonomy. Moreover, scholars increasingly agree that despite the imposition of social structures, young people shape their gender identity both as individuals and as a group and can create new ones that alter the trajectory of their lives and their communities (James 2007).

Contrary to masculinity, the literature tends to treat femininity as more static and essential in nature. This study, in adopting a constructionist approach to gender and gender identity formation, views both masculinities and femininities as socially constructed concepts that are multiple in form and vary across space and time. To the extent that hegemonic masculinity is often defined in relation or opposition to hegemonic or emphasized femininity, it is appropriate and indeed necessary to consider both concepts in relation to each other.

Gender and violence. In her work on rape in the United States, Peggy Sanday (2003) articulated the feedback between gender identity development, culturally programmed sexual behavior, and sexual violence. Her work argues that there is a correlation between indicators of social male-dominance and forced sex in many cultures (2007). In a recent article she states, “The first step in bearing witness to sexual violence is to describe local socially agreed upon understandings which are often shaped in single sex groups focused on promoting gender identity development and are played out in adolescent or childhood sexual games (Sanday 2010: 42).

My research pays close attention to the specific contexts in which GBV occurs, recognizing that violence is a product of larger processes and structures that create and reproduce inequalities. Merry (2009: 21) explains the intersectionality of gender violence:

Gender violence is embedded in patterns of kinship and marriage, but can be exacerbated by political and economic tensions. Interpersonal gendered violence and structural violence- the violence of poverty, hunger, social exclusion, and humiliation – are deeply connected. The conditions which breed gender-based violence include racism and inequality, conquest, occupation, colonialism, warfare and civil conflict, economic disruptions,

and poverty. Patterns of kinship and sexuality provide the justifications for gender-based violence and determine the possibilities of escaping it.

The anthropological concepts of structural and symbolic violence also provide useful theoretical perspectives to shape understanding of the relation between gender, violence and macro-level social systems. Paul Farmer situates structural violence as the “social and economic inequities that determine who will be at risk for assaults and who will be shielded from them” (Farmer 2005: 17-18). Nancy Scheper-Hughes (2004: 14) defines structural violence as “permissible, encouraged” violence “deemed necessary to the maintenance of crucial cultural, social, and political institution.” Closely related to this concept is symbolic violence, which helps to explain the internalization and legitimations of gender inequality among women. According to Philippe Bourgois (2003), symbolic violence persuades individuals that they are responsible for the violence they experience and that their subordination is the logical outcome of the natural order of things. Along the same lines, Sanday (2007) points out that women will uphold the environment of male dominance that they are raised in, unless they are made aware of alternatives. Situating GBV as acts of structural and symbolic violence resulting from political and economic structures extends analysis beyond a narrow focus on the individual and micro-level explanatory models.

2.4. Intersections between Idea Systems and the Individual: Embodiment

The concept of embodiment, which theorizes how the body internalizes cultural meanings, helps to situate our understanding of humans as biological organisms within broader cultural systems. Since the end of the 1980s, North American anthropology has viewed the body as an “active, fluid, material and symbolic process, with individual,

social and political meaning, an object of discipline and control, and at the same time the basis of resistance and identity building” (Scheper-Hughes and Lock 1987: 23). The recognition that the body is in large part a sociocultural construction illuminates the interplay between pubertal changes and the cultural and social meanings overlaid on female and male bodies and their reproductive functions.

The concept of embodiment can be traced back to the assertion of French anthropologist Marcel Mauss that bodily sensations are mediated by culture, and Maurice Merleau-Ponty’s concept of embodiment, which describes how the body internalizes cultural meanings (Singer and Baer 2007). Merleau-Ponty conceived the body as the primary site of knowing the world, a corrective to the philosophical tradition of placing consciousness as the source of knowledge. Building on this work, as well as the perspectives of Foucault and Bourdieu, Margaret Lock situates the body as a product of social, cultural and historical contexts; discusses the nature/culture and mind/body debates; and analyzes the politics of the production and reproduction of body (Bourdieu 1990; Foucault 1998; Lock 1993). The concepts of embodiment are useful to understanding the development of gender identity during puberty.

The interplay between bodies and identity has been a central theme of gender research, focusing primarily on health and illness, sports and interpersonal violence to show how bodies are affected by social processes. Nevertheless, some writers assert that the patterns of embodiment involved in hegemony have not been adequately theorized. Connell and Messerschmidt (2005), for example, argue that the common understanding of the body as an object of social construction is inadequate, suggesting instead that bodies are agents as well as objects of social practice. Social constructionist accounts of

childhood and the body tend to emphasize the discursive component, downplaying the importance of material aspects, focusing instead on the ways in which perceptions of the body are constrained and shaped by society (Prout 2000). Connell (2005) suggests that, in part due to the influence of Foucault, researchers have tended to see bodies as passive bearers of cultural imprints, blank pages upon which meanings and stories are inscribed. At the most extreme, the body is viewed simply as a product of discourses of power, to the extent that it sometimes disappears altogether as a material entity (Prout 2000).

While social constructionism has found it difficult to find a place for the physical body in theory, feminist scholars argue for a theoretical framework in which bodies are constructed through social relationships and social power yet maintain their materiality. The primacy of embodiment is articulated by Thomas Csordas (1994), who refers to it as “the primordial ground of culture,” highlighting its central role in reproduction/transformation of cultural norms. He remarks that, “Being-in-the-world constantly involves mediations between material, biological, symbolic, individual and social processes, between body, mind, and context...It is only through collective, shared experience of these mediations that we can know the world” (Csordas 1994: 104).

The dominant epistemology of Western thought concerning the body has radically evolved over the last thirty years. Bourdieu’s concept of habitus (1977), Csordas’s notion of embodiment (1994) and Foucault’s theory of bio power (1998) have all been rapidly integrated into the lexicon of anthropology. Since the end of the 1980s, North American anthropology has addressed the body as an active, fluid, material, and symbolic process, with individual, social, and political meaning, an object of discipline and control, and at the same time the basis of resistance and identity building (Scheper-Hughes and Lock

1987: 23). Increasingly, anthropologists are turning their attention to historical and cross-cultural studies of embodied human experience (i.e. experiencing the world from within the confines of our bodies). The anthropology of the body, however, dates back to French anthropologist Mauss's assertion that bodily sensations are mediated by culture and Merleau-Ponty's concept of embodiment, which draws attention to how the body internalizes cultural meanings (Singer and Baer 2007). Today, it is widely recognized that although the body is a biological entity, it is also in large part a sociocultural construction.

In her review of theory related to anthropology of the body, Margaret Lock situates the body as a product of social, cultural, and historical contexts; discusses the nature/culture and mind/body debates; and analyzes the politics of the production and reproduction of body (Lock 1993). Lock suggests that the roots of this field are found in work by Durkheim, Mauss and Van Gennep. She highlights the influence of the politicization of the female body by feminists on anthropology of the body and explains how anthropologists have used phenomenological theory to counter cognitive and linguistic models of interpretation of embodied experience (Lock 1993).

Lock's classic ethnography comparing cultural constructions of menopause in Japan and North America convincingly demonstrates that knowledge about the body is a product of history and culture and changes with location and over time. Her research shows that menopause is not a universal event but an experience interpreted differently by American and Japanese women as a product of culturally produced knowledge. She uses menopause as a point of departure for discussing the interplay of culture and

biology, deftly demonstrating through detailed analysis the way in which the body provides an opportunity to map social relations (Lock 1993).

Anthropological theory grapples with the multiple forms of the body. Mary Douglas (1973) called attention to the “two bodies,” referring to the social and physical aspects of the use and function of our bodies, and the way elements of physiology and anatomy taken up in the symbolic domain can influence how our bodies are organized and experienced. Scheper-Hughes and Lock give us “three bodies,” including the individual, the social, and the body politic. The first refers to the lived experience of the body as self, the second to representational uses of the body as a symbol of nature, society, and culture, and the third to the regulation and control of bodies (Scheper-Hughes and Lock 1987: 5). They remark that the notion of the individual body, as a separate entity, driven by will, is compatible with Western ideas about individualism; other cultures conflate individual and social identity. In other words, they do not conceive of themselves as fully distinct individuals; rather, their identities are embedded in their roles and responsibilities as members of a social group.

The social body refers to representations of the body as, “a natural symbol with which to think about nature, society, and culture” (Scheper-Hughes and Lock 1987: 45). Douglas remarks that, “The human body is always treated as an image of society (and therefore) there can be no natural way of considering the body that does not involve at the same time a social dimension” (1973: 98). The body politic concept draws from work of Foucault and refers to the, “...regulation, surveillance, and control of bodies (individual and collective) in reproduction and sexuality, work, leisure, and sickness” (Scheper-Hughes and Lock 1987: 45). Health can be understood as a reflection of the hierarchy of

relations in society, and anthropologists are mindful of the ways inequality, exploitation and structural violence are reflected in the social distribution of health.

I use the CSP as an organizing framework for this dissertation to understand the ways that idea systems, particularly gender norms and expectations, interact with the physical changes of puberty and influence life trajectories, within the context of a setting recovering from a particular historic process – decades of economic marginalization and prolonged armed conflict. The theoretical constructs described in this chapter such as the social construction of gender, embodiment and symbolic and structural violence are used to theorize the processes by which the gender identities of girls and boys are influenced by each component of the human ecosystem during adolescence, resulting in divergent life course outcomes. The concept of embodiment, for example, explains the highly charged interplay between the human organism and ideation during puberty, which results in the reproduction of cultural norms related to gender. I hypothesize that the interplay between boys' and girls' experiences of developmental changes and gendered cultural and social expectations during puberty result in hegemonic masculine and feminine identities firmly embedded in the reproductive and social imperatives of Acholi and Lango society. Thus, adolescence, and puberty in particular, represents a fertile moment in the reproduction of cultural systems. Similarly, the concept of structural violence offers a construct to characterize interactions between individuals and historical processes, physical and social environments, and cultural systems that result in elevated risk of violence and poor SRH outcomes. Furthermore, violence can be seen as a way to maintain the status quo of cultural, social, political institutions. The concept of symbolic violence helps us to understand the internalization of gender inequality among women.

The overall research objectives of this research are to: 1) describe the cultural ecology of adolescence in the study site and explain how gender norms are learned, internalized and passed on; 2) provide an in-depth view of the experiences of young people as they navigate the physical, social, and emotional changes of puberty and explore the ways that gender and other social and structural factors influence youth outcomes; and 3) identify opportunities to support youth development and promote the formation of gender equitable values, norms, attitudes, and practices among adolescents. The next chapter will present my specific research questions and describe the study methodology and tools. Chapter 4 draws upon secondary data to describe the human ecosystem of the study site, north-central Uganda. Chapters 5 through 9 present results related to gender enculturation, puberty experiences, life trajectories, GBV, fertility, and FP. I present my conclusions and recommendations in Chapter 10.

Chapter 3. Research Design and Methodology: Life Stories in Context

Thus far, I have introduced the purpose of my research and situated it within widespread and growing global concern with the influence of inequitable gender roles on SRH and GBV. In the previous chapter I introduced the CSP as the central framework for my research along with theoretical perspectives, such as embodiment, that provide insight into the influence of interactions between cultural sub-systems on acquisition of gender identity during puberty. In this chapter I will describe my research design and methods, addressing the study setting, research objectives, applied ethnographic approaches, data collection methods and instruments, data management, and analysis and ethical considerations.

3.1 Study Site

The study setting is two districts of northern Uganda – Pader district in the Acholi sub-region and Lira district in the Lango sub-region – which are recovering from 20 years of civil war. After more than a decade living in IDP camps, most families have now returned to their ancestral homes. Families in these districts are struggling to regain their economic capacity and revitalize cultural values and traditions. Most Acholi/Lango youth entering adulthood today have not been socialized into traditional norms and practices, have been exposed to tremendous violence and now face severe economic constraints. In order to help young people overcome these challenges, community and cultural leaders are working with the government and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) to revitalize Acholi and Lango cultural traditions in ways that support more equitable, peaceful relationships that will lead to healthier communities.

This site was chosen to build on existing partnerships, support efforts to address the significant problems of the region, and to examine evolving gender norms and their relation to violence in a post-conflict environment. This situation provided a unique opportunity to explore the role of gender and violence among adolescents returning to their ancestral communities after growing up outside of traditional social and cultural structures. Eager to revitalize Acholi culture and rebuild their communities after decades of violence, and facing rapidly changing social norms resulting from internal displacement and development initiatives, gender and GBV are topics of intense scrutiny and debate among youth and adults alike – providing a fertile terrain for inquiry.

After many years of war, combined with long-term isolation and neglect from the Ugandan government, the northern region of the country – and specifically the women/men and girls/boys of the Lira and Pader districts – face considerable reproductive health challenges stemming from the massive disruption of services, internal displacement, erosion of traditional social and family structures (56% of the population are youth, with 28% orphaned), and high incidence of GBV (Annan, Blattman, and Horton 2006). A poverty rate of 63%, compared to 38% nationally, constrains resources and opportunities for young people; access to skill-building and psychological support remains limited (Spittal et al. 2008). Consequently, up to 31% of girls aged 15-19 reported having received money in exchange for sex in some areas, while others curtail their education and enter into risky early childbearing in part to guarantee basic economic and physical security (Akumu et al. 2005).

Additionally, GBV is widespread in northern Uganda: among young women (ages 15-19), more than half (62.6%) have experienced GBV by a husband or partner and

16.5% of ever-pregnant women report experiencing physical violence while pregnant (UBOS 2007). High rates of induced abortion (1 in 5 pregnancies) reflect both this violence and low use of FP, especially among adolescents: 45.2% of women ages 15-19 have demand for FP but only 6.5% of that age group use a method (UBOS 2007). Early initiation of sexual activity, engagement in transactional and intergenerational sex (9.6% of women aged 15-24), GBV, and lack of FP and reproductive health information and services all result in increased risk for unintended pregnancy and HIV infection among young women (UBOS 2007).

3.2. Research Objectives

The overall research objectives of this research are to:

1. Describe the cultural ecology of adolescence in the study site and explain how gender norms are learned, internalized and passed on.
2. Provide an in-depth view of the experiences of young people as they navigate the physical, social and emotional changes of puberty and explore the ways that gender and other social and structural factors influence youth outcomes.
3. Identify opportunities to support youth development and promote the formation of gender equitable values, norms, attitudes and practices among adolescents.

3.3. Research Questions

The specific research questions are presented below, organized by the chapter in which they are primarily addressed.

The embodiment of gender: The nexus of puberty and cultural systems

- What are the lived experiences of young people as they navigate the physical, social and emotional changes of puberty?
- How do the interactions between pubertal changes and cultural and social processes shape gender and sexual identities and norms?
- How are the developing bodies of boys and girls regulated and controlled during adolescence?
- How do social structures inscribe gendered meanings to male and female bodies and reproductive lives?

Learning gender: Intersections between social systems, settings, and processes

- What are the range of normative gender roles and standards within Acholi and Lango communities? How do young people feel about these expectations?
- How do boys and girls experience and define themselves as men and women?
- How do individuals and social structures and the broader ecosystem influence the formation and transformation of gender attitudes, norms and roles throughout adolescence?
- How are hegemonic constructions of social norms enforced? How do young people contest these norms?
- How do gender norms and roles influence SRH and violence among youth?

Becoming an adult: Life trajectories viewed through a systems lens

- What pathways do boys and girls take as they enter puberty and transition into adulthood – navigating school, becoming economically productive and forming families? What are the antecedents of school dropout, sexual debut, parenthood, and marriage?
- How do social, economic, and cultural factors influence educational and economic achievement, sexual relationships, and family formation?
- What are the capacities of adolescents to shape their lives in the face of multiple constraints and limited opportunities?

Dangerous waters: (Un)Acceptability of violence

- What are the perspectives of boys/girls and men/women regarding the prevalence, causes, and meanings of violence? What are their thoughts on how to prevent violence?
- How does armed conflict and its aftermath (i.e. displacement, poverty, and demographic changes) affect gender relations?
- What is the relationship between gender norms and the acceptability of violence, as well as perceptions of appropriate responses to violent acts and situations?

Gender, fertility, and contraception

- How do gender norms influence fertility desires and contraceptive use among adolescents in northern Uganda?

- What do young people know and believe about contraceptive use? What are the sources of information and advice about contraception among youth?
- How are decisions about fertility and contraceptive use made?
- What are the experiences of young people seeking and using contraception? What are the reasons for use or non-use of contraception among youth?

3.4. Applied Ethnographic Approach

As mentioned earlier, this research was conducted during the first year of a six-year project intended to develop and test an intervention for transforming gender norms and improving adolescent SRH. As such, only one year was available to collect information to guide intervention development. Due to limited funding and other professional responsibilities, it was not possible for me to relocate to northern Uganda to conduct classical ethnographic fieldwork. Nevertheless, I was committed to producing a holistic and rich understanding of adolescent experiences and meanings to inform the design of a transformative and culturally appropriate intervention to address the root causes of GBV and poor adolescent health. Building on the work of anthropologists facing similar challenges, my goal was to apply a methodological approach that would fit within resource constraints while retaining the underlying tenets of the ethnographic method.

Whitehead (2002) argues that while the primary methodological paradigm of ethnography is qualitative, it also has ontological and epistemological proprieties. He describes ethnography as a holistic approach to the study of cultural systems,

sociocultural contexts, processes, and meanings from both emic and etic perspectives. In a similar vein, Butler and Copeland-Carson (2005) discuss the application of anthropology to applied endeavors, highlighting mixed method approaches, combined emic and etic viewpoints, analysis of data from multiple perspectives and connecting human behaviors to context as hallmarks of anthropology. Copeland-Carson (2005: 21), like Whitehead, asserts that ethnography is not defined exclusively by participant observation and interviewing, but also the holistic integration of interdisciplinary theories and methods.

Whitehead's description of ethnography in the Ethnographically Informed Community and Cultural Assessment Research Systems (EICCARS) approach encompasses three approaches relevant to the methodology of this study: 1) the iterative, flexible process of fieldwork; 2) use of a team of cultural insiders and outsiders to achieve emic and etic validity; and 3) analysis of secondary data such as scholarly and popular publications and products, archival and statistical data (Whitehead 2005). I used a number of the methods catalogued in this approach including secondary data analysis, observation and participant observation, individual and group interview methods, mapping technologies and team approaches (Whitehead 2005).

I also drew from the methods developed over the last two decades by applied anthropologists to conduct rapid assessments and formative research (LeCompte and Schensul 2010, Pelto 2013, Scrimshaw and Hurtado 1987). There are many guidelines and tool kits available to guide ethnographic field research intended to meet the practical needs of intervention projects. These include Rapid Appraisal Procedures (RAP), Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA), Rapid Rural Assessment (RRA) and Focused

Ethnographic Studies (FES). Most were developed by anthropologists, using ethnographic tools, but shortening the expected time frames to allow the research process to fit with programmatic objectives (Chambers 1997). Rapid qualitative approaches have been especially notable in the area of health and nutrition, although they have also been used in agriculture, water, and sanitation (Pelto 2013, Scrimshaw and Hurtado 1987, Gittelsohn et al. 1998, Chambers 1997). Methods frequently included in rapid assessments include mapping, semi-structured interviews, seeking out local experts for key informant conversations, in-depth interviews, and transect walks (Chambers 1997). Most of these methods were utilized in the research described in this dissertation.

The body of literature on rapid assessment approaches suggests that they are methodologically sound and more suitable for applied endeavors than longer-term ethnographic fieldwork. In a recent handbook on applied ethnography, Pelto (2013: 278) concludes that products of rapid ethnographic approaches are not weaker in validity, reliability or overall credibility than products of more academic, expanded research. Rather, the results are simply more focused, and less concerned about generalizability and contribution to general theory. Nonetheless, Pelto finds that formative research is a fertile field for the discovery of grounded theory, producing rich information that can be mined to develop theoretical frameworks. In fact, an experiment conducted in West Bengal by the Child in Need Institute (CINI) comparing a structured quantitative survey, the WHO focused ethnographic study approach and traditional ethnographic methods concluded that based on time, cost, logistical advantages and wealth of data, the rapid approach was preferable (Bhattacharya 1997).

This study was designed to retain the benefits of the classical ethnographic approach of immersion in a cultural system with opportunities for observation and ongoing, iterative data collection, while operating within resource constraints. The methodology included five key elements:

1. **Review of secondary data sources** such as statistical information, program reports, web-sites and list serves, including popular media such as newspapers, television and films;
2. **Team approach to data collection** and analysis which engaged cultural insiders as ethnographers and key informants working in collaboration with the principal investigator;
3. **Brief period of participant observation before data collection;**
4. **Interview methods** (life histories and in-depth interviews) designed to elicit holistic understanding of cultural systems, for example through use of participatory techniques such as social mapping and transept walks; and
5. **Participant observation** during stakeholder meetings, instrument pretesting in study communities, ethnographer training and other project activities.

Review of secondary data. I consulted a variety of sources of data throughout the research process to provide context and stimulate thinking about pertinent issues. These include a review of statistical reports (the Ugandan Demographic Health Survey, data on the prevalence of violence in northern Uganda), as well as project reports (evaluation of the Government of Uganda/USAID District Operating Plan process, NGO reports) and policy documents (Peace, Recovery and Development Plan for Northern Uganda 2011,

the 2014 Anti-Homosexuality Act, 2013 Uganda National Land Policy, 2010 Domestic Violence Act). I also referred to quantitative data from a baseline survey I conducted in study communities with adolescents as part of an evaluation of youth interventions conducted by GREAT Project partners. Finally, data from popular media provided context and identified relevant issues to explore. These include: listservs (Google Acholi listserv), websites (organizations working with youth in northern Uganda, USAID, UNFPA and the government of Uganda), local newspapers (the Monitor and New Vision) and local television (news, talk shows and religious programs).

Team approach. Data was collected by a team of four ethnographers (two female and two male) and one field supervisor fluent in English and Luo. I led the training and participated in the field testing in northern Uganda. After three weeks, I returned to the U.S. and remained in close contact with the supervisor and team through weekly Skype calls and e-mail. The four ethnographers and supervisor were cultural insiders trained in social work, counseling, and/or psychology with intimate and extensive knowledge of the social, cultural, and political context in the Acholi and Lango sub-regions and expertise working with youth. Four research assistants (two male, two female) worked with the ethnographers helping with material preparation and set-up, note taking and documentation. The entire team participated in an intensive one-week workshop which included sessions on gender, GBV, adolescent SRH, working with children, informed consent and ethics, and research methods, followed by one week of supervised fieldwork. They were trained to collect life histories and conduct in-depth interviews and taught to keep a field journal of observations and notes. On-site and distance coaching and mentoring strengthened their skills throughout the study period through observation,

review of field notes and interview transcripts and debriefing meetings. Peer review of transcripts was also helpful.

A team approach to ethnography, which draws upon cultural insiders and outsiders, is common in applied endeavors (Whitehead and Brown 1986, Pelto 2013). Among the advantages of team ethnography are expanded resources for fieldwork and the inclusion of diverse skills and perspectives that provide insight into cultural meanings and may facilitate entrée into different segments of the community. At the same time cultural outsiders bring a beginner's mind and different frameworks and perspectives (Whitehead and Brown 1986). Furthermore, the validity of results may be enhanced through discussions between team members during and after data collection.

The entire team, including myself, held weekly Skype calls to discuss emerging information and insights, clarify results, or further explore issues identified from transcript review, including translation of particular phrases or proverbs, and suggest areas to explore or improve during future interviews. Because the ethnographers were cultural insiders, they also played the role of key informants during these conversations and provided information to clarify or expand the accumulating body of data. During the calls team members shared concerns, questions, and insights from informal and participant observation. For example, one team asked to be relocated to another village because they felt threatened by reports of witchcraft in the village where they were living. This prompted exploration of the topic of witchcraft, something not originally included in the interview guides. In the same vein, both teams requested guidance on how to respond to neighbors asking them to mediate cases of intimate partner violence and shared observations about specific situations of violence they heard or observed. Their insights

provided invaluable context for a number of topics, such as the role of bridewealth in determining appropriate ways to handle domestic violence.

Participant observation before data collection. The team of ethnographers was deployed to study communities about six weeks before they began formal interviews and continued to reside in the field while they conducted interviews and transcribed their notes. During this period they volunteered in youth centers, visited schools, and attended community events. This is not a common practice in Uganda. Typically, field researchers live in the nearest town with a hotel and electricity and travel daily to the community, with the goal of completing the fieldwork as quickly as possible, and thus keeping down data collection costs. This ethnographic approach posed challenges – convincing the NGOs participating in the study to cover the costs of lodging and food for three months, finding well-qualified researchers willing to live in the field, purchasing solar batteries and lanterns to enable transcription in the field and purchasing USB internet sticks to enable regular Skype communication. Nevertheless, this strategy allowed the team time to map the community, build rapport with community leaders, parents, and youth, learn to communicate well in the micro-dialect of the community, and observe the behavior of young people on a daily basis. This information was recorded in their field journals, shared during team meetings and used to revise guides and inform ongoing data collection.

Periodic observation by the principal investigator. As mentioned earlier, I was not present in the study communities throughout the study period to conduct participant observation, often considered the hallmark of the anthropological method. Instead, I formed and led a team of cultural insiders to reside in study communities, conduct

participant observation, gather life histories, and conduct in-depth interviews with selected members of the social network of study participants. However, managing a large research-to-practice endeavor provided me opportunities for ongoing, iterative observation and data collection. For example, during the design and launch of the project I visited health posts, youth centers, schools, and local government offices, interviewing staff in each location. I also participated in *wang-ooos* (fireside chats) and other community and youth group meetings, as well as planning and launch meetings with project staff and stakeholders. Ethnographer training and field testing of the interview guides also provided opportunities for informal observation and conversations with community members. I conducted key informant interviews with the ethnographers, NGO staff, and local leaders while traveling in the field for pretesting and other project activities. Observation of interviews and team discussions also provided useful contextual information.

After the formative research phase was concluded, I continued to work with the NGOs involved in this project (Save the Children and Pathfinder International) and their local partners (Concerned Parents Association and Straight Talk Foundation) to design and pilot the intervention, which was developed based on preliminary analysis of the formative results. In addition, over the last two years I have been working with the same ethnographers to conduct a qualitative panel study following a cohort of 60 boys and girls ages 10 to 18 (15 from each life course stage of interest). The study consists of biannual in-depth interviews organized around a timeline exercise to collect information on physical, social, educational, and economic changes. In order to support these activities, I have visited the study areas for about two weeks three times a year since the formative

data was collected in 2012. During these visits I continued to collect data and interact with the ethnographers and key stakeholders to further explore and clarify issues emerging from analysis of the data collected during the formative research phase.

3.5 Life History Approach

This research applied a life course approach to understanding gender formation and SRH by purposefully selecting young people at key transition points to participate in life histories. A life course consists of a sequence of socially defined events and roles that an individual enacts over time. According to this perspective, in order to truly understand a person's life it is necessary to explore significant events, experiences, or transitions that have taken place from birth to death. The life course approach is often used when discussing the transition period of adolescence and is a particularly useful lens for examining gender identity formation because it foregrounds the connection between individuals and the historical and socioeconomic context in which they live and supports a belief in human agency (Mortimer and Shanahan 2004; Roy 2008).

Key concepts from the life course perspective such as trajectories (sequencing of roles and experiences), transitions (life events that cause changes in life experiences and relationships), turning points (major transitions that cause a sharp change in life course trajectory) and timing (temporal contexts for acquiring work and family roles) were incorporated into the analytical framework, in order to frame the temporal nature of the experiences of young people within the broader influence of cultural systems.

Researchers must listen to the voices of youth in order to support their active, transformative role in the transmission of cultural knowledge and practices. Life history methodology is often used to amplify the voices of those whose experiences are not often

included in research agendas, such as women, youth, and elderly (Freidenberg 2000; Myerhoff 1978). Much of the groundbreaking work on gender, such as development of the concept of hegemonic masculinity, was based on use of life histories to document personal experiences, and the intersection of individuals with social structures, movements, and institutions (Connell 1995).

Life histories provide a degree of depth, flexibility, and vitality sometimes lacking in structured interviews (Hatch and Wisniewski 1995). Nevertheless, life history has been a controversial method, largely because of questions of reliability, validity, and representativeness (Caughey 2006). In recent years, however, life histories have reemerged, to a large extent in connection with reflexive and feminist anthropologies (Hesse-Biber and Leavy 2007). This methodology facilitates connections between individual biographies and the larger cultural and institutional contexts that serve as a backdrop for these experiences (Hesse-Biber and Leavy 2007). One of the earliest and most popular narrative genres of ethnographers, life histories are often used to examine the relationship of an individual to their society or culture or to explore subjective experience and meaning, rather than provide a factual report of individual lives. In life history research, the narrator and the listener interact as part of a shared activity, co-constructing meaning as a result of their collaboration (Langness and Frank 1981). The process of constructing a life history provides individuals the opportunity to reflect upon their thoughts, perhaps making meaning of their life experiences (Freidenberg and Thakur 2009).

Life history methods are generally utilized to encourage individuals to reflect on their experiences over their lifetime, and therefore not commonly used with youth who

have not lived long enough to gain a broad perspective on their experiences. This study adapted this approach to explore a specific life course phase, puberty, which occurs early in the life course. We interviewed youth in the midst of this transition, as well as those recently emerging from puberty, about specific domains of interest, applying a focused life history approach organized around specific events and issues occurring during adolescence. Such issue-focused life histories collected at key moments of passage from childhood to adulthood can reveal insights into norms, attitudes, and knowledge related to fertility, gender, couple dynamics, and family formation and the factors influencing these norms and attitudes (Caughey 2006; Cole and Knowles 2001). This technique yielded adolescent life stories from different perspectives – those of boys and girls going through puberty at the time of the interview as well as those entering into marriage or becoming a parent for the first time.

3.6. Collecting Life Histories and Interviewing Significant Others

Two interview-based methods were used: a) life history interviews with youth between the ages of 10 and 19; and b) in-depth interviews with individuals nominated by youth as a significant influence on their lives. These methods were selected because they are well-suited to explore the complex human ecology within which young people are enculturated and to elucidate the processes. Data were collected over a three-month period in Pader and Lira districts in northern Uganda.

Life histories. As one of the richest methods in social science, collecting life histories is time-consuming. Researchers often spend multiple sessions with one individual, sometimes working with a handful of respondents over a period of months. Therefore, researchers concentrate on a few cases in which the theoretical yield should be

high; generally this is a moment when identity is under construction or pressure (Cole and Knowles 2001). For this reason, we selected young people at key moments of the life course who were in the process of adopting new roles, responsibilities and constructing elements of their gender identities – early adolescence, older adolescence (when romantic attachments/intimate relationships are beginning to form), newly married when family formation and adult identity is in transition, and after pregnancy/childbirth when gender and adult identities are beginning to solidify.

Life histories were collected from 36 youth (ages 10-19) at different stages of the life course: VYAs (age 10-14), older adolescents (age 15-19), newly married (age 10-19), and pregnant with first child or a parent of one child (age 12-19). The life histories were collected during two, and sometimes three, sessions with each individual in order to provide the opportunity to build rapport, cover with adequate depth important events in their lives, and allow the ethnographers to explore further emerging topics which subsequent sessions.

As mentioned earlier, the field team relocated to study communities during data collection and spent about a month volunteering at youth club locations becoming acquainted with the youth and community before beginning interviews. With advice from youth club staff, the researchers identified potential participants who represented key stages of the life course; covered a range of socio-demographic characteristics; and were able to articulate their experiences.

The characteristics of the life history participants are presented below in Table 1. As expected due to the rural setting of this research, all of the study participants live in households supported by subsistence farming. The influence of historical processes on

adolescents in North-Central Uganda, specifically the civil war and HIV epidemic, can be seen in the fact that six of the participants are orphans and four had been abducted by the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA). This is consistent with DHS data from 2011 that 17% of children in northern Uganda are orphans, and about the same percentage are not living with biological parents.

Table 1. Characteristics of Life History Participants

	VYA (8)	Older Adolescents (8)	Newly married (8)	New parents (12)	Total (36)
Male	4	5	3	4	16
Female	4	3	5	8	20
Mean age (years)	Girls: 11.5 Boys 13.75	Girls: 15.6 Boys: 17.2	Girls: 17.2 Boys: 17.6	Girls: 18.3 Boys: 18.6	--
Orphan	0	1 boy	1 girl 2 boys	2 girls	6 (3 boys and 3 girls)
Formerly Abducted	0	1 girl 1 boy	1 girl	1 boy	4 (2 boys, 2 girls)

All of the young people (and adults) participating in this study had spent most of the ten years prior to being interviewed in an IDP camp. The interviews took place about one year after their families had returned to their ancestral villages, depending on the date their camp closed and the time it took to relocate. Some families left the camps before they were officially closed. While all participants were greatly influenced by the war, their experiences vary significantly by age. The height of the violence was in 2005, and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) officially closed camps in 2012. That means that the VYAs in this study would have been toddlers during the time of greatest violence and most affected by hunger, disease, and the illness and deaths

of their caretakers. Many were cared for by their elder siblings and subsisted on food aid. These children also spent most of their lives in the camp setting without the opportunity to work in the fields or be enculturated through traditional social and cultural mechanisms. On the other hand, older study participants, such as newly married boys and girls, would have been in early adolescence (10-14) during the height of the war and likely experienced violence directly in terms of being abducted or attacked or seeing/hearing about such incidents. They also may have been the primary caretakers of their younger siblings in the absence of adult family members. The historical processes referred to here will be discussed in detail in the next chapter.

Appendix B includes abbreviated life stories of the adolescents who shared their life histories. Each participant is identified by a pseudonym used throughout the dissertation to identify their life circumstances. The pseudonym protects the confidentiality of study participants, yet provides readers the opportunity to refer to the appendix for more information about their life situation. Reading through the abbreviated biographies also offers useful information about the experience of each study participant and illustrates the diversity of their life experiences.

In-depth interviews with significant others. During the life history interviews, adolescents were asked to identify one or two individuals who they felt had an influence on their development into an ideal man or woman and invite them to talk with one of the ethnographers. The purpose of these interviews was to complement the information provided by the adolescents and increase understanding of the influence of social and ideation systems on adolescent life trajectories. The interviews explored knowledge and attitudes related to gender and SRH, how these attitudes were formed, their relationship

with the adolescent who nominated them, and their perceptions of their influence on youth in the community. Youth were told that they could invite a parent/guardian, peer, partner, teacher, health provider, community or religious leader, or any other person who had a significant impact on their lives. It was made clear that nothing they had discussed would be shared with these individuals. Adolescents were provided an invitation letter to give to the individuals they selected. The invitation letter contained information about the study and the contact information of research team members. Significant others interested in participating in the study contacted the researchers, who then obtained their consent to participate in the study.

The “nominated” individuals included parents/guardians (9), siblings and other relatives (8), community members such as teachers, health providers and religious or civic leaders (11) and peers (12). The characteristics of the participants in the in-depth interviews are presented in

Table 2. Note that quotes from significant others are identified throughout the dissertation as “significant other” and basic identifying information; pseudonyms were not used, and contextual life information was not collected from them.

Table 2. Characteristics of "Significant Others"

In-Depth Interview Participant	Age Range	Male	Female	Total
Parent of adolescent girl or boy	22-53 years	2	7	9
Relative of adolescent girl or boy		4	4	8
Community member (e.g. teacher, religious leader, elders)		8	3	11
Peer of adolescent girl or boy		6	6	12
Total		20	20	40

Study instruments. Most SRH research on VYAs relies on retrospective reports from their older counterparts. This study took a different approach, based on the understanding that younger boys and girls can be competent, reliable informants about their own childhood, with their own perspectives to share. Most research methodologies, however, advantage adults in terms of social and communication skills or knowledge, therefore it was important to develop participatory, visual, game-based methods which shift the balance of power from researcher to participant and are cognitively and developmentally appropriate for this age group (Dell Clark 2011).

The topics covered during the life history interviews included gendered experiences of puberty, sexuality, reproduction, and violence, with a particular focus on early adolescent experiences. Information was collected on core attitudes and values related to SRH, such as: 1) the experience of maturation and fertility awareness as it relates to gender identity formation, including the experiences of girls at onset of menstruation; 2) beliefs about what it means to be a man or a woman; 3) life plans with regards to schooling, employment, and family formation; 4) societal expectations, awareness, and attitudes towards contraception and spacing of pregnancy; 5) communication, decision-making, and underlying power dynamics between adolescents and their parents, peers, partner, and family; 6) sexual behavior, family formation, and childbearing and experiences, feelings; and 7) attitudes related to the violence continuum.

Direct questions about violence experienced during the conflict were avoided because the study's Technical Advisory Group (TAG) in northern Uganda (cultural and religious leaders and representatives of civil society) advised that young people, their families, and communities wished to move beyond intense preoccupation with the

conflict, especially among westerners. At a time when northern Ugandans were focusing on rebuilding their communities after a ten-year absence, TAG members found discussion of the atrocities of the civil war gratuitous. In addition, a vast body of literature on the LRA conflict, with a focus on the experiences of formerly abducted boys and girls, already existed. Furthermore, the ethics committees in the U.S. and Uganda were concerned about re-traumatizing youth (especially 10 to 14 year olds) by encouraging them to recall violent experiences. Hence, instead of asking direct questions, open-ended methodologies were used such as timelines, mapping and free listing “bad things that people do to each other.” This left the choice of whether or not to bring up difficult topics to the study participants and kept the focus on the topics most salient to them.

Eight interview guides were developed for this study (see Appendices E and F). These included life history discussion guides for each segment of the study population (VYAs, older adolescents, newly married, and new parents) and in-depth interview guides for significant others (community members, parents, adult relatives, and others). The life history was developed over two or three sessions with each participant.

Table 3 describes the methods used and the topics covered in each guide. These topics relate back to the research questions presented at the beginning of this chapter and seek understanding of the ways in which interactions between different elements of the human ecosystem described by the CSP acculturate new members of society and shape their life trajectories and experiences of reproduction and violence. The guides were designed to explore the experience and meaning of pubertal development, human needs

for sex and reproduction, social systems (dyads, families, clans) and ideation (gender attitudes and roles), as well the influence of the environment and historical processes.

Table 3. Summary of Research Guides by Life Course, Methods and Topics

In-Depth Interview Guides for Significant Others <i>(community members, parents, adult relatives and peers)</i>	
Method/activity	Topic
Informal guided questions	Experiences with and attitudes toward youth
Ideal man /woman: metaphorical technique with toy animals	Gendered expectations, norms and enculturation processes
Timeline for SRH benchmarks	Beliefs about marriage, sex and reproduction as life course events
Free list and continuum of acceptable and unacceptable violence	Attitudes toward violence
Hopes and dreams	Hopes and dreams for themselves, youth and their community
Life History Discussion Guide <i>(VYA (10-14), Older Adolescents (15-19), Newly married, New parents)</i>	
Method/activity	Topic
First interview	
Community mapping	Physical space, daily lives, safety concerns, gendered spaces, safe and non-safe spaces
Spider mapping	Social networks and their influence
Time line	Life events perceived as significant and how they were experienced
Second interview	
Free list and continuum of acceptable and unacceptable violence	Attitudes towards violence
Doors to my future (visualization)	Understand hopes and dreams of participants
Ideal man /woman: metaphorical technique with models of animals	Gendered expectations, norms and enculturation processes

Participatory methodologies were used to facilitate a rich discussion, especially among younger study participants, who tend to respond better to non-formal research methods (Clarke et al. 2003). These methods allowed a combination of visual and verbal language, reduced the need for written literacy, and established foundations of trust and

rapport between the respondent and the interviewer (Hurworth et al. 2005). Furthermore, use of visual methods provided children a focus other than the interviewer, possibly reducing the social and emotional demands of the interview (Butler and Williamson 1994).

The visual and participatory activities included the following:

- Participants were asked to draw a timeline of their life on a four-foot long strip of paper and note important positive and negative events that they would like to include in their life histories (Figure 6)
- Young people drew maps of their community to illustrate where and how they spend their time and to indicate with symbols how safe they feel in each location. (Figure 7)
- In order to discuss social networks, participants were asked to make “spider maps” of people who influence them, varying the size and location by degree of affinity and to indicate lines of connection between individuals. (Figure 8)
- Participants free listed the “bad things people do to each other” and then used Post-It notes to place their answers on a continuum from acceptable to non-acceptable (Figure 9). In this way, youth maintained control over whether or when to bring up an issue, avoiding the ethical dilemma of “teaching” a child about a problem of which they were unaware or forcing them to discuss traumatic experiences.
- A metaphorical technique was used to explore meanings, emotions, symbols, and values related to gender in terms of a concrete concept, in

this case an array of eight to twelve toy animals (chickens, dogs, cows, etc.). Participants began the activity by choosing an animal to represent an “ideal women” or “ideal man” and then asked to explain their choice. This was followed by requests to choose the type of animal that represents their ideal spouse, etc. along with discussion exploring gender norms, attitudes, and meanings. This exercise drew on experience showing that visual metaphors signify ideas, even those with ambiguous meanings, and making connections from one domain to another helps youth concretize their ideas and feelings (Clark 2004). (Figure 10)

Figure 6. Timeline with positive and negative events placed below and above the dateline



Figure 7. Map drawn by a married girl indicating safe and unsafe spaces. She includes the church, school, toilets, home, water tap, garden, and market on the map.

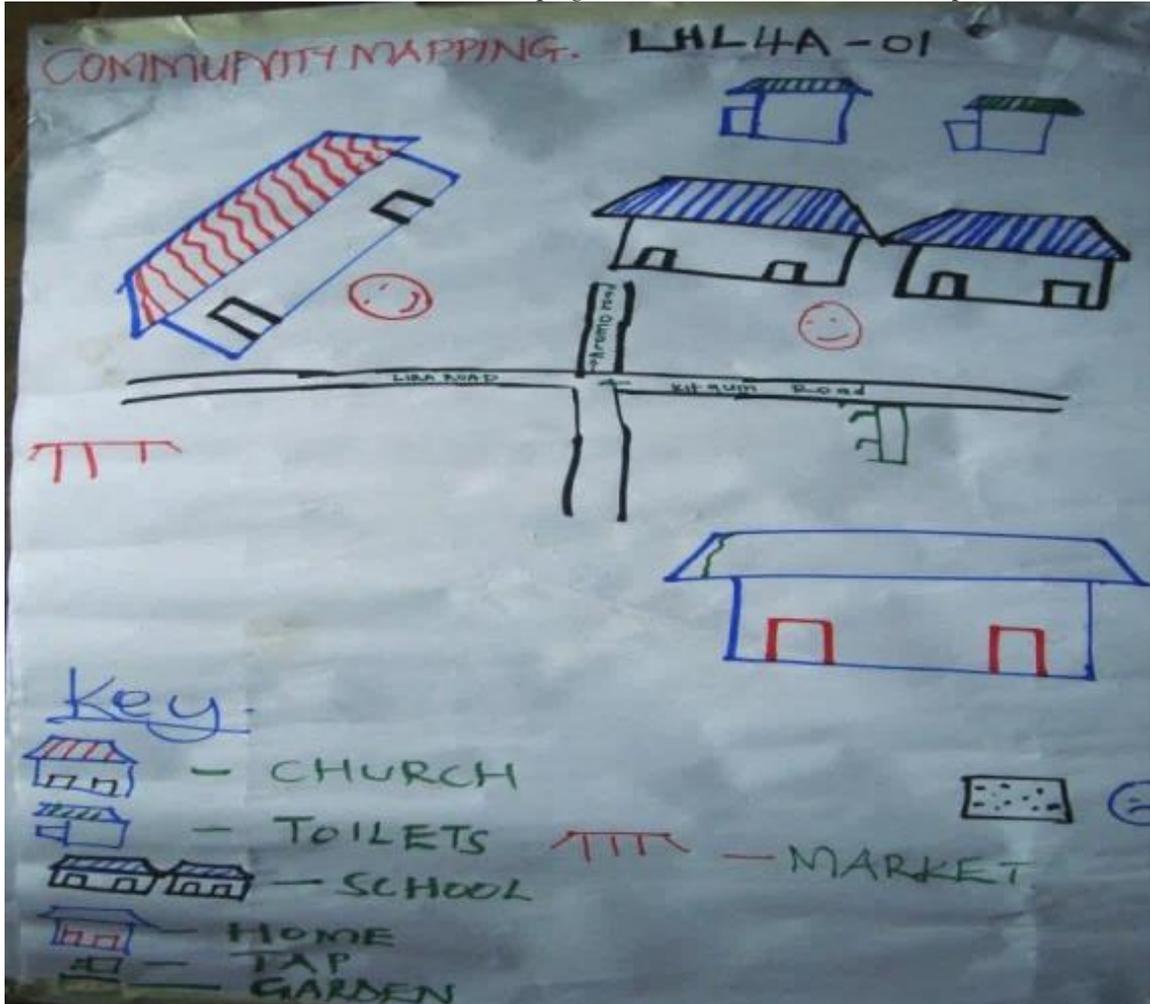


Figure 8. Spider map showing degrees of affinity and interaction between social network partners

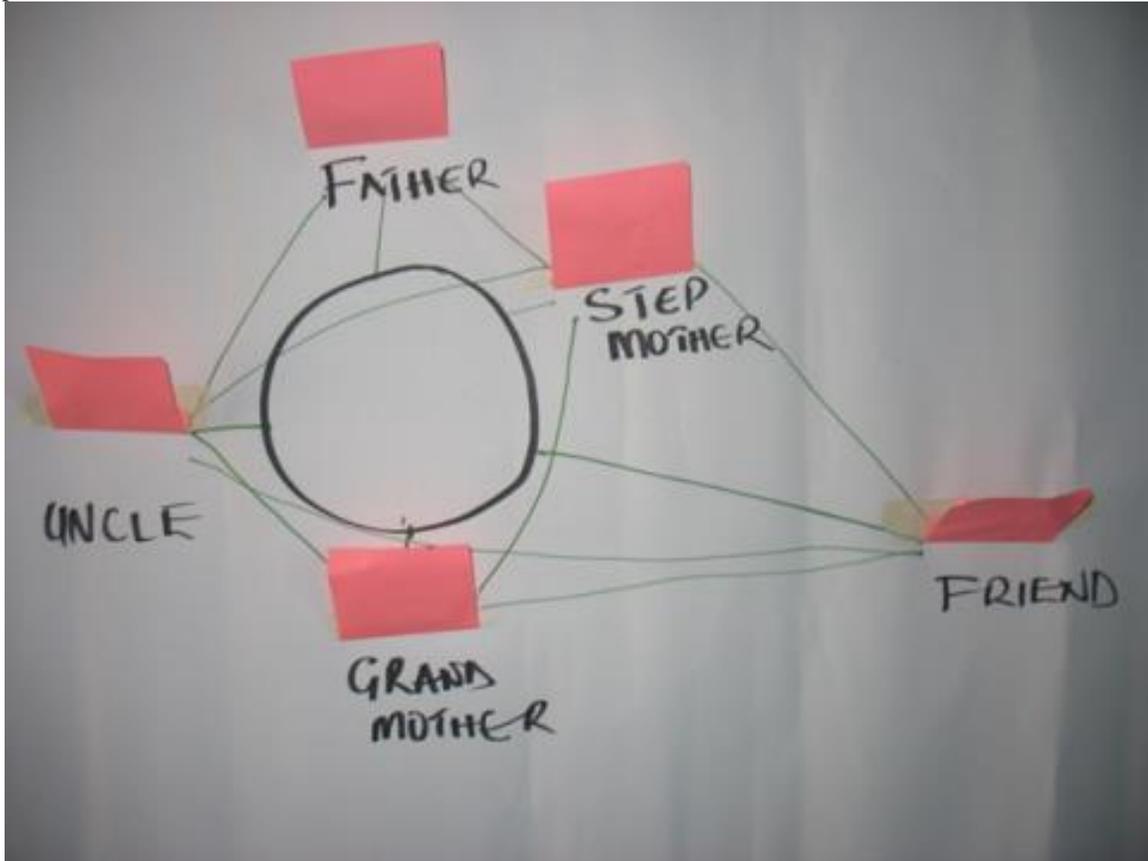


Figure 9. Result of free listing and ranking of "bad things people do to one another" on a continuum from acceptable to unacceptable

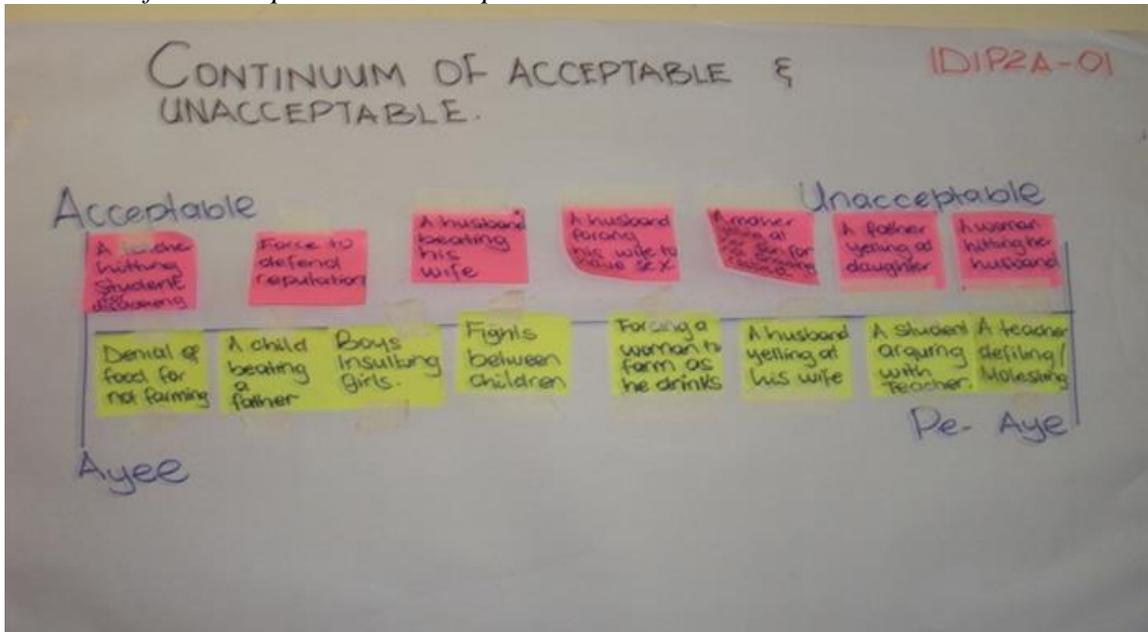


Figure 10. A study participant chooses an animal figurine to represent an ideal woman



The tools and methods used in the life histories and in-depth interviews were translated into Luo by the research team and then back-translated into English. Once adjustments were made, the tools were carefully pretested. The first phase of pretesting consisted of practice sessions within the team. Once the tools were refined, the team pretested them in Gulu and Oyam. After pretesting, the field team met to exchange experiences and further revise the tools.

3.7. Data Management and Analysis

Field teams audio recorded (if consent was given) and took notes of key points and observations during the interviews. Immediately after the interview the team identified all materials (recordings, social and community maps, timelines, pile sort cards, notes) with a unique field identification code. Codes identified the interviewer, geographic location, and participant sex and life course stage. Photographs were taken of visual output and later included in the transcripts. The field teams met daily to debrief on

experiences, discuss and synthesize information and identify common themes, problems and issues for further exploration. Each team transcribed their interviews weekly, translating them into English. The field coordinator reviewed the transcript and the recording together with the team to ensure that the content accurately reflected the discussions. Completed transcripts were sent electronically through a password-encrypted site to the principle investigator who reviewed them and provided feedback through weekly e-mail and Skype calls.

This research employs the life course perspective as an analytical lens to elucidate the interlocking factors that shape the unique pathways of boys and girls and ultimately influence their life course outcomes. According to McLeod and Almazan (2004: 395), the life course is punctuated by physiological changes, life transitions, and turning points that alter developmental and experiential trajectories. Physiological events, such as hormonal changes during puberty, create new “physical and social selves” that require adjustment and adaptation. Transitions involve age-graded movement into and out of major social roles and/or institutions, such as entering elementary school, marriage, or childbirth. These may occur on- or off-time and may be either expected or unexpected, although transitions that are off-time and unexpected have the most profound effects (McLeod and Almazan 2004). In contrast, turning points are defined as periods or points in time in which an individual undergoes a major transformation in self-image, relationships, or life roles (see Glossary for further definitions). Turning points are often associated with major life events such as graduation or marriage. Bodily alterations, turning points, and transitions have the potential to create new opportunities, alter life goals, and create stress. Their influence on the life course is influenced by the ecological and cultural

system which influences how individuals interpret and respond to these events, as well as on the social capital they have at their disposal. As a result, individual boys and girls faced with similar situations will assert different types and levels of effort to change it, creating diverse life pathways.

Data was analyzed through a combination of inductive (open-ended and exploratory) and deductive approaches (testing or confirming hypotheses). Several different approaches to the analysis of life story narratives were used including: 1) the holistic-content approach which explores salient themes of the story as a whole through close analysis of textual themes; 2) the content-analysis approach which codes segments of text irrespective of its place in the narrative; and 3) the holistic-form method which focuses on the structure rather than the content of a narrative, for instance identifying the high and low points in a life (Mortimer and Shanahan 2004). The qualitative software program, ATLAS.ti v5, was used to code and organize the data. For the holistic-content analysis, a grounded theory approach was used, coding data into categories to search for patterns, identify trends and relationships, and build theoretical models based on empirical data (Glaser 1998). Using an iterative process of coding and “memoing” (writing notes with ideas about substantive codes and emerging relationships), tentative patterns and themes were generated about gender formation and its relationship with SRH and GBV. Deductive analysis looked for patterns suggested by life course and ecological perspectives using templates to contribute to theory building and develop actionable findings to guide intervention development. Analysis templates consisting of matrices were used to organize data by key variables such as facilitating and constraining factors for key behaviors, key potential intervention types, or population segments. A matrix to

support life course analysis was also used to capture sequencing, transitions, and turning points.

Inductive analysis was conducted to uncover emergent patterns and deductive analysis was used to apply key constructs of the life cycle perspective such as turning points, agency, timing of transitions and linked lives within the broader lens of the human ecosystem. The analysis addressed specific questions such as: What makes a given transition such as school leaving or marriage take place? How do young people adapt to this transition? Is there a unifying theme to the life stories? What other elements shape life trajectories? The CSP framework guided analysis questions such as: In what ways do the social, human individual and idea sub-systems intersect to shape adolescent life pathways in study communities? How do historical processes and the physical and social environments influence adolescent trajectories? The analytic approach combined variable-oriented analysis and case-oriented analysis as described by Miles and Huberman (1994), which uses matrices in which case-level displays are stacked in a meta-matrix, permitting systematic comparison across cases. Within-case and cross-case displays were used to feed the analysis, developing conceptually clustered matrices of variables of interest and building an integrated map.

Key variables included in the matrix were selected from those emerging from thematic analysis of coded transcripts, facilitated by the use of ATLAS.ti v5. Using constructs from the CSP, individual codes were organized into families to provide a systems lens to the analysis. The themes and variables generated by the thematic analysis were then applied to individual time-ordered life stories, drawing upon life course perspectives. For the within case analysis, a matrix was developed for each participant,

ordered by temporal events and the key variables identified during the thematic analysis such as social capital, puberty changes and gender norms. The matrix included space to identify transitions, turning points and life themes. The cross-case analysis began with construction of matrices by sex and life course (e.g. 10-14 year olds, older adolescents, newly married, and newly parenting segmented by sex). Subsequently, a series of meta-matrices were developed across outcome variables of interest, such as school leaving, sexual debut and family formation to identify patterns across cases.

3.8. Ethical Considerations

Ethical clearance was obtained from the Institutional Review Boards of Georgetown University and Makerere University School of Public Health, as well as the Uganda National Council of Science and Technology.⁴ Informed assent was obtained from the adolescents (the legal age of majority in Uganda is 18), because of their status as minors, while their parents or legal guardians provided consent for their participation. Married or parenting youth are considered emancipated youth according to Ugandan law, so therefore provided consent for themselves.

Informed consent and assent. For participants under the age of 18, informed assent was first obtained at the recruitment site by the ethnographers. Once informed assent was received, they accompanied the youth to their homes to meet their parents/legal guardians and receive their informed consent. After informed consent was received by the parents/legal guardians, an interview date and time was be scheduled. For life history participants above the age of 18, informed consent was obtained at the time of

⁴ The University of Maryland IRB waived IRB approval because I conducted the research under the authorization of the Georgetown University IRB.

recruitment. Interviews took place at time and places selected by participants and privacy was ensured.

Confidentiality. The names of participants do not appear on any of the interview notes or drawings. Audio recordings, drawings, photographs, and handwritten interview notes remained with the ethnographers at all times in a locked backpack while they were in the field. When they left the field, all data was kept in a locked, secure location, at collaborating partners' offices and only research team members had access to them. The audio recordings were translated and transcribed by the ethnographers. Handwritten notes were typed up immediately following each interview and destroyed. No names or any other identifiable information were included in the transcripts or notes.

Protections for participants. There was a risk that the participants would feel uncomfortable discussing certain topics or that memories of painful past events would be elicited. To minimize these risks, the ethnographers came from the region and had first-hand knowledge of the social, cultural, and political context in addition to expertise in working with youth and experience in social work and/or psychology/counseling. Furthermore, recognizing the delicate nature of studying adolescents as young as ten years of age and the potential discomfort that discussion of sensitive topics could cause them, interviewer training included – in addition to the study methodologies and themes – training about conducting research with human-subjects including youth, and how to deal with situations of stress. The following topics were included in their training:

- What is meant by confidentiality, privacy, and consent (using case studies and role plays);
- Voluntary nature of participating in the life-histories and interviews;

- Importance of always obtaining an informed consent/assent and making sure participants do not feel pressured to stay in the study, should they wish to withdraw;
- How to keep information confidential;
- How to respond to personnel outside the study who want to be present during the interviews (for example, a relative of the youth, or the spouse of a married youth);
- How to respond to suspicions of abuse that might emerge during the interviews;
- Strategies to end interviews with adolescents to ensure that participants are happy and relaxed when they leave.

In the case of illiterate or low-literate youth and adults, an informed assent/consent script and a description of the study and their participation were read aloud to them. A literate witness not affiliated with the study ensured that all relevant information was read to the participants and a thumbprint was used to indicate consent on relevant forms.

Project partners in northern Uganda, Pathfinder International and Save the Children, have health facilities and counseling services for youth in the study area. A referral and support system was established with partner organizations in the event that questioning around sexual and other forms of violence evoked strong reactions by an adolescent, to the point that they needed psychosocial support. Interviewers were trained to provide basic counseling and refer youth to these services. The ethnographers accompanied youth as necessary to ensure continued access to services. There is no law

in Uganda mandating that educators and interviewers report suspected cases of physical or sexual abuse among minors. However, both partner organizations provided health and counseling services for youth, and interviewers referred participants to their services if they suspected abuse with the permission of the youth.

Chapter 4. Human Ecosystem, Cultural Systems, and Social Systems of Central Northern Uganda

This chapter will examine the system elements at play in northern Uganda, drawing primarily upon secondary data to describe the human ecosystem in the study site. This chapter will address components of the CSP, organized as follows: 1) physical environments and organic human needs; 2) cultural systems, social systems, and other human needs; 3) instrumental and expressive human needs and 4) significant historical events and processes.

4.1 Physical Environments and Organic Human Needs

This research took place in Acholi and Lango communities in northern Uganda, areas where GREAT partners planned to implement interventions. About one quarter of the Ugandan population (5 million people) live in northern Uganda (UBOS 2003). It is the least densely populated of Uganda's four regions with only 65 persons/km compared to 226 persons per square kilometer in the Eastern region (UBOS 2003). Acholiland (also known as the Acholi sub-region) encompasses about 11,000 square miles near the Uganda-Sudan border.⁵ The Lango sub-region borders it directly to the south (Figure 11).

The Lango and Acholi (representing six and five percent respectively of the Ugandan population) represent the southernmost extension of Nilotic people in East Africa. Both belong to the Luo sub-group of the Nilotic ethno-linguistic category

⁵ While Acholi also live north of the South Sudanese border, the Sudanese Acholi are generally excluded from the political meaning of the term Acholiland

(Atkinson 1994).⁶ Lango speak Leblano, a Western Nilotic (Luo) language like their northern Acholi neighbors, and share many cultural characteristics and historical processes. For example, both groups are patrilineal, governed under Rwodi clan chief systems and have suffered greatly from the protracted civil unrest due to the LRA and Karamajong cattle raiders.

Figure 11. Map of Uganda



The history of the emergence of distinct Lango and Acholi ethnic identities is debated. According to Atkinson (1994), the Acholi descended from cattle-keeping Luo speakers who migrated from their homeland along the Nile River in Sudan in the sixteenth century and settled in different parts of East Africa. Starting in the late seventeenth century, a new sociopolitical order developed among the Luo of northern Uganda, mainly characterized by the formation of chiefdoms headed by Rwodi. During the second half of the nineteenth century, contact with traders from the Sudan and the

⁶ The Luo are found in northern and eastern Uganda, southern South Sudan, western Kenya, eastern Congo, western Ethiopia and northern Tanzania

upper Nile and with neighboring groups such as the Jie and the Lango further reinforced development of a unique Acholi identity (Atkinson 1994). With regards to the Lango, anthropologists assert that they are part of a group that migrated from Ethiopia around 1600 A.D. and split into two groups, with one group moving to present day Kenya and the other group, called Ateker, migrating westwards and entering Uganda from the north-east (Hutchinson 1902). Ateker further split into four groups to form the Karamojong, Iteso, Kumam and Lango. The Lango migrated further to the west, and there they encountered the Acholi, who they pushed northwards from the northern part of Lake Kyoga. Through prolonged interaction with the Acholi, Lango lost Ateker language and took up Luo spoken by their Acholi neighbors.

Northern Uganda is a vast and sparsely populated area with considerable agriculture and livestock development potential. Situated on a plateau 3,000 to 4,000 feet above sea level, the region consists of lightly wooded savannah with scattered trees, bushes and thick, rough grass that can reach six feet in height. In fact, when families returned to their villages from the camps, their homesteads were entirely covered by tall grass. The climate is harsh marked by a long dry season and frequently late or unreliable rains. The grasslands are broken up by streams and rivers and rock or mountain outcrops. Most families access water through hand-dug wells or through boreholes (water wells) drilled through bedrock.⁷

⁷ Hand dug wells generally have a maximum depth of 40' and are finished off by lining with concrete culverts and covering with a pad and hand pump. When the water table is too deep to reach by hand, digging a borehole is required to access clean water. Bore holes are drilled deep into the ground using motorized equipment, in the location that hydrogeological surveying indicates is likely to contain underground water. Pipes are then installed into the hole to protect the water, a concrete pad is installed over the hole, and a hand pump is installed to allow clean water to be brought to the surface. Boreholes are important social sites, as several trips a day are required to provide the household with water, a task usually performed by younger family members and women.

Throughout the history of the discipline, anthropologists have recognized the importance of the physical environment to meeting what Whitehead refers to in the CSP as the organic needs of populations, in particular food, water, and effective economic activity. The Acholi are traditionally agriculturalists practicing subsistence farming alongside animal husbandry. Prior to the conflict, 90% lived in rural areas (Patel et al. 2012). Cotton, tobacco, coffee and maize were among the major cash crops and there was a well-linked network of roads and rails to transport products to market. The most important crops grown in the region today are also among the oldest. These include millet, sesame (called *sim sim* in much of East Africa) and sorghum. Other crops include pulses and leafy green vegetables. Agricultural production was complemented by wide scale ownership of shorthorn cattle for ploughing and to serve as a source of wealth. Men also hunted and fished in the rivers to supplement their daily diet. Poverty and famine were rare because of the favorable environment for agricultural production and a tradition of cattle and livestock ownership (Girling 1960). Ironworking, pottery and basketry making were widespread arts, and are still carried out by both men and women.

4.2 Cultural Systems, Social Systems, and Other Human Needs.

The CSP divides Human Needs into three major categories: Organic, Instrumental and Expressive. Organic or biological needs are those that human groups and individual members must meet in order to achieve physical and socio-psychological functioning. Two of those, food and water, I included in the discussion of the physical environment above. Other organic needs listed in the CSP are clean air, energy sources, sex and reproductive needs for group or population continuation, disease prevention and treatment, housing for protection from hazardous climate conditions, waste elimination,

physical space, and security to protect against external and internal threats to the survival of the group and its members.

Most relevant to my research is the human need for sex and reproduction, and the management of these needs through cultural practices and rules related to gender role enculturation, marriage, residence, kinship and family. These are at the heart of this dissertation, particularly gender role enculturation, and as such will be discussed in various sections later in this chapter and others. The reference to the management of needs through social institutions related to marriage and kinship illustrates the intersectionality between human needs and a people's cultural system, most notably their social systems. In fact, it is a people's social system that manages the remainder of these organic needs, as well as those listed in the CSP as Instrumental or Social Needs, which Whitehead defines as needs that arise as a consequence of social living. These include: 1) Economic Needs (rules and methods for acquiring, distributing, and consuming goods and services); 2) Social Needs (educating new members to become well-functioning and contributing members of the group); 3) Governance Needs (with its own subcategories of political needs related to leadership selection and decision-making for the group, and legal needs that have to do with resolving internal conflicts); and 4) Communal Needs (periodic gatherings to conduct activities that define the group and what members have in common (e.g., celebrations and other festive occasions, group practices of rituals, etc.).

It is a people's social systems, as well as other components of their cultural system (Ideational System, Behaviors [both normative and idiosyncratic], Expressive Culture [language, music, song, dance, stories, proverbs, and other narratives, talk and debate, gestures and other non-verbal actions, and other significant symbolisms], and Material

Culture [objects, technologies, etc.]) that intersect with the CSP's other category of human needs, which Whitehead refers to as Expressive Needs.

The CSP suggests four categories of expressive or cultural needs; Cosmological, Spiritual,⁸ Affective, and Communicative. Whitehead defines cosmological needs as:

...those that humans have for a meaningful and orderly view of the phenomena in their worlds, including their physical and metaphysical worlds, and where they are situated within these worlds, both as individuals and as a group. For example, for some cultural groups stories of the origin respond to this human need, while for others religion responds to this need. While for some cattle herding nomadic groups, many aspects of their cosmological needs may be met through beliefs regarding their relationship to cattle. Religion often relates to a relationship between the individual or self, and some supreme being, e.g., God or Allah, while for others, they may include other beings (e.g., angels, spirits, the devil, demons, witches, etc.), but the idea of a supreme being may be absent.

Included in the category of Affective Needs, the CSP includes *social status* and *acceptance*, being loved or liked, self and group identity. These affective needs are quite relevant to this dissertation's topic of adolescence and gender identity, and the broader cultural system category of ideational system and meaning. The issues of social status and group membership have been demonstrated cross-culturally to be very relevant to boys and men (Kimmel 2008; Connell 2005). And finally, there is an abundance of programs targeting women that focus on self-esteem, which Whitehead refers to as having a strong sense of the "gender self" (Whitehead 1997; Aronson et al. 2003).

And finally, communicative needs, according to the CSP, are the needs of humans to explain their realities, both to themselves and to others, i.e. to be able to internalize and

⁸ In categorizing expressive needs, Whitehead does not view religion as a human need but as a vehicle for meeting cosmological needs. He does view spirituality as a human need, in which religion is only one vehicle for meeting spiritual needs. However, it is not described in any detail here because it has no relevancy to the dissertation topic.

communicate meaning. The intersectionality between communicative needs and the cultural system should be readily apparent.

With this background from the CSP regarding human needs, I will now discuss the relationship of these needs to Acholi and Lango cultural systems, beginning with social systems. Categories of social systems listed in the CSP are the Domestic Unit, Inter-residential Networks and Associations, Wider Community and Societal Structures and Prescriptions, Multi-national Linkages and Influences. Whitehead employs the domestic unit as the smallest significant unit of organization, rather than family, because the concept of family is often confused with household – or those residing in a common domicile (personal communication, 2014). In African settings the common domicile is often a compound with a cluster of households in which different types of family systems reside. Thus the CSP includes residences, whether single households or clusters of kinspersons living in close proximity (compounds or hamlets) as a category of domestic unit. On the other hand, family is a unit of the kinship system. This conceptualization has relevance for understanding family and kinship among the Acholi and the Lango, and in turn the enculturation of their children. Both groups are patrilineal, passing ethnic and clan identities through the father (Girling 1960). Clan membership is defined in terms of descent from a common (male) ancestor. Important family functions are carried out by culturally significant male relatives who reside in multiple households. When parents are unable to care for family, responsibility falls to extended family members due to communal nature of Acholi and Lango society.

Using the CSP as a guide, the domestic unit (single household or multi-household compound) is viewed as the smallest social systemic unit; however, Whitehead also

considers a smaller unit, the social dyad (relationships between two people). Thus, even within the domestic unit, there is the husband-wife dyad, the father-child or mother-child dyad, sibling dyads, and in the case of polygyny, co-wife dyads. Moreover, significant dyads frequently exist beyond the domestic unit as in the case of courting partners, employee-supervisor, teacher-student, and so on. Understanding dyadic relationships is important to research such as my own, because of its focus on intimate partner violence, as well SRH issues such as FP, HIV, and other STIs. Understanding the relationships between dyads such as parent-child or teacher-student is also relevant to my task of deconstructing the process of gender enculturation in Acholi and Lango communities.

In his 1960 book, *Girling* described the domestic unit and inter-residential networks of the Acholi as households, hamlets, and villages and explained the relationship between the couple and their broader domestic unit. My research suggests that this social system, with some changes, is still intact today, with some modifications. Although hamlets were once popular to accommodate the extended family structure, they are becoming smaller and less widespread because of the difficulty of supporting extended families. Given the difficult and changing economic system in northern Uganda, many individuals must now prioritize the needs of their immediate family over their extended kin network.

The household is comprised of a circular hut with a high peak, furnished with a mud sleeping-platform, jars of grain, and a sunken fireplace. The women “smear” the walls with mud and cow dung, decorating them with geometrical designs in red, white or grey. According to Acholi custom, a man was not allowed to build a hut for his wife until she was either pregnant or had already given birth. Today, before a man brings a wife

home, he needs to have a hut of his own (*ot otog*). In fact, the word for sex, *geero*, also translates to “build a hut”. This phrase was traditionally used to mean “found a home” with respect to a young girl or woman. Today the more commonly used expression is “*Nana onyommo i lango*” which means “Nana is married in Lango”. The former is believed to have been used because sex according to the Acholi was not for pleasure but for procreation (establishing a home).

The new wife will cook from her mother-in-law’s hut until she bears a child, at which time her husband will construct a cooking hut for her. The reasoning behind this is that there should always be leftover food for her child to eat when hungry. As a man expands his family, he also expands his hut. As his children reach adolescence, the boys will need to sleep in separate huts from the girls. The man and/or the boys will then construct smaller sleeping huts to meet this need. In general, although a man is responsible for providing a physical dwelling for his family, the existence of that household is contingent upon childbirth. That is still largely true today, although there are exceptions, for example, when a childless wife who has lived with her husband for at least a year moves into her own hut. More often than not, however, wives without children are ridiculed, not allowed to talk in meetings or to offer guidance to their younger childbearing co-wives. Such a woman may also be forced out of the husband’s home or ‘replaced’ by a younger wife. Whether or not she stays in the family depends on her husband’s love and his ability to stand up to family pressure.

Each wife maintains her own fields to provide for her husband and children. If there are multiple wives, they may work together to take care of the household’s needs. Whether or not the wives work together depends on how the husband manages his

households. It is more common for a man to support his wives, one at a time, to plough and maintain their different fields. It takes a man who yields strong authority to organize his multiple wives to take turns to plough and maintain each other's gardens.

The next levels of the residential unit are the hamlet and the village. A hamlet is the extended family dwelling that each household belongs to. Traditionally there is a communal fire at the center of each hamlet. The eldest son of the eldest son typically produces the most children and controls the hamlet. The youngest son of the youngest son usually leads the hamlet rituals. Villages are agnatic (patrilineal), as are hamlets and households. Tradition prohibits marriage within a village lineage. Historically, all village members hunt and tend the fields together. This is still true today, although hunting has become less common due to restrictions from the Ugandan Wildlife Authority.

Traditionally, Acholi and Lango youth held societal roles of strict obedience to their elders, especially clan leaders. Elders were responsible for disciplining youth and transferred social knowledge through formal (*wang-oo/wang-ii*) and informal (traditional dancing, private counsel) mechanisms (Girling 1960, Hutchinson et al. 1902). Today, young people are still expected to demonstrate proper respect for elders, and in turn, elders are responsible for imparting cultural values to guide their way. Age-sets and initiation schools for boys were common. If a village did not have either, elders gave the boys a new "flirtation name" *nying mwoc* from the elders.

According to Girling (1960), labor was strictly divided by gender during the pre-colonial era, and in large part that continues today. Warfare, hunting, and herding are the domain of men. Men also conduct time-limited, labor-intensive agricultural tasks such as clearing, planting, and harvesting (often as part of lineage-based cooperative labor

teams). Women work in the fields, and are responsible for most child rearing, cooking and food preparation. Women grow and process a variety of food crops, including millet, *sim sim*, groundnuts, peas, sorghum, and vegetables. Houses and granaries are built by both men and women, with each performing specific functions. Boys and girls are socialized into distinct gender roles, and do household and other chores accordingly.

Historically, Acholi and Lango women were primarily defined in relation to their reproductive role (Girling 1960, Hutchinson et al. 1902). The socialization of girls focused on preparing them for the role of wife and mother. One of the most important lessons passed on to young girls was how to respect and care for a man. Elaborate ceremonies prepared young girls and women for these roles, including marriage and birth ceremonies that formally recognized a woman's status within the family home she married into, and validated her worth to the family and to the clan as a whole. The gendered division of labor in the home followed. Women were expected to care for children, tend the field, cook, and clean. In contrast men were expected to dig, harvest, and hunt, and to construct and maintain the compound. Ordinarily after marriage a wife moves into her husband's village. She is surrounded by her husband's family – his mother, father, unmarried siblings, brothers, and their wives (Ominde 1952). According to Girling (1960), women come to their husband's village as outsiders and must strive to gain privilege, status and respect through giving gifts (bride-price) and raising children. This is generally still true today and is reflected in the feelings of isolation and disempowerment some of the young wives in the study expressed. In fact, all of the newly married or parenting study participants (men as well as women) felt pressure to produce children quickly to please their family and clan.

During the enculturation of girls, kinship systems as traditionally practiced by the Acholi provided security before marriage. Structured mentoring roles played by female relatives, particularly patrilineal female relatives, (i.e., father's sister, father's mother), combined with belief systems that prevented premenstrual sex and emphasized the cultural concepts of personal and community consent. These systems also represented a child protection structure that placed a high value on the Acholi girls' personal and familial dignity and served to protect her sexuality (Patel et al. 2012). Grandmothers and the huts in which they resided were pivotal in the transmission of SRH knowledge and mentoring of young girls. Girls were raised by their mothers and fathers, but their grandmother (*adaa*⁹) played a significant role in their upbringing offering mentoring and guidance via story telling (expressive culture) in the privacy of her own hut. The grandmothers generally taught the girls about the importance of not moving in with men before they menstruated, marriage, the clan system, and incest taboos (Patel et al. 2012). Traditionally, it is the paternal grandmother who plays this role, however the maternal grandmothers may also instruct their grandchildren, especially when children visit their maternal relatives. Moreover, children whose mothers were not married to their fathers often stayed with their maternal kin. Under such circumstances girl children received the same upbringing from the grandmother of their mothers.

Similar to other Ugandan cultures, among the Acholi, intergenerational taboos exist regarding discussions related to sex. Mothers did not speak to their daughters about sex, and this role became associated with the *wayo* (father's sister). The *wayo* was

⁹ The term *adaa* applies to both maternal and paternal grandmother. In order to distinguish between the two it is necessary to provide an explanation e.g. "*ada ki tung bot mamana*" or "*adda ki tung bot babana*" literally translated to mean "my grandmother from my mother's side" or "my grandmother from my father's side", respectively.

responsible for socialization of young girls into (proper) womanhood and assumed a sister-like role in the girls' life (Spittal et al. 2008). She taught her nieces about various aspects of maturing in Acholi culture, relayed sexual health information, and was expected to be a trusted secret keeper. Traditionally the age of sexual debut for Acholi girls was between 16 and 18 and could only occur after the female child had had a number of regular menstrual cycles (Patel et al. 2012). Premenstrual sex was forbidden and was the cause of shame both families involved. In fact, if a child was discovered having sex prior to menstruation the incident became a kin and community issue and was treated in the same manner as a sexual assault that took place in the bush. Rituals would have to be involved that included compensation from the man's family.

Within a cultural group, social systems provide positive or negative feedback to behavioral patterns depending on whether they follow or violate group norms. At the end of the preceding paragraph, I cited several behaviors viewed as socially negative and controlled by cultural taboos with the intent of preventing such behaviors. In the study of populations, either as social scientists or health professionals, behaviors are generally the first component of the cultural system that we focus on. Behavioral systems are encompassed in a sub-category of the cultural system conceptualized by the CSP. Behaviors sanctioned by the cultural group are frequently institutionalized and become culturally persistent customs. Among the traditional Acholi behaviors described by Patel et al. (2012) are courtship customs. Once an Acholi girl begun to menstruate she could begin receiving suitors. Men would arrive at the family compound where aunties, mothers and grandmothers would determine a relationship's potential by eliminating the possibility that the couple could in some way be related. After it was determined that a

union was possible, courting could commence and eventually the suitor obtained permission to propose. Prior to bridewealth negotiations a girl had to provide her consent to the relationship and to sexual relations. In an article on forced sex among married or steady partners in Uganda, Kathleen Cash (2011: 26) observes, “The internal fragility of a marital bond is subjected to stringent restraints exemplified in familial and social rituals, structures, and practices because this bond assures the continuation of family, tribe, ethnic group, and culture.”

The practice of paying marriage dues to the girl’s family, often called bridewealth, is an enduring, although evolving, cultural practice deeply rooted in Acholi and Lango history. The marriage dues system provides societal rules and expectations about sex and reproduction and regulates responsibilities for affective and economic support for women and children, including property rights and inheritance. Paying bridewealth is required to legalize traditional marriage and confirms relations of affinity between families. In customary Ugandan marriages, bridewealth may include gifts of cows, saucepans, alcohol, and money to the wife’s family. The gift of money, in particular, often involves lengthy negotiations. Because the process of transferring wealth can be protracted, one can be more or less married and wives are only gradually included in their husbands’ lineage or clan (Finnstrom 2008).

According to Ugandans interviewed by Cash (2011), the purpose of these gifts is to strengthen the relationship between families, show an appreciation for the daughter to her parents and to ensure harmony, and as a sign of respect and appreciation between a man and a woman. The central role of bridewealth in governing marital and family relationships can be traced back to pre-colonial times. In her work on lineage in Uganda,

Rhiannon Stephens (2009: 11) explains that bridewealth is important because it establishes a system in which many people beyond the biological parents hold interests in the children.

Those various interests were physically represented in the form of bridewealth given by the lineage of the man to the lineage of the woman. The economic ties created by bridewealth were part of what activated kin interests in a lineage's offspring. Through the distribution of the bridewealth among the patrilineage of the bride and their commitment to return it (or its equivalent) should the marriage fail, the two patrilineages – that of the bride and groom – became enmeshed in economic as well as social relationships.

Of course, pregnancy often occurs outside of a relationship that has been sanctioned by the payment of bridewealth. This represents a violation of social norms that invites severe social sanctions. In principle, children whose mothers were not properly married and for whom no *luk* has been paid belong to her patrilineage and are the responsibility of her father, father's brothers, and brothers. It has long been the case that daughters and sisters who returned to the homes of their fathers and brothers were accommodated and allocated land to cultivate. The term for 'aunties who come back home' (*wayo ma odwogo gang*) has negative connotations, implying as it does the failure of marital relations. Nevertheless many homesteads include households of adult sisters and daughters (Whyte et al. 2012). This situation will be addressed further in Chapter 7, which discusses the life trajectories of study participants.

The bridewealth custom illustrates the complex intersections between the systems described in the CSP – Ideas (values and beliefs related to male and female roles), Social Systems (the couple or dyad, family, and clan), Policies and Laws, and Individual Organic Needs for sex and reproduction. The traditions, songs, stories and dances related

to paying and receiving bridewealth illustrate how Expressive Culture plays a role in the continuation of cultural practices and values. Historical and Economic Processes are also important as they determine whether young men and their families are able to pay the bridewealth and the amount the family considers sufficient. The payment of bridewealth also determines the rights and obligations of women, men, children, and their extended family related to economic support, property, and inheritance.

In a study of families who remained in the camps after they were closed by UNHCR, Whyte et al (2012) found that failure to pay bride-price was a significant cause of disenfranchisement of women and children. Their research describes current bridewealth practices, which include two kinds of payment. One was *adkumu*, which might be translated as bridewealth, and could include one or more cows. The other was *luk*, a fine paid to a woman's father or brothers, either for eloping with her, that is cohabitating without making a proper arrangement, or for the right to affiliate children (*luk pa latino*) born before any bridewealth was paid. Informants set this fine at two goats each for the first two children. They conclude that making these payments is a way of formalizing the relationships and declaring responsibility. "In the absence of any transfer, one is certainly less married and probably not married at all," remarks Whyte (2012: 9). This discussion is consistent with the traditional customs recorded by Girling (1960) who explained that it was important to determine a child's biological father so that he and his family could claim the child at any time by paying *luk* and compensation to those who had cared for the child. "Children of the bachelor's hut," born out of wedlock, were often brought up by their mother's family and sometimes taken with her when she married

another man. Nevertheless, they are always regarded as belonging to the patrilineage of their genitor (Girling 1960: 35).

During the conflict, and even still today, many families cannot afford to pay bridewealth. On a northern Uganda blog site (2013), Ronnie Layoo quotes chiefs of the cultural institution Ker Kwaro who believe that bridewealth has gotten too high, as much as 150 million shillings (about \$56,500 dollars). The Ker Kwaro recommend that the amount be affordable and “should not exceed the amount set a long time ago by chief Olia of Atiak, who came up with a minimum bride-price of two cows or its equivalent so both rich and poor can afford it.” Layoo further reports that Chief Oola Peter of Alokulum says that the price should not exceed 10 million (about \$3,800). During the years of violence and encampment, many families lost their animals, first to Karamojong raiders, then to the government and LRA forces. It was also difficult to keep livestock in the camps. Although it has long been possible to pay bridewealth in cash, during the insurgency there was little opportunity to earn money. By and large, that is still true today.

Many couples, during their time in the camps, as well as after resettlement, have established relationships that have not been sealed by any transaction, often with mutual recognition that the obligation must be put off. Some men have made agreements with their wife’s parents to pay later or in installments. However, even if the intention to give marriage dues is assumed, and the obligation merely delayed, the rights of the women and children remain unclear. When a man dies or leaves without establishing the legal status of his cohabiting wife and her children, their social position is ambiguous. This has

many implications for young people, especially in terms of the support they can expect from their extended family.

According to customs in northern Uganda, a daughter or wife cannot inherit property; therefore, a family needs a son. Sons inherit property and carry on the lineage while daughters move out. If a woman divorces, she must leave her children, once they are weaned, with her husband's family. Sex is related to land inheritance, primogeniture, and generational continuity. If a wife fails to produce children, there are few culturally approved options other than divorce, abandonment, or the acquisition of a second or co-wife. While marriages did happen during the time of displacement, the ceremony and required wealth transfers were rarely done properly causing complications for resettlement (Mergelsberg 2012).

4.3 Beyond the Domestic Unit: Meeting Instrumental and Expressive Human Needs

As stated earlier, family or kinship systems (e.g., the Acholi and Lango patrilineage system) usually extend beyond the domestic unit, and often belong beyond a localized geographic community. In fact there are different types of "communities" within localized geographic communities and beyond. For example, within a particular community there may be social groups based on membership in religious institutions such as churches, mosques, or other places of worship. Places of religious practice respond to a range of needs, as laid out in the CSP, including leadership selection and development (political needs), places of community gathering (communal needs), as well as cosmological (world view) and spiritual needs. They are also places for enjoying expressive cultural experiences. Beyond those local, regional and national systems that exist primarily to maintain social order (legal needs), religious institutions also contribute

to meeting these needs through viewing various social wrongs in moral or cosmological terms.

In northern Uganda, most Lango and Acholi are Protestant or Catholic, with a smaller percentage practicing Islam. Nevertheless, traditional beliefs in guardian and ancestor spirits remain strong, though they may be described in Christian or Islamic terms. Religious and cultural leaders, such as Elders, Mego and Rwodi play a central role in reproducing (and adapting) cultural patterns and maintaining social order, thus promoting clan unity.

The document “*Roco Wat I Acholi Restoring Relationships in Acholi-Land*” describes Acholi spiritual beliefs from the point of view of cultural leaders and members of the Ker Kwaro Acholi (Liu Institute for Global Issues 2005).¹⁰ Acholi beliefs include a supreme being accessed through an intermediary deity, known as the *Jok* (ruling deity or spirit) as well as active presence of ancestral and foreign spirits. There are many differing *Jogi* (plural of *Jok*) and sacrifices are made to ask for favors or blessings, to prevent disasters, or to give thanks. In addition to *Jok*, there are ancestral spirits who provide guidance to their lineages on how to maintain the communal and unified whole.

According to Adam Branch (2008), Acholi culture produced a hierarchical social order maintained through social compliance to a central value system. These values were connected to a spirit world, which in turn was connected with everyday behavior. The elders interviewed in the Roco Wat document describe a communal society that highly values clan unity and expects each member to fulfill different but complementary

¹⁰ This document was prepared as part of efforts to revive Acholi cultural traditions and promote traditional restorative justice. It was a collaborative effort between the Liu Institute for Global Issues and the Ker Kwaro Acholi. It has been criticized as an effort to restore traditional (patriarchal) power structures that were transformed during the period of conflict.

productive, reproductive, and cultural roles (Liu Institute for Global Issues 2005). The religious and spiritual worlds – through spiritual representatives and selected human representatives – actively enforced codes of behavior. Like Jogi, the spirits of ancestors protected and guided a moral and social order, sending misfortune or illness whenever that order was disturbed (Liu Institute for Global Issues 2005: 10).

The belief in *cen* spirits illustrates the relationship between idea systems and governance. *Cen* is sent when a wrong against the dead has been committed (Girling 1960; Liu Institute for Global Issues 2005). Angry spirits may enter into the body or mind of a wrongdoer. *Cen* can also send nightmares or sickness. *Cen* may gather in places where a person's death occurred, and enter one who moves through this place. That is why some people today are reluctant to move through places where accidents occurred or to visit massacre sites. Because *Cen* can manifest over a long period, even in the next generation, Elders are concerned about future generations of former rebels and celebrate rituals to resolve and “chase *cen*.” These concerns will be discussed in more detail below in the discussion below on the justice system.

Cultural leaders and elders reproduce shared values and meanings, such as traditional spiritual beliefs, through expressive culture such as dance, song and storytelling. As described in the CSP, expressive culture responds to a range of needs such as the desire for affective bonds and a sense of community and meaning. The traditional Acholi/Lango communal practice of *wang-oo/wang-ii* (telling stories around the fire pit) invites discussion of social life and norms and actively shapes morality and social relationships (Baines and Steward 2011). In their article on storytelling and transitional justice, Baines and Steward explain that the oral tradition is an expression of

critical thought, cosmology, and morality that holds together communities. Morals are taught through the *ododo* (folk tales) and lessons are impressed upon younger and older listeners alike. Baines and Steward cite Acholi scholar Opio Oloya who explains that all *adodo* have moral endings that instructed listeners how to relate to the people around them as *dano adana* (human persons), a core identity endowed on each individual, and which determined how the individual viewed self, and how the individual was treated by others within the community. According to Baines and Steward (2011: 5), “*Ododo* may have moral lessons intended to relegate women or girls to subordinate positions, but they also offer opportunities for women and girls to contest injustices in a safe space.”

Thus far I have discussed the interactions between components of the cultural system with organic and expressive needs. I will now turn to a discussion of instrumental needs, in particular systems of governance and justice. This is a complex area given changes in social and idea systems in northern Uganda, such as the waning power of traditional structures as a result of displacement and conflict and the need for justice and reconciliation efforts to help communities move beyond the violence of the conflict. This area is quite relevant to my topic of GBV because the justice system enforces social norms governing the acceptability of violence and has the authority to take action (or not) in cases of violence depending on their interpretation of the social meaning of the incident. I have already introduced the cadre of elders and clan leaders who play important roles in communal decision-making and conflict resolution. The section below describes in more detail how they are organized to enforce community and societal structures and prescriptions.

As mentioned during the discussion of kinship, the clan consists of members beyond the local geographic community, and is made up of several patrilineages that trace their kinship to a common ancestor. The nature of these relationships are rather loose in some African societies, but in northern Uganda they are highly structured, creating tight-knit communities whose members interact at clan functions, meetings and birth, marriage, and death ceremonies (Davenport 2011). Localized lineages have been the fundamental social unit in Acholi and Lango since pre-colonial times, with chiefdoms providing a layer of organization above the lineages from the late seventeenth to early twentieth centuries. Under colonial rule, formal legal codes and local courts were introduced which undermined the authority of the elders and Rwodi; nevertheless, they continue to play an active role in the resolution of family disputes and mediate community conflicts. In addition, the practice of paying compensation remains and elders continue to play an important role mediating this process.

The long conflict has weakened this system even further, in particular the Rwodi and the Councils of Elders. During displacement they were forced to leave their homesteads and live in IDP camps where clans intermixed and they were isolated from their people. In addition, elders were separated from each other and unable to meet regularly for security reasons. Today, most Rwodi no longer live in the center of their subject's domains, but in town centers. As a result many people may not know their Rwot, or what his role should be. Some elders today feel that the spirit of communalism that characterized Acholi culture in the past has been replaced with that of individualism (Liu Institute for Global Affairs 2005). According to Branch (2008), the lineage-and clan-based structure of patriarchal, generally gerontocratic, male leadership has been thrown

into crisis by war and displacement. While male elders and chiefs have largely lost their power of social regulation and political leadership, women and youth have seen their economic, social, and political authority and status rise during war and displacement, benefitting from new economic and educational opportunities.

Nevertheless, clans play a role in responding to political needs, as clan elders, religious leaders (*Rwot Kweri*) and local councilors (elected leaders at different levels of local government in the Ugandan political system) are the most important leaders at the village, sub-parish and parish level (Mergelsberg 2012). Traditionally, elders earned the respect of their communities because they were seen as fathers and relied upon for their advice and wisdom. The main function of the elders and clan leaders persists since pre-colonial time – to guide communities, solve disputes, and create peace and unity among people – and they are still afforded great respect.

The duties of elders in conflict resolution have been to some extent replaced by Local Councilors (elected officials) and the police. However, clan leaders still lead the traditional justice system. In Acholi culture, justice is done for *ber bedo*, to restore harmonious life. Traditional Acholi justice is described as restorative rather than punitive, seeking to repair social harmony of a community rather than establish individual innocence or guilt (Whyte et al. 2012, Liu Institute for Global Affairs 2005). Because one person's crime extends to their entire family, their actions may cause a division in the community that can only be resolved by determining the truth, paying compensation, and enacting a series of rituals. According to "Roco Wat I Acholi" (Liu Institute for Global Affairs 2005), part of the logic of Acholi cosmology is to make individuals feel guilty

and shamed if they break a social norm and to encourage them to take appropriate steps towards restoration.

This cultural norm can be seen in my study results in the way that the entire clan is involved in situations in which one of their members breaks a social contract. For example, a girl who becomes pregnant while still living at home brings shame to her entire clan, not only herself. A complex system of payments mediated by clan elders enforces cultural rules. For example, clan elders may require a husband and his family to provide recompense (cash, goats, or cattle) to the family of his wife if he has beaten her without what they consider adequate justification. Similarly, the bridewealth system regulates appropriate resource transfers between families, for example the boy and his clan must pay a fine to a girl's family in order for his lineage to gain legal rights to children born before paying bridewealth.

The justice system has been well documented by those working to promote post-conflict peace and reconciliation (Branch 2008; Huyse and Salter 2008; Liu Institute for Global Affairs 2005). Establishing the truth is regarded as a requisite step for reconciliation. In general a mediator (usually an elder at the family and sub-clan level), a representative of the *Rwot-Moo* at the clan level, or the *Rwot-Moo* himself (at the inter-clan level) would establish the facts through a process of shuttle diplomacy or public meetings. The *won-ot* (head of household, always a man) would be the first to attempt to resolve any domestic disputes including quarrels between family members. The amount of compensation and corresponding ritual required to appease spirits and ancestors would be determined based on the facts. Women are involved only in instances when a women's issue arose. Categories of crime and corresponding compensation exist in traditional by-

laws which include compensation on a range of family issues, including divorce, marriage, burial rites, and criminal laws including arson, theft or murder. The circumstances are always considered. Compensation is usually paid in the form of livestock or its monetary equivalent. A chief elder in charge of compensation receives it. The clan or family of the wrongdoer is expected to contribute to raising the compensation. According to the Roco Wat report, belief in and consent to this justice system and the social order it supports is unanimous, for all Acholi value the unity of the Acholi, or the clan, before they value themselves (Liu Institute for Global Affairs 2005). When a killer is known but refuses to admit his guilt, revenge by the spirit of the murdered is encouraged by elders. This will result in misfortune of the offending clan.

An example of the way that the traditional Acholi justice system values peace over justice and attends to both retribution and restoration is the approach used with LRA returnees. Most underwent *nyono tong gweno* (stepping on the egg ceremony) after returning to their home village. This ceremony welcomes home a member of the family who has been away for an extended period of time in order to resolve any problems or feelings of alienation resulting from their extended absence, and to ensure that the person feels once again a full member of the family (Huyse and Salter 2008). Communal stepping on the egg ceremonies were conducted by Rwot Onen David Acana II for large numbers of returnees living in camps and also for former LRA commanders upon their return home.

A critique of the traditional governance and justice systems described above, and concern about its renewal under the guise of cultural revitalization, is that male elders are presented as the privileged repositories and guardians of tradition, and the exclusive

mediators with the spiritual world. In the realm of domestic violence, for example, this could mean legitimizing partner violence as a way of enforcing male power and authority. The Roco Wat report (Liu Institute for Global Affairs 2005) notes that physical punishment of women and youth through beating is a widely present aspect of traditional culture and justice promoted by older men. Consider, for example, this quote from an Acholi elder, “All rituals are meant to inculcate good behavior. Anyone who acts contrary to established norms displeases our ancestors, and rituals should be performed to appease them” (Liu Institute for Global Affairs 2005: 32).

4.4 Significant Historical Events and Processes: Origins, Resolution and Consequences of Protracted Conflict

In the CSP, Whitehead defines culture as a process of historical reproduction, a phenomenon of what he refers to as significant historical events and processes that may influence either the persistence of various cultural components, or bring cultural change. He then defines significant historical events as being biophysical (e.g. floods, droughts, etc.) or sociocultural (e.g. coups, civil wars, new economic or marketing systems, etc.) that either institutionalize or sustain components of a cultural system or result in regenerated or synchronized cultural forms. In 1986, a major sociocultural event and process, war and displacement, led to great disruptions in the cultural and social systems of populations in northern Uganda. In the following section I will discuss events and processes including the war’s origins, attempts at resolution, and some of its consequences. As I have already described, the processes of war have impacted many of the cultural traditions discussed in the preceding section. Here I will discuss further how war disrupted traditional patterns meeting organic needs related to sexual ideations and practices, the focus of my research,

but also those related to traditional means of meeting other needs listed in the CSP, e.g. access to food and water, disease prevention and treatment, housing, and personal and family security. There also has been widespread regret in Acholiland over the shift in communal norms and celebrations due to the conflict and the inability to pass their traditions on to younger generations (Patel et al. 2012).

Origins of a protracted war. Northern Uganda is currently recovering from a 20-year war, which began in 1986 when a rebel group known as the LRA, led by Joseph Kony, took up arms to overthrow the Ugandan government. The LRA was unsuccessful in its attempts and the conflict remained largely confined to northern Ugandan districts. Acholi and Lango communities were deeply affected by this conflict, as they were subject to killing, looting, raping, and torture by the LRA.

In 2005, the International Criminal Court issued arrest warrants against Joseph Kony and four of his top commanders. A formal cessation of hostilities agreement was reached in mid-2006 and the LRA subsequently began peace negotiations with the government. In 2008, the peace negotiations collapsed when Kony failed to appear for the signing of the final peace accord. Despite the failure to reach a formal agreement, Northern Uganda has remained peaceful since the cease-fire and the remaining LRA forces were captured, killed, or forced out of the region during a military operation by the government of Uganda. Despite the absence of violence in northern Uganda, the LRA continues to abduct children and kill citizens in parts of South Sudan, eastern Congo, and the Central African Republic.

The original cause of the conflict was a combination of several factors, including religious, political, economic, and cultural factors, and lies in the deeply rooted ethnic

mistrust of the Acholi (who share same ethnicity with the Acholi of Southern Sudan) against the predominantly Bantu ethnic tribes in southern Uganda.

Structurally, the conflict is a result of the North-South divide and the policies of divide-and-rule applied by many colonial and post-colonial regimes. A numbers of scholars consider the LRA conflict partially rooted in the way that ruling powers managed the diverse nationalities and ethnic groups within Uganda, encouraging members of different groups to view each other as fundamentally “other,” and at times, as enemies (Apuuli 2011; Mergelsberg 2012; Mulumba 2011). Mulumba (2011) remarks that in this respect colonial anthropology contributed to the construction of social and ethnic stereotypes in Uganda. According to Philip Kasaija Apuuli (2011), colonial administrators portrayed the Acholi as a violent, war-like people. He suggests that this cultural branding continued even well after Uganda obtained its independence, citing the former Army Commander of the government forces, Major General James Kazini: “If anything, it is the local Acholi soldiers causing the problems. It’s the cultural background of these people here: they are violent. It is genetic” (Apuuli 2011).

During colonial administration by the British, and later by post-independence governments, the southerners were employed mostly in the civil service while the northerners, particularly the Acholi, were recruited into the armed forces. In addition, the British deliberately reserved the introduction of industry and cash crops in the south, for which the north became a reservoir of cheap (manual) labor, thereby dividing the country into ‘productive’ and ‘non-productive’ zones. Some authors suggest that this colonial economic policy helped bring about a polarization amongst Ugandans that remains in place even today (Mulumba 2011).

Other causes of the conflict are believed to stem from the role the Acholi played in Uganda's successive governments since independence in 1962. Acholi soldiers have been both victims and perpetrators of the violence under various leaders. In the 1970s during Idi Amin's reign, many Acholi soldiers were murdered. With the resumption of Obote II (1981-85), Acholi soldiers were implicated in the deaths of thousands of civilians during the civil war against Museveni's guerilla National Resistance Army, which drew support mainly from the southern and western parts of Uganda. The brief period (June 1985-January 1986) of Acholi control of government under army officer could also be viewed as a cause for fighting (Mulumba 2011). After the overthrow of the Tito Okello government, retreating Acholi soldiers fleeing Museveni's pursuit did not all cross to Sudan, retreating only as far as Gulu and Kitgum. Many never relinquished their weapons, and joined up in 1987 with other opponents of the Museveni administration and formed a rebel alliance, the LRA.

Encampment. Over the course of the conflict nearly two million people, accounting for 90% of the population in affected districts, were displaced into camps, forcing them to abandon their villages, fields, and former livelihoods (United Nations Security Council 2007). Many Acholi civilians were forced to flee their villages following attacks by the LRA. Many more were forcibly displaced into camps by the government to deny the rebels resources and to offer the population protection. At first those from the same village settled near each other maintaining clan cohesion. After some time, however, this replication of patrilineal and virilocal residence became impossible. Although some of the displaced population moved to urban centers and towns, the majority were settled into IDP camps where they remained vulnerable to rebel attacks,

living in cramped and unhygienic living conditions with limited food and livelihood options. Devoid of any means of livelihood in the camps, inhabitants were reduced to near total dependence on donated food and other humanitarian aid. Most of the participants in this study, children and adults, spent a good proportion of the last decade of their lives in these camps.

The literature documents a breakdown of cultural values with many living in a state of trauma and depression (Dolan 2002; Mulumba 2011; Okello and Hovil 2007). There were limited opportunities for income, especially for men. As a result, men were disempowered and restricted in their access to factors of production – i.e. land and cattle, the source of their wealth and power – one possible cause of excessive consumption of alcohol in the camp (Kitara et al. 2012). Women assumed a greater number of responsibilities in the camp and became the breadwinners, which in Ugandan society is normally a man's responsibility (Kizza et al. 2012).

Youth were particularly affected by the war; nearly 70% of those living in the camps were under 25 years of age (UNHCR 2007). By April 2006, the LRA had abducted an estimated 24,000 to 38,000 children; and 28,000 to 37,000 adults (Annan, Blattman, and Horton 2006). Abduction was widespread; in areas surveyed 26% of female youth and 47% of male youth were ever abducted. The period of abduction ranged from a few weeks to 12 years, averaging 11.4 months for females and 9.1 months for males. A total of 64% of females were abducted for more than two weeks, and 11% were kept more than a year. Almost a quarter of abductees were forced to kill. Among those abducted for more than two weeks, 18% of males and 12% of females were forced to beat, cut, or kill family members. Females were mainly recruited to become “wives” and

mothers. About a third of abducted females were forced to marry. Rebels divided females into prepubescent girls, young adolescents, and older adolescents and adults thought to have had sexual experience. Prepubescent girls were kept as servants to be forcibly married later; young adolescents were forcibly married sooner. Older adolescents and young adults, seen as potential carriers of sexual diseases, were seldom given as wives and more often released (Annan et al. 2011).

In the camps, extended families were forced to live together in huts contrary to their traditions, in which adolescents live separately in a bachelor's hut or with their paternal grandmother who helps them transition into adulthood. Even more disruptive was the absence or death of their parents and other adult relatives due to labor migration, abduction, or military service. In Acholi culture, child rearing and enculturation was the responsibility of the extended family and depended on traditional use of space and proximity to kin. In McCelroy et al.'s study of the experiences of Acholi mothers raising children in displacement camps (2010), women lamented the lack of aunties and uncles to provide guidance to their children and despaired because they were unable to foster their children's social and cultural competence in traditional ways. Traditional places and practices that promoted enculturation in daily life, such as working together in the fields, or sharing lessons, stories around the evening campfires (*wang-oo*) were lost in displacement. A widowed mother living in Palaga camp explained:

You would gather the children in the compound by the fireside. Then you would start to tell them that in the past we had our ancestors who would tell us this and that. But these days there is no fireside. When it begins to get dark the child has to bathe and just go to sleep. The teaching you should have given him about traditional culture and other teaching, you cannot do because the *wang oo* (fireside) is no longer there. (McCelroy et al. 2010: 135)

Parents also struggled to provide children the knowledge, values and skills they would need to support themselves and their family in the future. Children growing up in camps did not have the opportunity to learn traditional subsistence techniques, instead learning to line up for food and scavenge for necessities. For example, before the war an Acholi girl who was not in school would accompany her mother to the garden, weed and clean the garden, help harvest and store food, collect firewood, and carry water. This served as part of the enculturation process and offered protection, as a child would be under guidance and control of an adult. During the war, families were afraid of abduction so they left their daughters behind in the relative protection of the camps (Patel et al. 2012).

Despite the existence of schools in the camps, large numbers of children dropped out of school and others attended sporadically (Patel et al. 2012). Girls left school due to pregnancy or marriage or because they could not afford the uniform or other costs associated with schooling (i.e. books, pencils), despite the fact that primary school is free. Some children missed classes because they were afraid of being abducted on the way to and from school while others failed to attend to avoid the stigma associated with going to school with younger peers. Due to their older age, children felt out of place in school and many dropped out.

Youth in the camps were vulnerable to coerced and forced sex as traditional protective structures for youth broke down and they became victims of the conflict. Children were exposed to widespread violence including abduction and rape, and travelled long distances together each night to sleep without adult supervision for fear of

abduction (Annan, Blattman, and Horton 2006). This night-commuting phenomenon, in which thousands of children journeyed from their villages to Gulu town to sleep in churches, hospitals, and on verandas in order to avoid abduction and other violence, is well documented. Older study participants (those between the ages of 16 and 18) would have been between six and ten years of age at this time. At the peak of the conflict in 2004, over 40,000 children regularly engaged in this practice in an attempt to seek safety and escape rebel captivity. Girls and boys were also moving away from their family huts at dusk to sleep in other huts within camp perimeters. Some did this in order to respect their parents' need for sexual privacy, others for security. If families lived on the periphery of the camp, their children were at increased risk for abduction and parents would attempt to negotiate a safe hut in the center of camp. In an article on the sexual vulnerabilities of Acholi girls living in camps, Patel et al. (2012) reported that it was during internal night-commuting that girls were most vulnerable to pressure from men offering food and clothing in exchange for sex. In this study over half of the youth interviewed reported that their sexual debut occurred during internal night-commuting.

In sum, the literature, although scant, suggests loss of traditional Acholi mentoring and belief systems that had previously served to protect youth and a collapse of livelihoods coupled with lack of supervision and movements at night; inadequate access to relevant sexual health information and programming in the IDP camps, all contributed to heightened sexual vulnerability among youth (Patel et al. 2012; Mulumba 2011). Furthermore, with no land to cultivate or crops to harvest, opportunities were restricted for girls to make money to purchase items they desired (such as menstrual pads, soap, Vaseline, panties, dresses), leading to transactional or survival sex relationships and

early marriages, which inherently increased their vulnerability to early pregnancy and HIV.

The vulnerability of youth, especially girls, to forced and coerced sex, HIV and unwanted pregnancies did not end with cessation of armed conflict. This study explores the experiences of 10-18-year-olds recently returned from IDP camps as they mature and enter into sexual and parenting relationships, examining the complex, multiple, and interacting influences within the ecological system on their health and well-being.

Resettlement. In 2011, at the time this study began, northern Uganda was in the process of transitioning to a post-conflict state and the majority of its inhabitants had left the IDP camps and moved to transitional camps or returned to their ancestral homes (land belonging to their lineage). Despite the fact that LRA leader Joseph Kony had not signed the final peace agreement, improved security meant that many IDPs had access to their farmland and could begin rebuilding their homes. The situation has remained fragile, however, for some returnees. Levis Onegi (2012) reported that widespread land grabbing by politicians, civil servants, business leaders and investors competing for the spoils of war had a major impact on land insecurity. He writes that before the LRA insurgency, land conflicts were infrequent in northern Uganda; where they occurred, they tended to be minor disputes over a plot of land or disputing a boundary. The impact of the forced encampment policy resulted in large expanses of arable land remaining largely vacant and unoccupied – therefore vulnerable to occupation and land grabbing.

After many years of war combined with long-term isolation and neglect from the Ugandan government, today the northern region of Uganda – in particular the women/men and girls/boys of the Acholi and Lango sub-regions – faces considerable

challenges stemming from massive disruption of services, internal displacement, erosion of traditional social and family structures (56% of the population are youth, with 28% orphaned), and high incidence of GBV (Annan, Blattman, and Horton 2006). Consequent to the insurgency, the district of Gulu had the highest percentage of its population (58.1%) in the lowest quintile of wealth in Uganda, and only 0.9% of females and 3% of males had completed secondary education (Nattabi et al. 2011). A poverty rate of 63%, compared to 38% nationally, constrains resources and opportunities for young people; access to skill-building and psychological support remains limited (Spittal et al. 2008). Almost a third of girls aged 15-19 reported having received money in exchange for sex, while others curtailed their education and entered into risky early childbearing to guarantee their basic economic and physical security (Akumu et al. 2005).

Most of the study participants grew up in the camps, returning to their family villages only a year or two before the interviews for this study took place. Resettlement was not easy for most families. Mergelsberg writes, “Where a long time ago had stood huts, compounds, and fields was now bush – a place perceived to be alien and dangerous” (2012: 67). The frequent rebel attacks had destroyed the region’s agricultural base and education and health care systems, and rebuilding the homestead was hard work. Like many conflict-affected regions across Africa, northern Uganda – once a fertile region – had been left neglected, untended, and uncultivated (Patel et al. 2012). Many village schools had been burnt down and rebels had raided hundreds of health clinics for medicine (Mulumba 2011). Moving to the village was also a great change in lifestyle. People who had lived for years in close contact with others suddenly found themselves in an isolated and unfamiliar setting. Adapting to this way of life was especially difficult for

the younger generations who had grown up in the camp and knew little of rural life (Mergelsberg 2012).

Discussions of displacement frequently make the point that people forced to live in IDP camps have lost their “culture” (Apuuli 2011; Davenport 2011; Kizza et al. 2012; Mulumba 2011). However, Mergelsberg remarks that it is not easy to pin down exactly what has been lost and if people really want it back. He suggests that over time an idealized narrative of traditional life has become established, “...invoking imaginations of the high moral standards of life before the war and displacement” (2012: 78). The literature reflects a common discourse of reviving Acholi culture and its values espoused by local leaders and NGOs working in the region. According to Mergelsberg (2012), this has led to a paradoxical situation where aid agencies, on one hand, welcomed plans of restoring Acholi traditions, but on the other, opposed the cultural values embedded in these traditions.

4.5 Policy Initiatives of the Broader Social System: Reconstruction, Customary Land Tenure, GBV and Alcohol

One of the social systems categories in the CSP is *Policies and Laws of the Wider Community and Society*. In this section I will discuss Government of Uganda policy initiatives, which address some of the social and cultural consequences of the long war, particularly gender-related issues that are the focus of this dissertation. In an effort to expedite post-conflict reconstruction in northern Uganda, the government drafted the Peace, Recovery and Development Plan for northern Uganda (PRDP) in 2010. One of the multiple outcomes the PRDP sought to implement were policies that were, “...gender sensitive and take into account the need for women’s voices to be heard, to strengthen

their visibility, address their specific needs and priorities and promote and protect women's rights" (Republic of Uganda Office of the Prime Minister 2004: 25). The PRDP highlights the 1995 Constitution of the Republic of Uganda that requires the State to protect the rights of women, and the Uganda Gender Policy (Government of Uganda 2007), which notes that gender equity is an integral part of national development. PRDP created the Women's Task Force to evaluate PRDP through the lens of women's needs. This task force included women in the decision-making sphere, advocated for gender empowerment, and worked to ensure that human and financial resources reach women. Nevertheless, the only mention of violence against women in the PRDP is a brief reference to efforts to raise awareness among men of the relationship between masculinity and violence. A number of NGO interventions in northern Uganda have been directed at addressing this gap in post-conflict reconstruction, including initiatives implemented by Raising Voices, the International Rescue Committee (IRC), CARE, Young, Empowered and Healthy (YEAH), and GREAT.

Customary land tenure systems in Uganda represent another policy area of utmost importance to efforts to rebuild the economy and social fabric of northern Uganda. Traditionally, land rights were vested in localized patrilineal lineages, under the control and guidance of lineage heads and elders (Scalise 2012). An individual had personal claim to land that he and his wife (or wives) had under cultivation or that had been cultivated and was lying fallow, and such land passed from father to son. Given low population densities and minimal land pressure, almost anyone willing to work unused land was welcomed by lineage heads.

Throughout the Acholi and Lango sub-regions land has become a critical issue in part due to its commodification, fears of land grabbing by outsiders, vagueness of traditional land tenure, and loss of knowledge about customary boundaries during the years of encampment and widespread death of family heads and clan leaders. Often overlooked is the fact that the population of northern Uganda more than doubled between 1980 and 2002 (UBOS 2003) and continues to grow rapidly. Thus, the situation is different today than it was before the war. Then, land was generously offered to non-lineage members willing to work the land. According to Whyte et al. (2012), today non-belongers are being told they cannot return to their homes. He remarks that these expulsions are happening in the name of “*ngom kwaro*” or ancestral land. In a kind of ‘patrilineal fundamentalism,’ Acholi tradition is invoked to exclude people who were previously made welcome.

Customary land tenure practices are complex and varied; land governance is tethered to social relationships and reflects the multiple systems of the CSP such as power structures, social norms, symbolic or cultural meaning, and sometimes systemic inequities (Scalise 2012: 53). In northern Uganda, land is held under customary tenure, which is recognized by law, and is technically owned by all Acholi people, though different clans govern different areas of the region (Scalise 2012). Arable land is allocated by clan elders to a household head, always a male, normally at the time of marriage. The household head is responsible for managing and protecting the land, while other family members – the wife and children – must obtain the consent of the household head to use the land. When the household head dies, his sons inherit his rights to the land,

and may also request additional land from clan elders when they marry. Traditionally, transactions in land are not permitted without sanction of the clan.

A widow who completed customary marriage rites becomes the de facto head of household upon the death of her husband. She then has the responsibility of managing the household land and allocating it to male children when they become adults and marry. However, if she never completed the customary marriage rites, as was very common during the civil war, she could be forced to leave the land she used in her husband's household and take her children with her. Because her marriage was not sanctioned by custom (and bride-price was not paid), her children are not considered part of her deceased husband's clan, so she must return to her birth household.

When the camps were disbanded and families began to return to their land, customary rules for land tenure did not necessarily have the answers to the problems faced by the Acholi people: men had lost their fathers from whom they would be granted land; children didn't know where their clan land was, some women were "married" to men without following customary rules, and others were widowed and left with few options for survival. In such a context, the land rights of those with least power — widows, disabled, and elderly — were very insecure. According to Whyte and colleagues (2012: 12), "Socially mediated access to land has been weakened by the death of husbands and parents; conjugal partnerships and children's affiliation were not formally recognized during the years of violence and displacement, also undermining claims to the land."

The Ugandan government adopted a National Land Policy in February 2013 following more than ten years of debate. This policy aims to "ensure efficient, equitable

and optimal utilization and management of Uganda's land resources for poverty reduction, wealth creation, and overall socioeconomic development" (Uganda Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development 2013). The new National Land Policy also builds on the 1998 Land Act which put in place a legal framework that supports women's land rights; decentralizes land administration; and establishes land tribunals for the resolution of land-related disputes. In addition, the *National Policy for Internally Displaced Persons* addresses property rights issues affecting some two million people who were displaced from their homes during more than 20 years of armed conflict (Republic of Uganda Office of the Prime Minister 2004). These policies seek to address the problem of traditions that discriminate against women in matters of land access, use, and ownership. However, implementation is just beginning and its effect is still unknown.

The Ugandan government has taken steps to address another issue significant in the lives of young people in northern Uganda – GBV – as a signatory on the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the government professes commitment to passing laws and regulations to ensure protection for women facing violence. In the late 1990s, a Ugandan Human Rights Commission (UHRC) was established to ensure full implementation of CEDAW in Uganda, although this commission has not been fully functional. Similarly, a coalition of the UHRC, the Ministry of Gender, Labor and Social Development (MGLSD), and the Equal Opportunities Commission was created to advocate for the advancement of women. Due to limited funding however, this coalition has not been able to take significant action. Following the Beijing Platform for Action, the government of Uganda instituted the

National Gender Policy (1997) and the National Action Plan on Women (1999). While these addressed issues such as poverty and SRH, they did not include GBV as a priority.

Under past Ugandan legislation, perpetrators of GBV could only be prosecuted for assault or homicide under the General Penal Code, meaning that sexual assault and other forms of violence could not be taken to court. Since 2007, a number of bills intended to address GBV have been passed, including the Uganda Gender Policy (2007), Domestic Violence Act (2010), Domestic Violence Regulations (2011), and Female Genital Mutilation Bill (2010). The Domestic Violence Act provides GBV-specific frameworks defining illegal acts and mandatory legal responses, and the Domestic Violence Regulations detail complaint procedures and services to be provided to victims of GBV. Recent legislation, while a step, has so far been limited in its effect on protection for women because of poor implementation.

Another issue that plays a significant role in the lives of young people is alcohol. Despite the well-documented relationship between alcohol and GBV in Uganda, the country lacks an alcohol control policy. The existing policy is still in draft state – and has been for a number of years. Advocates believe the policy should be expedited, and at the community level by-laws concerning brewing and consumption of alcohol should be set up and enforced to ensure that accessibility to alcohol is minimized or at least controlled (Kitara et al. 2012). A review of studies found that policies that reduce on-premises drinking hours by two hours or more significantly reduced harmful use of alcohol (Tumwesigye 2012).

Chapter 5. Learning Gender: Intersections between Social Systems, Settings and Processes

Gendered social norms influence the life experiences of youth by shaping the way they think, act, and relate to others, and laying out socially sanctioned pathways of opportunities and constraints. Social understandings of what it means to be a man and a woman in a particular setting are powerful determinants of SRH experiences and outcomes. Gendered norms, attitudes and opportunities define the way young people construct romantic and sexual relationships and form their families. Life history discussions with adolescents and in-depth interviews with influential individuals provided information on the normative gender roles and standards within study communities and revealed the ways that gender norms are learned, internalized and passed on, elucidating the processes by which individuals and social institutions shape and reinforce social norms.

This dissertation examines how elements of the human ecological system interact and contribute to the persistence of hegemonic gender norms. It also explores the ways that historical processes such as the conflict with the LRA can shift notions of normative gender identities. This chapter will address intersections between different CSP categories, in particular social systems, idea systems, organic needs and historical processes. It will also discuss idea systems in the Acholi and Lango sub-regions of northern Uganda, focusing particularly on gender norms and their influence on the lives of boys and girls as they mature and develop different forms of masculine and feminine identities. The results described here demonstrate how gender identities are shaped by elements of the cultural system, including families, schools and social networks, and are

influenced by the broader ecosystem, encompassing conflict with the LRA and other historical, political and economic influences. This chapter also explores the process of enculturation (included as a basic need in the human individual subsystem of the CSP) and examines the evolution of gender identities and inequities over the life course. These results demonstrate the power of gender to influence life outcomes, as well as the capacities of adolescents to shape their lives in the face of multiple constraints and limited opportunities.

5.1. Gender Attitudes, Norms and Roles in Northern Uganda

The concept of hegemonic masculinity, formulated by Australian sociologist R.W. Connell almost three decades ago, has become a central construct in understanding men, gender, and social hierarchy (Connell 1987). It provides a useful paradigm for understanding gender norms among the youth in this study; however, it is important to avoid applying the concept in a way that leads to reified or essentialist ways of thinking about gender. In 2005, Connell and Messerschmidt reviewed the accumulated body of evidence related to the concept of hegemonic masculinity and concluded that the key elements of the construct – multiple masculinities, the concept of hegemony and the emphasis on the construction and reconstruction of masculinities are supported by evidence and should be retained, while rigid typologies of gender traits must be discarded.

The notion of hegemonic masculinity as a package of fixed character traits has been widely criticized. The traits typically considered pertinent to hegemonic masculinity include violence, aggression, stoicism (emotional restraint), toughness, risk-taking, adventure and thrill seeking and competitiveness. Hegemonic masculinity has come to be

associated primarily with negative characteristics that depict men as unemotional, non-nurturing and aggressive, yet ignores positive traits such as courage, achievement or success. Because the concept is based on practice that permits men's dominance over women to continue, it is not surprising that in many contexts, hegemonic masculinity does refer to negative practices – including physical violence – that enforce gender dominance. Nevertheless, Connell and Messerschmidt (2005) point out that if there were no positive traits, this form of masculinity could hardly be considered hegemonic – an idea that embeds the notion of consent and participation by subaltern groups.

Hegemonic masculinities rarely correspond closely to the lives of any actual men and women. Rather, hegemony works in part through archetypes of masculinity, symbols that have authority despite the fact that most boys and men do not live up to them. Hegemony is not achieved by violence, although it could be supported by force; it achieves ascendancy through culture, institutions and persuasion. Although only a minority of men enact hegemonic masculinity, Connell and Messerschmidt explain; “It is normative and embodies the currently most honored way of being a man. It required all other men to position themselves in relation to it, and it ideologically legitimated the global subordination of women to men” (2005: 832).

The concept of hegemonic masculinity was formulated in tandem with hegemonic femininity, which was later renamed “emphasized femininity” to acknowledge the asymmetrical position of masculinities and femininities in a patriarchal gender order (Connell and Messerschmidt 2005). However, this relationship has dropped out of focus in the research on men and masculinities. According to Connell and Messerschmidt (2005: 848), “This is unfortunate because gender is always relational, and patterns of

masculinity are socially defined in counterpoint from the (real or imaginary) model of femininity.” A focus on men ignores the critical role of women in many of the processes constructing masculinities. To address this gap, I used a relational approach to explore hegemonic gender identities among women as well as men in the study sites.

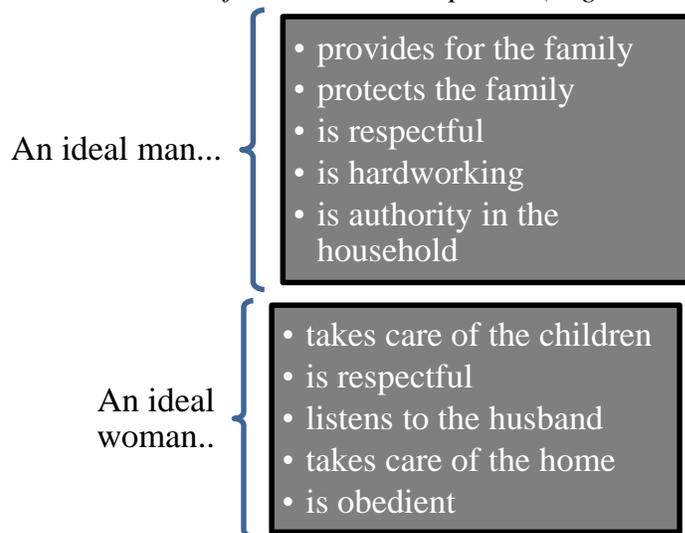
Hegemonic masculinity and emphasized femininity can be understood as a pattern of practice (not just role expectations or identity) that allow men’s dominance over women to continue. The dominance of men and the subordination of women constitute a historical process that can be challenged and requires considerable effort to maintain. Sustaining a given pattern of hegemony requires policing men as well as excluding or discrediting women (Connell and Messerschmidt 2005: 844). An example of this process is the effort of (male) cultural leaders to maintain their dominance through revitalization of traditional Acholi practices. Additional examples are given in subsequent chapters demonstrating the pressure young people experience from their family and clan elders to conform to hegemonic forms of masculinity and femininity in the reproductive realm.

The pertinence of the concepts of hegemonic masculinity and emphasized femininity to this dissertation lies in understanding that while there are multiple ways of performing the masculine and feminine role in Acholi and Lango communities, there are also hegemonic norms that boys/men and girls/women aspire to, and there are significant costs to not enacting the dominant form of gender identity. While hegemonic gender identities are unique in each distinct cultural and social context, there are consistent patterns around the globe because gender norms in every patriarchal social system are shaped by the inequitable distribution of power between men and women, and at the same time reinforce gender asymmetries. The process of hegemony at work, meaning that

valued ways of being a man or a woman are not forced on individuals, rather individuals buy into the process, will be evident in the results presented in subsequent chapters.

During fieldwork ethnographers engaged study participants in activities and discussions to elucidate “ideal” gender roles and norms. Further conversation explored the ways that participants might conform or contest those hegemonic gender practices. These discussions yielded understanding of the notions of masculinity and femininity embraced by most study participants and maintained across the life course (Figure 12). As mentioned above, because these norms are forged in a patriarchal social system, some could be considered negative, inequitable or patriarchal. Newly married adolescents and young parents held the most inequitable views toward gender roles, with younger adolescents more open to alternative conceptions of masculine and feminine identities.

Figure 12. Characteristics of idealized and expected (hegemonic) gendered behavior



Expectations of appropriate behavior for young girls and boys differ starkly – girls must stay home, perform chores (such as garden work, cooking, collecting water and firewood), and are not allowed much time for play. Boys also help with domestic chores

(primarily cleaning the compound) but have greater freedom to enjoy leisure time playing at school or by the roadside. The explanation given for these disparities is that girls must stay home to master the tasks for which they will be responsible when they marry, and also that it is dangerous for girls to move outside of the home. The gendered nature of labor and space is well documented in the anthropological literature (Sanday and Goodenough 1990, Rosaldo 2006) and is addressed in the section below on the role of gendered spaces in the enculturation process.

These results also indicate that boys are more respected, listened to, and valued than girls in their parents' households. A 27-year-old man emphasized this point by citing an Acholi proverb, "*Atin laco kutu laango*" ("A boy child is the head of the family"). Indeed, even at a young age, boys have more power in the family than girls. After the father, male children are often given authority over the household, including his mother, and if a girl misbehaves, it may be her brother who beats her.

When young men marry, they are expected to provide for their family but still are allowed time to relax at the market, watch films, or play football. Young women, on the other hand, must keep up with their domestic tasks and are expected to be obedient and submissive, vigilant regarding their safety (e.g. being home by 6 pm), and produce a child within the first year of marriage. Men make final decisions in the household and women are expected to defer to them. Young women recognize the authority of their husband, and describe their role as being obedient and hard working. A 25-year-old man explained, "There are songs like *atole* [a traditional war song] which show that a man is a man and he holds ultimate authority." The quote below describes his expectations for an ideal Acholi woman.

We say that if you find a girl who knows the cultural traditions of the Acholi, for example cooking, like let's say Acholi foods, cooks for a man right on time, and then she goes to dig in the garden and comes back, she carries some bundle of firewood on her head back home, from home respect is there and she takes care of the children well, keeps them very clean at home where they play freely, she respects your parents and all your friends...that one is Acholi. She is the woman they say can keep the home.

While expectations and experiences regarding household responsibilities, decision-making, mobility, use of space, and availability of leisure time are rigidly gendered; showing respect, working hard, and producing children were equally expected of both sexes. At the same time, gender norms, such as expectations regarding appropriate occupations for girls, seem to be evolving. Many girls, supported by their parents, aspire to professional careers such as doctors or lawyers which once would have been unthinkable. Twelve-year-old Lucy explained, "My family hopes that I study hard and become a doctor so that I am able to support them. They have the same hopes for my brothers and sisters." However, expectations for their roles as wives and mothers still closely follow the norms associated with emphasized femininity in Acholi and Lango idea systems, which prioritize the nurturing role of women.

5.2. Gender Enculturation: Social Systems, Settings and Processes

As stated in Chapter 2, the CSP emerged from Whitehead's work not just in the United States, but also in other cultural settings (e.g., see Whitehead 1984; and Whitehead and Brown 1986). As such, it was created for use in carrying out organizational, community, or cultural assessments cross culturally, often a key aspect of applied anthropological practice. To facilitate assessments in different community, population, or cultural settings, the CSP offers the domestic unit (those sharing a

common residence) as a basic level of a people's social system. Within the domestic unit Whitehead includes smaller units of analysis such as: (1) socioeconomic status (level of education of the head of the unit, type of employment, and income); (2) composition (type of unit, e.g., nuclear or extended, and members present and relationships between members, e.g., husband-wife, co-wives and their various children, parent of either spouse, etc.); and (3) organization (e.g., division of labor). My discussion here focuses on the organization of the domestic unit, the role of gender as the basis of domestic unit organization cross-culturally, and the domestic unit as a primary locale of enculturation.

Children learn to be men and women from their families and others around them. Through assignment of roles and evaluation of worthiness, girls and boys acquire their gender identity. They observe and internalize broad social norms, including messages from the state, religious institutions, schools and the media. Certain cultural conditions produce early and differential treatment of boys and girls. A variety of social forces such as gendered expectations for work and leisure activities and the influence of parents, religious institutions and peer networks interacting within the context of an ideational system transmit societal norms about what it means to be a man or woman. At the same time, gender norms are constructed against a backdrop of power hierarchies and resource inequities that give greater power to some men.

Gender identification begins in one's earliest enculturation through the ways a baby is treated. Childhood learning teaches individuals the appropriate behavior expected by others and to model their personality to conform to cultural norms. Children learn what is appropriate by observation of adults and by overt instruction and practice of skills they will assume as adult men and women (Bandura 1986). Moreover, children learn gender

through observation of social relations between their parents and other adults (Bonvillain 1995). Research suggests that gendered expectations for family and household responsibilities play an important role in the development of gender identities and norms (Janssen 2009; Sargent and Harris 1992).

Anthropologists today recognize that gender enculturation is not something that happens *to* children; rather it is a process in which children, in interaction with others, produce their own peer culture. Evidence suggests that children play an instrumental role socializing each other – constructing the norms and valued identities of their peer group. This interpretive approach proposes that children appropriate information from the adult world to create their own peer cultures, thus contributing to the reproduction and extension of culture. Childhood researcher Bill Corsaro (1992) suggests that cultural routines provide frames within which sociocultural knowledge can be produced, displayed and interpreted. The concept of *framing*, articulated by Erving Goffman (1974), refers to working hypotheses regarding what is going on in a specific segment of interaction, providing children with expectations that enable creative production of culture. Through their daily interactions with adults and peers, children can embellish certain elements of frames that are particularly important to them (e.g. discipline, power, gender, sexuality). In this view, adults are not simply reinforcers or role models. Rather, they represent aspects of the adult culture to children by involving them in basic cultural routines. This conceptualization of enculturation provides an explanation of the ways that culture is continually reproduced and transformed, and provides a conceptual road map for interventions to bring about planned change in cultural norms.

5.3. Gender Identities: A Product of System Intersections. Social Systems, Settings and Processes

“There are different ways boys learn to be ideal men; first of all, they learn from their fathers how their fathers carry out tasks, because their fathers are big men. I should follow so that I am like him. Others learn from fellow boys to be ideal men” (Hope, newly married).

The stories shared during the life histories and in-depth interviews provide insight into the processes through which gender attitudes, norms and roles are established and reinforced among boys and girls in northern Uganda. Analysis of these narratives reveal that boys and girls are aware that social norms are gendered, and able to identify some of the ways that youth are taught to embody these norms. Processes for “learning” gender included observation, practice, instruction, and advice, as well as less obvious influences such as gendered time and space. Study participants identified parents and other family members, teachers, peers and religious and community leaders as key influences in their journey of becoming an ‘ideal’ man or woman. Adolescents also mentioned political and historical influences such as war and poverty as forces that shape gender social norms.

Table 4 deconstructs the process of enculturation into three intersecting components: social systems and their actors, sociocultural settings and sociocultural processes. The first column lists social systems such as kinship and family, religious and educational institutions and the broader community along with corresponding actors such as parents, siblings, relatives, clan members and elders. The column on the far right displays sociocultural processes that generate culture including giving advice, role modeling and discipline. The middle column details the settings where these processes

take place – the hut, clan meeting, school or soccer field. The information displayed in Table 4 suggests that although the formulation of gender identities involves the articulation of cultural ideals; they are also constituted through non-discursive practices, such as labor, violence, sexuality, and childcare.

Table 4. Shaping gender norms: Social systems, settings, and processes

Social Systems/Actors	Sociocultural Settings	Sociocultural Processes
Kinship and Family Parents Siblings In-Laws Extended Family Clan Members Clan Elders	Hut Hamlet Garden Clan Meetings	Instruction Advice Giving Modeling Working Together Peer Influence (discussion, play, hanging out) Discipline Violence Gendered Spaces Rites of Passage Religious rituals texts, sermons, music, etc.
Religious Institutions Pastors/Priests Religious Leaders	Church	
Educational institutions Administrators/Staff Teachers	School	
Community Neighbors Peers	Town Center Video/Dance hall Soccer Field Work Place Well Other Places Youth Hang Out	

The excerpt below from Jacob’s life story demonstrates how the elements in the table above – social settings, social systems and generative processes – shape the acquisition of gender identities. In addition to learning from parents and friends, he

mentions spending time at church and school, institutions that play an influential role in gender enculturation. It is also interesting to note that Jacob acknowledges that as a boy, he has opportunities that girls do not.

I spend my time studying and at the Catholic Church to pray. After school, I love spending time playing games with my friends. I am lucky that I am a boy and am able to spend my free time with my friends. My father has been very important in teaching me and raising me up to be a good man. He gives me advice and shows me how to become a strong and real man. My mother and older sister have also been very important in guiding me, encouraging me to stay in school, and teaching me what things I should do. My elder brothers are the ones who I seek advice from about relationships. They tell me what to do in a relationship and how to act around girls. My elder brothers have led good lives and they have always been my moral example. I hope to grow up to be like them when I am older, because they have become successful by leading exemplary lives. I am expected to finish my education and be a good provider for my family. As my parents get older, they will stop farming and expect me to take over for them. This way I can take care of them, as they have always taken care of me.

In the remainder of this chapter I will discuss the social systems central to the formation of gender identities such as the family, workplace, church, and school. I will then describe processes for acquiring gender norms, namely what study participants described as “learning by observing,” “learning by doing,” “learning from peers,” and “instruction and advice.” Finally, I will discuss the sociocultural settings where gender norms and identities are formed and the influence of gendered use of time and space.

5.3.1. Social systems. Enculturation processes unfold within the context of the social systems and institutions that surround youth. Implicit and explicit ideological messages, often symbolized in religious beliefs and practices, communicate the social value of women and men and define their place in their families and communities (Dyck and Archetti 2003; Bonvillain 1995). The family, workplace, place of worship and school

are all gendered institutions organized to reproduce differences and inequalities between women and men. Institutions create gendered normative standards, express gendered institutional logic and are major factors in the reproduction of gender inequality. In the words of Michael Kimmel, “Institutions are like factories, and what they produce is gender difference” (2008: 113). Similarly, the CSP conceptualizes social systems as the “engines” of cultural systems because they contribute to the production and reproduction of system components through positive feedback for expression of normative ideations and behaviors and negative responses to undesirable expressions" (personal communication, Whitehead 2014). Rosaldo also writes of the importance of social systems, “... it seems to me quite clear that women’s goals themselves are shaped by social systems which deny them ready access to the social privilege, authority, and esteem enjoyed by a majority of men” (2006: 111).

The reproduction of gender asymmetries is sometimes accomplished through rites of passage that usher boys and girls through sequential stages to manhood and womanhood (Van Gennep 2011). For example, in a cross-cultural analysis of global masculinity, David Gilmore cites many examples of strategies used to “masculinize” boys – such as separating them from their mothers and puberty rites (1990). While girls in many cultures also participate in puberty rites, they do not tend to include tests of bravery or stoicism meant to “prove” their femininity (Gilmore 1990). Examples of Lango or Acholi rites of passage involving ritualized separation of boys and girls during puberty were not uncovered during fieldwork. However, other ceremonies and practices marking the transition of youth to a new social status which provide hidden and

expressed messages were identified, such as the requirement that boys build a hut for themselves when they reach puberty or participate in traditional marriage ceremonies.

The family and other social systems such as peer networks or religious institutions that make up the fabric of society are often viewed as the leaders of the enculturation process, teaching children the norms, values, behaviors, and social skills appropriate to their social position. The results of this research confirm this perspective. Examples of the role of family members, especially parents, in shaping young people have already been given, but it is worthwhile noting that not only parents, but the broader community is influential. In fact, due to the protracted conflict, widespread poverty, HIV, and poor health infrastructure, many of the children participating in the study lived in households without their biological parents, influenced primarily by their siblings, grandparents, aunts, and uncles (or step-aunts/uncles).

Adults outside of the family, such as elders, religious and community leaders, teachers, and NGO staff instruct boys and girls how to be “real” men and women, and young people identify them as important sources of information and advice. Youth described seeking out elders or religious leaders when they faced a problem or needed advice. Community members play a role disciplining, guiding, and teaching all children, not only those in their immediate family. They advise parents on proper childrearing, warn young people against bad behavior and negative influences and punish youth who transgress social norms. The community-at-large also enforces gender and other social norms through gossip and criticism of members whose behavior falls outside of socially sanctioned boundaries. Youth whose behavior is inconsistent with Acholi and Lango gender norms, such as women who are assertive in their household, young couples who

delay their first pregnancy, or girls who neglect their household chores, are criticized. In this intensely communal society, such disapproval often extends to parents or spouses. Peter commented, “My hope is to have one wife. I should take care of her so that no one talks about her...like saying that this guy’s wife is dirty.” Although Peter is only 14 (and unmarried), he is already concerned about what others may say about his future wife.

The majority of the boys and girls interviewed under the age of 14 or 15 spent most of their time in school. The structure, organization, and activities of educational institutions may provide children direction, sensitization, advice, comfort, support, and encouragement, and also shape gender identities. The student-teacher relationship, a dyad the CSP includes in the category of social systems, can be formative for youth, with positive as well as negative effects. Teachers are frequently mentioned by study participants, both adolescents and adults, as a source of advice, especially in matters related to puberty changes, and clearly play an important role shaping perceptions of appropriate behaviors for boys/men and girls women.

Among youth attending school, boys and girls generally believe that they are treated equally, although a few boys complained that they are beaten more often and more severely than female students and that teachers favor girls. On the other hand, although girls may experience less corporal punishment, many suffer sexual harassment and violence during the school day. Several of the girls told stories of male teachers sexually harassing their friends, and others told of male teachers courting and marrying their students. This creates an unsafe environment for girls and sends indelible messages about appropriate masculine and feminine behavior.

Most of the youth mentioned some level of engagement with either the Catholic or Protestant church in their community. Almost all included the church on their community map as a place where they spend time, especially on weekends. For some, their social lives revolved around church activities; others discussed ways that their faith (or that of their family) guided their decisions and behaviors. The church represented a source of spiritual advice and moral guidance for some youth, but also provided entertainment and social events, such as youth group meetings. Through all of these functions, religious institutions teach young people what it means according to their belief system to be a man or a woman.

Expressive culture, another sub-system of the CSP, is the means that people use to explain their cultural, physical, and metaphysical worlds, such as music, dance, poetry, or song. To the extent they are still practiced, traditional Acholi and Lango expressive culture builds on the influence of the social system on gender identity formation. Acholi/Lango expressive culture includes traditional songs and dances that demonstrate behaviors of ideal women and men, fireside chats (*wang-oo*) and proverbs warning of the dangers of multiple sexual partners, drinking too much, or of being lazy or “big-headed” (arrogant or stubborn). Although many adults mentioned these traditions, fewer young people referenced them and it appears these traditions are fading away, although some NGOs and community leaders are trying to revive them. In the aftermath of the war, many NGOs and community organizations implemented programs in northern Uganda to address attitudes and norms related to violence and gender inequity. In fact, many respondents mentioned radio programs, dramas, dance competitions, and sports as means

of helping young people navigate their transition to an adult member of society, teaching them to be respectful, responsible and obedient men and women.

While the influence of global culture (a multinational influence included in the CSP social systems category) as a negative influence on youth is often mentioned by adults in adolescent research, participants in this study did not talk about the influence of global culture on young people, however they did discuss at length the effect of the civil war, especially encampment and perceived high levels of violence in their communities.

5.3.2. Sociocultural processes. Learning by observing. When young people were asked how they learned to be ideal men or women, their most common response was by observing their mothers, fathers and peers. Girls were most expressive and used the following phrases: “learn from,” “tag along,” “observe carefully,” “watch closely,” “see and do,” and “practice.” Boys used terms such as: “learn,” “see,” “listen,” “associate with,” “work,” and “do what is similar.” Eighteen year-old Martha explained, “When men are going to the garden, they also tag the boys along so they learn how to dig. They tell them that someday they will become fathers so they should observe carefully what the older men do, like sweeping the compound.” In fact, some young people commented on the power of example, remarking that it would be almost impossible for boys who observe their fathers drinking too much or abusing their wives to behave differently when they are grown. Denis, who is 13 years old, explained:

Young boys learn to become men by practicing what adults do, like building a house or marrying. Girls are trained by their mothers. They start cooking, so if they learn to cook they say they are becoming mature. Not only that, they go to fetch water with a big jerry can at the water point. She tries carrying it home the next day, then she goes back and does it many times. Then she starts to say she is maturing. (Denis, 13 years old)

Adults also cited role modeling and observation as potent mechanisms shaping the gender roles and attitudes of their sons and daughters. They consider parents most influential, but church leaders, community leaders, and elders were also mentioned. Adults stated that following the example of others teaches youth how to fulfill their roles as husband/wife and father/mother and inculcates a strong work ethic.

Learning by doing. Boys and girls also learn to be men and women by practicing female and male responsibilities and trying out sexual relationships. Children are expected to take on tasks gradually, slowly taking on greater responsibility as they mature. Work begins at a very young age (especially for girls); for example, three-year-olds help carry water, five-year-olds care for their baby sisters, and seven-year-old girls assist with the meal preparation. Respondents often conflate gender roles (“ideal” or “real” men and women) with gendered work roles and responsibilities, suggesting that they view labor at the core of masculinity and femininity. This is consistent with theoretical perspectives which place the division of labor at the core of gender differences (Rosaldo 2006, Sanday 1990, Kimmel 2008). Joyce, a 17-year-old new mother, explained that girls learn to be women, “...through cooking. They learn from seeing how their mother cooks and then they practice it. And when it comes to fetching water they will begin with a small jerry can and practice carrying water for home use. And when your mother goes you will follow her with a ten liter jerry can.”

Table 5. Gendered Responsibilities of Acholi and Lango Girls and Boys

Ideal Girl	Ideal Boy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Domestic work (cooking, cleaning) • Farming • Harvesting • Making money 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Farming (fieldwork, gardening) • Building his hut • Handiwork • Looking after animals • Making money

However, work is not the only domain where young people say they learn to assume gendered roles. Study participants also remarked that young people grow into adult masculine and feminine roles by forming romantic relationships; mentioning sex (especially for boys), marriage, and procreation. Similar to the step-wise assumption of adult work roles, respondents described a process by which boys and girls gradually engage in romantic relationships leading to marriage and adulthood. According to 18-year-old Isaac, “I see the boys start learning to be real men by beginning to relate with girls and then bringing a wife home. Girls start learning when they are in their own house with their husband, and then they start learning how to become real women.” Girls also mention sex and drinking alcohol as ways that boys begin to assume the masculine role.

Peace, a new mother: Boys learn to be ideal men by having sexual relationships.

Interviewer: Any other?

Peace: Drinking... drinking alcohol. They go out drink and feel big. (Long pause) [Cross talk] and this habit of bullying, they love it.

They [girls] learn to be ideal with sexual desires that take them to men, and also giving birth. And giving birth makes you an ideal woman. (Patience, new mother)

Learning from peers. Peers represent another important sub-unit of social systems; they provide explicit advice, model behaviors, and enforce gender norms by reinforcing or sanctioning behaviors. Adults and youth alike commented that peers can play a positive or negative role. Gloria, a 19-year-old new mother explained,

She learns when she is with her friends depending on the kind of friends she has. If they are good friends, she will also be a good girl but when she engages in a bad group, she will also be a bad girl as a result of what those people are doing that is why she also becomes a bad person.

Peers can be a powerful influence because young people feel a strong need to please them and be accepted by the group. As described in the CSP, this sense of belonging and affection responds to a fundamental human need. Expressive needs such as affective bonds with others and a sense of a community and meaning are all intimately related with gender-identity and normative attitudes.

Several study participants described situations in which they felt pressured to behave a certain way in order to be accepted by their peers. Newly married Amos explained, "... [You] learn from friends. This is because when you see you are chased away from your friends who are slightly older than you, you can try to do what others do in order to be included in the group." Amos is alluding to the tension between "positive" and "negative" masculinity traits, a common theme in the literature on masculinity. For example, Whitehead introduces attributes of masculinity as two binary oppositions of *respectability* attributes (including providing for one's family, following mainstream rules, etc.) and *reputational* attributes (including drinking and sexual exploits), which are

exhibited and confirmed in male groups through drinking behaviors, gamesmanship, and competition, and through narratives of sexual conquests. In Jamaica these oppositional constructs of male strength were kept in balance through the use of the concept of *balance* (e.g., a strong man can consume great amounts of rum, but then he becomes weak if it prevents him from adequately providing for his family) (Whitehead 1992; 1997, Aronson, Whitehead, and Baber, 2003).

Instruction and advice. Instruction and advice from adults or elder siblings is another mechanism for inculcating gender norms. Young people considered parents as the most significant influence on children as they learn to become “ideal” women and men. Adults agreed that parents are a primary formative influence on their children, because they advise them on issues – such as work ethic, household chores, menstruation, puberty and romantic relationships – and also set examples for them to follow. Several young people mentioned that if verbal instruction is not effective, their elders discipline them physically to enforce correct behavior. For example, when asked what happens if she doesn’t meet the expectations of her elders, 16-year-old Elizabeth answered, “They whip me. They can quarrel on me and then they just let me be.”

In the passage below, Martha, a new mother, discusses the importance of the guidance that parents provide their sons about their roles as husbands.

- Martha: You know people are different. Some do tell their boys to respect their wives and treat them with dignity. They can tell them that now you have chosen someone’s daughter to be your wife, please take good care of her. Do not hurt her or start bringing another woman here. Other parents do not.
- Interviewer: Do you think the boys who are told to respect their wives when they grow up treat their wives differently, as

compared to those who never get any advice from their parents?

Martha: Yes, such boys respect their wives. Those who were not counseled on how to treat their women turn out to be violent because they lack knowledge on how to treat their partners.

5.3.3. Sociocultural settings. Thus far, I have outlined the major social systems and processes at play in shaping gender norms among adolescents. Here I briefly consider the sociocultural settings where these processes unfold. Referring back to Table 4, there is a connection between family and kin with the domestic setting – the individual hut, compound and garden. Youth spend time in those places interacting with siblings, cousins, spouses, parents, aunts and uncles, and grandparents performing household chores, working in the garden, eating, studying, and playing. Boys and girls may also move outside of their compound bringing water from the well, herding cattle or working in the gardens of other families for cash or a share of the harvest. Occupying these public spaces provides adolescents, especially boys, the opportunity to interact with the broader community. Opportunities for learning by observing clan elders and cultural leaders or receiving instruction or discipline may take place at clan or village meetings or in (now infrequent) *wang-oo/wang-ii*. Similar processes take place at other social institutions, such as the school and places of worship.

As discussed earlier, peer influence plays an important role in gender identity formation, in part through role modeling and young people's desire to be accepted and held in esteem by their peers, but also through the policing function of peers who may tease, bully, or ostracize those who fail to conform to hegemonic forms of masculinity

and femininity. Peers may also play a transformational role, providing examples and support to youth with subaltern gender identities. Peers not only exert influence in school settings, but also in places of worship or other settings where youth frequent such as the soccer field, video hall, or well. The topic of peer influence will be discussed in more detail in the following chapter on puberty.

While it is informative to note the sociocultural settings where processes of gender norm enculturation take place, it may be the meaning attached to these spaces and differential access by boys and girls that is most significant. Indeed, gender asymmetries in use of time and space represent another mechanism that enculturates boys and girls into adult gender roles. Youth remarked upon these differences. Sixteen-year-old student Ronald observed, “Women spend their time at the old woman’s house. They gather there and discuss their issues. They tell stories and plait their hair. Boys like to spend their time in front of the shop. They gather there and play cards for soda.” Girls corroborated this, remarking that boys learn how to be men by “loitering” and spending time in video halls.

Girls clearly have a heavier workload than boys; they spend much of their time performing traditionally female chores (cooking, carrying water, caring for their younger siblings, etc.). Further, girls are supposed to stay at home and are not allowed to move freely outside the borders of their compound. As a result, boys have the opportunity to learn from their peers and life experiences outside their home, while girls primarily learn within the home. Many of the boys and girls recognized this inequity and remarked upon it, as did Denis (13 years old) below.

Denis: People like going to play at the school because you find there are so many children that you play with.

Interviewer: If you were a girl, would you find it the same?

Denis: Not the same! This is because a girl has a lot of work, more than we do. Like when it is over the weekend, she has a lot of work at home. Some, you find their mothers are tired so she keeps on working for a long time at home.

Gendered spatial boundaries are sometimes enforced by violence, and in turn these boundaries may reinforce gender norms. For many girls, the fear of violence may have an even greater impact on their lives than actual experiences of aggression. The specter of violence keeps girls close to home and afraid to venture out to visit the town center, soccer field or even sometimes to attend school. Fear of violence was mentioned by almost all study participants as a major difference in the life experience of boys and girls. For example, 14-year-old Simon remarked, “I would also fear the well if I were a girl.”

These results speak to theory on gendered spaces, and illustrate how they perpetuate hegemonic gender identities, and thus broader social inequities. The concept of hegemonic masculinity does not refer explicitly to gendered spaces, although the use of space clearly plays a role in reproducing hegemonic gender identities. In many settings, such as northern Uganda, the dominant form of masculinity expects (and requires) men to control their wives, daughters, and sisters, including determining where and how they spend their time. It is worth noting that although the domestic sphere is the primary domain of women in Acholi and Lango culture; men have ultimate authority even there, sometimes using force to ensure that their wives and children perform their normative feminine role. In fact, gendered use of space continues and may even increase after marriage. Newly married Stella mentioned that she used to go to the center for fun,

but now that she is married she does not because, “A girl with a husband should not go out because you are under his control.” This will be discussed further in subsequent chapters on violence and FP,

In almost every society, labor is divided by gender (as well as age). Certain tasks and places are reserved for women, others for men. Anthropologists have debated for decades the correspondence between gender inequity and the division between domestic and public spheres of activity, one built around reproduction and emotional and family bonds inhabited by women; the other, managing collective needs for governance and cooperation, organized primarily by men (Ortner 1974, Rosaldo and Lamphere 1974, Kimmel 1987, Gregor 1977, Bourdieu 1990). In her seminal cross-cultural study of women’s status, Peggy Sanday (1981, 75) found that sex segregation was highly associated with women’s lower status, “...as if separation were necessary for the development of sexual inequality and dominance.” She also found that women had the highest levels of equality, and thus the least frequency of rape, when both genders contributed about the same amounts to the food supply.

In an essay reflecting upon her early work on gender asymmetries, Rosaldo (2006) remarks that the division between domestic and public domains corresponds to Sherry Ortner’s discussion of “natural” versus “cultural” valuations, where such factors such as a woman’s involvement with young and disorderly children give her the appearance of less “cultured” than men. She further suggests that men’s ability to engage in public activities affords them privileged access to resources which sustain their power. In this retrospective commentary, Rosaldo affirms her earlier account of sexual hierarchies in relation to domestic or public spheres, but clarifies that:

Women's place in human social life is not in any direct sense a direct product of the things she does (or even less, a function of what, biologically, she is), but of the meaning her activities acquire through concrete social interactions. And the significances women assign to the activities of their lives are things that we can only grasp through an analysis of the relationships that women forge, the social contexts, they along with men create – and within which they are defined.” (Rosaldo 2006: 114)

Rosaldo's updated perspective situates gender as a complex product of a variety of social forces rather than a unitary fact determined by similar concerns in every setting and calls for exploration of the meaning and interpretation of the social facts of gender difference. This approach is widely applied by anthropologists today and exemplified in the use of the CSP to understand the roles of intersecting systems in producing gender asymmetries in different cultural settings. The work of Matthew Guttman (1997: 147) with men in Mexico City applies this approach, while affirming the relevance of the public/private distinction he cautions against typologizing gender differences without taking into consideration how they are interpreted by women and men themselves. His description of multiple masculine identities demonstrates the ways that men and women engage in transforming both public and private life.

5.4. Intersections between Historical Processes and Social and Idea Systems

The acquisition of gendered identity is an intimate process which occurs throughout the life cycle but is accelerated during adolescence as biological changes are experienced within the nexus of the cultural systems of social structures and ideas. At the same time, historical, political, and economic events and processes play a significant role in shaping gender identities and attitudes, and also define life course opportunities – often

limiting the choices available to both girls/women and boys/men. The conflict in Uganda, for example, has had an impact on every level of the social system, including the structure of the domestic unit and the capacity of kinship and other networks to provide social and economic support to members and maintain cultural norms.

Families play a primary role transmitting specific values and beliefs directly to their children, but they also provide access to social, cultural, and economic resources and position them within the larger social structure (Bourdieu 1990; Bronfenbrenner 1979). The interaction between social status and enculturation can be viewed through the lens of the life course perspective, which incorporates a dynamic view of historical and structural influences. “Families do place their imprint on the next generation. But even more consequential for gender role attitudes are the next generation’s own life experiences, shaped by changing opportunities and shifting normative expectations,” explains Moen et al. (1997).

Economic factors are frequently cited as critical to the development of gender identities and constructs in societies around the world (Bonvillain 1995; Gilmore 1990; Kimmel 2008; Whitehead 1997; Whitehead 1984, Sanday 1981, Rosaldo 2006, Divale and Harris 1976). Like others, Whitehead suggests that the association of sexual and sociopolitical power with masculinity is rooted in the economic division of labor between men and women in early human societies. In fact, the dominance of hegemonic forms of masculinity has been explained most often by the determining role of globalization and the spread of capitalism (Arnfred 2004; Connell 2000; Guttman 1997; Kimmel 1987; Whitehead, Peterson, and Kaljee 1994).

The influence of economic and structural factors on idea systems, social systems and behaviors in northern Uganda is demonstrated by the ways that the war affected gender roles and the division of labor within the household, primarily by making men more dependent on women for income generation.

Men have now left all the garden work for the women and yet previously the women were supposed to weed and harvest but you find them also digging together with men and other things like paying fees, buying clothes, and taking children to the hospital. It never used to be like this, men were more responsible, but now some men cannot even plan for their families. (35-year-old woman, community member)

As discussed earlier, hegemonic notions of masculinity and femininity characterized ideal men as providers, protectors, and decision-makers. Ideal women were described as obedient, submissive caretakers. Being respectful, hardworking, and fertile were considered desirable traits of both men and women. Content analysis of the number of times participants mentioned “provider” as an element of ideal masculinity and femininity confirmed the centrality of this role to masculine identity. It also revealed gender differences in perceptions. Men/boys and women/girls frequently used the word “provider” to describe an ideal man and “nurturer” to describe an ideal woman. Women/girls, however, more frequently described an ideal woman as a “provider” as well as a “nurturer.”

From the perspective of the CSP, the impact of the conflict was not limited to meeting economic needs alone, but influenced a whole range of organic (food, water, disease prevention/treatment, security), instrumental (education, governance), and expressive needs (affective ties) included in the CSP. Post-conflict realities created an environment in which communities found it difficult to meet most of these needs and

young people struggled to bridge the gap between idealized and experienced gender roles, especially in the economic domain.

Study participants reported that the conflict altered gender roles by preventing men from fulfilling their roles as provider and protector and by forcing women to assume new responsibilities. With limited livelihood options within IDP camps, women assumed non-traditional roles of selling produce or merchandise and digging in the fields. A 34-year-old man explained,

This war created a gap between women and men. Men would struggle to get something to eat just for themselves and not for the family; very few men cared for their families. But women struggled to bring food for the children. To some extent, men learned that women can do a lot more than them so they have withdrawn from their responsibilities.

Additionally, participants report that women and girls were subject to rape and other forms of violence by soldiers and rebels while husbands and fathers were unable to protect them. Study participants concluded that these conditions had long-lasting effects on their culture, families, and relationships. They described continuing gender-related challenges after returning home, including increased divorce and marital discord, alcohol abuse, domestic violence, and loss of traditional lifestyles.

Men also became serious drunkards and the only thing they knew was to drink. This is not according to their interest but this was because men were too frustrated. In the camp, to tell you the truth, the most mistreated people by soldiers were also men. If a soldier wanted to take your wife, he could come and beat you. Men are also the people that the rebels were after the most. Men were the most killed, most mistreated and most hated. This is because soldiers did not like men and rebels also looked at men as spies for the government, and so men were frustrated. I see that men suffered most and so they kept on doing this because of the problems that had surrounded them. (28-year-old man, peer)

5.5. Health: Human Needs and Resources in the Face of Gender Inequities

As conceptualized by WHO, health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being, not merely the absence of disease or infirmity (1948). The CSP offers a perspective for conceptualizing the connection between the broad range of human needs related to quality of life (including health) and the intersecting elements of the human ecosystem. In the public health literature, these elements are generally referred to as the social determinants of health, defined as the conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work and age. These circumstances are shaped by the distribution of money, power and resources at global, national and local levels. Many argue that most health inequities can be traced to unfair and avoidable differences between population groups as defined by characteristics such as their gender, ethnic or cultural group, economic status or place of residence (8). Of particular relevance to my work is the recognition that inequitable social arrangements such as gender disparities are often a cause of poor health outcomes, and is referred to by some scholars as structural violence (Farmer 1999, Bourgois 2003, Scheper-Hughes 1987).

In a cyclical manner, the idea systems related to gender discussed in this chapter both flow from and result in a wide range of gender inequities, many of which are manifested in terms of access to resources. In Acholi and Luo communities, as in much of the world, men generally control resources, including education, property and health care and have authority over most community and household decisions. The women interviewed in this study articulated many examples of gender inequality, stating, for

example, that women cannot own property, have a voice in public meetings, receive higher education, or be promoted to leadership positions.

Among adolescents, gender disparities are often experienced in the realm of education, in part due to a series of gendered factors that constrain the ability of girls to complete even primary school. As will be discussed in Chapter 7, hegemonic gender norms are related, both directly and indirectly, to many of the reasons that girls drop out of school, such as pregnancy, marriage, inability to pay school fees, or the need for girls' labor at home. While the 10-14-year-olds participating in this study believed that boys and girls in their communities generally have equal access to schooling, study participants of other ages reported that girls are not given equal opportunities due to their household responsibilities, early or forced marriage, or unintended pregnancy. A 16-year-old boy commented, "You find that mostly they like sending only boys to school and not girls, because girls do not have a future. This is bad because sometimes, the girls are brighter than boys at school." Once girls are enrolled in school they often face additional hurdles. For example, girls (but rarely boys) are expected to prove that they are worthy of the resources their family is investing in their education by doing well and avoiding pregnancy while at the same time performing household chores not required of boys.

The patrilineal kinship structure of Acholi and Luo communities – in which a girl joins her husband's family and no longer contributes to her natal household – influences their status in their family while growing up. "They see that when a girl is married, she is detached from the family. They see marriage as part of buying; girls always have to work hard so that they are loved in the family," commented a 34-year-old man. Baby girls are treated as "harlots," one man said, because the family understands that she will get

married and leave so they never accept her. Additionally, mothers may view their daughters as property to be sold and prefer to invest in training girls as housewives rather than educating them. Parents may be reluctant to invest scarce resources in their daughters, as a newly married 16-year-old explained, “For a girl, even if she studies and finishes studying, she will be married off and when you get say two cows as for her bride-price, the boys at home will use them to marry their wives and bring home a girl.” Youth recognize that the kinship structure favors emotional as well as financial investment in boys. Peace, a new mother, reflected on her childhood, “If I were a boy, I would be really loved. Boys are loved because they stay home, while girls go away.”

The right to own property is another structural factor that reflects underlying gender inequities. A number of participants noted that because girls have unequal access to property, they are viewed as subordinate within the home and are less valued than boys. As girls mature and enter into marriage, lack of access to property places them at a continued disadvantage. They move into their husband’s home with few tangible resources of their own which, compounded with existing gender norms, contributes to limited power and decision-making ability in their new household and increased vulnerability to intimate partner violence. Newly married adolescents state clearly that men have greater power in decision-making. This may change over time as women bring children into the family and become involved in income generation activities. “Our household decisions are made together, however my husband’s view is valued more,” explained Martha, a new mother. Women’s lack of autonomy is evident in barriers to access health resources. Men noted that if a pregnant woman goes to a clinic to be tested,

or to receive medication or FP, she must have her husband with her or she may be denied medication.

Most respondents, especially younger boys and girls, recognize these gender disparities. Some boys mentioned that it is unfair that girls have so much work and are not allowed leisure time. Yet, many boys (and girls) accept this situation, “Girls shouldn’t go to swing at the youth center. They should be cooking and looking for firewood,” commented Mark, an early adolescent. Opio, a 16-year-old student, remarked, “Girls are not supposed to be moving. There is work to be done at home. Besides, if they spend time loitering around, they may grow up without knowing how to do domestic chores.”

Chapter 6. The Embodiment of Gender: the Nexus of Puberty and Cultural Systems

Gender identities in northern Uganda are shaped by interactions between social systems, settings, and processes under the influence of the broader ecosystem, including decades of conflict and displacement. These forces have resulted in hegemonic constructions of masculinity and femininity that characterize men as authoritarian providers, protectors, and decision-makers while women are expected to be obedient, submissive caretakers. This chapter continues to explore the ways in which gender identities are shaped, focusing on the lived experiences and meanings of biological and social development among girls and boys as they strive to fulfill their organic, expressive, and instrumental needs. During construction of their life histories, study participants spoke about these needs, expressing the desire to form a sexual relationship, have a first child, be respected as an adult, and feel loved, respected, and connected to their community. In sum, this chapter will examine the embodiment of gender during puberty, a process which occurs at the nexus of puberty and cultural systems. In the words of Aitken, “A body becomes a body through reference to contexts, relations, and settings and through the bifocal lens of maturity and gender” (2001: 84).

The salience of embodiment as a cultural process is most marked at key points in the life course such as puberty, childbirth, and menopause. In the words of Prout (2000: 105), “Clearly we might identify a number of positionings, periods, and moments when embodied processes are critical to social interpretation and regulation of transition within the Western life course. Puberty signals the socially embodied shift from childhood to adolescence.” In an usually direct treatment of the gendered body, Kincaid (1992: 70)

suggests that the dividing line between childhood and adulthood is delimited almost universally by “bodily changes and specific fluid rendering of the interior leaking out.” He points to the commencement of menstruation as the borderline between girlhood and womanhood and to nocturnal emissions, perhaps less clearly, as the signal of manhood (Kincaid 1992).

Physical changes during puberty are evident to all – peers and adults alike. In her ethnography conducted in California working class schools, Barrie Thorne (1994: 142) points out that personal bodily changes and sexuality among young people often become public commentary. Some of this commentary, like bra-snapping, takes ritual form, “Once in a classroom and several times on the playground I saw a girl or boy reach over and pull on the elastic back of a bra, letting it go with a loud snap followed by laughter.” Thorne concludes that young people are often curious about one another’s bodily changes, which they may transform into public news (Thorne 1994). This visibility is an important element of changing social relationships and expectations, and can reinforce or challenge gender norms enculturation.

For most boys and girls around the world, the process of puberty begins between the ages of 10 and 14. These years are among the most critical for human development, yet represent one of the most poorly understood phases of the life course. During this life stage, often referred to as early adolescence, young people experience intense physical, psychological and social changes that initiate the transition from childhood to adulthood. Along with pubertal changes that establish adult appearance and reproductive capacity, this age is marked by equally dramatic changes in social, brain, and cognitive maturation which set the stage for lifelong capacities and aspirations. While these biological

processes are universal, the social contexts within which they occur vary considerably. In many societies, these years encompass a major educational shift from primary to middle or secondary school or are characterized by early school leaving, family formation, and employment in formal or informal sectors.

The process of maturation during puberty should not be viewed as an inevitable unfolding of predetermined characteristics, but rather a social construction in which the self develops through an ongoing interaction between the individual and the social contexts and groups with whom the individual interacts. It is this interaction that led Goffman (1959) to observe that culture influences adolescent development by shaping identity, self-perception, and the public presentation of self. This is captured in the CSP at the intersection between the human individual and human need sub-systems, in which the biological processes of pubertal development interact with needs for enculturation and community connection.

Puberty generally signals the time young people are expected to assume socially defined adult gender roles, which result in pathways that lead to particular SRH outcomes. However, it is not yet fully understood how adolescents acquire these gender norms and beliefs about sexuality or how they adopt behaviors and establish relationships that ultimately shape their own sexual, overall health and well-being. This chapter draws from the life history interviews to describe lived puberty experiences and explore the ways that social systems interact to inscribe social meanings upon young bodies, considering physical development as a trigger for acquisition of gender identity and social norms.

6.1. Lived Bodies: Experience of Physical Changes during Puberty

The bodily changes described in the life stories of the boys and girls participating in the study were consistent with the literature on puberty around the world. Girls reported noticing pubertal changes between the ages of 12 and 15, and most experienced menarche between the ages of 13 and 14. Boys noticed developmental changes slightly later, between the ages of 13 and 16. The first sign of puberty observed by both boys and girls was generally pubic and underarm hair. As puberty progressed, girls noted breast development, and then later menstruation. Boys noticed facial hair, but most considered changes in their voice as key signal of puberty.

The biological development of young people is linked to their growing need for sexual expression and desire to procreate, as well as the need for emotional ties with a sexual/life partner. Emerging sexuality – changing feelings and relationships and concerns about sex and its consequences – is an underlying theme of the puberty narratives shared by study participants. The topic of sexuality permeated discussions about puberty. For example, boys brought up the topic of nocturnal emissions and sexual desire when asked how they were managing pubertal changes and both sexes equated puberty with readiness to enter into romantic and sexual relationships. While constructing their timelines, a number of the boys shared stories about their sexual debut. One boy commented that he had sex for the first time when he was 12. He said he was surprised that he enjoyed it even though it was his first time. Emerging sexuality is often expressed in a common hide-and-seek game played in the bush by boys and girls.

When I noticed those changes in my body, I wanted to start fulfilling my sexual needs so when we were playing the hide and seek game, we started

to have sex. However, I was caught with a girl and her brother beat me seriously. I was 15 years old that time.” (Joseph, 19-year-old).

Girls discussed their developing sexual feelings as well, often finding them disturbing because they feared contracting HIV, becoming pregnant, and having to drop out of school. Both girls and boys viewed sex with some trepidation, an imperative of their new social role as adults, demanded by the onset of puberty.

In general, boys and girls viewed puberty as a positive event signaling good health. Youth were concerned that they develop at the same pace as their peers, and gradually learned to accept and manage puberty changes. Consistent with the literature, boys and girls who received adequate information about puberty before its onset navigated the process with greater ease (Dixon-Mueller 2011, Sommer and Sahin 2013). Most of the adolescents were worried, however, about sex; boys desired it and girls were admonished to avoid it. All expressed fear of its potential consequences: HIV infection, pregnancy, and school-leaving.

Although boys had mixed reactions to the onset of puberty, they generally perceived it as a sign of good health, remarking, “I was happy that I had matured,” or, “It shows that you are healthy.” At the same time, some worried that they were growing up either too quickly or too slowly, even though they were assured that they were developing normally by their friends and family.

I started experiencing changes in my body when I was 11. I wondered why I was growing up so fast but didn't say anything. I didn't feel bad since I knew from my brothers that such things happen to every growing man. I got support from my brothers, father, mother and even my sisters so I did not feel bad in any way. (Denis, 13 years old)

Peer networks represent a particularly influential social system as boys and girls navigate puberty. Observing and learning from others similar to them, adolescents compare their own experiences with those of their age mates, using this information to guide their own attitudes and behaviors. In addition, some boys and girls may prefer to learn from their peers because they feel uncomfortable talking with adults about certain topics. Younger boys, for example, wonder whether their pace of development is normal, and compare their body changes to those of their peers. Fourteen-year-old Peter explained that once he began to see changes in his body, “I was no longer jealous of others who had hair around their private parts when I went to the borehole.” Boys who had not been taught what to expect during puberty were initially disturbed by the changes in their body, especially nocturnal ejaculations. Sixteen-year-old Opio recalled,

I said nothing about my body changes with my friends until they told me they had also started experiencing them. I got over my fears when my aunt talked to me about the experience and explained that it was normal. That it is not caused by any infection, because I was thinking it could have been an infection. So when she told me it was natural I relaxed. She started the conversation. I was so worried I could not even sit in class.

Similarly, most girls welcomed puberty saying that it is “normal,” “healthy,” or signaled that they were now an adult. Only two of the girls considered puberty a negative event. One mentioned that puberty interfered with her freedom while another felt it was a bad thing because, “I started having feelings towards the opposite sex.” A few girls did not understand what was happening or had no one to guide them (this in the case of a girl who was living without a female adult in her household). Not surprisingly, the girls who were prepared in advance were more able to take their first menstruation in stride.

I started puberty at 14. It was a positive event because I was prepared for the changes early with lots of information. I was told it is not a bad thing. I didn't tell my friends anything but if they brought up the topic I would also talk and tell them my experience. Once they told me about a girl who woke up in the night and found she was dirtied with menstrual blood and started shouting. (Elizabeth, 16 years old)

Advice and instruction, two of the enculturation processes discussed in the previous chapter, are particularly important during puberty, as young people need information to help them manage their changing bodies and social roles. The structure of the social systems, especially kinship patterns, and the idea systems within which adolescents live, determine who is most appropriate for them to talk with and about what topics. Traditionally this role is filled not by parents, but by aunts or uncles, grandfathers or grandmothers. Like Elizabeth, most of the girls interviewed did have the opportunity to talk with someone about the changes they were experiencing; often an older female relative such as their mother, grandmother or aunt, or at times a sister, cousin or friend.

I felt more relaxed after my mother assured me that these changes happened to everyone. (Sarah, 15 years old)

At first puberty scared me. I thought I was going to die, but then my friends assured me that I was going through a normal process and I began to feel good about it. (Elizabeth, 16 years old)

I was unhappy when I started going through puberty and having my period because my mother was not back yet and there was no one to guide me through it. Eventually I told my grandma. I was scared because this had never happened to me before. My grandmother told me not to be ashamed because it happens to all women. (Stella, 16 years old)

Boys tended to discuss puberty changes with their peers, rather than their parents. Even boys who considered themselves close to their mothers or other family members remarked that they would be embarrassed to talk to their parents about puberty. "I did not

talk with my family. It is not easy to say such a thing to elders. It is easier to say it to young people,” explained a 14-year-old boy. It is not clear whether this embarrassment resulted from age hierarchies regarding appropriate conversation topics, or the association between sexuality and puberty changes. Boys explained that the topic comes up naturally in conversations with friends because they observe the changes in each other, for example, while bathing at the borehole. Boys seek advice from their friends about their developing sexuality – managing wet dreams, finding a girlfriend, fulfilling their sexual desires and fear of HIV. One boy explained, “I did not talk with my family but talked with my peers about having many women when I grow up. Some supported the idea of having many wives, while others rejected it due to HIV.”

Among the girls, four mentioned that they spoke with their mothers about puberty changes, five with friends and one girl spoke with no one, not even her friends, because she was afraid they would laugh at her. The girls remarked that they held these conversations with their mothers because they feel close to them. None thought it was appropriate to talk with their fathers about puberty changes, “Fathers don’t know how to teach girls about menstruation, it is mothers who know it.” Stella, now married, recalled that while her mother was away, her grandmother gave her guidance about puberty and bought her pads. “She taught me that what I was experiencing occurred to women so I should not be ashamed of it.” Girls also turn to their friends for reassurance, “I told my older friend because I was afraid I might be sick. She said that it happens to everyone.” They seek advice on “managing their periods” and their “growing feelings for boys.” The girls did not mention talking with teachers about their personal experiences, but did cite them as sources of information. However, several mentioned that teachers only talk to

“big girls,” suggesting that the information provided in school may come too late. Parents and teachers give similar information to girls, namely guidance on hygiene (bathing and using pads), coupled with admonitions about appropriate behavior – specifically being humble and respectful and avoiding sex.

Boys and girls take some time to learn to manage the physical changes they are experiencing. Some girls mentioned fear of staining their clothes in public or painful cramps during menstruation, sometimes missing school for these reasons. One girl explained, “Some girls who get their period hide so the boys don’t see them. They hide because their clothes will be stained with blood and they are afraid.” This finding is supported by results of a recent survey of 10- to 14-year-old girls in the Gulu sub-region which revealed that nearly one in five girls missed three or more days of school in the last month due to menstruation (Scales, Shramko, and Ashburn 2014). Boys also have concerns about their changing bodies, for example expressing worry about nocturnal ejaculations, “Things like wet dreams sometimes make boys think they could be sick. They can worry about a lot of things until they tell their friends who know about it,” remarked 14-year-old Peter.

6.2. Social Bodies: Evolving Norms and Roles

While most young people accept their changing bodies with relative ease, assuming adult social roles poses a greater challenge. The biological changes of puberty trigger significant life changes over a relatively short time period, sometimes as little as one or two years. Boys and girls explained that once they began to experience physical changes, they were expected to assume new social roles: enter into a sexual relationship, form a family, and move into their own home. They must also find a way to make a

living, provide for the needs of their children, and contribute to the welfare of their extended family. In essence, girls and boys are expected to become proficient in the rules of their cultural system and demonstrate this expertise by fulfilling culturally mandated social roles by the end of adolescence. Study participants expressed this in terms of “acting like an adult” or doing “adult things.” Both boys and girls define maturity as being respectful, behaving responsibly and listening to their elders. Youth recognize that it is no longer acceptable to talk back or be “big-headed,” rather they must demonstrate respect and responsibility – for example, helping to mediate or prevent disagreements, rather than causing them. Below, 14-year-old Peter talks about these new expectations.

A boy wants to make his bed and keep the curtain clean. His mind set changes also. He behaves like an adult and starts to refuse wrong things. When his parents are having a misunderstanding, he does not fight one of them, but stops them and talks to them to resolve things through dialogue.

Boys look forward to their new status, explaining that now that they are grown, they will be respected by the community (girls did not make similar comments). Some boys, however, did not feel ready for this life phase and were concerned about the new expectations facing them, as well as the risks of sexual relationships. “I am not happy that my body is changing into a man’s because I don’t know how to behave as an older person, I still feel like a child,” commented newly married Paul. Eighteen-year-old Isaac recalled his feelings during puberty, “My heart feelings changed. I had to stop being childish and start being like an adult. I was worried about how to take care of myself from the bad things in the world (diseases, stealing). I didn’t worry about body changes because those happen to everyone.”

Changes in social roles during puberty are closely linked to idea systems and young people recognize that they are expected to assume more gender-differentiated social roles at this point in their lives. In the words of 14-year-old Peter, “Until now, my life has not been any different from a girl’s life. When girls are still young they do everything that boys do. Once they are grown, that is when everyone gets to know whatever they are supposed to do.” In the narrative below, 14-year-old Peter offers his view of girls’ transition into puberty. His remarks touch on a number of gendered expectations for Acholi and Lango girls – namely, that they will begin to display their sexuality, move out of their parents’ huts, and demonstrate greater maturity and obedience.

[During puberty] a girl starts to develop breasts and begins to associate with friends of the same size. She will demand to sleep in her own house [apart from her parents] or at a friend’s place. She wants to be smart [attractive] so that men can see her. She puts on clothes that show her breasts. Her walking style changes. She is now showing signs of maturity. An ideal girl is respectful and listens to her parents. She does not rush to move to her own house if her parents do not yet feel she is mature enough. She follows her parents’ advice and when she is told to stop doing something she obeys.

The concerns of study participants reflect the intense interactions between sub-systems of the human ecosystem during adolescence. At the individual level, adolescents are experiencing rapid physical and cognitive changes, while their needs are evolving to encompass sex and reproduction and affective ties with a life partner. Boys and girls alike expressed a strong need to form their own household and gain respect from their elders by assuming an adult role. However, certain historical processes – prolonged conflict, the spread of HIV, and decades of exclusion from economic investment, have contributed to a situation in which youth have little access to resources and lack a robust social network

for support and assistance. Consequently, young women and men are unable to fulfill the cultural imperative of establishing their own household, as they struggle to make a living, acquire land and formalize their marriage.

Most young people come to appreciate the changes they experience during puberty and look forward to achieving respect from their elders by performing well in their new adult role. At the same time, however, many fear the changes that puberty augurs – not physical development, but the specter of new social roles and responsibilities, including sex and its consequences, which they often equate with HIV, death, and pregnancy. Girls are also frightened by their growing vulnerability to violence, in particular sexual assault. Based on the experiences they observe in their communities, they postulate a downward spiral of puberty, sex, and HIV infection, leading to school dropout, poverty, illness, and death.

A comparison of the puberty concerns of boys and girls illustrates the many ways that gender is embodied during puberty and the resulting divergent experiences for girls and boys, some of which may lead to lifelong gender inequities (Table 6). Boys are most concerned with beginning a sexual relationship, along with making a living to support their families. On the other hand, girls fear violence and sexual assault, pregnancy, and having to drop out of school. Underlying these concerns is the enduring influence of hegemonic masculinity, which defines men as predators and providers with an identity forged by sexual prowess, relegating women to a passive role – victims of men’s agency.

Table 6. Gendered Puberty Concerns

	Boys	Girls
Body changes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wet dreams • Timing of development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing menses • Timing of development
Social	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being teased 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being teased

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negative influence of peers • Feeling isolated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negative influence of peers
Romance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Getting a girlfriend • Being rejected by girls 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wary of boys
Sex	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being attractive to/loved by the opposite sex • Desires sex • Afraid of HIV/STIs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being attractive to/loved by the opposite sex • Fears sex (although also feel desire) • Afraid of HIV/STIs • Afraid of pregnancy
Violence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enculturation of female obedience often results in violence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fear of sexual & rape • Afraid to go out at night
Economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support family 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staying in school

Next I will examine the concerns of boys and girls in greater detail, a number of which are related to their unfolding sexuality. As mentioned above, while their biological needs and desire for sex and relationships are growing, the strategies youth employ to fulfill these needs are mediated by social structures such as peers, family, and the broader community, as well as by idea systems and broader political and economic processes.

In general, adolescent boys are focused on securing a girlfriend and having sex, and preoccupied with the fear of being rejected by girls. They feel pressure to enter into a romantic relationship and form a family soon after they observe pubertal changes. George, a new father recalled, “In that time, you feel like you should be with a girl you like. But it is hard to get her since you are scared. But I got her. You have so much desire to be with a girl. So you struggle hard to get her.” Boys are also concerned about being attractive to girls, as Opio notes: “Boys worry about pimples on their faces. You find people start saying you look ugly. If you go to a girl, no girl will talk to you.”

Boys rely on support from their peers to navigate this new terrain of sexual relationships. “My friends think about what they need to do to get a girlfriend. They

approach girls and when girls abuse them they get discouraged and ask for advice,” explained 14-year-old Peter. Despite the drive to fulfill their sexual desires, boys are frightened of HIV, and identify it as their greatest concern once they start seeing signs of puberty, “At times I worry when I feel like falling in love with a girl, because I don’t know how healthy she is and I worry that she may infect me and I will die,” commented 17-year-old Solomon.

When asked directly about their concerns as they enter puberty, boys mostly referred to issues related to fulfilling the hegemonic masculine roles such as the challenges of finding a mate and forming their own household, and their ability to support a wife and children, and to meet the needs of their extended family. These expectations weigh heavily on some boys, especially those with fragile family support.

At 14 when I noticed body changes, my voice changed. I also started developing interest in a girlfriend because I wanted someone to keep me company. I had seen that since there was poverty and there was no one to help us that time when my mother died, I should first get someone. My friends told me that the time has come, you cannot avoid it. That is why I picked the woman I am with now. (James, 17, new father)

When I reached puberty, my friends began telling me that I should get a wife. However, I didn’t want a wife until I could build a hut for her. I first had sex at 13. Once I started seeing changes I talked to my fellow children I lived with and they told me to find a wife and bring her home. I told them I did not want to bring a wife until I had a hut for sleeping and not disturb my mother. (Michael, 19, new father)

Girls, on the other hand, express concerns about doing well in their studies and staying in school, “I felt I needed to study hard and prayed that my parents would be able to educate me.” They worry that their family will not be able to continue paying their school fees or that they will become pregnant and have to drop out of school. Many girls

are wary of boys, who they believe seek to seduce them, and fear sex and its consequences. Violence is also a significant concern for girls, as discussed in greater detail in Chapter 8. In fact, all of the girls interviewed said they were afraid of violence, especially sexual assault. Even the 10- and 11-year-olds mentioned that they were afraid of boys and feared rape. Some of the girls remarked that now that they have begun to menstruate, they no longer feel safe going out at night, “Unnecessary movements in the night should be avoided because someone can easily rape you and infect you with HIV.” This fear is reinforced by the advice they receive from parents and teachers not to move about at night and to protect themselves from boys.

6.3. Political Bodies: Enforcement of Social Expectations

In Acholi and Lango communities, as in most places around the globe, boys and girls are expected to begin living up to new cultural and social expectations when they enter puberty. The degree to which individuals are capable, ready and eager to fulfill these expectations varies. Youth receive both guidance and pressure from all parts of the social system – family, teachers and elders – to assume these new roles. Teachers may provide needed information and offer moral guidance, as might parents. Their advice is highly gendered, and for girls focuses on moral admonitions intended to protect them from sex and its consequences. Adults also model appropriate behavior, criticize boys and girls who violate social norms, and physically punish those who break the rules, enculturation processes discussed in the previous chapter.

Table 7 displays the advice young people report receiving from members of the social institutions in which they are embedded, comparing the responses of boys and girls. Advice falls into general categories of school, relationships, staying safe, sex and its

consequences, social norms, and peers. The information displayed in the table illustrate the extent to which girls (not boys) are advised to be careful about sex, pregnancy, and HIV, and reveal the fear of violence that constrains the mobility of girls as they enter puberty. These results also suggest that adults more strongly enforce norms of obedience, respect, and humility among girls than boys. Although valued for both men and women these norms are strongly associated with gender asymmetries which dictate that women be submissive to men and their elders. This table provides evidence of the ways that the social system, through the processes of instruction and advice giving enforce hegemonic gender norms.

Table 7. What Advice Do Boys and Girls Receive?

Domain	Boys	Girls
School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study hard • Stay in school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study hard
Relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get a wife • Avoid girlfriends 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wait to marry
Staying safe		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't go out at night (5) • Stay home • Boys are planning bad things • You can be raped
Sex and its consequences		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sex and pregnancy (7) • Don't meet boys • Don't have sex • Don't ruin your life • Remember you are now a big person and can have a child • Be careful not to get pregnant • Don't have sex, you will get HIV (3) • Don't start having sex because it will make you die early (HIV). • Don't get HIV • If you engage in reckless love you will get HIV

Alcohol	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't drink 	
Social norms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work hard 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be obedient • Be respectful • Be humble • Be disciplined
Peers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid peers who are a bad influence • Choose good friends 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid bad friends • Avoid bad company

Peer networks also enforce social norms, as illustrated by the stories boys and girls shared about their conversation with their friends, the power they ascribe to “falling in with the wrong group” and stories of being teased or mocked. Sixteen-year-old student Opio recalled, “I could find the whole class talking about me. So that would make me dodge classes. I kept dodging classes and that made my performance drop.” Elizabeth, also 16, remembered, “When I was 14 I was beaten on the way home from school by spoiled girls because they thought I should have a boyfriend like them.” The power of peers to enforce social expectations, in this case age grades, is illustrated in Opio’s story below.

I started experiencing body changes at thirteen when I started feeling shabby and isolated myself from my peers. I worried over it to the point that I could skip classes and this made my performance drop. Each and every time you go to where your peers are they move away from you. They tell you that you are too old for them, but you as an older person should not associate with young ones. You find that most people fear you. Like the boys in the boarding school where I was. It came time for bathing; those younger boys were not allowed to enter the bathroom when the bigger boys were bathing.

Chapter 7. Becoming an Adult: Life Trajectories Viewed through a Systems Lens

The previous chapter described the lived experiences of boys and girls during puberty and explored the ways that social meanings of gender are inscribed on their developing physical bodies. This includes, for example, how safe they feel, their ability to move throughout the community, the parameters of appropriate sexual relationships and comfort with their developing bodies and sexual feelings. These results confirm what has been shown in other settings, from a very young age boys and girls in northern Uganda construct their gender identities through ongoing interaction with family, peers, communities and social institutions. The bodily changes of puberty trigger a period of accelerated change, not only physically, but also socially; expectations to begin fulfilling adult gendered roles increase, and boys and girls respond with varying levels of comfort and ability.

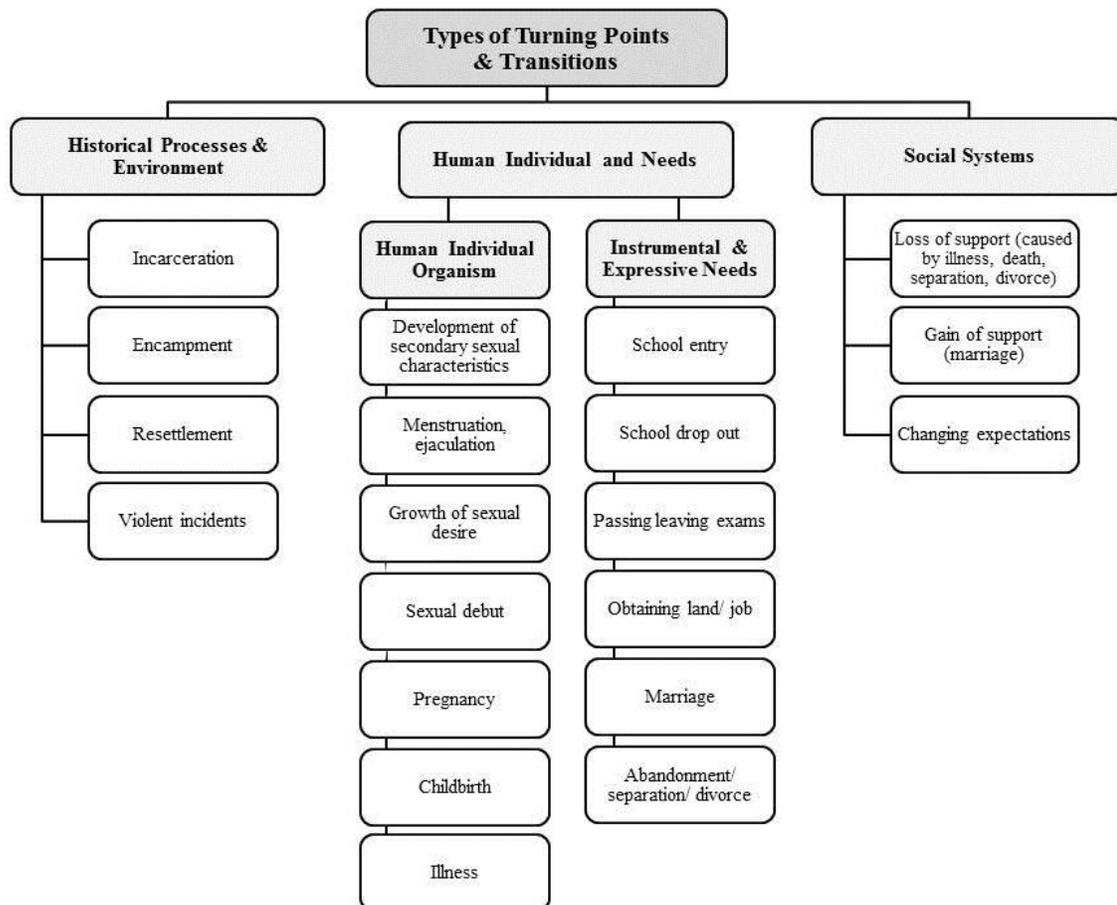
This chapter explores the factors that support or constrain the ability of young people to develop into happy, healthy, productive adults. Analysis of participant's life stories elucidate youth trajectories, viewed through the lens of the intersectionality of encompassing cultural systems, environments, and processes. Beginning with a brief grounding in life course concepts, I discuss the needs and aspirations shared by study participants and consider how the cultural and social systems they were born into shape their ability to fulfill these needs. The chapter closes with a typology of the life situations of study participants (e.g. in-school, married, single mother) and review of the factors that have shaped their trajectories thus far.

A life course perspective provides an analytical lens to elucidate the intersecting factors that shape the unique pathways of boys and girls and ultimately influence their life course outcomes. According to McLeod and Almazan (2004: 395), the life course is punctuated by physiological changes, life transitions, and turning points that alter developmental and experiential trajectories. *Physiological events*, such as hormonal changes during puberty create new “physical and social selves” that require adjustment and adaptation. *Transitions* involve age-graded movement into and out of major social roles and/or institutions, such as entering elementary school, marriage, or childbirth. These may occur on- or-off time and may be either expected or unexpected, although transitions that are off-time and unexpected have the most profound effects (McLeod and Almazan 2004). In contrast, *turning points* are defined as periods or points in time in which an individual undergoes a major transformation in self-image, relationships, or life roles. Turning points are often associated with major life events such as graduation or marriage. Bodily changes, turning points, and transitions have the potential to create new opportunities, alter life goals, and create stress. Their effect on the life course is influenced by ecological and cultural systems, which affect how individuals interpret and respond to these events, and determines the resources and social capital youth have at their disposal. As a result, individual boys and girls faced with similar situations will exercise their agency in unique ways, creating diverse life pathways.

The complementarity of the life course perspective and the ecological approach of the CSP is depicted in Figure 13, which categorizes major turning points and transitions experienced by the youth in this study according to CSP sub-systems including: 1) *historical processes and environment* (events related to historical processes and the

environment such as civil war, encampment and resettlement); 2) *human individual organism and needs* (biological/physiological transitions such as menarche/spermarche or sexual debut); and 3) *social and ideational systems* (gaining or losing social support, changing expectations of family and friends).

Figure 13. Types of Turning Points and Transitions Organized by CSP Categories



7.1 Life Course Outcomes

Life course literature generally conceptualizes four categories of outcomes: 1) survival and physical health; 2) emotional and mental health; 3) socioeconomic status; and 4) social relationships (establishing stable, positive relationships and maintaining adequate social support networks) (Elder and Giele 2009). These outcomes overlap with

the basic human needs included in the CSP for food, security, health, sex, and reproduction, as well as expressive needs for a gendered self-identity, affective bonds, and a sense of community and meaning. The results of this research suggest that although these needs are expressed equally by boys/men and girls/women, opportunities for fulfilling them are shaped by the gendered nature of Acholi and Lango communities – from the cultural norms and attitudes held by community members to the structural frameworks which dictate different educational, social, sexual, and economic opportunities for boys and girls.

As we seek to understand the pathways taken by youth in northern Uganda, and the resulting life course outcomes, it is important to be grounded in the needs and aspirations articulated by study participants. As mentioned in the introductory chapter, this research was embedded in an intervention project funded with particular outcomes in mind: delayed sexual debut, increased FP use, decreased intimate partner violence, and more equitable gender norms. While for the most part these goals are consistent with the aspirations voiced by youth, they use very different language to talk about them.

When asked about their hopes and dreams for the future, almost all of the young people interviewed, across sex and age group, mentioned becoming educated, forming a stable, productive household, bringing children into their family and raising them to be healthy and educated (Table 8). These aspirations correspond with the organic, instrumental, social, and expressive human needs laid out in the CSP (e.g., housing, food, sex and reproduction; employment, education, and affective ties). Table 8 shows that most of these aspirations are aligned with multiple human needs: for example, education will help to fulfill instrumental needs for employment but also brings respect. Similarly,

while forming a family fulfills organic needs for sex and reproduction, it can also provide love, affection and practical help in the household.

Study participants also aspired to improve the economic status of their families and become respected adults. In many ways, these goals overlap with the donor objectives mentioned above, however, youth tended to frame their goals in terms of the collective rather than the individual good, envisioning their future in terms of the well-being of their family, clan, and community. They dreamed not only of doing well themselves, but also of doing well for their family, and working towards a safer, more equitable community. “When I look around, there is a big gap between the rich and poor. So in my heart I feel that if I were the person I want to be, I would work hard to find ways of closing the gap,” remarked Joseph, one of the more idealistic study participants.

Table 8. Aspirations of Adolescents by Organic, Affective and Instrumental Needs

ASPIRATIONS	ORGANIC	AFFECTIVE	INSTRUMENTAL
Being educated		X	X
Making a living	X	X	X
Improving the situation of the extended family	X	X	X
Being respected		X	X
Marriage and children	X	X	X
Educating and supporting children		X	X

Completing their education was by far the most common and strongly felt goal among the youngest boys and girls in the study. They also mentioned getting a job,

having children, supporting their family, and living up to the expectations of their family to be “good” and “respectful” men and women. They wanted to achieve what their parents failed to accomplish due to the war, especially completing their education. Ten-year-old Judith explained, “My brother said education is the only way to a bright future. He encouraged me to concentrate on my studies so that in the future I will be able to get a good job. He told me not to leave my studies.” The aspirations of older adolescents were similar: they also voiced the desire to finish school and meet the expectations of their parents.

The hopes of newly married and parenting youth, however, who no longer had the luxury to dream of what they will accomplish in a faraway future, began to shift to their immediate needs. Young men focused on economic concerns of being able to feed, educate, and provide health care to their children. They also hoped to meet family expectations and be respected in their community, perhaps formally recognized, for example by election to the local council.

New husbands and fathers were very focused on improving their economic situation and providing for their family. In addition to the food they grew in their garden, they needed to earn money by raising and selling goats or cattle, selling charcoal or alcohol, working in a paid job, or establishing a small business. Single mothers responsible for supporting themselves and their children had similar concerns. Gloria, a new mother who lived at home and received no support from the father of her baby explained her strategy for improving her situation.

I think that if I do something good this year, I will get a cow in the New Year because there is something small I have done and when I add this money, I will be able to buy. Not only because of that, after that, I have

five goats that I think in future when they give birth and increase, they can help me take good care of my children while I am still alive.

Almost all of the youth hoped to educate their children, and some also mentioned helping their siblings complete their studies. Once young men and women became parents, they generally relinquished with regret their dream of completing school and becoming a professional, perhaps an engineer or a teacher. Instead, they dreamed of educating their children so that they could make a better life for themselves in the future. In that way they would continue the legacy of their parents who invested in their children to fulfill the dreams they were unable to achieve.

Education. As mentioned above, educational achievement was by far the most common dream of young people; they viewed school success as their pathway to a better future, as well as an obligation to their parents. Youth hoped to stay in school, and those who had already left dreamed of returning. Robert, who recently brought his wife to live with his family, remarked, “The biggest hope I have is to go back to school to get some vocational skills. The way I see it is education is the key. When you are not educated there is no way you can get enough money to have a future.”

While boys tended to focus on education as a means to economic security; girls valued education because it provides protection and independence. Once girls became mothers, however, most abandoned their hopes for academic achievement, instead investing their dreams in their children. Martha, a new mother living in her parents’ home, reflected with regret:

In case I cannot study, then I hope my son should at least be able to study. Among all these hopes that I mentioned, education, business and a good marriage partner, I hope for education as my greatest dream. Education is important because if I

were educated my husband wouldn't have listened to people and left me. I would have my own money and not beg him for financial support... I wouldn't mind him leaving me. Secondly, all educated girls are fine and even my friends who studied are okay and it's me who is not fine.

The obligation of young people to complete their education in order to pay back their family's investment in their education is a dominant theme of the life stories.

Nineteen-year-old Joseph, who was waiting to marry his girlfriend until he completed high school explained, "Since they are helping me to become someone, I should also work very hard in the future so they also feel the importance of paying school fees. I want to rise to a level where they will not regret wasting money paying my school fees." This theme is reflected not only in the hopes, dreams and regrets of youth, but also in the disappointment and anger adults expressed towards young people who drop out of school due to pregnancy or marriage (especially girls). When a girl drops out of school to have children or marry, it is seen as a violation of her informal contract with her family, and one reason for reluctance to invest in girls' education. Parents are disillusioned when their daughters become pregnant and feel that they invested poorly in their education. There is a tacit understanding that a family will invest in its children, who, in turn, will work hard to achieve economic success and contribute to the well-being of their parents and family. The quotes below demonstrate boys' and girls' recognition of their family's sacrifice and expectations:

- "It is important because I see they are sacrificing a lot for me. They provide for whatever I want yet sometimes they go to bed hungry." (Joseph, 19 years old)
- "My parents expect love from us and a future because they have sent us to school." (Faith, 13 years old)

- “My family expects me to study and support them in the future. They have the same expectations for my brothers and sisters. If I don’t follow their expectations they stop paying for school.” (Joyce, 17 years old)
- “They are expecting me to study hard so that I can fight the poverty that exists in our homes.” (Peter, 14 years old)

Earning respect. Beyond education, young people hoped to gain the respect of others by living up to gender role expectations, forming a family and supporting their parents and clan. The importance of respect is a common theme in research conducted among youth in northern Uganda. Bell and Aggleton (2012) report, for example, that respect was mentioned by all young people when describing their relationships with parents and elders. Bell and Aggleton found that it was considered disrespectful for young people to argue with, answer back, or disobey adults and parents. A respondent in Bell and Aggleton’s study stated, “Young people are respected as an adult after having got married, but if they are not married, people don’t respect you. There will be no contribution in meetings. They will have no respect even if they are clever. Marriage leads to adulthood. Even if you have a degree you are not respected. You are underrated” (Bell and Aggleton 2012: 391).

Embodying community expectations for appropriate gender roles is central to earning respect. During discussions about respect, young people were quick to point to neighbors and relatives who are admired by the community because they behave according to gendered expectations, as well as those who are ostracized for failing to live up to gender ideals. Use of projective techniques, in which boys and girls were asked to select a plastic animal which represents an ideal man or woman, yielded descriptions of

the way men and women should behave in order to gain the respect of their family and community, namely by providing for and protecting their children. Solomon, who is not yet in a romantic relationship, used the metaphors of a hen and a rooster to explain established gender roles that define men as providers and protectors and women as nurturers.

When it gets food it does not pretend and eat that food alone, it first calls its wife and their chicks and they eat together. The hen takes care of its chicks in a good way, for example if the weather is cold, it gathers its chicks and covers them so they are not exposed to coldness it. It guides its chicks in order to prevent them from going to bad places and falling in a hole, it shows them how to dodge that hole and it shares food with its chicks without being selfish.

Robert conveyed a similar vision of gender norms in his description of an ideal woman. Newly married, he held traditional expectations of gender roles in his home. “I picked a hen to represent an ideal woman because an ideal woman teaches her children and shows them good ways. A hen when you look at it lays eggs, hatches and later takes care of her chicks until they are grown and then she separates from them. She teaches her children when they come back from school and gives them good advice.”

Young people hoped to live their lives in a way that would earn respect for themselves and their family. Nineteen-year-old George explained, “My greatest hope for my family is to see that they are respected and educated. I believe that respect is free and not purchased. A respected home is where people are kind and good mannered and show good examples. I believe my family will be respected because I respect myself.”

Understanding the hopes and dreams of young people can inform the development of programs that meet their needs. It is important for program designers and managers to empathize with adolescents; knowing what makes young people happy (and

sad) can help programs reach them on an emotional level. Much of the sadness shared by study participants stems from the difficult situations they faced growing up, such as poverty, hunger, sickness, and violence as well as the loss of loved ones and their support network. All of the study participants witnessed firsthand the violence of war, including abduction, injury, and death, and survived the challenges of internal displacement. In the passage below, Amos, 19, described his feelings about being abducted by the LRA.

The thing that hurt me so much...I was captured with one of my brothers and then I was released on the grounds that I was young. When my brother was captured, we were together with my mother, my brother and my other sister. We all came back but that brother of mine never came back, which made me sad.

Robert, 18, was happily married and looking forward to having children, yet he recalled with regret the events of the war and the constraints it places on his future. “The saddest thing was the death of my father in 2002. During the LRA war there was no food. There was no going to school because when you want to go to school you had to pay, yet there was no money. So we had many problems, which is why I did not study up to now.”

Girls and boys shared feelings of fear, grief, loneliness and loss of connections. Often these emotions were linked to their role in the social system and related cultural norms and attitudes. The most emotional life stories came from child mothers, especially those abandoned by the fathers of their children. These young women lived with their parents, and felt depressed, ashamed and stigmatized. Several shared narratives about suicidal thoughts or attempts. Three of the girls in the study – all facing unwanted pregnancies – had considered suicide, and tried to end the pregnancy. Young men faced challenges as well as they began to assume their expected role of family provider and

protector; many felt overwhelmed and burdened and mourned the loss of their dreams. School leaving, usually accompanied by a loss of hope for a better future, was a sad event for many of the study participants.

On the other hand, adolescents are strong and resilient, and find joy in the love and support of those around them. Youth whose affective needs for respect and love were met were particularly optimistic. Many cited love and protection and feeling respected and appreciated by their family and clan as sources of happiness. “I feel I have reached a stage where I am respected because of the trust they have in me. It also makes me feel proud of myself,” remarked Joseph, a 19-year-old student. A number of the boys and girls counted school achievements among their happiest moments. Newly married Hope, who at 17 has already had a particularly difficult life, including abduction, domestic violence, and losing both parents, recalls happily the pride of her parents in her achievements.

I was happy that my parents loved me. They loved me for participating in school activities and they would teach me at home to read and other things I didn't know. What I remember very well was that at 13 years I started participating in school athletics and I even reached the district level...my parents became so proud and this is one most important events of my life. I knew how to speak and also I was the class leader.

Good health, marriage/cohabitation, sex, and children were sources of happiness, as well as loving God and abiding by their faith. Newly married Robert recounted many sad and difficult events in his short life, but also remarked, “Our staying together as husband and wife makes me happy because when there is something I may not know, my wife can help me.” Amos, also newly married, has confronted many challenges as well, including abduction, the death of his mother, and dropping out of school. Like Robert, he

finds his wife a source of comfort, “Let me say when I was still young, I did not know that a woman makes people happy, but for me she makes me happy in very many ways...” For many of the new parents, the birth of their children, and the joy of their families as they welcome a new generation represent their greatest source of happiness.

The remainder of this chapter explores factors that support the safe passage of children to adulthood, as well as those which pose obstacles along the way, focusing first on education, then on sexual debut and family formation.

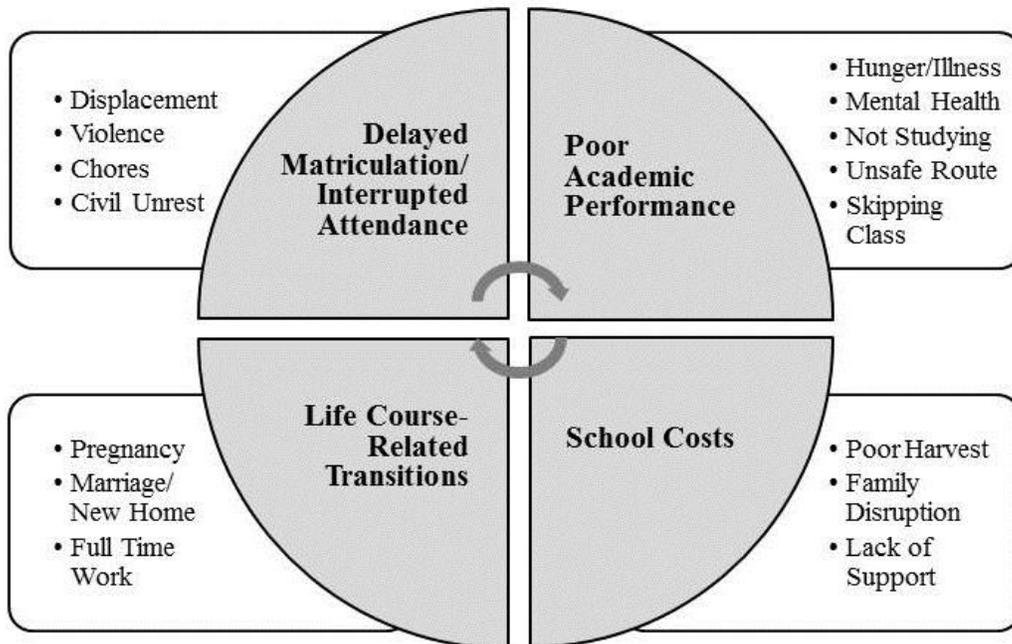
7.2. Pathways to Education

The excerpt below from the life story of Opio, a 16-year-old boy still in school, illustrates the multiple interrelated factors that influence academic success; including family instability, poor health, civil unrest, abduction and teasing.

From the time I was born up to the age of five, my mother suffered from problems caused by my father. I stayed with my mother up to three years, and then I left her and was sent away. I was taken to one of her sisters where I stayed up to the time I started coming to visit my mother during holidays. I was given all I needed, but the kind of care that a mother would give to a child was not given. The problem that kept affecting me was that I fell sick time and again. That is why I left my mother. I felt sick so often that my auntie never took it seriously. My saddest memory was when the Lord’s Resistance Army rebels kept on disturbing the place I was staying. That was when I was abducted. So starting from that year up to ten years I experienced some things that I should not have been witnessing. It affected me sometimes, someone could leave school and stay for a month and that is when you return back to school. My health in this period was not so good because you could find that the health centers were usually closed. Most times, there were drug shortages, you find the rebels would go to the health center and loot all the medicines. I joined primary one when I was eight years old, but by then I kept on jumping some of the classes. When I was in school good things did not happen as I was often sick. Sometimes I could be mentally disturbed. That is still affecting me up to now. Some things I could not remember and that left my performance at school poor. Sometimes, teachers could be talking about me. The worst thing that happened at school was in 2006 when I fell sick and had a problem of malnutrition. When I went to school, everyone was calling me names. That made me almost drop out of school.

While all of the young people valued education highly, only a few completed their secondary leaving exam and none had finished any vocational training or higher level education at the time they developed their life stories. This is consistent with survey data from 2011, which shows that only 5% of women and 10% of men age six and over in the region have completed primary school; and about two-thirds of women between 15 and 24 are literate (UBOS and Macro International 2012). According to national policy, girls who get married must leave school. After time away, most never re-enter the school system, mainly due to the stigma associated with older girls studying with their younger peers and lack of childcare (Patel et al. 2012). Figure 14 displays the interrelated factors which contribute to school dropout: delayed matriculation or interrupted attendance, inability to cover the costs associated of attending school, poor academic performance, and life course-related transitions such as pregnancy, marriage, or full time work.

Figure 14. Primary Causes and Contributing Factors for School Dropout



Delayed matriculation/interrupted attendance. Many of the young people interviewed enrolled in school late or did not attend regularly, which affected their academic performance. During the war some children had to leave school to relocate to the camps, or were unable to attend school consistently because of unsafe conditions on the way to school. It was also common for boys and girls to miss a term because they were unable to pay school fees or purchase their books or uniform. Young people, especially girls, also missed school because their mothers, stepmothers or aunts required their help with chores. Students who were unable to attend school regularly sometimes failed their exams, which resulted in reduced family support for their education and eventual dropout. Some youth explained that they had difficulty doing well in school because they were hungry, ill, or distracted by worries. A few told of experiences which made them feel unsafe in school and influenced their ability to perform well, such as being harshly treated or sexually harassed by teachers or incidents of teasing and bullying. In some cases, young people did not study or missed school to go the movies or spend time with friends. A number of boys and girls blamed their friends for being a “bad influence,” encouraging them to skip class, flirt with boys, get a girl/boyfriend or drink rather than study.

School costs. Almost all of the youth interviewed reported that it was a struggle to pay school fees or buy their uniform or other needed supplies. Looking across the life stories the importance of a robust social network to keep children in school becomes evident. In most cases, it took several adults to provide children the support and resources needed to perform well in school, especially over several years. Stable, two parent

families, although rare in this setting, were best able to ensure a consistent education for their children. Many of the children in this study, however, were orphans or lived in single-parent households, and as a result, had to patch together needed resources from their extended social network. The adult who paid their school fees often shifted each term, for example from father to uncle to elder brother, depending on who had resources available. Some children lived in extremely adverse circumstances, with little support from relatives, and were unable to stay in school. The excerpt below tells the story of Lilian, a new mother who lives with her stepmother.

[Tell me about events that took place when you were 10 to 15.] That was the time I suffered most. I was left alone in the house. I would cry a lot and I would come here to the office [Save the Children] when I was still a member of the Peace Club. I would play and go back home. I tried to forget but when I was alone I just kept going. My father died early in 2002 when I was four. My mother died in 2004 when I was about six or seven. I was still young. My mother gave birth to two other children who died and another one after the death of my father. The sad things were the death of my mother and also instead of taking care of us, my father's relatives abandoned us. I was happy that I was in school, but finally I could not manage it anymore so I dropped out.

Disruptions in family structure, for example divorce or remarriage, could have either a positive or negative effect on a young person. For example, a brother's marriage might mean that the money he provided for school fees was spent elsewhere, at the behest of his new wife. On the other hand, a new wife might be sympathetic to her new brother or sister, or bring additional resources to the family. Older boys and girls were sometimes able to earn money to fill in the gap by doing small jobs or by selling produce that they had harvested. In some cases, boys and girls were able to return to school once more support was available. Often, however, once children left school they never returned.

This became more likely as they get older and the imperative of forming their own family becomes more imminent.

The narratives revealed the tremendous practical and instrumental support needed from a young person's kinship network to keep them in school – moral support, encouragement even in the face of failure or misbehavior, school fees, money to purchase exercise books and other supplies, and sometimes advocacy with school officials. Martha, who lived with her aunt and uncle until she moved in with her mother at 12, offers an example. As a child she lived with her aunt and uncle, where she was overworked and beaten by her aunt. Martha sometimes missed school because of her chores and was also beaten by her teachers. At the age of 12 Martha went to live with her mother where things improved. She describes multiple and shifting sources of support for her education. When she was a child her mother provided emotional and material support, and her father paid her school fees. At the same time, her sister gave her advice that motivated her stay in school, and a friend gave her money when she needed it. Later on when her father could no longer pay her school fees, her uncle, with whom she lived, paid them. Halfway through her first year of secondary school, however, her uncle remarried and stopped paying her fees. His new wife had her own children and convinced him that he was no longer responsible for his niece's schooling. At that point, her second paternal uncle pitched in. Despite these efforts, however, when Martha was 17 she became pregnant and left school. The father of her baby was 23 when they met and he offered to pay her school fees. He refused to use condoms and assured her that he could prevent pregnancy by timing intercourse according to her menstrual cycle. Within a year she was pregnant and

alone. Martha now lives with her mother and new baby, where she feels ashamed and mistreated.

Beyond material support, high expectations and encouragement also help girls and boys stay in school. In the life story excerpt below, 16-year-old Judith describes the moral support she received from her family which enabled her to continue her education.

My brother changed my life during the time I didn't want to study. He said education is the only way to a bright future. He encouraged me that if I concentrate on my studies then in the future I will be able to get a good job so I should not leave studies. My aunt also encouraged me. There was a time I sat for exams in P.6 and I failed to make it to P.7 and I decided that I would never go back to school. Then my aunt talked to me, encouraging me to go back to school and repeat P.6. She told me that when I repeat it I will then be in a position to get better grades to go to P.7. That is when I went back to school.

Delayed matriculation. Young people who enrolled in school late or whose education was interrupted often found themselves behind in their studies, placed in classes with younger students, and struggling to keep up. As a result, they were more likely to leave school without passing their leaving exams. Robert explained his inconsistent school attendance, "I tried going back to school and then I tried studying and that is what made me happy somehow. I first started school at the age of six years but again stopped at the age of seven since we ran away because of the war. I again went back to school at the age of 15." Robert values school highly but eventually left to work full time to support his mother and new wife and child.

Life course-related factors. The most frequent reasons youth cited for leaving school were related to life course transitions, such as pregnancy, marriage, or full-time work. The sequence of these events was not always clear in young people's narratives. In their minds, falling in love, having sex, pregnancy, full-time work, marriage, and leaving

school are tied together in one knot of life experience, rather than a step-by-step process triggered by a single event. Nevertheless, most of the boys and girls began cohabitating or marriage as a result of pregnancy.

Once it is discovered that a girl is pregnant, she must leave school. A boy has several options, he may deny responsibility, although that is difficult in the small communities where this study took place, run away to work or study elsewhere, or invite the girl into his household (with or without negotiating bride-price). Most boys also drop out of school to work full time to support their wife and child. Some boys and girls hope to return to school after their child is born, once they are on their feet economically. In several cases, the girl herself, her parents or her husband hoped that she would continue school after her baby was born. For example, two of the new fathers said they hoped their wife would be able to attend vocational training, since she had already come so far in her education. A few boys also hoped to return to school once their economic situation improved. However, at the time of the interview, none of the study participants had returned to school.

Pregnant school girls are severely criticized and a cause of great embarrassment to their family. They are a visible representation of a society member who has violated cultural norms and challenged social structures. As such, their transgression brings shame not only to their parents but to their entire clan. Boys who impregnate girls outside of the marriage contract are also highly criticized and their family may be required to pay a fine to the girl's family, or begin bride-price negotiations to enter into a formal contract with the girl and her family. In such a situation, it is rare that a family would continue to cover the costs of their daughter's schooling, because they feel she has broken her compact

with them. Families invest in their children's education with the explicit understanding that they will later contribute to the household economy. This is the economic strategy that families bank on: short-term investment in their children's education with the expectation of a long-term pay-off. Once a child does something which indicates they are not living up to their side of the agreement – getting a girl pregnant, getting in trouble, or failing an exam – families may reduce their investment in that child, possibly transferring resources to another son or daughter who they consider a safer investment. Some boys, for example, explained that they are a disappointment to their family or that their family has “lost faith in them” and no longer wanted to support their education.

After this overview of factors that shape academic success, let us take a closer look at the ways these factors play out in the lives of study participants. At the time of the study, all of the 10- to 14-year-olds and the older adolescents (not married or pregnant), except for one, were still in school. The exception, Ronald, had left school to support his widowed mother who was too ill to manage alone.

Table 9 presents the reasons the adolescents gave for leaving school. Among the girls, pregnancy (4) or marriage without pregnancy (5) were the most common causes; three left school because their families could not pay school fees, and one left to help in the garden, at her father's request. Attributing a primary cause for leaving school among the boys is less straightforward. Their narratives rarely addressed the decision to leave school directly, instead it appears that over time it became increasingly necessary, and expected, that older boys would discontinue their studies to work in the garden and support themselves and their families (3). In two cases, the boys mentioned specifically

that they left school to support their wife and child. Two of the boys explained that they could not pay the school fees, and one stated that he lacked support from his family because they had lost faith in him.

Table 9. Reasons Given by Study Participants for School Dropout among Boys and Girls

	School fees	Work to support self/family	Work to support wife/children	Pregnancy	Marriage (not pregnant)
Boys (n=8)	3	3	2	0	0
Girls (n=13)	3	1	0	4	5
Total	6	4	2	4	5

Although it is possible to identify factors related to school dropout, no clear causal pathway emerges. For boys, the factors mentioned above as well as others – sex, love, economic imperatives, poor grades, the inability to pay school fees, and a desire to be viewed as an adult – all combined to push boys out the school door. Moreover, without the ability to continue in vocational or technical training or to study at the university, there may be little practical advantage of graduating from high school. For most girls, on the other hand, there was a clear precipitating factor: pregnancy or marriage. The complex chain of events leading to family formation will be discussed in the next section.

The passage below from the life history of Peace, a new mother, illustrates how the factors associated with school dropout are intertwined. An orphan, Peace struggled to attend school and keep her siblings in school. She found it very difficult because she had little support from her relatives. Although the excerpt below implies that she dropped out of school before becoming pregnant, her full life story suggests that is not the case. Peace

explains that she and her boyfriend were in senior one and two when they met. They planned to marry when they finished school, but she got pregnant, even though they were using condoms. Peace's boyfriend asked her to let him finish school before they had children. When she discovered that she was pregnant at the age of 16, she became very angry and tried to abort. Peace and her baby now live with her husband and his mother. Her husband also left school because his mother was ill, and there was no one else to pay his school fees or support the family.

When my mother was still alive I had a good life, but when she died life became so difficult. I became a mother [of her siblings] with no one to support us. I struggled and sat for my primary leaving examination and I started secondary school. After the first term I tried and I was position number 11. I could not see my report card because I hadn't paid my fees, but people told me what I got. I thought this over and decided that since there was no one to support me, the best course was to drop out of school and help my young ones [younger siblings]. This is when boys started asking me out. Since I knew that I had nobody, I agreed and left school, got pregnant, and gave birth. My friends gave me bad advice that since I didn't have anyone to pay for my school they advised me to get my own home. I took their advice as a good thing and I ended up getting lost and throwing myself in a hole.

These results demonstrate the critical role of the resources which flow through social structures such as the family and clan. In Peace's situation, her family was either unwilling or unable to provide her the resources she needed and she looked elsewhere for support. The research of Annan et al. (2011) on the ability of former LRA abductees to integrate successfully into society suggests that it was human capital rather than post-traumatic stress or other factors that were most important in determining their success. They found that it took significant support and sacrifice on the part of vulnerable families to keep children in school. Support entailed paying school fees and purchasing supplies, monitoring and supervising children to ensure they attend school and do their homework,

providing free time from chores to study, and offering moral support and motivation. There are significant opportunity costs to investing in children's education in terms of lost labor and lack of resources to invest in other economic ventures. While the family, as the most interested party, is key in their children's school success, other individuals also provide valuable support, such as teachers, church leaders and members, and staff at the youth resource centers or other NGO initiatives.

7.3 The Beginning of the Journey: Courtship and Sex

Although rooted in childhood experiences, the pathway to marriage and parenthood begins in earnest with sexual debut. The stories boys and girls told of their first sexual experience are set in puberty at a time of increasing sexual desire and social pressure to have a boyfriend or girlfriend. Sexual debut generally led rapidly to pregnancy and then to marriage or cohabitation, and young people use the words sex, love, and marriage somewhat interchangeably. Boys spoke freely of their quest for a girlfriend, explaining that they desired sex, and also felt lonely or needed a helpmate. Although some of the girls mentioned sexual desire, their narratives tended to focus on the instrumental benefits of the relationship, such as receiving gifts and assistance with school fees, or the need for a home and economic support. It is not acceptable in northern Uganda for a girl to continue living at home, dependent upon her parents, once she leaves school. She is expected to marry well to support herself and to bring resources in the form of bride-price into the family. Most of the boys and girls also mentioned pressure from their peers as motivation for their first romantic relationship. Hope recalled, "I got my first love at 15 just for fun. Everyone had a boyfriend and I needed one also."

The stories related by the girls included falling in love, the excitement of a grown-up relationship, sexual desire and pursuit by boys, as well as peer pressure. Many girls told of encouragement from their friends to have a romantic relationship because “everyone has one” or because it represented their best option for their future. A number of the girls explained that they were influenced by gifts or presents from their boyfriends, and several said that their boyfriends helped to pay their school fees, even after marriage, in one case. Boys tended to reflect less on the genesis of their relationships, focusing on their desire to have sex and obtain a girlfriend. A number of the boys also voiced their need for a helpmate – someone to assist them and their mother at home, and to provide love and companionship.

In the passage below, newlywed Robert, who had no children yet, expressed the joy he found with his first girlfriend as well his happiness with his new wife.

I was 16 or 17 when I first fell in love. My heart told me that I would stay with her in the future because she made me happy. Her beauty used to make me happy but later she became unattractive in my eyes and I left her. I remember the joy of being in love for the first time that made me happy....starting something you had never done (laughing). [What is that?] Having sex. My wife now is 16 years old. She stays at my house. I met her at my relatives' place. I met her there where we started staying together and later we started loving each other. (Smiling) When I met her I was happy and she also became happy after seeing me. Sometime later I expressed my love for her and then she accepted. I married her June last month. I am 18 and she is 16. I make the decisions because I want us to settle in the household since she is still young.

Faridah relates a different experience, waiting to have sex until marriage. She entered into an arranged marriage, with the support of both families, following accepted community norms. At the time she constructed her life history, she and her husband had no children, and looked forward to bringing children into the family.

My husband is 18 years old. He is a mechanic. He went home and met my parents and they accepted. He came from very far and they just brought him home. He went to someone who could bring him home and that person brought him straight to me. He started by marrying and then later brought me to his home. [How did you marry a person you didn't know?] (Looks down and smiles) I saw that he would stay with me. I saw when he brought money to me. [Did he take money to your parents?] No, he brought it to me for my marriage. I got married in January then I came to his home in April. I was 17. Pregnancy would be a blessing from God and I would give thanks to him. If you give birth to a child then you are loved, people will trust you. They will believe you have brought something good for them.

Figure 15 presents three key elements of the pathway to sexual debut. Where do young people meet? What is the courtship like? What is their motivation for getting together?

Figure 15. Pathways to Sexual Relationships: Where, How and Why?

Where did they meet?	How did they get together?	What motivated their relationship?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Home of relative • School • Church • Dance hall • Well • IDP camp/night commuting • Through friends 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letters • Notes • Peer intervention • Gifts/money • "sneaking out" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sexual desire/fun • To be viewed as adult • "Trying out" sex • Peer pressure • Love and affection • Help at home • Need a home • Form a family • Economic security/support

Boys and girls sometimes met their romantic partner on their own, for example at the home of a relative, at school or church, fetching water from the well, or at the dance hall. Several of the older youth mentioned meeting their partner while they were living in the camp, commenting that they had too much time on their hands. A few were

introduced by friends. There was generally a courtship period, especially at a younger age, during which the couple exchanged letters, notes and gifts.

Motivations for embarking upon a sexual relationship are multiple and extend beyond sexual desire and experimentation to encompass social or economic needs, such as fitting in with peers, completing a rite of passage, need for affection, or desire for economic security. Peer pressure is one reason boys and girls gave for getting a boy or girlfriend. The paragraph below from the life story of 16-year-old Opio provides a glimpse into the influence of peers and adults on romantic relationships and the ways that young people exert agency.

My friends said to me, man at least get a friend. At first I thought this was bad because even just talking to girls, I used to be afraid. So I got a friend from another school. I told her that we could be academic friends only. When she started talking to my friends, they started introducing me to things I did not know about. They said, 'this girl loves you so much, why don't you have sex with her?' I first thought it was a good idea but when I thought it over again, I said to myself, I need to take this issue to my aunt or my teacher. When I took it to my aunt, she met the girl and talked to both of us. Now I don't have a girlfriend because she got annoyed with me because I reported what should have been between us only to my aunt. That has made us part ways. Even my friends, when they saw what I did, stopped being my friends. Now I am always alone. At that time, my friends kept telling me that to prove I am big I should go with them to drink. But when I started telling them about the bad part of drinking they refused and started telling me I was just a kid. So, since that day, they don't want me to associate with them. For my girlfriend, she thought she would be like a lover to me. But afterwards, she found she was just like a friend to me. So, that made us quarrel and we parted ways.

Having a boy/girlfriend and having sex was often perceived as a rite of passage by the young people in the study. It is considered an essential requirement of adult status, as reflected in the passage below from 19-year-old Joseph, who has a girlfriend but wants to complete school before he marries.

I started by talking to her sometimes back when she was on her way to the well. I insisted until we had sex. You feel like you have grown up and most times you are proud of yourself. Also you feel that if they are grading people you can be somewhere that you have also passed through some ritual. A boy like me prays and hopes that in case I get something for my future; we can stay together as husband and wife. The first person I told about her was my best friend. Other people got to know later on, even my sister. I do not want my father to know. He is very tough and does not like such things. If he found out, he would say he is not happy about the money he spent on school fees.

7.4. Pathways to Family Formation

Making the transition from the role of child to spouse and parent is the primary developmental task facing adolescents in northern Uganda. The vignettes below tell the stories of three girls who experienced different transitions into motherhood and marriage. The themes raised in these narratives, such as power, peer pressure, agency, and gender-constrained opportunities are explored in the remainder of this chapter.

In the first narrative, Hope, initially reluctant, is pursued by a boy and, encouraged by her friends, eventually gives in to his pressure. Soon afterwards she discovers she is pregnant and elopes with him. Hope has struggled mightily in her short life – she was abducted by the rebels at 15, watched her parents fight as a child, was beaten by her siblings and teacher, and was eventually left an orphan. For some time she lived alone caring for her younger siblings, until she went to live with her elder sister. She missed her parents and few of her relatives helped. Despite success at school and sports from 11 to 15, seemingly the highlight of her life, Hope was not able to complete her studies. Given the challenges she faced growing up, Hope seems predestined to early marriage and motherhood, despite her love of school.

Interviewer: Which year did you get your first love?

Hope: It was at the age of 15. It was not serious, we were just trying it out. I would get annoyed and fight with him. It was not a good thing because I did not enjoy it. I did not tell my friends because I feared they would laugh and make fun of me, but I told my mother and she told me not to worry. I told my mother because I was so close to her. She loved me, and she would do anything to help me out of my problems. I was in primary seven. All my friends had boyfriends and they influenced me to get one as well. When I was alone I didn't like it because my friend had parents who I didn't always like. I would tell him to stop the relationship and he got so annoyed with me. [Having a boyfriend] is bad because when you are in school you may lose concentration and keep thinking about him, I would even dodge class. He would also come up to the school to visit and I would be beaten and get so embarrassed. We did not have any sexual intercourse because I was so tough. I got scared of going to their home where he used to sleep so if he called me we would meet in an open place and just talk. He would tell me not to love anyone else, to keep safe and such talks. Sometimes he would ask for it [sex] but I would tell him it's not the right time. I didn't want him to touch my body.

Interviewer: Did you think of spending your life with him?

Hope: Later in the future I thought of it.... One time I had no fees and I was to stay home for a term, he gave me money and told me to go back to school. I went home and told my people that I had money and was going back to school. Our friendship began when I was on the school athletics team. He did roadwork and also sometimes he would help start the athletics for students. I liked him as a person from the same team but later we developed feelings towards each other. When this started there were some good times and other times it would be so bad. We didn't just meet, it had to be planned and only once in a while. There was no introduction to parents because both of us are orphans but my sisters and brothers knew about the relationship.

Interviewer: What does your husband do?

Hope: He does nothing because there were no school fees to continue, but he is a farmer here in Acholibur. We got married this year in January. It was not getting married where dowry is paid, but I eloped with him. I was 18 and he is 20.

In the next narrative, 18-year-old Martha had already left school when she met her boyfriend. Like Hope, she was initially reluctant to have sex; however, she decided that her options were few and a relationship with him would be in her best interest. As a result, today she is living with her mother and new baby, coping as best she can with her family's resentment and criticism. The father of her child is in police training in Kampala, and does not provide any support.

Interviewer: Tell me about your first love.

Martha: When I dropped out of school and had no one to support me, I felt I wanted to die, my friend advised me not to do that. This boy came and asked me to marry him; he even visited my mother and was a good person. I was 17 when he first came to me.

Our friendship started when I dropped out of school and had no one to pay my fees. My father was dead and I felt like dying but I had my siblings and if I died no one would take care of them. So I decided to get someone to support me and my siblings. When we started the relationship I still had my walking stick. He asked me for a relationship and I refused but when I went back to the hospital for review and stopped using the stick he came back again and insisted. I asked him if people would abuse me because I am crippled and suggest he get another wife. He said he didn't love me for what I was but who I was – I had good character and he liked me for that. That is when we started staying together.

He used to leave school and come visit me from my school. That was in senior two. I stopped the same year because I had no one to support me. We met in 2007, I hadn't yet started menstruating but just before we entered the second month of our relationship I started my period and we had sex.

Stopping my studies was the worst thing in my life. If I had a chance to go back to school I would. I see my friends in school and it hurts me, now I am struggling with my child. I have no one so I have to work so hard to get money like digging in someone's garden to earn money so that when the child is sick I'm able to take him to the hospital.

In the third narrative, 17-year-old Peace, also an orphan describes how she became pregnant at 16 and ended up living with her boyfriend and his mother. Peace summed up her life this way, “Boys disturbed me until I left school and got a baby.” Her parents were killed when she was young, and she stayed in her home caring for her younger siblings, with food and money from her uncle. She tried to go to school and send her siblings to school but found it very difficult. She remarked that most of her relatives abandoned her after her uncle’s death, “So I saw that I was a useless person.” At the time she met the father of her baby, she was despondent and struggling to care for her two siblings and stay in school. Peace was introduced to her boyfriend by a friend who convinced her that a relationship with him would solve her problems. Soon after, when she found out that she was pregnant, she and her boyfriend were distraught. Her boyfriend’s friends tried to convince him to leave her and Peace tried to abort, but was not successful. They have both dropped out of school and are living with his mother.

Interviewer: Tell me about your first love.

Peace: I was 15 years old when I had my first love. We met in school when I was in senior one and he was in senior two. My friend Anna came to me and told me that there is some boy who says he is in love with you. I was with my friend; she insisted that since I have no one this would be a very good opportunity for me. He sent me 20,000 shillings but I didn’t take the money because I was afraid he would think that I loved him for this money like other girls do. So I returned the money. I thought of telling my uncle’s wife what was happening, but out of fear I ended up not telling her.

Eventually I accepted, we had sex, and I got a baby. I am still with him – he is 19 years old now. I am 17 years old. He was a student, but he dropped out after senior four. His father is dead and his mother is very sick now so there is no one to pay school fees.

We are not married. I didn’t elope; I just got pregnant with him. I would sneak out of the house to meet him. We tried using condoms

to avoid pregnancy but we failed. When I got pregnant I went to live with him. I was 16 years old and he was 18.

When I found out I was pregnant I realized I was still young and could not take care of the baby and have a home of my own. The baby's father said he had nothing to take care of a child. He is also still young and just struggling on his own. His friends told him to chase me away and some said that we should abort. That is when I tried but failed and had the baby instead. I was so angry at myself; I would not eat but just cried all the time. I swallowed tablets to abort the baby. I became so weak they had to take me to the hospital. I was rescued and the baby did not come out.

These narratives provide insight into the experiences of young women as they struggle to support themselves and their siblings and continue their education. All three of these girls were in vulnerable situations, without adequate support from their family to meet their need for food and shelter, education and affection (e.g. organic, instrumental and expressive needs of the CSP). Their life stories illustrate the intersections between their social system and the historical processes of war, displacement and poverty which situated these young women in a vulnerable position with inadequate support at a critical transition point of the life course.

Nevertheless, each of these three girls exerted their agency even in the face of limited options. Hope refused sex for some time, effectively employing strategies to resist her boyfriend's pressure; "We did not have sex because I was so tough." Hope, Peace and Martha leveraged the economic resources the boys offered in different ways. Hope accepted her boyfriend's money and used it to pay school fees, while Martha entered into the relationship as a strategic decision to garner the resources needed to support herself and her siblings. Peace, on the other hand, refused her boyfriend's money, because she did not wish to establish a relationship founded on economic exchange. Peer influence is

apparent in all three of these narratives. Hope felt she should have a boyfriend because “everyone has one,” Martha’s friends provided her emotional support and advice, while Peace’s friends brokered the relationship as a solution to her economic problems.

7.5. Life Trajectories through a Systems Lens

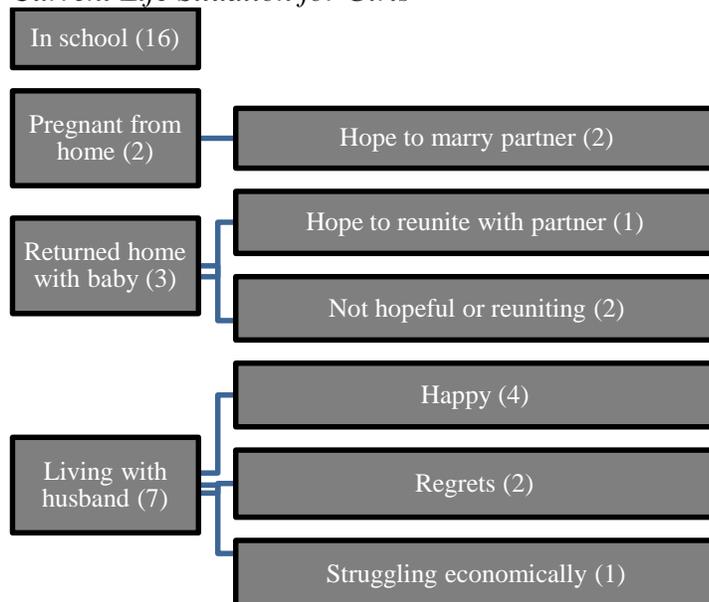
In the final section of this chapter I assess the current life situation of the study participants and attempt to elucidate common pathways of transition from puberty to marriage and/or pregnancy, drawing primarily from the life stories of the newly married and parenting youth, although narratives from the older adolescents offer insight into sexual debut. Interviews with adults provide insight into the cultural, historical, and economic context that shapes these pathways.

Lango and Acholi boys and girls grow up planning to marry and have children, and take their place in their extended family and clan. The results of this study confirm the cultural norms related to family formation discussed in Chapter 4. A girl is expected to leave her home to join her husband’s family, while a boy plans to bring his wife into his compound. According to custom, a boy asks a girl’s family for permission to marry and the elders of the two families negotiate the bride-price and terms. Bride-price, most often cattle, is paid in a formal ceremony and marks formal marriage. Unions are not considered legal until the bride-price is paid, and the woman may leave her partner, with their children, until payment is complete, at which point the man gains legal rights to the children. Given the difficult economic situation in northern Uganda today, most families pay the bride-price in installments, after a down payment. Few of the youth in this study paid the bride-price before moving in together, and about half of the unions were precipitated by pregnancy. Once bride-price negotiations are completed, a girl is

welcomed into her new husband’s home by his immediate family and clan. The couple is expected to bring children into the family soon, ideally before the end of their first year of marriage. This ideal pathway was rarely followed by the youth in this study, who are establishing new forms of family formation in the face of the economic and social disruption caused by many years of civil war.

Although youth in this study had not yet reached the age of 18, their life trajectories have already placed them on a path that will significantly shape their future. Looking first at girls, their situation at the time of the interview can be classified into four categories: 1) in school; 2) “pregnant from home”; 3) returned home from their partner’s household; or 4) living with husband (Figure 16). The challenges that girls face completing their schooling were discussed in the previous section, so here I will focus on the latter three situations.

Figure 16. Summary of Current Life Situation for Girls



Getting “pregnant from home” is shameful for the girl and her family. As discussed earlier, this violates cultural norms and brings shame to the girl and her family and clan, although some families shrug off the stigma. The two girls in this situation, Martha and Joyce, were very unhappy and felt stigmatized and rejected by their family and community. Both dreamed of eventually marrying their baby’s father and moving to his home. Fortunately, both of their partners were still in contact with them, sending money or visiting from time to time. In Joyce’s case, although her boyfriend wanted to marry her, her parents would not allow it because they were afraid she would quickly become pregnant with a second child, and they still hoped she would return to school.

Returned to parents’ home. Three of the girls were living with their own family after returning home from their boyfriend’s household. Like the other girls living at home with their baby, they felt ashamed and embarrassed. Gloria still hoped to reunite with her boyfriend, while the other two girls had little hope of getting back together, as their boyfriends did not visit or support their child in any way.

Married and living with husband’s family. Most of the girls (seven) were living with their husband’s family – four were happy, one struggling economically, and two expressed strong regrets.

Table 10 presents individual details about the living situation of the newly married/parenting girls at the time of interview by type of union, feelings, aspirations and degree of partner engagement. Themes of jealousy, misunderstanding, poor treatment and quarrels run through their life stories. The girls living with their new baby in their natal home were very unhappy, ashamed, and stigmatized, and dreamed of marrying the father of their child. Those who had returned home from their partners’ compound were also

unhappy, hurt, and angry and criticized by others, although a few found solace dreaming of a happy ending with their baby's father. One of these girls, Gloria, returned home, not because of her partner, but because of conflicts with her mother-in-law. Among the girls living with their husbands, the socially mandated option, four were generally satisfied, but the other two had regrets. Their narratives reveal an increasing awareness of lost opportunities, both educational and economic. Others were disappointed in their partner, faulting him for his inability to provide or jealous of the resources he shared with others, for example, his sister or mother. The ability of the young woman to get along with her new family is key to her happiness.

Table 10. Girls: Current living situation by type of union, feelings, hopes and dreams and partner engagement

Current Living Situation			
	Unmarried mother living at home (n=2)	Living with husband's family (n=7)	Moved back home after childbirth (n=3)
Type of union	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May or may not have been formal union, generally parents approved and bride-price agreed upon • Pregnancy may or may not have occurred before union 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May or may not have been formal union • Pregnancy may or may not have occurred before union • Eloped when found out pregnant
Feelings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shame, stigma for living at home, unmarried with a child 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Happy (Faridah, Hope, Millie, Stella) • Happy but struggling economically (Peace) • Regrets (Patience, Grace) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lost education/economic opportunities - Husband does not support her as expected - Domestic quarrels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Still loves partner, but had conflicts with mother-in-law • Ashamed to be living in parent's home with a child • Hurt feelings

Hopes and dreams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dreams of marriage (Martha, Joyce) • Hopes to return to school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desires more children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hopes to reunite with partner (Gloria)
Partner engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working to raise bride-price • Continues to visit • Supports child 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Controlling • Favors others in his family over her 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not happy with pregnancy, sent her home • Sends money to support child • Never sees baby or sends money • Left to study/work elsewhere

Turning now to the life situation of the boys, three were living with their wives at the time of the interview, with no children yet; four married due to pregnancy; and one was still in school (*Figure 17*). The boys did not share much about their satisfaction with their situation, with the exception of Michael who said he regrets having sex in the first place and is sorry that he brought his wife home, because it has caused so much quarrelling in the household.

Figure 17. Summary of Current Life Situation for Boys

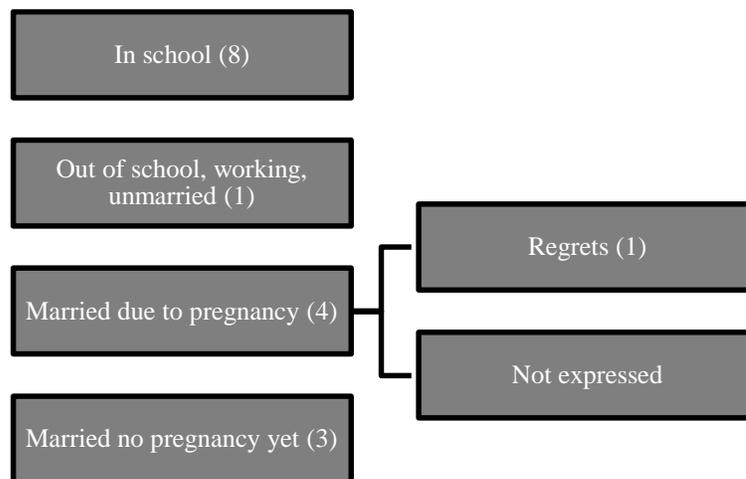


Table 11 presents individual details for boys by type of union, motivation for union, concerns and hopes and family planning. The topics included in the table vary slightly from those presented in Table 10 for the girls because the salient themes differed by sex. For example, boys mentioned FP while girls did not. Also, the boys discussed their relationships in a more matter-of-fact manner than female study participants. They generally framed their stories in one of two ways: 1) they married for companionship and help at home; or 2) they were compelled to marry due to pregnancy. In some cases they view themselves as the protagonist who wanted to do the “right thing,” while others describe themselves as the pawn of others. Boys often began their marriage narrative with a scene in which their girlfriend comes to his home to announce that she is pregnant, sometimes accompanied by her brothers or other family members, or perhaps alone after being kicked out of her home. Once married, the new responsibilities the boys are expected to assume weigh heavily. Boys shared concerns about the difficulty of supporting their family and regret for lost opportunities. Some also complained about the challenges of integrating their new wife into their household. Perhaps as a result of their economic concerns, boys brought up the topic of FP more frequently than girls. While a few of the boys mentioned that their family would welcome more children and one mentioned he would be happy if his wife were to become pregnant, even though she is using the injection; most would not welcome a pregnancy at this time. The boys mentioned that they discuss FP with their wives, and most who are trying to avoid pregnancy use condoms or withdrawal.

Table 11. Boys: Current living situation by type of union, concerns and family planning intentions

Current Living Situation		
	Married and living together, no children yet (n=3)	Married due to pregnancy (n=4)
Type of union	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planned Mother provided bride-price Asked for her hand 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prompted by pregnancy Family mediated marriage and defended couple from criticism
Motivation for union	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Needed help at home 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Needed help at home Couldn't turn back on pregnant girl
Concerns/hopes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No comment (Amos, Paul, Robert) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finds it difficult to support his family No comment (James, George, Okello and Hovil 2007) Regrets bringing wife home because there is too much quarrelling (Michael) Family happy with pregnancy and desires more children
Family planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discusses family planning with wife Wants to wait for children (2) Using family planning Uses injection but would be happy with pregnancy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss family planning with wife. Doesn't want a child now, using withdrawal (1) Doesn't a child now, using condoms (2)

How did these young people end up in the situations described above? What launched them into cohabitation or marriage? The primary precipitating factor for six of the twelve girls was pregnancy. Among the remainder of the girls, four mentioned love and two viewed marriage as a means to secure a home and economic support. Four of the seven boys married due to pregnancy, saying that their families insisted and/or that they could not turn their back on a pregnant girl. The other three boys whose marriage/cohabitation was not precipitated by pregnancy said that they needed someone to help at

home. Robert spoke of the need for emotional support, “I told her that I am interested in staying with you in the future because as I talk I have a lot of pain. I feel I need another person to stay with.” Nineteen-year-old Paul, a mechanic, reflected, “I took her because of problems at home. This is because my mother is always alone, when she leaves the garden, there is no one important at home to help her.”

These results suggest that pregnancy is a major factor in adolescent unions in northern Uganda, and not surprisingly abortion was considered by many of the girls and boys who faced an unplanned pregnancy, even though it is illegal. In fact, three of the four girls who experienced a pregnancy described an unsuccessful attempt to abort (Lilian, Martha, and Peace). Another two, Joyce and Patience, wanted to end the pregnancy when they found out they were pregnant, but did not mention trying to abort. In addition, when discussing their future plans, three girls said they would consider abortion if they were to get pregnant (Grace, Stella, and Patience).

These pathways were shaped by interrelated elements – cultural, social, political, historical and economic – of the cultural system. The opportunities and constraints adolescents face are rooted in a dynamic mix of gendered social norms and economic, historical, and sociopolitical realities. This is illustrated in the following excerpt from Martha’s story describing the events leading to her pregnancy.

Another negative event in my life was when I dropped out of school. I felt so bad and that was the time I eloped with the father of my child. It wasn’t my choice but I had to because there was nobody to support me and pay me to go to school. I felt like dying but I had my siblings... if I died no one would take care of them. I decided to get someone who would support me and my siblings. That’s when I got the father of my child. He was also a student at that time. My friends had a great influence in this relationship because I feared boys and I would run away from them. My friends encouraged me to stop running from them. I moved out of home to live with my boyfriend when I conceived in 2008. It was a happy event when I gave birth to my first child in 2009.

The data presented in Table 12 suggest that adolescents form families early in their life course in order to fulfill their biological, social, instrumental, and expressive needs. Analysis of the process of adolescent family formation through the lens of these needs affirms the importance of gender on adolescent life experiences. About half of the boys and girls married for biological or social reasons (pregnancy). A small percentage of the girls married to meet their instrumental needs (two out of twelve, or 16%) compared to almost half of the boys (three out of seven, or 42%). Gender differences are greatest in terms of expressive needs; almost half of the girls (five out of twelve) married for love compared to only one of the seven boys.

Table 12. Reasons for marriage/cohabitation categorized by human need (boys and girls)

	Biological & Social Needs	Instrumental Needs	Expressive Needs
Girls (n=12)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pregnancy (n=6) (<i>Faridah, Peace, Patience, Martha, Joyce, Lilian</i>) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Needed someone to support self and siblings (n=1) • Left school, ready to form a family and needed a home (n=1) (<i>Hope, Lillian</i>) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Love (n=5) (<i>Gloria, Ann, Stella, Grace, Millie</i>)
Boys (n=7)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Couldn't turn back on pregnant girl/families insisted (n=4) (<i>James, George, Okello, Michael</i>) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Needed help at home/wanted to marry (n=3) (<i>James, Amos, Paul</i>) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Love (n=1) (<i>Robert</i>)
Total	10	5	6

The results presented in this chapter demonstrate the ways that the trajectories of young people unfold within the dynamic process of interacting social systems, idea systems, sociopolitical and economic realities, and human needs for food and shelter, sexual expression, and the desire to form a family and be respected and loved. This process results in many different permutations of life experiences, in part due to the

agency individuals exercise while navigating the structures that bind them, and also a result of their ability to reshape boundaries by the continual construction and reconstruction of cultural systems.

Chapter 8. Dangerous Waters: (Un)Acceptability of Violence

Adolescents strive to meet their needs to express their gender identity, start a family, and garner respect and affection within spaces defined by intersecting cultural systems and sociopolitical and economic realities. I will continue to explore this theme in this chapter, with a focus on GBV and the capacity of adolescents to challenge norms that support violence and take action to interrupt the cycle of violence in their homes and communities. Boys and girls and young men and women living in northern Uganda view the world as a place full of violence – in their homes, in the streets of their communities, and in relationships with friends and partners. Brought up in the midst of civil war, living in IDP camps where sexual and other acts of violence were common, these young people are now mostly resettled in their ancestral villages. However, the vulnerability of youth to multiple forms of violence did not end when they left the camps. In this chapter I examine the ways that inequitable gender norms are associated with the acceptability of violence, and with perceptions of appropriate responses to violent acts and situations. I will also describe how some adolescents resist hegemonic social norms and chart paths that lead to more equitable and peaceful relationships.

An ecological lens is often used to analyze the causes of GBV (Heise 1998) and the CSP provides a framework to conceptualize the complicated interplay of factors underlying GBV. The results of this study demonstrate that individual behavior is shaped at the most basic level by idea systems, which establish hegemonic gender identities mandating men as dominant and authoritarian providers while women are submissive and obedient caregivers. In this tight-knit society focused on the communal good, prevailing

norms also endorse physical discipline of women and children as a means of enforcing gender roles. At the same time, historical processes, namely twenty years of civil war and consequent poverty has created an environment in which individuals are unable to fulfill their basic needs and sexual and physical violence are widespread, modeling aggression as an appropriate response in a variety of situations. In this turbulent post-conflict situation, basic needs for security go unfulfilled. In this context, many men are unable to fulfill their socially mandated role of provider, producing a situation where they are frustrated by their inability to fulfill their gender identity and often turn to drinking for distraction and social support.

8.1. Intimate Partner Violence in Northern Uganda

The prevalence of intimate partner violence in Northern Uganda is high. The 2011 Uganda Demographic and Health Survey findings reveal that 42% of women experienced physical violence during the last year, and 21% experienced sexual violence within 12 months prior to the survey (UBOS and Macro International 2012). Intimate partner physical violence is among the most common forms of GBV in Uganda. Among women in union, one in four (25%) experienced physical violence and 21% experienced sexual violence from an intimate partner within 12 months prior to the survey. Overall, 45% of ever-married women had experienced at least one form of violence (emotional, physical, or sexual) perpetrated by their current or most recent partner in the past year. Lifetime experience was even higher, with 60% of women reporting physical violence since the age of 15, and one quarter of women experiencing sexual violence. Shockingly, over half of all men (54%) reported that they had committed violence against their wife, 22% in the last year. Men also are victims of violence. Over half of men (57%) had experienced

physical violence since the age of 15, with 18% reporting that they experienced violence often or sometimes in the last year. This most likely reveals the influence of the war and the cessation of violence.

Prevailing social norms support intimate partner violence; for example, 42% of women 15-49 and 59% of men believe a man is justified in hitting or beating his wife for at least one of five reasons. Among 19- to 49-year-olds, the most accepted reason for a wife to be beaten is arguing with her husband; 32% of women and 47% of men agree that violence is justified in this situation (UBOS and Macro International 2012).

As discussed in Chapter 5, levels of intimate partner violence and sexual violence in the camps were unprecedented, manifested in physical assault, sexual assault, rape, and prostitution (Mulumba 2011; Okello 2007; Patel et al. 2012). One study suggested that some type of sexual violence occurred in the camps on a daily basis (Akumu et al. 2005). Other dimensions of GBV included widow inheritance and forced early marriages. Mulumba (2011) reports that forced marriages of 13- and 14-year-olds were prevalent as impoverished parents married off their young daughters for bridewealth.

As discussed in the introduction, GBV in its multiple forms is a topic of increasing concern to the global community, both as a problem in its own right and also due to its influence on a broad range of health outcomes (WHO 2013). There is increasing recognition of the links between gender identity and culturally programmed sexual behavior and violence, exemplified in the correlation between male-dominance and forced sex in many cultures (Sanday 2003; Heise 1998). Recently, Sanday (2010: 42) called for research on sexual violence and gender norms: “The first step in bearing witness to sexual violence is to describe local socially agreed-upon understandings which

are often shaped in single sex groups focused on promoting gender identity development and are played out in adolescent or childhood sexual games.” Eliminating GBV will depend on widespread change of gender norms related to health and violence, which can best be achieved by harnessing the processes that transmit these norms and attitudes. Adolescence, early adolescence in particular, represents an opportunity to promote more equitable norms and behaviors – it is during this life stage that gender norms and identities begin to coalesce.

GBV is increasingly recognized as a significant barrier to reproductive health, preventing women, families, and countries from achieving their full potential. The first systematic review of the prevalence of violence against women worldwide reveals that 35% of women have experienced violence and links violence to significant health problems (WHO 2013). It is only in the last ten years that the prevalence of GBV has been well-documented. A seminal multi-country study by WHO found that the proportion of ever-partnered women who had experienced physical or sexual violence, or both, by an intimate partner in their lifetime, ranged from 15% to 71% (Ellsberg et al. 2008). Women and girls living in conflict or post-conflict settings, such as northern Uganda, are particularly vulnerable to GBV, unintended pregnancy and STIs, in part because of exacerbated gender inequalities brought about by armed conflict and its aftermath (McGinn and Purdin 2004; Okello and Hovil 2007).

Historical processes in northern Uganda have resulted in dramatic changes in the world in which Lango and Acholi boys and girls grow up, marry, and raise their children, These changes significantly influence ideation that frames interpretations and meanings underlying GBV. As an important social determinant of health, there is substantial

discourse regarding how conflict affects gender norms, largely focusing on men and the “crisis in masculinity” resulting from the displacement of gender-based roles and identity during conflict. The results of this study are consistent with the literature, suggesting that the conflict in northern Uganda has significantly influenced local gender roles and identity.

Traditional notions of Acholi masculinity are centered on fulfilling the roles of provider and protector in the family (Spittal et al. 2008). The massive displacement and subsequent economic impoverishment created by the conflict has made it nearly impossible for men to provide for their families. Large-scale violence, sexual abuse, and abductions perpetrated during the conflict have also made it difficult for men to protect their wives and children. In *Collapsing Masculinities and Weak States: A Case Study of Northern Uganda*, Dolan (2002) posits that men’s inability to live up to internalized and external expectations of the “normative” model of masculinity is a source of humiliation and leads some men to compensate by emphasizing other gendered expectations such as control or power over less powerful individuals, notably women and children. While men who are able to conform to the model benefit to an extent in terms of the power they wield over women and children, social expectations are onerous and many men feel oppressed by them.

The theoretical and empirical literature indicates that armed conflict and its aftermath (i.e. displacement, increased poverty, and demographic changes) affect gender relations and identity. A study on gender relations and armed conflict conducted in five sub-Saharan African countries (Sudan, Uganda, Angola, Mali, and Somalia) found that in all of the study sites changes in gender roles occurred at the household level which led to

a greater economic dependence of men on women. This change was the result of a combination of factors such as displacement to urban areas where economic resources traditionally controlled by men (e.g. agricultural land, cattle) became inaccessible while opportunities for women's income generating activities (e.g. selling food at the market) increased (El-Bushra, 2003). The study further concluded that while gender roles changed at the household level as a result of conflict, there were limited increases in women's decision-making power and political participation at community and national levels and that the ideological bases underpinning gender relations appeared to remain unchanged or are even reinforced. The conclusion reached by the research teams is that conflict does not appear to have led to shifts in gender identities but rather to growing tensions between people's ideals (of masculinity and femininity) and the practical reality available to them when their lives are restricted by violence, displacement, impoverishment, and personal loss. In fact, gender ideologies do not appear to have changed, and may rather have become further entrenched. These findings, however, were not universal across all study sites. In the Tamasheq and Maure communities of Mali, for example, both men and women valued the new skills and roles that women experienced as a result of displacement and few desired to return to previous ways of life. This is an interesting example of the result of intersections between the cultural systems and historical processes conceptualized in the CSP – in this case, conflict influenced behaviors but not idea systems, at least in the short term.

A number of researchers have documented the influence of conditions in the displaced camps on gender norms in northern Uganda (Patel et al. 2012; Akumu et al. 2005; Kizza et al. 2012, Mergelsberg 2012; Mulumba 2011). They explain that in Acholi

communities, as elsewhere, roles are highly gendered, with men producing household wealth and leading their family. Men are supposed to be in control of all family resources, including children and wives. Women's major role is reproduction and ensuring food security. In the advent of the war, movement in and out of the camp was restricted for men, rendering a significant number of men jobless, although others became casual laborers. The small income earned was often spent on alcohol, womanizing, and gambling. Women and their children were permitted by security personnel to cultivate around camps, however oftentimes soldiers would claim the harvests. Women, in addition to cultivating food, became involved in petty trading and/or brewing alcohol to sell. In addition, humanitarian aid programs tended to privilege women over men. As a result, women became more economically powerful than men. Men lost their power as providers, but nevertheless insisted on controlling the women's income, especially when their own earnings ran out, something that could have become a source of tension in families and increase men's aggression towards women (Kitara et al. 2012).

Ugandan researchers studying violence and gender during the war argue that men were reduced to powerless victims who could not protect their wives and daughters from extortion, and resorted to over-drinking, which contributed to incidents of excessive violence (Kitara et al. 2012; Dolan 2002; Okello and Hovil 2007). They suggest that as a result of excessive desperation, increasing poverty, limited activities for income generation and over-drinking, men resorted to beating and battering. Mulumba (2011: 114) reports that men indicated they were overwhelmed and disturbed by their wives' insubordination. He also suggests that congestion and idleness in the camps contributed

to excessive drinking and engagement in unsafe sexual activities leading to STIs and HIV/AIDS.

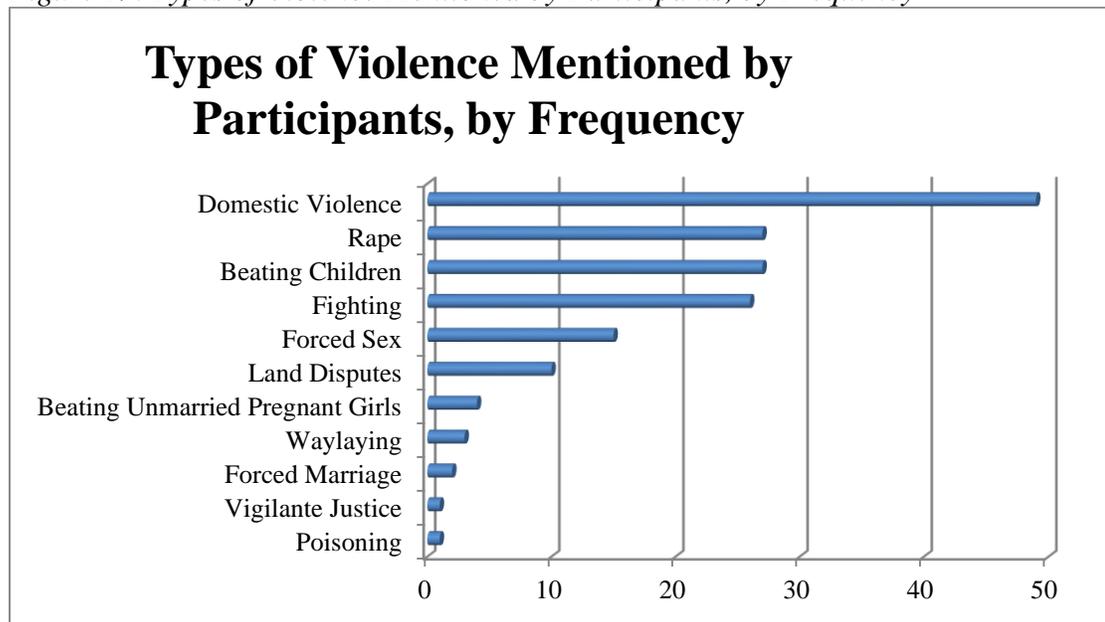
8.2. Living in a Violent World: Mapping Violence

The adolescents participating in this study viewed their world as a dangerous place with multiple forms of violence – verbal, emotional, physical, and sexual – surrounding them. Study participants were asked to free list all the types of violence in their community (ways that people hurt each other) and then rank them from least to most acceptable. The types of violence they described fall on a continuum from insulting and belittling others through shouting, vulgar language, quarrelling, and slapping to fighting, poisoning/witchcraft, assault, beating to discipline or teach, coerced/forced sex and rape (Figure 18, Figure 19). Of greatest concern to participants were rape, abuse of women and children, and fighting. Older adolescents were particularly concerned with fighting related to land disputes.

Figure 18. Example of Ranking of Continuum of Acceptable & Unacceptable Violence



Figure 19. Types of Violence Mentioned by Participants, by Frequency



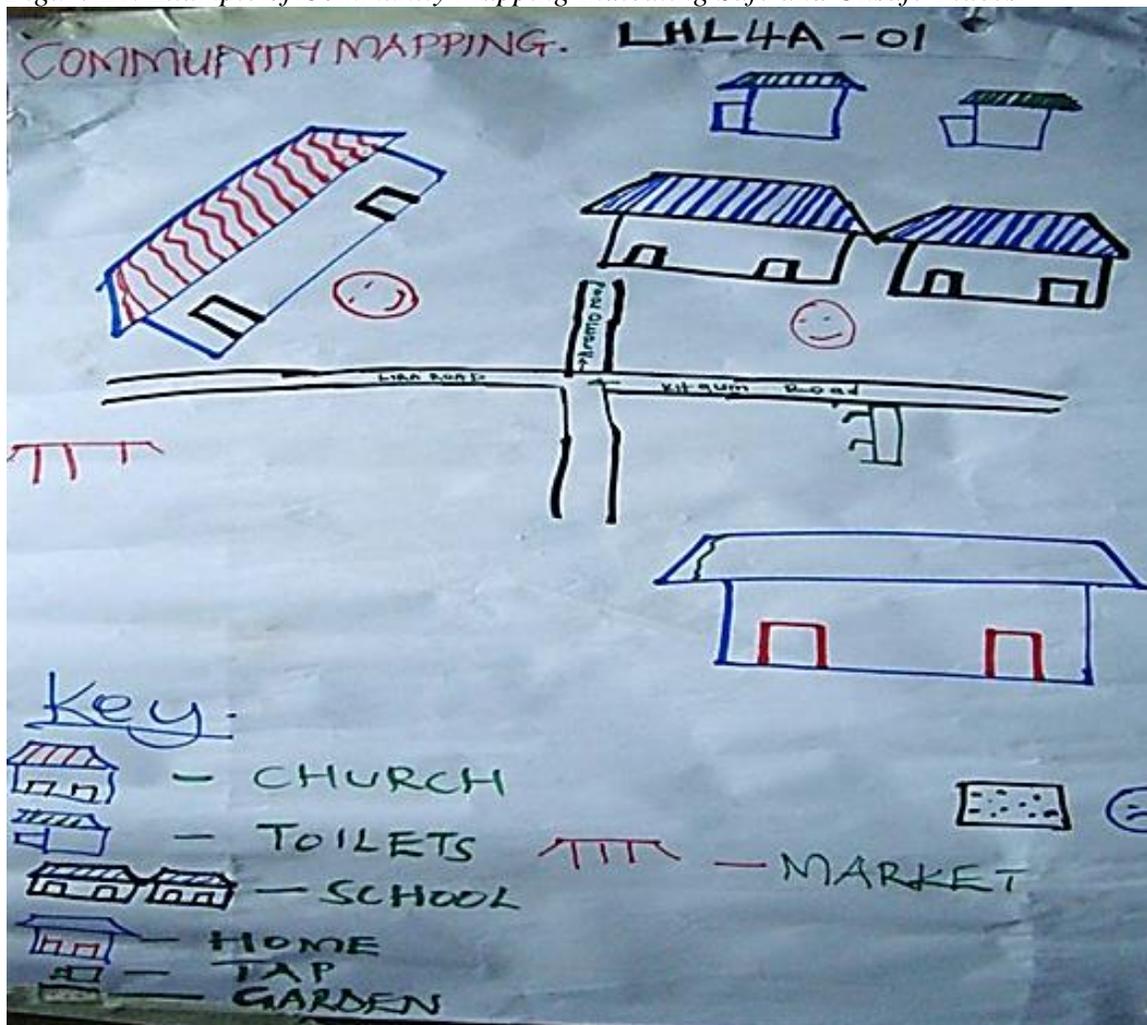
Domestic violence, defined by participants as intimate partner violence and corporal punishment of children in the home, was considered the most common and worrisome form of violence. Most often, study participants talked about beating perpetrated by the husband, but cases of women hitting their husbands also surfaced. Domestic violence primarily occurs in the privacy of the home, although verbal abuse and fighting may occur at the market or in other public venues. Mention of fathers beating or yelling at their daughters for burning dinner or not properly completing chores was common. Forced sex within a relationship was also raised. A 39-year-old woman explained, “Most of the men like forcing women into sex without a consensus...Most men take it that he has married a woman so at the minute that he wants it, even if both of them are not prepared... That is what I see happening and mostly we remain silent.” Concern about rape was widespread among all ages and both sexes, many noted specific places girls should avoid and suggested that girls should not leave their homes after dark.

An excerpt from 17-year-old Sarah's life story provides a glimpse into the way adolescents view the violence around them, as well as their hopes for a more peaceful future.

I experienced many hardships growing up. My mother died, and my father moved away when I was very young. I was left in the care of my stepmother who never gave me food, and insulted and abused me. In our village, we have many forms of violence: land wrangles, quarreling, domestic violence, abuse, rape, fighting. Instead of allowing these forms of violence to continue, we should actively fight to end it. We need to increase dialogue among married couples to reduce domestic violence, and to foster understanding between the couple. I hope to see our community evolve to a place where men and women do not fight and struggle to live together, but rather, live happily and take responsibility where it is needed.

Study participants drew maps of their communities and discussed feelings of safety in various locations (Figure 20). Participants judged women most at risk in the town centers and places where people gather and drink, such as the video, movie or dance hall. Men and women alike were concerned that girls might be raped or coerced into having sex in those venues; considered especially perilous because of widespread drinking. The borehole, a place where girls and women visit daily, was also considered unsafe. The community was viewed as an environment that must be carefully negotiated to avoid danger, especially by women, although men and boys also fear assault and fighting. Some blamed women for rape, such as newly married Stella, "Her movement in the night is the reason why men rape her because if she stayed home, slept and locked herself in the house, there wouldn't be any person who would come to rape her." Yet some younger girls labeled their own house as an unsafe place "...because there is too much beating." This often occurs in households where girls are taken in by relatives or stepparents or in the case of girls who have gotten pregnant from home.

Figure 20. Example of Community Mapping Indicating Safe and Unsafe Places



The (un)acceptability of violence. In Uganda as elsewhere, gender norms that give men dominance over women are closely related to GBV. Traditional Acholi and Lango gender norms assert a hegemonic masculinity that mandates power and control over women. Ideal men are strong and protect their wives and family; they plan, control resources, and make decisions for the benefit of the household. An ideal woman cares for and protects her children. According to tradition, a wife is always subservient to her husband, even if he has done something wrong or has been unfaithful. These gender norms are widespread across sex, age, and life course.

In order to explore the range of masculinities and femininities accepted in Acholi culture, participants were asked to choose a toy animal to represent an ideal man and an ideal woman. The resulting discussions revealed how closely gender norms are related to violence, especially domestic violence, as in this quote from an 18-year-old newly married Grace:

I have selected a cow for an ideal woman because a cow is used by human beings; it cannot do anything until its owner says so, just like a woman who waits for information from her husband. A cow is a hardworking animal and when a task is given it carries it out, although it doesn't want to. In a home sometimes there is misunderstanding and just like a cow is beaten when it fails to do tasks so is a woman beaten by her husband...and also a cow gives birth and feeds its own on milk just like a woman does. She also takes good care of her children.

Deeply rooted in Acholi culture is the value of respect, which can both prevent and exacerbate violence. While men must respect and protect women, women must also respect their husbands. In fact, the mere idea of women beating their husbands was considered unacceptable because of the disrespect it shows men. Regardless of a man's conduct, hitting a man would shame and belittle him, and would "spoil" a woman's name.

As shown above violence of all types is widespread in study communities, however the only form of violence widely considered acceptable is that which is linked to gender norms – for example, beating wives or children in a controlled and "proper" manner to teach, discipline, and/or punish. According to study participants, the man holds the authority in the home, and it is his responsibility to correct his wife if she fails to complete a chore or shows him disrespect. Moreover, since he brought his wife into his home and clan, it is his right (and obligation) to correct her as needed. Discipline is

required if a woman disobeys her husband or fails to fulfill gender role expectations, such as neglecting to cook the evening meal or showing disrespect. There was general agreement that some women do not listen to their husbands; even if such a woman is corrected several times, she will not understand until she is beaten.

Respondents explained that beating must be done “properly,” which entails explaining to the person what s/he had done wrong, allowing them to admit their mistake, and asking them to lie down to receive their punishment (to reduce possible injury). The process is described below by newly married Faridah.

Interviewer: Do you think it’s acceptable for a man to beat his wife?

Participant: Yes, when he is beating you in a good way.

Interviewer: What could have happened for it to be seen that a person was beaten in a good way?

Participant: When you have admitted your mistake and he asks you to lie down and you do so and he beats you. It’s better than beating you while you are standing.

Most men would agree with Faridah. A 27-year-old community leader explained:

A husband beating his wife because she has delayed to cook is acceptable. Even myself, I once slapped my wife so badly at one moment, because my wife eats and goes to sleep. For me, when I come back and find nothing for me to eat, I beat you. I was relieved because there was some improvement afterwards. The next day I came back and found food was there.

Beating children to punish, prevent bad behavior, or instruct is also widely accepted. Many believe that children, like women, who do not learn when corrected, must be beaten. This sentiment was expressed by a 43-year-old woman, “Beating a child

is not something that violates the rights of a child, it is correct and helps their future.”

Many respondents believe that it is incumbent on parents and teachers to beat children to ensure that they complete their chores or obey their parents. Nevertheless, the prevailing view is that corporal punishment should only be used after alternative forms of discipline have been tried such as talking to the child about their behavior or asking a clan leader or family member to intervene. If a parent decides to beat the child, it must be done “properly” – in the same way women are beaten – asking the child to lie down, explaining why punishment is necessary, allowing the child to apologize, and then beating. Beating is not accepted if it is “excessive,” or causes injury to a child, although the definition of what is considered excessive is unclear. In such cases, a community member or relative may intervene.

There are new laws in place to prevent parents and teachers from caning children as a form of discipline, or to teach a lesson. Perhaps as a result of these laws, norms are beginning to shift, and some respondents find caning excessively violent and unacceptable. In general, adults were more accepting of corporal punishment than children, although most adolescents thought that beating children was appropriate if it was done with the intention to teach. In fact, one child indicated that he felt he was being overbeaten when he was young, but now understands that he was being trained. Those who disagreed with corporal punishment stated that children are physically weaker than adults, and beating is never acceptable. A few commented that beating children is an abuse of their rights, most likely a concept introduced by the many NGOs working in the region during the conflict.

The life histories revealed that it was not uncommon for individuals to question traditional norms regarding violence and gender roles. Although beating is generally viewed as a suitable way to enforce social norms and roles, some clan leaders and elders do not condone this practice because it can lead to serious injury or death, or may be directed at someone who unknowingly made a mistake. Some men expressed opposition to beating women based on the view that strong relationships, built on male and female equality, are peaceful while violence fractures families. According to newly married Robert,

We do not have any misunderstanding since she gives her views and I also give mine and we come up with an agreement... If one of us had denied the other's view, then there would have been a misunderstanding. To live a good life in a relationship, husbands and wives should be peaceful and not always have wrangles in their relationship and work together.

The excerpt below from Simon, a 39-year-old community leader, exemplifies central themes that emerged from the research, such as rejection of a range of violent acts and hopes for a more peaceful community.

Our community has been through a long period of violence that has drastically affected all of our lives. Many use the war as a reason to perpetuate violence; however, I believe that we must work together to come to agreements through avenues outside of violence. I believe that rape and the beating of children should never be accepted under any circumstance. Shouting at children is also unacceptable because it ruins their mindset and will not benefit the child. Rather than shouting, a parent should sit down with the child and speak to the child until there is a mutual understanding. Finally, I hope that parents will use the money they get from the harvest to fund their children's education; and that all families within our community can live together in peace.

8.3. Community Understandings of the Roots of Violence

Study participants of all ages were asked to share their views of the causes and common responses to the types of violent situations they mentioned (Table 13). Examples of violence included husbands beating their wives if they do not prepare a meal on time or there is no food in the home; disagreements over how household resources are utilized; and infidelity (perceived or real). Men and women of all ages considered alcohol a primary cause of violence, although other factors such as scarce resources, gender inequities, sex, and land disputes were also identified. Participants identified land wrangles as a particular type of violence that disproportionately affects women, especially older women. As mentioned in Chapter 4, disputes over land are very prevalent because families returned to their villages from the camps with little knowledge of legal property lines. Such disagreements sometimes occur when the family head passes away without demarcating clear boundaries, making it difficult to determine legal ownership. Women often lose the rights to their land, depriving them of their livelihoods.

Table 13. Types of violence, causes and responses mentioned by study participants

Type of violence	Causes	Response
Interpersonal violence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Authority of men - Alcohol - Scarcity of food - Arguments over resources - Women disobey/ need instruction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Intervention by community leader or NGO workers - Treatment
Forced sex	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of women's rights - Women viewed as husband's property - Uncontrollable male sexual urges 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clan leaders mediate - Brothers punish boys
Fighting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Land disputes - Being teased or ridiculed - Fighting over water 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fight broken up - Police called - Sent to hospital if injuries

Poisoning/witchcraft	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hatred - Revenge - Jealousy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Nothing due to fear of perpetrators
Rape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Women/girls moving at night - Alcohol - Uncontrollable male sexual urges - Drug use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gossip about perpetrator and survivor - Pity for survivor - Vigilante justice - Police called - Hospital if injuries

According to participants violence has a temporal nature, increasing during periods of greater stress and alcohol consumption. It is highest during the Christmas holidays and independence celebrations in September and also increases during the harvest period when people struggle to feed their families.

The violence currently is fighting that men like exercising on women and children. Women and children are the ones who suffer. It happens because men are the heads of the family and therefore have authority. Some men are generally tough whenever they drink alcohol. Others are naturally tough even without the influence of alcohol. Violence is most frequent during the harvest season because the men usually want all the money for drinking alcohol and buying roasted meat. (42-year-old woman)

Study participants noted the relationship between gender norms and violence, explaining that life in the camps shifted gender roles and expectations, leaving men feeling vulnerable and emasculated. Many reported that men started drinking after returning from the camps because of unemployment and frustration with their inability to support their family, which is requisite to being an “ideal” man.

Men and women believe that life in the camps brought increased violence, particularly sexual violence. Some of this was attributed to camp life, which created a situation where young people passed their days with nothing to occupy themselves. After returning from the camps, many adolescents were no longer in school, as they had

dropped out or could no longer afford school fees, and spent much of their time in the center of town. With little to occupy their time, respondents suggested that young people became involved in drinking, theft, rape, and fighting.

The literature on northern Uganda substantiates the concerns of study participants about drinking and its effect on the community. Alcohol consumption and problem drinking is prevalent in northern Uganda and closely linked to negative outcomes such as suicide and GBV. According to WHO (2004: 1), Uganda had the highest annual alcohol consumption in the world in 2004, with 19.47 liters of pure alcohol consumed per capita among adults aged 15 years and older – in addition to consumption estimated at 10.7 liters of pure alcohol annually per adult. Despite a decline in 2011, Uganda still had the second highest per capital alcohol consumption in Africa (11.93) and was rated 28th in the world. High rates of alcohol use in northern Uganda, especially among men, have been attributed to displacement and forced idleness (Kitara et al. 2012; Mulumba 2011). Protracted war and political turmoil and demoralization and loss of interest in the future are also thought to be associated with excessive alcohol consumption (Kitara et al. 2012; Tumwesigye et al. 2012).

Worldwide, evidence suggests that alcohol use is closely associated with intimate partner violence. Alcohol consumption reduces self-control and affects cognitive and physical functioning, which reduces the ability of an individual to negotiate nonviolent conflict resolution (Tumwesigye et al. 2012). Alcohol consumption by partners may also cause financial problems, aggressive behavior, childcare problems and other related problems. The WHO recognizes problem drinking as a determinant of intimate partner violence and advises countries to reduce access and harmful use of alcohol (WHO 2013).

Evidence suggests that intimate partner violence may not have much relationship with the male partner's simple consumption of alcohol but rather the occurrence and frequency of drunkenness.

Data from northern Uganda are consistent with global findings that problem drinking is a major risk factor for physical intimate partner violence (WHO 2010; Tumwesigye et al. 2012). Analysis of data from the 2006 Uganda Demographic and Health Survey revealed that women whose partners got drunk often were six times more likely to report physical intimate partner violence than those whose partners never drank alcohol. There was no significant difference in likelihood of being a victim of physical partner violence between those whose partners never drank alcohol and those who drank alcohol but don't get drunk. In a study conducted in 2003 women whose partners frequently consumed alcohol had approximately four times higher risk of domestic violence than those women whose partners did not drink. (Michael et al.: 34). In a study conducted among women presenting at Gulu hospital, Kitara and colleagues (2012) found that problem drinking among male partners was strongly associated with intimate partner violence.

Alcohol can also be an important factor in suicide, something several of the adolescents mentioned contemplating in their life histories. According to a study by Kizza et al. (2012), alcohol facilitated the suicidal process, was a means to suicide, or had an influence on the decedent's lifestyle in nearly 68% of the suicides in northern Uganda. In some cases alcohol had an influence on the suicidal process of the deceased through the drinking behavior of significant others. This research established that alcohol not only contributes to the suicidal process of individuals through acute and chronic alcohol

consumption, but also through victimization of those lowest in the power hierarchy by the alcohol abusers higher up in the hierarchy (Kizza et al. 2012).

8.4. Response and Prevention

The Ugandan government and civil society are actively applying a human rights framework to reduce GBV, and adolescents and adults are familiar with human rights discourse, especially regarding the rights of children. This familiarity is likely a result of intense efforts of NGOs to protect children and respond to widespread human rights abuses, especially those targeting children, during the war. However, adolescents and adults appear less motivated by distant human rights ideals than by a desire to embody traditional values such as respect and to create more peaceful communities. While social norms do sometimes legitimize family violence, others such as respect, obedience and protection could play a role in prevention efforts. Study participants were asked for suggestions on how to respond to and prevent violence.

Table 14 presents their suggested strategies organized by the broad categories of community sensitization, law enforcement, structural interventions and services.

Table 14. Response and Prevention Strategies Mentioned by Respondents

Community Sensitization	Law Enforcement	Structural Interventions	Services
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dialogue and discussion • Violence prevention training & workshops • Clan leaders teaching people not to be violent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrest, beat, imprison the perpetrator • Enforce laws in local courts and by police • Clan leaders create and enforce laws • Create by-laws on land 	<u>Addressing Poverty</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide jobs, vocational training and skills building for women and older adolescents • Rehabilitate formerly abducted children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better equipped and more accessible health services • Provide recreational activities for adolescents – games, social clubs and projects

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sensitization on rights and laws of Uganda • Train and sensitize community leaders 	<p>ownership, bride-price and defilement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build more police posts 	<p>with vocational training</p> <p><u>Addressing Alcohol</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase community awareness of the effects of alcohol and reduce consumption 	<p>– to prevent idleness</p>
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Intimate partner violence within the family is seen as a private problem that should first be addressed by family and clan leaders, and many express concerns about outsider involvement. As discussed in Chapter 4, clan leaders have traditionally been the first line of response to violence in the family. If the situation cannot be resolved within the family, community leaders, including the elected village leader or LC1 (Local Counsel 1), are expected to intervene by mediating disputes, punishing perpetrators, and modeling respectful, nonviolent behavior. Women and men facing violent situations generally first seek advice from LC1s and clan leaders, as they are considered by many as the only outsider who can legitimately mediate domestic disputes.

Beyond clan leaders, respondents identified police, hospitals, and NGOs as organizations that respond to acts of violence. For domestic violence, community members and relatives may also provide support and advice, for example advising a woman whether or not to remain in a marriage. Attitudes toward police intervention in cases of domestic violence were mixed. While some considered increased police presence necessary to combat violence and punish perpetrators, many felt that police should not get involved in private family matters. At the same time, however, others recommended that police more strictly enforce laws that prohibit violence against women and children.

Study participants identified medical, community-based, legal, and other services available for violence survivors. In the case of physical violence or rape, clinics, and hospitals provide treatment for injuries, post-exposure prophylaxis to prevent spread of HIV, emergency contraception to prevent unwanted pregnancy, and in some cases psychosocial counseling. Access to and use of health services, however, is impacted by affordability; local clinics are free but poorly stocked while hospitals offer greater resources at higher cost. Some NGOs offer medical care but are not easily accessible. In the case of severe violence, such as rape or where there is injury or death, victims seek the police for support or to arrest the perpetrator.

Embedded cultural norms supporting intimate partner violence sometimes prevent survivors from seeking help or legal action, as do bureaucratic delays. For a woman to have the perpetrator arrested, she must first have a doctor send a letter to the police stating the extent of her injuries, and the necessity for compensation or punishment. The high cost of medical fees, as well as stigma related to violence, may prevent women from seeking legal recourse. Structural constraints are also recognized; study participants pointed out that women who leave violent situations are often left with no support.

The general consensus is that community members should endeavor to resolve conflicts peacefully through dialogue. Several parents remarked that they prefer talking with their children about their behavior to beating them. In the case of conflicts between children, parents suggested talking to the other parents involved rather than fighting among adults. Among couples, some state that they try to resolve their differences through mutual respect and dialogue. Some remarked that mediation by elders or NGOs has resolved conflicts related to land disputes or domestic violence. Many respondents

mentioned that they feel it is important to “forgive and forget” and move forward without holding grudges in order to interrupt the cycle of violence. This is consistent with traditional Acholi justice systems which prioritize community harmony over retribution.

As part of the post-conflict rebuilding process, there have been widespread efforts to combat violence and raise awareness of human rights. Some study participants participated in violence prevention activities organized by the government or NGOs. One young man reported, “After we were trained, we went to the community and sensitized all the people in Pader and Kilak sub-county, and people learned how to protect the rights of children. Things that used to be done unknowingly which are now considered child abuse have been reduced.” Perhaps as a result of these efforts, respondents had many ideas about how to prevent violence, focused primarily on raising concerns about the issue, teaching participants about their rights and responsibilities, and developing nonviolent conflict resolution skills. Community leaders are expected to take the lead in this work, along with the police and NGO workers.

Interventions conducted by NGOs to prevent and respond to violence were generally viewed positively. However, as mentioned earlier, NGO intervention is not always welcomed in the domain of domestic violence. In fact, a number of respondents criticized the work of NGOs to change discourse about the rights of women and children. The following comment made by 35-year-old Sarah reflects this point of view.

I am a primary school teacher and live at home with my three children. The war has greatly changed Acholi culture. Life in the camps prevented children from moving out to the garden [subsistence agriculture] and caused them to develop bad habits, to become thieves and do bad things. Children lost respect for the elders, and parts of Acholi culture vanished as we could not express our culture the way we did in the past. NGOs came to the camps and taught women about their rights, which made women very big-headed, telling their husbands that they

have rights. With their new talk of rights, they do not respect their husbands, and it causes many problems.

Raising awareness that violence is a serious issue and teaching community members about existing laws was identified as an important element of violence prevention, along with ensuring laws are enforced. As a newly married 17-year-old woman remarked, “There is a law that if anyone fights his partner, they should be imprisoned for seven years. This scares them and they calm down. They should enforce the law.” Similarly, a 27-year-old man remarked, “The other thing that should be done is to find ways of sensitizing the community by teaching them about domestic violence, abuse of children’s rights, use of bad words, and issue of drunkenness.”

Suggestions for preventing violence went beyond awareness-raising to recognition of the need to address structural causes of violence, such as poverty and post-conflict rehabilitation, as well as idleness and excessive drinking. A young man recommended, “They should improve people’s lives, because what causes violence is poverty.” Study participants noted that when men are unemployed and have no means by which to provide for their family, or farm their land, violence increases. Study participants identified improved economic opportunities for women and men as a critical element of violence prevention, and remarked that financial independence enables women to leave an abusive situation, and is an essential element of violence prevention.

Drinking and idleness were perceived as the primary causes of violence, and many emphasized the importance of sensitizing boys and men to drink less and providing activities to fill young people’s time. A 50-year-old male suggested, “First of all, to reduce violence in homes, they can sensitize people to reduce their rate of taking alcohol,

because that is the major cause of violence here.... Drink wisely.” Boys in particular emphasized the importance of activities to keep adolescents occupied. A 19-year-old new father, Okello, stated, “When I am at the field, I play and get so tired. So, I go back home, read a little bit, and sleep. The club has kept boys busy in the field instead of drinking alcohol, which is good. Most times, if they are occupied they cannot be doing bad things.”

8.5. Opportunities for Change

Although this research revealed that GBV and the underlying gender asymmetries that fuel violence are widespread, it also identified opportunities to build on existing awareness, concern and activism related to violence in northern Uganda. Examples of girls/boys and women/men who strive to resolve conflict peacefully emerged; parents who mentor rather than beat their children, couples who resolve their issues through dialogue, and men who respect their wives’ point of view. Many men and women in all life course phases expressed opposition to violence and voiced the desire to move beyond the violent reality they have experienced over the last two decades to construct a more peaceful society.

This moment in history provides a unique opportunity for Acholi and Lango communities to address inequitable gender norms contributing to GBV. Although religious and clan leaders are often assumed to be committed to maintaining the status quo they also hold the power to facilitate cultural transformation. An encouraging result of this research is the number of leaders who recognize the need to reinvigorate their culture by forming children according to cultural traditions that are relevant and adaptive for today’s society.

Table 15 presents the causes of GBV identified by study respondents and corresponding barriers and opportunities to address them. The primary factors associated with GBV according to study participants were cultural and gender norms, drinking, and structural issues such as poverty, unemployment, and war. Intervention opportunities included activities to raise awareness of violence and the contributing role of alcohol, address structural issues, and form more equitable gender norms. Barriers to intervention efforts include ambivalence about the role of outside organizations and reluctance to intervene in private family matters, as well as entrenched gender norms that contribute to widespread acceptance of beating as a form of discipline. Perhaps most challenging to address are structural factors such as land disputes, unemployment and the rights of women to inherit property.

Table 15. Causes of GBV Identified by Study Participants and Intervention Opportunities and Barriers

Causes	Opportunities	Barriers
Alcohol abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognized as a factor contributing to violence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Highly prevalent/used to socialize and escape from frustrations. Producing and selling alcohol generates income for women
High prevalence of violence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Awareness of the problem Many types of violence considered unacceptable Adolescents less accepting of violence Desire to protect children Ongoing efforts to prevent/respond to violence Interest in sensitization activities Some individuals oppose beating women and children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outside interference not always considered appropriate Few services available Closely tied to gender identity and cultural norms

Cultural norms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respect and advice giving valued • Clan leaders empowered to intervene • Peaceful resolution valued • Acceptance of evolving norms to reduce violence (<i>wang-oo</i>, role of advice giving, clans) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beating to discipline women and children widely accepted • Interference in domestic affairs not considered appropriate
Gender norms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Men responsible for protecting their family • Gender norms evolving 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Man considered authority in household • Women marry into husband's clan • Inappropriate for women to question their husbands
Structural issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government and NGO initiatives to support post-conflict reconstruction • Desire to rebuild community during resettlement from IDP camps 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poverty • Unemployment • Land disputes • Gender disparities (resources, education, power) • Women do not inherit property

The role of adults and parents as change agents will be instrumental in achieving lasting change. Advice-giving is paramount in Acholi and Lango culture, and adults take their formative role seriously. A young woman remarked, “It was my parents who always advised me, encouraged me, and from school, the teachers... when you listen, your life might be changed.” Although many traditions, such as the *wang-oo* (fireside chat) have faded, there is interest in reviving them in order to provide adolescents needed guidance. A 54-year-old man reminisced, “Being close to children is very important and that is why I encourage parents to get close to their children and bring back the culture of an evening fire. We need to shape our children, not by beating them, but by talking to them.”

This research highlighted the potential power of individuals to transform their communities, illustrated by the two examples below. In the first life history excerpt, 18-year-old Robert relates his experiences as a role model and youth advocate.

My family was significantly affected by the war, in which my father and brothers were captured by the rebels. When I finally returned home at the age of 16, I got married. We have a positive relationship and work together to build our home. I spend my weekdays working in the garden and playing board games and football with my friends. On the weekends, I also work in the garden and attend church. Additionally, I am a member of German Agro, a group that comes together to plant produce such as tomatoes and onions. This group allows me to teach younger boys and influence their lives. The greatest influences in my life were my parents and uncle because they taught me, kept me in school and gave me advice. This helped me create a strong future. The strength has helped me in difficult times, such as when I suffered a serious beating. However, I realized that keeping such anger at one's perpetrator can only bring death. Therefore, I decided to forgive the attacker and move on with my life, because I cannot pay one wrong doing with another. I want to emphasize the importance of providing a good example for children and teaching them how to build strong homes.”

Joyce's story below demonstrates the pivotal role parents can play by modeling non-violent conflict resolution.

I am 34 years old. I was married at the age of 18 and have since been caring for my own children, my stepchildren and orphans in the community. An orphan myself, I know how it feels to be abandoned, and although individuals in the community tell me to desert the orphans, I will not. When they make mistakes, I do not beat them, but rather talk to them and explain why the action was wrong. My greatest influences were my parents. Like I now do with my children, my mother would not beat me as a child, but would hold discussions with me. These are the lessons I now pass down to my children. My father also had a significant impact on my life. He introduced me to the concept of non-violent conflict resolution. The day he adopted me, we set ground rules, which governed the home. Asking that I listen to him, in exchange for offering me respect, we had no fights in our home. If a dispute arose, my father called me into the room, we discussed the event, he explained the consequences and then we forgave one another and moved on. My hopes for the community are that youth will be taught how to avoid violence.

The acceptability of GBV in study communities is far from universal; the results of this research reveal opportunities to amplify the voices and extend the influence of individuals committed to ending violence. Positive role models such as Joyce and Robert may be able to realize their hopes for an end of violence in their community if they are

given the support needed to join with others to spread their examples widely. These results identify multiple entry points to address GBV including the desire of communities to heal from the effects of conflict and displacement and the conceptualization of an “ideal” man as someone who protects and provides for his family.

Chapter 9. “Tell Them You Are Planning for the Future”: Gender, Fertility, and Contraception

Boys and girls and young women and men in northern Uganda experience their world as a place filled with violence. However, the acceptability of violence is not universal, and study results reveal opportunities to challenge norms that support violence. The central role of inequitable gender norms and roles in sustaining GBV is a clear emerging theme. This chapter continues to consider the primacy of idea systems, in particular gender norms and roles, in shaping behavior, turning to fertility desires and contraceptive use. Starting with a discussion of fertility desires and norms related to family size and timing, this chapter presents examples of the ways that youth who transgress predominant social norms are criticized, labeled and stereotyped, and also tells stories of young people and adults who successfully resist these norms. The second half of the chapter addresses contraception, sources of information and advice, utilization of services, and method use.

The topic of fertility is a particularly compelling example of the power of the CSP as a tool for describing and interpreting human behavior. Youth in northern Uganda are born into cultural and social systems which shape their gender identity, as well as fertility desires, patterns of couple communication and decision-making and ultimately contraceptive use. The role idea systems play shaping SRH is broadly recognized in the SRH literature. In fact, research suggests that gender norms are among the strongest social factors influencing SRH (Greene and Barker 2011; McCleary-Sills et al. 2012). On

their own, and because of pressure from their partners, families, and society, women and men set their metric for childbearing goals in accordance with these social expectations.

For women, gendered norms and institutions shape demand for FP by emphasizing the importance of motherhood, and by ensuring their social and economic status derived from bearing children (McCleary-Sills et al. 2012). This normative prescription remains an important contributing factor to continued high desired family sizes in Africa. There is considerable documentation indicating that in West Africa—and to a lesser extent in East Africa—having many children continues to be critical to a woman’s identity, as well as her social and economic standing (Keele, Forste, and Flake 2005; Kodzi, Casterline, and Aglobitse 2010). Where motherhood holds central importance, women are highly conscious of cultural expectations regarding childbearing. Their value in marriage, treatment and security in their marital homes, and risk of divorce or abandonment often depend on meeting prescribed expectations (Braam and Hessini 2004; Hyoung 1997).

Gender norms may also require men to prove their virility and manhood by fathering a large number of children, with accompanying social sanctions in the form of stigma and ridicule in the case of failure to do so (Konje and Ladipo 1999). Inequitable gender norms that emphasize men’s strength, independence, and power can translate in the intimate realm into sexual risk-taking and control over partners, increasing vulnerability to unintended pregnancy (Greig et al. 2008; Marston and King 2006).

Few studies, however, have sought to understand the links between gender norms and FP in conflict-affected settings, and fewer have included adolescents in this inquiry. This research illuminates the influence of social norms on fertility desires and

contraceptive use among adolescents in northern Uganda. Improved understanding of this relationship is critical because it is during adolescence that gender role differentiation intensifies and hierarchies of power in intimate relationships are established.

9.1. Fertility and Contraception in Northern Uganda: A Review of the Literature

The northern Uganda region has the lowest use of contraceptives by currently married women in the country; only 11% of women were using FP according to the 2011 DHS survey (UBOS and Macro International 2012). The total unmet need for FP in the northern region was 46% among currently married women (compared to 41% nationally), with 29.5% of these women unable to access FP services to help space births and 16.5% unable to limit their family size. Overall, only 19% of total demand for FP was being met in the region, the lowest percent in the country. Although it is a largely rural area, in 2004 the prevalence of HIV in the north central Uganda reached 8% (9% for women and 7% for men), one of the highest in Uganda. This contrasts with a national average of 6% and 2% in West Nile, another predominantly rural area (Nattabi et al. 2011). There is substantial need for contraception among adolescence, the median age at first intercourse for women between the ages of 20 to 49 was 16.7; the median age of sexual debut for men was 18 (UBOS and Macro International 2012). Over one quarter (26%) of 15- to 19-year-old women have begun childbearing; some of those pregnancies may put young women at risk because their bodies are still developing or they are not yet married, and living in precarious social and economic conditions (UBOS and Macro International 2012).

Data from the 2012 DHS survey indicate that many adolescents use ineffective, traditional methods to prevent pregnancy. Qualitative research in northern Uganda

supports this finding, revealing that adolescents use several mythical contraceptive strategies in the belief that these reduce the risk of pregnancy (Bell and Aggleton 2012). One strategy involves taking Panadol tablets (acetaminophen) just before having intercourse. Another is wrapping local herbs in a small cloth tied to a cord around the waist during sex. In a number of studies, adolescents reported that they time intercourse during perceived safe days following menstruation to prevent pregnancy, although opinions differed about the timing of these safe days.

Contraception: reasons for non-use. Given almost universal knowledge of FP methods, why is contraceptive use so low in the region? The literature on adolescent SRH in northern Uganda suggest three major barriers: social and gender norms related to fertility desires and FP use, structural barriers related to the acceptability and affordability of services, and dislike of method options (Mulumba 2011; Nattabi et al. 2011).

Social and gender norms. Many Acholi and Lango women and men hope to have large families. In fact, the mean ideal number of children desired by women of reproductive age is 4.6, although the number of children women actually have is substantially higher. The mean total fertility rate is 7.5, one of the highest in the country (UBOS and Macro International 2012). In societies with low literacy, endemic poverty, high child mortality, and lack of social welfare and security programs, children are often viewed as a form of insurance to provide support in old age. The literature suggests that the strong desire for children may be a result of the prolonged civil conflict and high levels of infant and child mortality in the region (Nattabi et al. 2011; Mulumba 2011;

Mergelsberg 2012). Furthermore, having children in Uganda increases a person's social status (Nattabi et al. 2011; Mulumba 2011; Mergelsberg 2012).

Low use of contraception may also be explained by male opposition, and male-dominated fertility-related decision-making. Some women do discuss desired fertility and contraceptive use with their husbands; however it is ultimately the man who makes the final decision (Nattabi et al. 2011). One study conducted in an IDP camp found that husbands believed that contraception was a deliberate intention to reduce their numbers; and they believed they must have many children to replace those members of their community who died in the war (Mulumba 2011). Women in this study were often prevented by their husbands from using contraception.

Structural barriers. Turning to structural issues, FP services are not widely available in the region and existing services may not meet the needs of the population. The long period of conflict has led to out migration of skilled health workers and limited availability of services. There are only two FP clinics in Gulu town, run by Marie Stopes International and Reproductive Health Uganda. FP programs mainly target females, a feature which in one study “irked some men in the community” and impeded uptake of contraceptive methods (Nattabi et al. 2011). In the same study, conducted in Gulu district, several men told health workers that their programs fail because they target the “wrong people.” A number of articles about FP in Uganda have recommended that reproductive health services reach out to men as well as women, given that men are the reproductive decision-makers in most Ugandan homes (Nattabi et al. 2011; Mulumba 2011; Bell and Aggleton 2012). For example, whether or not condoms are used is very much determined by the male partner. Adolescents are frequently discriminated against,

and health providers are reluctant to provide them contraceptive services, especially if they are unmarried (Bell and Aggleton 2012). Despite the strong focus on HIV prevention and treatment in the region, very few NGOs address FP, focusing primarily on HIV. The practice of abortion among youth, although illegal, is documented, and there are no facilities or expertise to provide post-abortion care (Mulumba 2011).

Schools are a potential source of information about sexual health. However, community attitudes are not generally supportive of contraceptive education for school children; almost half of women (41%) and a third (35%) of men oppose condom education for 12-14 year olds (UBOS and Macro International 2012). In a recent study, Bell and Aggleton (2012) reported that in each of the eight schools involved, although senior female and male teachers were reportedly available to provide advice to young people, worries about discipline prevented students from using this support. Teachers recognized that they were jointly responsible with parents for talking to young people about their health. Extracurricular music, dance and drama clubs may, in principle, provide a safe space in which young people can discuss private issues with peers, as well as an opportunity for boys and girls to learn from one another through interactive dialogue and building support networks across age and gender.

Method related. Misconceptions related to contraception represent a significant barrier to contraceptive use. Those mentioned in the literature include the belief that contraceptive methods cause dizziness, weight loss or vomiting, destroy reproductive organs, or result in infertility, over-bleeding, or death. Youth are afraid that the condom may become lodged in the vagina, and complain that use reduces sexual pleasure (Nattabi

et al. 2011). Some contraceptive users experience side effects, and after a negative experience, youth are often reluctant to try another method that might be a better fit.

9.2. Fertility: At the Intersection of Idea Systems and Human Needs

As discussed above, social norms and cultural values, especially those related to masculinity and femininity, play a major role shaping fertility desires and norms related to the value of children, ideal family size and timing of pregnancy. The table below presents key findings related to gendered social norms, fertility and FP attitudes, behaviors and health outcomes. These data suggests the wide reaching influence of gender on fertility and contraceptive use.

Table 16. Does Gender Matter? Social Norms, Fertility and Contraception

Social norms	Fertility/FP attitudes and norms	Behaviors/Barriers	Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ideal women obey their husbands • Men control women & resources • Procreation core of masculinity and femininity • Children bring status and recognition to young couples 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distrust of contraception due to infertility concerns • Women who use contraception are promiscuous • Men should make final fertility and contraception decisions • Children highly desired • Contraceptive services/use not appropriate for adolescents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intimate partner violence • Couple discussion re contraception and fertility deterred by threat of conflict/violence • Youth lack access to quality services • Men lack contraceptive information • Little use of effective methods • Covert contraceptive use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor timing and spacing of births • Unwanted pregnancy • Unsafe abortions • Health complications for women and children • Economic vulnerability • Early marriage • School drop out

Value of children: family size and spacing. Most young people expressed a desire for three to four children, with some mentioning as many as four or five. Both sons and daughters are desired. Children are highly valued and viewed as critical to the household economy, both for the labor they provide early on and for future support through work or bride-price. Furthermore, children preserve the lineage, are perceived as security in unstable times and bring intangible rewards, such as joy and respect. Women and men, adolescents and adults, view procreation as the foundation of their gender identity, one of life's most important purposes and rewards.

The maternal role was consistently mentioned as a key trait of an ideal woman (mentioned by about half of the male and female adult respondents). Men and women who do not have children are viewed as impotent or barren and not respected as full members of society. A 49-year-old man explained, "You know here in Africa if God has not given you a child, you can have so many thoughts and sometimes you end up falling sick, your mind doesn't function, and things get so heavy for you. A girl sees her friends having children, which makes her very sad" (49-year-old man, community member).

The centrality of fertility to gender identity is illustrated by the following exchange with 16-year-old Judith:

Interviewer: Among all your hopes, which one is the greatest? You talked of education, having a job, and giving birth.

Participant: Giving birth is the most important. In this world, if you don't have a child your life is worthless and people insult you. When you separate from your husband, then the children can send you back to your husband. And the children can support and farm for you when they grow.

Boys are also cognizant of the importance of reproduction for their passage to manhood. New father George, explained, “Now that I am a father, I feel I am different because when I am seated at my home, I feel happy because I have become a father (smiling).” Similarly, newly married Robert dreams of the status he will achieve when he becomes a father, “When I am among people, my maturity will be there. I will be able to sit among the clan. If there are no children people minimize you and there is no one who comes to your home.”

Children are highly valued for the material support they provide. Several respondents quoted a proverb which demonstrates the importance of children, “If you see it is a home where there are many latrines in the back [meaning that you have many children to fill up the latrines] then there is wealth in your home.” In fact, children are considered critical to the household economy; for the labor they provide, as well as for the economic support they are expected to provide once they are grown.

The reason why I find having a child is important is at times when you have come back from the garden tired, you can send him/her to get for you some water instead of sending the mother. When you have taught him/her, she can go and get for you some water, so that makes me find that having a child is important at times. I want to have both boys and girls because they both help people...they can fetch you water. They can help you with digging. (Okello, 19, new parent)

Young people also discussed the importance of having children to continue their lineage, and for the security a large family may provide in unstable times. Newly married Paul reflected, “When I am not there in the future, the child can remain in memory of me.” George, a new parent, explained why he would like to have many children: “It is one way if all these children stay alive that there will be something that will replace you

if you are not there. They will stand in your footsteps. That one also makes these funny people not to disturb your home, because that is one thing that is there like security now.”

In the following quote, newly married Amos expressed the pronatalist attitudes of many study respondents, which may be related to the family and clan members lost in the civil war. “It is very important to me and my parents that I have a child because first of all it will increase the number of clan members. Secondly, when I have a child that child will remain for the memory of that family even if I die because they can point at him that this is the son of so and so.”

Children also bring young couples joy and respect. Newly married Paul commented, “It is important to my parents and relatives because when a child is at home that family can look beautiful because children themselves are like flowers.” Having children is also a way for a young couple to please their parents and gain approval for their relationship, “It is important to get a child because children are like a gift to us and they unite people” (Millie, 17, newly married).

Although children are highly valued, youth and adults alike recognize that there are advantages to a smaller family, due to the challenges of raising healthy children and providing them an education.

But if sickness falls, you begin seeing how life is difficult, and getting treatment might become difficult because you take this one, when you come back another one is again sick. Then the difficulty will be there but if you space, then it gives you time. And also for the woman even if she has given birth to five children, if there is spacing she will still be a little healthy not just becoming old now very fast. (George, new parent)

In the past when you have many children, you just allocate them land and give them animals but today when you have like nine children, you have to pay school fees because there is no land that they can cultivate to keep them. I decided to have only three children because I know I can pay their school fees and when

there is one who is not bright he/she can come and stay in my land. (Michael, 19, new parent)

Although large families are highly valued, there are strong cultural norms that mandate spacing children two to three years apart. Couples who do not wait an acceptable time between pregnancies are also criticized and stigmatized. “They are always pointing at you because sometimes you find when you have gotten your wife pregnant when the other child is just one year old or even still only a few months, and so that one doesn’t look good” (George, 19, new parent).

9.3. Fertility Timing among Newly Married Couples

Acholi and Lango idea systems working through family, clan and religious institutions exert considerable pressure on young couples to produce a child within the first year of marriage, and certainly by the end of the second or third year. About half of the newly married youth (boys and girls) mentioned receiving pressure from relatives and neighbors to begin childbearing. Couples who do not produce a baby within their first year or marriage are shamed and criticized. As one man stated, “If you don’t want to shame the girl from where she came from, she should conceive immediately” (43-year-old man).

The excerpt below from the life story of Amos (male, age 18, new parent) reflects a number of the themes which emerged from analysis of data related to fertility and contraceptive use, such as the joy the pregnancy brought to the new couple, their ability to time the pregnancy according to their needs and the decisive role of the male partner.

I brought my wife and she started staying with me in 2009, and she gave birth in December in 2010. When I realized that my wife was pregnant, I became very

happy. The reason why I became happy was the way that I grew up with a lot of problems and it made me happy that since our number is increasing, such problems will disappear from my life. When I realized that my wife was pregnant I developed a lot of love for her. I became very happy because let me say we cannot stay in the house without having children. She also became very happy. That pregnancy let me say we planned for it. The reason why I decided that she should get pregnant at that time was because I thought that if she gets pregnant in that month, she can deliver in the month of December when people are just staying without any work to do. So I can say it will not be a burden because if she gives birth around that time when there is work, it can be hard for me to do all the farm work since I am still young. It is proper that even if you are giving birth, you should deliver at the time when work is almost done from the garden where I can finish. It was our intention. It happened the way we wanted it to be.

Having children is viewed as the cornerstone of a strong relationship. According to study participants, there can be no happiness without children. They remark that a childless couple will argue and their home will eventually be destroyed. Children can unite the family, even in cases in which the elders were not pleased with the union. The passage below from an interview with a 19-year-old boy illustrates the unifying role of children in the family.

This is because in Acholi once you have been married they want you as a woman to produce; this is what happens in families. Starting from two to three years, it is not good for married people to stay without having a child. You know, to have a child is a sign of joy between a husband and a wife. Family happiness will not be there because the family from both sides will be interested in seeing their grandchild. This is because at the time when one produces, there are functions like the naming of the child. If both parents from the boy's side and from the girl's side come together they reconcile in case there had been some misunderstanding between the two people. Even though the girl's parents did not support the marriage and they were so angry, they can find the grandchild is looking very nice. There can be some happiness created that overcomes the misunderstanding. [Without a child] the benefit of their daughter's marriage would not be there.

If a new wife does not produce children, she will lose respect and status in her husband's family, and may be denied access to or control of family resources. "On some

occasions, whatever she has harvested is removed from her with the argument that she has no child. People even use bad language towards her. It usually ends up in separation,” explained a 43-year-old mother of one of the study participants.

Many of the study participants view having childbearing in economic terms – children represent a family asset and the return on their investment in their son’s marriage. A 19-year-old woman reflected, “Let’s say you have spent one year married, what will the relatives think? The relatives might think you are barren and you must pay back the dowry by giving birth as soon as you marry to prove you are able and healthy.” Similarly a 31-year-old man explained, “If there is a delay in giving birth, they like saying that it is the girl having a problem and then they start torturing her. They look at it like it is wealth; people take it that if you have a child then you are wealthy so they look at it that if you delay giving birth it is as if you are not wise.”

Husbands may be pressured by their family and clan to separate or divorce a wife who has not yet had children; in that case she may be sent home and her family will never receive the bride-price, or if it has already been paid, they may have to repay it. A 60-year-old male elder discussed this point, “It should be immediate. He has married her; so he should start scaling [having children]. If they take two years, then violence will begin. Even one and a half years they will begin suspecting each other. People will not be happy. Sometimes it can reach the extent of ‘return back my wealth’ [bride-price].” Comments from a 27-year-old man suggest that divorce is likely in this situation, and that women as well as men may complain about their spouse’s infertility.

That one [lack of children] strictly brings divorce. People from the boy’s side will start saying that your daughter cannot deliver so they don’t want her and a boy also goes to his father and says that I don’t want this girl because she is a girl who

does not give birth. So when a boy does not function and a girl has been hiding him for that one year, it reaches a time where she comes out and says I have tried but I found out that your boy does not function so there is no way I can stay with him because he is wasting my time.

Living in their husband's household, with few assets of their own and little social capital, young women are especially vulnerable to pressure to produce a first child; in the absence of pregnancy they may face verbal or physical abuse from their husband's family and co-wives. The excerpt below from an informal conversation with several young men is a remarkable testimony to the power that social systems hold in enforcing community norms related to fertility. In this context, using contraception to delay a first pregnancy would require newlyweds be strongly motivated and work together to stand up to their family.

For us in Acholi here if you bring a wife and she stays for like two years when there is no sign, your wife will be chased away. (Group laughter) There will be very many talks about your wife. The elder's eyes will be on me (Group laughter)... so if they wait in vain, my brother, there will be so many issues. (Group laughter) You find when you want to go for a journey, your wife says that if you are going, we need to go together. Things will be bad behind there for her. You find they begin hating themselves at home over something that you don't understand. Their family members would think that she cannot produce a child and that God will not have wanted them to stay together.

Once a family begins to be concerned about a couple's ability to conceive, the woman may be advised to seek medical attention. In the case of the man, his mother may begin to cook him special foods to strengthen him. If that is unsuccessful, traditional rituals and remedies may be used. If a couple does not begin having children right away, the community may suspect that they are using contraception and blame the woman. A 19-year-old female peer explained, "They think that a woman would be the one having

problems because she would be the one getting injected because they currently know that women now go for injections.”

9.4. Challenging Community Norms

The CSP provides a framework to interpret behavioral patterns such as contraceptive use resulting from the interactions between evolving idea systems, social systems and human needs. These interactions are influenced by broader physical and social environments and historical processes. Study participants painted a picture of a society with narrow and strictly enforced boundaries of acceptable behavior related to procreation. Nevertheless, they also provided examples of adolescents and adults who successfully challenged the boundaries enforced by the systems within which they operate. For example, it is becoming increasingly common for newly married couples to resist pressure to conceive immediately after marriage. One 28-year-old man explained, “As a man, if your elderly people have started saying anything, you can even call those elders and tell them that you are still planning for your family and no one should be scared that you are not going to produce. You can tell them you are planning for the future.” In a similar vein, a 35-year-old woman encouraged youth to talk to their family about contraception.

Some community members view it negatively but when you tell them they understand. But it's worse with the in-laws. One has to tell them and explain to them that I want her to stay one year without a child because I am still working to get some money. They understand because problems associated with pregnancies are many.

Other adults expressed similar opinions, mentioning that times are changing and that couples can resist social pressure by explaining their decisions, or by ignoring the

opinions of others. In general, it falls to the husband to defend the couple's fertility decisions. "The boy's family will say that the girl is destroying their home. That was those days. But these days you have to block your ears to the past laws and plan, because it's you who will have the pressure [of raising the children]," noted a 50-year-old man. A 19-year-old boy remarked that his family calmed him down when he found out his girlfriend was pregnant. "My mother reassured me. My uncle also supported me to stay with her. He told people not to disturb us. He warned elderly women in the community not to disturb us." In fact, relatives, especially mothers, can be advocates for their children. In the quote below, a 55-year-old woman describes how she encouraged her son and daughter-in-law to use contraception:

A man should question why his wife is conceiving frequently and what he should do about that. An example is my son; he has two wives, the first wife is planting *sim sim* in Pajule. The first wife stayed one and a half years and then conceived the second child. Now my son realized that that with that kind of fertility she may have many children and yet his mother had few. So he came home and asked advice from me and I told him that if that is from his mind and heart and he is not forced to go for it then I encouraged the action. He picked up his wife and then took her for the five-year FP services.

9.5. Unwed Parenthood: Social System Responses

Becoming pregnant before marriage was referred to as *oyac ki gang-gi* ("pregnancy from home" or "producing at home). It is highly criticized and youth and adults alike discussed in detail the stigmatization of pregnant girls. Unmarried mothers are commonly labeled as "prostitutes" or "spoiled." They are treated severely by the community, as illustrated by this quote from a 43-year-old woman, "Girls do not like to reveal who impregnated them. Because of that, force is always used to make them reveal

the name of the boy. Sometimes they beat and at times even burn her with fire to make her reveal it. Then if she refuses to reveal they sometimes chase her away from home.”

As well as losing respect in the eyes of her community, unmarried girls often face grave consequences. Study participants recognize that stigma, economic hardship, and potential health problems situate young mothers in a vulnerable position as they struggle to finish growing up while caring for their children. Participants explained that it is not uncommon for girls in this situation to be kicked out of their homes, and they face an uphill battle as they form a new family with curtailed educational opportunities and bleak economic prospects.

Girls suffer most, but the effects of unplanned pregnancies also reverberate among the boys that impregnated them, their parents and community, as illustrated in the perspectives included in the table below.

Table 17. Pregnancy from Home: Perspectives of Unwed Mothers and Fathers, Parents and Community Members

Unwed mother	“I would advise parents that if their daughter gets pregnant while living with them, they should give them proper treatment. They should avoid saying those demeaning words that break our hearts.” (Martha, new parent)
Unwed father	“I had so many thoughts, I started thinking that I wish I had never started the discussion ever, now that she is pregnant, and there are many problems that I am going to pass through. Such things you cannot run away from. So I have been enduring it up to now I am still enduring it. I wish we had never had sex with each other. Because the problems I know are so many.” (Michael, new parent)
Parents	“It hurts a parent because they have wasted money in the form of school fees. People despise your daughter a lot and they say so many things. There are many things people say about her so you as the parent, you should just persevere when people are talking. “ (Female, age 52, adult relative)

Community	“Well, they despise her; they say she is a slut, a useless girl and they really make her life so hard. You wasted money that could have paid other children at school. You got involved in promiscuous acts... so many insults and this makes the girl’s life very difficult.” (Male, age 49, community member)
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Study participants painted a stark picture of the shame pregnant daughters bring upon their parents. Parents rely on their daughters to provide them economic and material support, and also count on the bride-price to help their brothers marry. Instead, parents find themselves supporting their “spoiled” daughter and her child and facing the prospect that she may never marry. They are disappointed that they have lost the investment they made in educating their daughters. Parents also lament their loss of status in the community.

We struggled so hard with her father to put her in school and she disappointed us by giving birth. Instead of now supporting us we again have to feed our daughter and her children. So I tell my younger daughter not to follow her footsteps so that people don’t abuse us again. They say see these people – they have money to put their children in school and they only come back with babies. (30-year-old woman, parent)

Boys are also criticized and sometimes suffer consequences such as paying a fine, going to jail, curtailing their education and shouldering the responsibility of supporting their wife and child. However, boys have the option to leave the girl and run away, and some take that route. When asked what happens to an unmarried boy who gets a girl pregnant, a 43-year-old mother of one of the study participants commented, “In most cases, these boys don’t stay home; they run away and leave the girl. But if they are not on the run, then we arrest them. Some are in prison. People do not speak well of them at all because they will have ruined the girl’s future.” Boys in this situation face the challenge

of supporting a wife and child before they have built a hut or established an economic base. Boys who are unable or unwilling to meet this challenge may run away, as described by a male community member, “People kept on disturbing this girl, yet the boy had run away and was hiding. People can abuse this boy saying that he comes from a poor family and that he is still young and therefore he can’t take care of the girl. Now he has run away because he fears the poverty at their home.”

Some girls and boys have supportive families, which try to mitigate the consequences of the pregnancy by offering economic and moral support. Relatives may also advocate for the girl, intervening to stop criticism. Many of the adult study participants described the stigma unmarried pregnant girls face, and some expressed empathy.

When a girl gives birth, people within that community will look at her as one who made a mistake. However she has no crime, she only thought she loved her partner, maybe her partner would love her back. So people within the community will see her as a stupid girl, others will abuse her, telling her that it was her stupidity which made her go have sex with such a moron. Such a girl will cry, be worried and regretful while also confused. That is what I commonly see within the community. (43-year-old woman, adult relative)

9.6. Contraceptive Knowledge and Attitudes

This section will review knowledge and attitudes related to contraception. As discussed above, although large families are valued, cultural norms support healthy spacing and timing of births. Men/boys and women/girls acknowledge the benefits of smaller, well-spaced families, citing economic and health benefits. Participants also evoked post-conflict realities to justify smaller families, “The time people were in camps, trees were cut, the land is now old and infertile, it does not bring any good yields. If you

continue producing many children, if hunger strikes or sickness falls, you will find many problems” (19-year-old boy). Indeed, all adolescents supporting child spacing cited post-conflict land and resource limitations.

Despite pressure to produce children soon after marriage, most respondents (both adults and youth) recognize that there are benefits to a young couple of taking some time to get established before having their first child. A mother of one of the study participants recommended delaying the first child.

After one year, they will have prepared everything they need for their house. For example, if they are farming, they will have produced enough food for their house instead of relying on their parents. They can also start some business for themselves so that they can afford to buy soap, salt and even their clothing. (42-year-old woman, parent)

Similarly, a 28-year-old man recommended:

That one year should be for planning, you plan that if God gives us a child after one year, we would have set every necessary need to take care of a baby like how to take care of his/her health, his/her clothing, feeding up to a stage when a child is old enough to go to school, and at this stage, you would have had a enough things to take that child to school.

Although there is widespread support for HIV services for youth (testing and condoms), attitudes towards contraceptive services are less favorable. Opposition is based on three major concerns (in order of frequency): 1) contraceptive methods cause side effects and infertility, especially among young women whose bodies are too delicate to tolerate them well; 2) contraceptive use encourages women to be promiscuous and unfaithful; and 3) contraceptive use causes quarrels between couples. A few respondents also mentioned religious concerns, “... they say that God asked us to reproduce and fill the world and so [contraception use] is disobeying God’s laws” (35-year-old woman,

community member). Nevertheless, most respondents recognize the benefits of having smaller, spaced families, mentioning that contraceptive use makes economic sense, enables parents to adequately provide for each child, and is good for the health of mother and child.

The contraceptive methods participants are aware of include: oral contraceptives, male condom, natural methods/abstinence, implants and injectable. Other methods mentioned infrequently include: female condom, IUD, and female sterilization. Frequent misconceptions related to contraceptive use include the beliefs that hormonal contraceptives cause infertility, information and access to contraceptives leads to promiscuity, using FP at an early age can lead to health complications, and the belief that pain relievers, such as Panadol, help prevent pregnancy.

The couple dyad is the most important domain for contraceptive decision-making, although the extended family often has significant influence on their decisions. Generally, men are poorly informed and suspicious of women who use contraception. A major concern expressed by all adult men, but not by women or adolescents, is women using contraception without partner approval.

First the woman goes to the clinic, and then they tell her to come back on such a date with her husband so that it does not bring quarrels in their family. But there are other people who do not tell their husbands and so quarrels erupt and some of these issues reach the leaders. Sometimes they remove it from the clinic. The medicine they implant under the skin. (39-year-old man, parent)

Men feel disempowered by covert contraceptive use and advocate for male involvement in FP services. “Sometimes, the husband just discovers that she is using the method. So, it is looked at as *female* planning, not family planning. The way I see that

family planning services can be improved is through engaging both men and women” (28-year-old man).

Men may block contraceptive use in a number of ways, including restricting their wives’ access to services. It is difficult for women to obtain services without partner approval. Also, women may be discouraged from using contraception because they fear violence. An 18-year-old woman explained, “If I said I wanted to use a family planning method, [my husband] would definitely say no! I would go by his decision otherwise it will just cause conflict between us which is not good at all.”

Once the decision is made to use contraception, men influence method choice. With the exception of one participant, all newly married/parenting adolescents reported that they had talked with their partner about contraception, how many children they would like to have and when they would like to have them. Although participants report that FP decisions should be made jointly, couples do not always agree on which method to use and the man’s view generally prevails. “We discussed other methods, but he didn’t accept them because of effects like headache, body weakness, weight loss, which might lead to spending a lot of money” (Hope, 17, newly married).

9.7. Diffusion of Family Planning Knowledge and Attitudes

FP idea systems are spread through communities by social system actors – parents, in-laws, co-wives, spouses, peers, teachers, health workers, and religious leaders among others. Participants often raised HIV prevention and treatment in tandem with the topic of FP. HIV has been a focus of health communication initiatives in Uganda since President Museveni launched the well-known ABC campaign (Abstinence, Be Faithful and Use a Condom if A and B fail) in the 1980s to address the HIV epidemic.

When asked about important sources of contraceptive information, youth mentioned radio and their peers; they had limited access to other media channels such as Internet, television or newspapers. Newly married James said, “Radio gives advice...with radio even if you go to the garden, you find information.” Radio was identified as a useful source of guidance on a wide range of topics including HIV/AIDS, condoms, school attendance, laws, contraception, and where to find services. One community member commented, “Radio shapes young people if they keep listening to good teachings. For example there are dramas that are played through radio that tell people how to prevent HIV/AIDS. This helps teach children how to lead a good life” (28-year-old man, community member). Interestingly, some adults mentioned that radio promoted communication with their children on important issues because they listen to the radio together or because young people discuss the topics they hear on the radio with them.

Interviewer: Okay, can you tell me what you have listened to when you are together with these youth from the radio?

Participant: Talks on family planning, behaviors like promiscuity. When the radio is staging a good talk show and a good child is listening, a child can grasp and become a good child who is happy. And sometimes the child can hear and tell me, “Mama, first come and listen to how these people are teaching on the radio and then we come and listen to it together from the radio.” (52-year-old woman, adult relative)

Although youth didn’t mention adults as a source of information, perhaps because they were focused on contraceptive technology rather than the broader spectrum of SRH, one quarter of the adults interviewed (four men and five women) spoke in detail about their role advising the youth in their lives about SRH. Their comments suggest that it is

inappropriate for young people to bring up this topic; instead it is the responsibility of elders to raise the issue, as part of their advice-giving role. A 28-year-old man noted that, “As very young people they can’t start such conversations, it’s me who comes out and tells them such things.” A 54-year-old man and community member concurred: “Who begins this conversation? It is us the elders who should begin this.”

According to adult study participants, the topics covered during their conversations with youth typically include the risks and consequences of sex, with a strong focus on HIV prevention. Early pregnancy and early/forced marriage, rape and school dropout are also discussed. Other topics mentioned were how to behave in a respectful manner (a strong Acholi/Lango value), following God’s will and working and studying hard.

What I discuss with youth, in most cases girls, is HIV/AIDS and how they should be careful, unwanted pregnancies, and forced marriage by parents from home. I ask them to report that so that I am aware of what is going on, then also I tell them to be careful and guard against rape. (23-year-old woman, community member)

I tell them that most boys today have turned people’s girls to be their playing ground, that they will make you pregnant and dump you with the baby, and I tell them the consequences of sexual relationships that it leads to school dropout, getting pregnant and also death so they should first leave it. (48-year-old woman, parent)

Some women mentioned that they advise unwed mothers to “be calm” by delaying their next pregnancy, working hard and respecting their parents, “I tell them to avoid conceiving again while still at home. I encourage them to start some businesses instead of just sitting. I also advise them to join youth groups, stay home, love their parents, and avoid over-loitering” (43-year-old woman, parent).

These discussions appear to happen most often in afternoons and evenings, when most work is done and during the fireside chat or *wang-oo*. A 54-year-old man explained, “I spend time with children from 2 PM to 4 PM, when I have little work to do but I also meet them in church.” Another described discussions during the *wang-oo*,

First of all, we talk about issues of engaging in sexual activities in regards with HIV/AIDS. Secondly, we talk about how bad it is to engage in early relationship and early marriages. Thirdly is about the issues of relatives. This is because it is around the evening fire when you tell them who their relatives are. (43-year-old man, parent)

Adults report giving advice to boys as well as girls:

... the advice that I give boys in Kilak here, first of all early marriage, they should not do. Secondly, if your parents have the capacity to pay your school fees, please you study, and thirdly if you find that your urges cannot be controlled, and you find that you cannot stay without a woman, Huum you are itchy when it comes to women. Please take your time with that girl and go to the hospital and have a test (45 year-old man, community member).

Contraceptive services are generally not considered appropriate for adolescents due to disapproval of premarital sex and pronatalist attitudes. Less than half of adults support contraceptive services youth (six out of eleven women, seven out of eleven men). Those opposed to those services voiced concerns that such services would encourage promiscuity, lead to infertility or dangerous/uncomfortable side effects and interfere with God’s plan. A 60-year-old man commented, “It is God who plans things; we are not supposed to plan God’s things. So let us not plan our families. So the unmarried adolescents shouldn’t access these services. They enter a marriage that is when they will access those services.” A 24-year-old man agreed, “No, they should be sensitized and given a blood test [for HIV], but not family planning. They will struggle to get the

medicine [contraception] and when they get the medicine, they will start to misbehave” (24-year-old man, peer). Those who do support providing services for youth focus on the consequences of early pregnancy, “We think that they should have access because it helps them in many ways. It is important for them to get these services and information. For example, young girls who suffer from unwanted pregnancies. Likewise, the boys need it, too” (43-year-old woman, parent).

Adults and youth alike voiced concerns with side effects and infertility related to contraception, “Family planning is disturbing people, so when young people start using this medicine it can affect their uterus. ... They should just abstain and remain faithful. For me I think they should not have access to it. I think if they get it they can misuse it without knowing the consequences,” remarked a 42-year-old mother. There is less concern once the couple has had at least one child. When asked if adolescents should have access to FP services, a mother of one of the study participants responded, “Ooo... they should not get. They should first have children and start using when they don’t want to give birth anymore. The reason why you see most girls these days not giving birth is because of medicine. Because that medicine is not right” (47-year-old woman, parent). Many adolescents share concerns about side effects, “I feel I shouldn’t use it... because when you start using it before having a child, it can make you barren” (17-year-old girl).

There are exceptions, however, and a few participants did express support for providing unmarried youth information about contraception. A 50-year-old man commented, “Youth can’t access family planning services because they are not yet married and have not yet started having children. But they should have that knowledge so

that when they marry they know how to space children. Actually all information regarding reproductive health, they should start getting when they are still young.”

In contrast to concerns about FP services, there is strong support for youth to have access to HIV services, including sensitization, HIV testing, condoms and treatment. The need for young people to “test their blood” before beginning sexual activity appears to have become a cultural norm, viewed as a rite of passage into a sexual relationship. Many of the adolescents explained that they began their sexual relationship with an HIV test. Unfortunately, however, contraceptive services are not included in this rite of passage. Outreach efforts tend to focus on promoting HIV testing and, to a lesser extent, condom use for HIV prevention. Most respondents did not see a link between HIV and FP services. Only a few mentioned condoms as pregnancy prevention, “I think that they should be given condoms because it not only protects them from HIV but from unwanted pregnancies” (43-year-old woman, parent). For example, although distributing condoms to youth for HIV prevention is supported by most, they are not considered a FP method, as illustrated by the following exchange between the interviewer and a 19-year-old female community member.

Participant: Condom is good, it will prevent the transmission of diseases.

Interviewer: OK, you said a condom is good, which one do you think youth should not get?

Participant: Family planning is the one that is bad.

Interviewer: Condom is also among family planning.

Participant: No, that is not true.

While community members are not opposed to providing condoms to young people, they emphasize that counseling and moral education should accompany distribution. A 50-year-old man explained, “They should first counsel before giving condoms. It will be like sending them to go and start having relationships...Also just supplying, they go and put them to use saying, ‘Were you not given? Go and put it to use.’ They will start having sex because they have been given condoms.”

9.8. Responding to Organic Needs: The Health System

The need for health care to prevent or treat disease is included in the CSP framework within the category of organic needs. This section will explore the perceptions of the adolescents and adults of the availability, accessibility and quality of services, especially those related to SRH.

When asked where they go when they get sick, young people mentioned the health center, and occasionally the hospital. Study participants experience frequent illness and seek care often; visiting the health center for diarrhea and dehydration treatment (“the drip”), “malaria tablets,” injections, painkillers and other services. They are more likely to go to the youth center than the health center for HIV services. Private clinics were mentioned as an alternative source of care when the health center is out of medications, especially antiretrovirals (ARVs). Although clinic services are not free, they are more likely to have needed medications including ARVs in stock. Clinics are generally located in the trading posts, and were mentioned more frequently by men than women, perhaps because it is more difficult for women to access them.

Contraceptives can be obtained at the health center, hospital, youth center, clinics (at a cost), and at the Marie Stopes mobile outreach clinics one day a month. Newly

married Okello stated, “They normally get information from the health center. Since the world is dangerous with a lot of diseases, they advise them on the way they should protect themselves in regard to being a man and a woman.” George, a new father, mentioned, “In the clinic people are taught to abstain and when you cannot you are told to use ‘Trust condom’ [brand name].” According to the youth, condoms are readily available and often available at no cost from health centers, hospitals, youth centers, drug shops, NGOs, in containers near markets, “lodges,” and from village health teams. A young man explained, “There are some people that give condoms to young people if they want, you just go and sign for them. They are distributed in all villages; the village health teams are the ones who distribute them.”

Youth centers are mentioned frequently as a source of SRH services and information for young people, especially HIV services and condoms. The youth centers are more likely to have ARVs in stock than the health centers or hospital. The youth center conducts educational sessions and provides counseling, with a primary focus on HIV prevention and treatment. An 18-year-old new father stated, “They usually teach how HIV is spread and how we should protect ourselves from it.” The youth center is identified by many adults (young and old, male and female) as the place to get tested for HIV and a source for ARVs. A few adolescents also mentioned that the center provides condoms and talks about FP.

The village health team (VHT) (made up of government-trained community health volunteers) was mentioned by only one adolescent and three of the adults interviewed, one of whom was a VHT member himself. VHTs were mostly mentioned in the context of condom distribution. Study participants explained that the VHT distributes

condoms, although few girls or women take them. However, one respondent did say that the VHT has not supplied condoms for several years, and that young people mostly buy them in shops since free stocks are no longer available. George, a new father, mentioned that the VHT members are trained to explain birth spacing to mothers and distribute FP methods. He also mentioned that VHT members provide information about FP during community meetings.

Providers themselves hold their own beliefs and biases which sometimes conflict with their professional responsibilities. One VHT explained this dilemma, “But there are some young children who come to get condoms from you as a condom distributor. You get worried about this child and sometimes you can feel like not giving. But if you do not give, they can still engage in sexual intercourse. So you are forced to issue out the condoms to a young person.”

In terms of needed improvements to health services, a few respondents mentioned that they had to travel some distance to a nearby health center and would like a health center closer to their home. Other concerns expressed included crowded services, long waits, ARV stock outs, and provider attitudes. After identifying the health center on his map as a place he doesn't like, a young man explained, “The place that makes me unhappy at times is the health center. Because at times you can come when the nurses are around but they just keep on shouting at you. There are days when you come but you find there are no drugs.”

Access and availability of supplies are challenges faced by government-run health facilities around the world and the Ugandan Ministry of Health is working to address these with international support. Less well recognized, perhaps, are strong concerns

related to the quality of FP services raised by respondents, primarily men, about informed choice and male involvement. Their comments may reflect men's fear of losing power, despite their expressed support for spacing births. These concerns may play a role in men's opposition to FP and, combined with concerns about side effects, explain their preference (discussed later in the chapter) for male-controlled methods such as periodic abstinence and condoms. The following response from a male community leader when asked how to improve FP services raises many important themes, such as couple power dynamics, women's autonomy, lack of information among men about FP, and the quality of FP services, including informed and voluntary choice and appropriate counseling and screening.

You find that women go and use implants without the consent of the husband. Sometimes, the husband just discovers that she is using the method. So, it is being looked at as female planning, not family planning. And in this way I see that family planning services can be improved by engaging men and women. The health workers should ensure that if a woman comes to receive medication for family planning, the husband should be there. And also, men should be sensitized on family planning use since it is hard to deal with men. Sometimes when a community meeting is organized, even though a village health team member goes there to sensitize people on family planning, you do not find men; you only get women who have gathered. There should be much sensitization of two parties. A husband and a wife must be involved during FP counseling. The decision should be theirs. The bad thing is that, most times, the family planning workers are the ones who decide for their client. This is not good as the decision should be for the client. Men should be involved and that service should be given to a family. This is because it brings family wrangles. Also they should do body examination to define the method that is good. This can help in giving the service that match with the person. So this area should be improved.

A number of men suggested the need to improve the contraceptive information provided, emphasizing the importance of discussing positives and negatives in order to facilitate informed choice. These concerns may be related to lack of information and

concerns about the side effects and long-term health implications of contraceptive use. For example, a 31-year-old man stated. “I feel it is very important for youth to have information about the medicine that they are going to use. If they are to use any FP medicine, they should have information about it, and they should know the disadvantages and advantages of the medicine.”

Adult men are concerned that FP services are oriented towards women and exclude them from the process, although notably women and young people did not mention this as a concern. In their comments, men focus on the fact that failure to involve men in FP decisions often leads to family conflict. It also appears from their comments, all of which relate to implants, that recent introduction of this long-acting reversible method may be related to male opposition to contraceptive use. However, men also imply that greater male involvement will increase acceptability and use of contraception.

HIV services are the ones that are there and very okay. But for family planning, this most times brings quarrels in the home. This is because women just go for it alone and yet for such services both of you need to go together. So, women go for this one where something is inserted into your arm to prevent you from getting pregnant. So, if a woman goes to the hospital and it is inserted into her arm or given without the concern of the husband, the man begins to raise lots of issues. (27-year-old man, peer)

To improve [FP services], I see that mostly they should talk to the men, because men are the ones who are always the source of confusion. Where you find the women are going to implant the things in style without informing them, it is because men do not want. (39-year-old man, parent)

Some study participants believe that FP cannot be given to a woman without her husband’s consent. For example a 49-year-old woman commented, “They ensure a woman is put on family planning when she has three or four children... However, this can only be done when both the woman and her husband have agreed to use the family

planning service.” It is not clear in comments such as these if respondents think this is the current policy or the way services should be provided.

9.9. Family Planning Use and Abortion

This section will focus on the experiences of newly married and parenting adolescents related to FP, including couple discussion and decision-making and male attitudes towards contraceptive use. Analysis of the life histories suggest that FP decisions are motivated by multiple and sometimes conflicting human needs such as the desire to reproduce and gain status by meeting community expectations versus the desire to establish a strong economic base before expanding the family. FP decision-making takes place within the context of the couple dyad, influenced by family and community beliefs about fertility and FP. The availability of accessible and appropriate services, however, depends on wider community processes, such as the ability and willingness of the government to dedicate adequate resources to adolescent SRH. The capacity of the health care system to meet the needs of adolescents is influenced by historical, political, economic and social processes, as well as community norms regarding the priority and shape of SRH services for youth.

Almost all of the youth reported that they had discussed FP with their partners; only one young man said he had not yet discussed the topic. According to study participants, couples share ideas about the number of children they would like to have and when they would like to have them, as well as what they should do to prevent pregnancy. It is evident that prevailing norms dictate that FP decisions should be made jointly by both members of the couple, although often the man has the final decision. When the interviewer asked Amos, an 18-year-old new father, whether he has discussed

FP with this wife, he replied, “We are supposed to. Yes we do, because it is so important to me.” When asked it was important for his wife as well, he replied, “Yes, it’s important.”

The topic of FP comes up in a variety of ways and is brought up by both men and women, as illustrated by the two interview excerpts below.

Robert, 18 years old, newly married

Interviewer: Who started the conversation?

Participant: It is her who started. She asked me if we should have a child now and I told her not yet. Let us first stay for a year.

Interviewer: So who decided that you go to the health center immediately?

Participant: It is me who told her.

Interviewer: So when you came to the health center, how did you feel?

Participant: We were just happy.

Interviewer: Did this happiness come from you or from her as well?

Participant: Because we can do those work that a pregnant woman cannot do within this time when she is not yet pregnant.

Stella, 16 years old, newly married

I talked about it with him because I thought I should use the injection. If I don’t use it I may get pregnant early which would make giving birth difficult for me because my waist is still small. I cannot yet produce a baby. So I talked about it with him in a good way and he agreed that I start the injection.

Most respondents reported that these discussions went well and felt positive about them. Nevertheless, their remarks reflect underlying concern with the sensitivity of the subject, qualifying their statements with phrases such as, “I talked about it in a good way,” or “She doesn’t react in a bad way.” Young men also seem concerned that such

discussions may reflect badly upon them, mentioning that these discussions should be private so that others don't gossip about you and "shame you."

Nevertheless there were two situations in which study participants preferred not to discuss FP with their husband because they suspected he would oppose continued use. In one case the young woman was using the injectable and knew that her husband was concerned with its long-term effects on her fertility, although he had recommended it earlier. In another case the woman's husband changed his mind and no longer wanted her to use the injectable. When asked if she would broach the topic of using the injectable with her husband, 19-year-old Gloria replied, "No. Because if I get pregnant he may not like it and then he will send me away. I used to talk to him about it but he did not agree to it. He says that thing causes a lot of bleeding in people."

When it comes to deciding how to prevent pregnancy, couples often disagree. Many young men are skeptical of hormonal methods, expressing concerns about side effects and future infertility. In these cases, it is generally the man's view that predominates, often resulting in use of condoms or periodic abstinence. Some of the young women expressed concern that their partner would not be able to use these methods consistently or correctly.

The narrative below, from newly married Robert, portrays a picture of joint decision-making, strongly dominated by the man.

It was her who started, she asked me if we should have a child now or wait, then I told her not yet. So we decided to go to the health center immediately. I told her that we should have few children and she accepted. When she asked me how many children I think we should have I told her three children and she told me that there is no problem. I was thinking that we should not rush with giving birth that is why I decided that she first gets injected and wait for a year.... We came to

the health center and we were helped with it. We came for it yesterday. It was me who came up with that idea. We were happy.

Results of the interviews with newly married and parenting young women revealed that half (five out of 11) perceived husbands as supportive of FP, four consider them opposed and two are unsure. Seventeen-year-old Peace explained, “He told me to go inject myself because he is also not ready and since God has given this one child we should try to take care of him with the little we have.” According to women, their husbands’ opposition to FP stems from fear of infertility and the health and economic consequences of side effects. Three of the young men mentioned that they use some type of periodic abstinence because they are concerned with the potential health effects of contraceptive methods. One mentioned that he wanted to learn more about the menstrual cycle and another explained that he learned how to prevent pregnancy this way in science class. All three mentioned that they might use a more effective, long-acting method after having their first child.

The passage below from Faridah suggests that although women have a say in FP decisions, their husbands and his family may actually control her fertility.

He [my husband] says family planning can pose a big health problem like making one barren. My family doesn’t support me using it. They expect you to just give birth to as many children as possible. If I said I wanted to use a family planning method, he would definitely say no. He believes he has the knowledge on how to space children. I would go by his decision otherwise it will just cause conflict between us which is not good at all. If someone came to sensitize him on family planning, he might accept at that time, but once the person leaves, he will maintain his stand.

However, Faridah believes that it should be a joint decision.

Both of you will have to agree. Let's say he suggests that he wants ten children, you cannot just say yes because you may fail to raise them and it can weaken you as a mother. So it's good to also give your opinion on such things while weighing the options. I would say no. It can be possible to have ten children but it will weaken me completely as a mother. presents information about FP use among study participants.

Analysis of the life stories reveals that seven of the young men and women have no need for FP because the woman is either pregnant or in the immediate postpartum period, seven were using an effective method, and seven were at risk of an unplanned pregnancy because they are using either condoms or periodic abstinence. Amos, a new father commented, "The method we use for preventing pregnancy is through talking amongst ourselves. Let me say my wife is in her period, I tell her that we should first wait for it to pass then we continue. That is the way we are preventing pregnancy instead of going for drugs and injections." Injection was the most frequently used method (4), followed by condoms (3), implants (3), periodic abstinence (2), and unspecified (1). The young women interviewed mentioned a number of problems with contraceptive use: one mentioned that the condom broke, another discontinued the injectable because of bleeding and five mentioned that their husband opposed method use (three due to concerns with side effects and two who did not like using condoms).

Table 18. FP Use among Newly Married and Parenting Study Participants

	Men (n=11)	Women (n=11)	Total (n=22)
No need for FP (separated)	0	3	3
No need for FP (pregnant, immediate postpartum)	3	1	4
Need for FP	8	7	15
FP use:			
Injection	1	3	4
Condom	2	1	3
Implant	3		3
Unspecified		1	1
Periodic abstinence	2		2
At risk of pregnancy/not using an effective method	2	2	4

Young men and women are strongly influenced by their family’s expectations regarding childbearing. About half of the young men reported that their family wanted them to produce children soon, while the other half reported pressure to space their next birth. Among the girls, the majority (five) reported that their relatives (mostly her in-laws) expected children soon, two felt that their family wanted them to space their next birth, one said their family left it up to them, and two desired pregnancy now.

In the passage below, Michael, a 19-year-old new father, describes his rationale for using contraception, and mentions talking with his wife about FP and the influence of his family on his decision.

We share ideas on family planning; she said that idea is not bad, because in the future if we have many children, or if we get children when others are still young, she will have problems taking care of the children. The reason why we use condoms is so that we don’t get another child immediately when the other is still young. Or so that children should not be malnourished because if a child is malnourished, life will be difficult to both the mother and the father. My family people will feel bad [if she gets pregnant again soon] because they will say these children, they are still young but they are producing children like this, in the future taking care of these children will disturb us.

Given the ambivalence towards contraceptive methods reflected in the adolescent narratives and reliance on less effective methods, it is not surprising that abortion was raised frequently as a solution to unplanned pregnancy. Abortion was brought up spontaneously by half of the newly married/parenting girls and boys, as well as by many of the adults interviewed. Induced abortion is illegal in Uganda, but as in other countries where it is against the law, is not uncommon (Singh et al. 2005). Two of the girls shared stories of unsuccessful attempts to abort. In one case, the girl did not discuss it with her partner; in the other, the baby's father suggested the abortion. Eighteen-year-old Lilian described her abortion attempt, "When I found out I was pregnant I wanted to die, I even tried to abort...I met a nurse and she explained to me how she aborted. She used aspirin and asked me to also try it. I bought 50 aspirins and tried and it failed. My husband didn't know about it." Seventeen-year-old Peace also shared her failed abortion experience:

When I found out I was pregnant I realized that I was still young and could not take care of the baby and have a home of my own. I got pregnant sneaking out of the house to meet my boyfriend. I started swallowing tablets and had taken many of them so that I could abort the baby. I became so weak they had to take me to the hospital and I was rescued and the baby did not come out. The baby's father said for him he had nothing to take care of a child, he is also still young and just struggling on his own and his friends would tell him to chase me away and some said that we should abort. That is when I tried and it failed then I got the baby. I was so angry at myself; I wouldn't eat but just cried all the time. I knew that was the end of my life and would leave our children alone without anybody taking care of them.

Boys also discussed abortion freely. One of the older boys mentioned that his first child was aborted and the relationship ended, although his current child was planned. Two other boys suggested that if they found out that their wife had an unplanned pregnancy they might want her to abort. "I would feel that she should abort because let

me say [pregnancy] was not my intention,” said Amos. Okello commented, “Huh, for her, she can be a lot of annoyance. If there is no good relationship between you, she can even get some drugs that will allow her to abort.” George, a 19-year-old father, made a similar comment, but noted that his wife and family might not agree.

... I just remove. (Laughs) There will no more discussion... Women are narrow-minded; she would feel like keeping it. She would want it to be kept... My family people will just be happy. (Group laughter) They love children. They say the land is big and people are few. They love children a lot. If they get to learn, it becomes hard to abort.

Boys as well as girls mentioned specific ways to abort, including taking large quantities of Panadol (acetaminophen), swallowing drugs and ingesting the roots of “moringa” or other local herbs. Stella, newly married at 16, mentioned that her friends at school told her how to abort. “For example, here someone can get pregnant and goes to the clinic, buys drugs and aborts. If she doesn’t go to the clinic then she can get the roots of any tree and drinks which make the baby to be aborted.”

9.10. Conclusions

Applying life history methodology to transitional moments from adolescence complemented by in-depth interviews with “significant others” enhanced understanding of the processes which enforce gendered social norms related to reproduction and FP. Analysis of the narratives elucidates gendered FP decision-making within the couple dyad, highlighting the pressure exerted by social systems and the need for acceptable services. Each of these factors plays an important role in contraceptive use among adolescents in post-conflict northern Uganda. Another notable finding is the challenging situation young couples face, caught between their individual fertility desires and those of

their family and clan, while at the same lacking confidence in the safety of available contraceptive options. Moreover, these dynamics play out in an environment where men fear losing what they see as core elements of their masculinity – their reproductive role and control over their wife.

Despite the changing post-conflict environment, gender norms related to fertility in northern Uganda appear largely static; masculinity and femininity are still embodied by procreation, ideal women are obedient and nurturing, and ideal men are providers with authority over women. Young men and women struggle to reconcile contradictory forces – pressure to have large families to strengthen their clan, and the desire for smaller families to respond to economic insecurity. The fear that women who use contraception will be unfaithful or unable to conceive in the future may be particularly salient to men frustrated with their inability to fully perform the traditional masculine role of provider and protector.

Although some prevailing social norms support FP use, the high value of children combined with the stigma associated with delaying a first birth prevents many young couples from using contraception. Negative attitudes towards contraceptive methods such as fear of side effects and infertility, especially among men, also prevent their use. The widely-held belief that youth should not have access to FP methods is a significant barrier to services. Oftentimes families pressure young couples to have children early and often and youth who choose to space or delay pregnancy pay a significant social price for defying social norms. Women, in particular, may lose access to resources, face criticism, be threatened with divorce, or forced to accept a co-wife. Much of women's value derives

from her procreative role; thus, the decision to have a smaller family may have a negative effect on her status and value within her family and clan.

Men and women – both young and old – share similar norms, values, and attitudes about fertility and contraceptive methods and services. There is one notable exception: men voice strong concerns about the side effects of FP methods and their potential effect on women's fertility and insist that FP services should be provided to the couple, rather than the woman alone. In addition, men voice concern about being excluded from FP services, an issue which is not raised by women. It is unclear whether women share these concerns as well, as they primarily discuss their husband's views without commenting on whether or not they agree or disagree with them. However, some women do use hormonal methods against their husband's wishes, suggesting that women are either less concerned about potential health effects, or are willing to accept these perceived risks in order to effectively control their fertility.

Chapter 10. A Cultural Systems Approach to Adolescent Trajectories: Discussion and Implications for Research, Theory and Action

The results of this research – focused life story interviews with youth at different life stages combined with in-depth interviews with significant others – provided insight into the ways boys and girls navigate their course through puberty into adult roles, while maintaining a broader view of the systems within which their lives unfold. In this chapter, I apply the primary theoretical constructs guiding my research, the CSP, a life course perspective and the social construction of gender to propose a framework for the pathways that adolescents take through life course stages under the influence of the systems and processes which encompass them.

I begin this chapter with an examination of the evolution of the key domains explored in this research (gender, violence, FP) over four adolescent life course phases: early adolescent, older adolescent, newly married, and first-time parent. Previous chapters focused on exploring each of these domains; by way of a conclusion, this discussion applies a temporal perspective, considering the way that social networks, individual needs, attitudes, and behaviors evolve in tandem as adolescents develop from children to parents. I then apply an ecological lens to the results and consider how social systems such as the family and ideational systems influence adolescents. I follow this with discussion of the CSP as an organizing model for understanding the situation of youth in northern Uganda and a framework for identifying opportunities for intervention and support. Finally, I discuss the methodological and theoretical implications of this study and offer recommendations for future research, policy and practice.

10.1 Life Course Transitions through a Gender Lens

As young people move through the life course, they develop from children doing chores and going to school under close adult supervision to adolescents engaging with their peers and beginning sexual relationships, ultimately transitioning into parents raising their own children. In the study setting of rural northern Uganda, all of this occurs with a short time span of three or four years. Across these rapid life course transitions, there is a gradual evolution in agency, gender norms, and idealism, as well as greater exposure to sex and violence. At the same time, social networks and roles and responsibilities are shifting. These shifts are triggered not only by chronological age, but by biological, social, and economic events to which youth must respond. The table below lays out shifts in social systems, idea systems and human needs, key elements of the CSP, by life course phase, applying a gender perspective to each transition.

Table 19. Life Course Transitions

	VYAs	Older Adolescents	Newly Married/ Newly Parenting
Social Systems			
Social networks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents and extended family • School 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peers gain increasing importance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Girls integrate into networks in their husbands' household • New work relationships
Idea Systems			
Gender Norms and Roles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexible • Somewhat gendered use of space and mobility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Becoming more differentiated • Fairly sudden limits on girls' mobility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solidified gender norms and roles
Human Needs			
Agency and respect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Little agency • No respect 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing agency over self/siblings • Growing desire to be respected 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agency in some areas (esp. related to childbearing) mediated by spouse, family and clan • Earning respect as adult/parent

Aspirations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Idealism • High expectations for life path 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Still high expectations, but tempered with reality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less idealism but still hoping for better life • Expectations focused on children rather than self
Behaviors			
Roles and responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Domestic chores • School entry 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing domestic chores • School leaving • Increased contributions to household economy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Domestic chores • Occasionally still in school • Support self and family • Contribute to extended family
GBV	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harsh discipline • Affected by intimate partner violence in home • Sexual violence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing harsh discipline, expands to school • Fighting • Sexual violence • Physical assault 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intimate partner violence • Fighting • Sexual violence • Physical assault
SRH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beginning of puberty • Early sexual play (“hide and seek”) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Romantic relationships/sex • Some condom use • Puberty • Fear of HIV • Pressure to form family 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sexual relationships • Childbearing • Contraceptive use

Social networks. Children are rooted in their immediate and extended family networks, which may be protective and nurturing or expose them to harm through lack of resources or violence. As children grow up, their networks expand to include their age mates, who influence them in positive as well as negative ways. Adolescents also become more involved in institutions outside of the family, such as church and schools, and opportunities for support as well as risk increase. Newly married Faridah commented, “You find that the spoiled ones also want you to be like them and if you refuse to follow what they say, they beat you.”

Although girls build peer networks, they have little opportunity to spend time with friends due to their responsibilities at home and restrictions on their mobility. Boys,

on the other hand, are free to spend time with their friends at the trading center, school grounds, video hall, or football pitch. Once young people marry or cohabit, their partners and family and clan become key elements of their network, with the potential of material, practical, and emotional support. The social networks of newly married boys expand to include their wives, who represent a significant new asset to the family. Newly married girls, although they may benefit from connections with their husband's family, initially find themselves in a new household with little power and support. They must gain social capital over time by conforming to the expectations of their new family to work hard and bring children into the clan.

Gender norms and roles. Attitudes, beliefs and norms (idea systems) represent the next component of the CSP shown in the table above. Study results suggest increasing differentiation and solidification of gendered attitudes, expectations and roles during adolescence. The attitudes of children towards gender roles and expectations are somewhat flexible, with less rigid definitions of what is appropriate for boys/men and girls/women. Although boys usually do "boy's work" such as grazing cattle and girls do "girl's work" such as gathering firewood or helping with cooking, there are areas where responsibilities may overlap such as fetching water, sweeping the compound or even smearing huts, and both boys and girls are expected to attend school and do their homework. Boys as well as girls must be obedient and show respect for their elders.

Older adolescents, however, begin to express more gendered expectations for "ideal men" and "ideal women" and household labor division becomes more gender-specific. Puberty marks the beginning of increasing gender diversification; it is considered normal for boys to roam freely, begin sexual relationships, and spend time

with their peers. They are also expected to lay the ground work to form their own family – finding a way to make a living, building their own hut, entering into sexual relationships, and courting a girl. Girls, on the other hand, must protect their chastity and demonstrate that they are ready for marriage by developing their home making skills and cultivating a respectful, obedient, humble, and caring nature. Faridah explained, “I’ll always listen to whatever I am told and this helps me. It can be my father-in-law, my husband or even my brother-in-law. If I don’t listen that makes me a bad woman.” In order to protect girls, they are kept close to home, and admonished not to “move at night.” She elaborated, “They teach us girls that by 6 PM, you should be home. Seven PM should not find you away from home because anything can happen to you. You know us girls are weaker, men can overpower us and when they find you on the way they can do something bad to you.” As illustrated by this quote, study results suggest that fear of violence, as well as actual violence, enforces gender norms.

Boys have greater mobility than girls, especially after puberty, due to concerns for their safety and increasing workload. When asked how life would be different they were a girl, most boys pointed this out. Nineteen-year-old Amos explained, “If I were a girl, I could not go because there would be work for me at home. There would be children to bathe at home, fetch water, and wash clothes and when going to have fun, you just visit your fellow girls around home.” Newly married James remarked, “I also go to have fun in the football field once in a while. This would not be the same if I were a girl, since first of all it is far from home and culturally a girl would not be allowed to do that.”

Once young women and men enter into a relationship, the division of labor becomes even more rigidly gendered, with women tending the compound and children

and men doing the heavy work in the garden. Women have a heavy work load including cleaning, cooking, washing clothes and caring for children as well as fetching firewood and water, and lighter tasks such as weeding and harvesting in the garden. When asked why men don't cook and bathe children, 16-year-old Judith remarked, "For them, it's God who said they should only dig and that is what their work is." Young men and women stated clearly that men should have the power to make all decisions, largely because it is his household and community (since oftentimes women move from their village into her husband's home) and he is more knowledgeable than his wife of the context. However, although men have the last say, joint decision-making is valued. Women tend to lose social capital when they move into their husband's home, but over time, they may gain power by building connections with their husband's family, especially his mother and co-wives or wives of his brothers, and by bearing children into the family.

Agency and respect. Analysis of the life story narratives suggests that among the affective needs of adolescents, the need for respect and agency are among the most salient. Children begin their lives with little agency, the patterns of their days determined by their elders. They are largely dependent on their parents, aunts and uncles or siblings to provide food, clothing, housing and education. Given the precarious environment in which children in northern Uganda are growing up, their well-being is heavily dependent on robust social networks, as discussed in Chapter 6. Nevertheless, children do demonstrate agency by foraging for and preparing food, and identifying and negotiating resources to meet their needs – sometimes finding support outside the home from extended family, schools, churches, NGOs, or youth centers.

As girls and boys mature, their agency increases as they make more decisions about how to spend their time and how to behave in school and with their peers, although they still operate within relatively limited parameters. Once girls and boys enter puberty, they are expected to begin behaving as adults and assume greater responsibility for their actions. Girls must adhere to conventional gender norms and protect themselves from sexual encounters, above all demonstrating the obedience and respect desired in a wife. As a result, their freedom to move outside of home and school is limited.

Sexual relationships represent another domain where adolescents have the opportunity to exercise agency as they mature. Girls and boys discussed their efforts to obtain and avoid sex during the life history interviews. Hope is one example. She managed to avoid sex and prevent an unplanned pregnancy over a period of three years until she married her boyfriend at 18.

Having a boyfriend is bad because you may lose concentration and keep thinking about him. I would even dodge class. He would also come to school to visit and I would be beaten and be so embarrassed. We did not have any sexual intercourse because I was so tough. Sometimes he would ask for it but I would tell him it's not the right time. I didn't want him to touch my body.

When boys and girls marry or cohabit, their agency increases vis-à-vis their parents, but they are still beholden to the expectations of the boy's family and clan elders. While young men may experience greater autonomy at this life stage, young women must adapt and conform to the needs and preferences of their in-laws, with little social capital as they begin their new lives. Girls with a strong natal support network (brothers, parents, uncles, and clan elders) are able to exert more power in their new household, and have a more robust safety net.

Closely tied to increasing agency is respect. As discussed earlier, respect is highly valued by young people in Acholi and Lango communities and they strive to achieve it. A new couple is not truly respected until they have brought children into the family. Men, in particular, highly value paternity as a means to gain respect and adult status.

Aspirations. A striking characteristic of youth is their idealism and optimism. Younger adolescents, and to a slightly lesser extent, older youth participating in this study expressed unfettered hopes for a safer, prosperous, more peaceful community, aspiring to become doctors, teachers, engineers and pilots.

I want to be recognized as an educated girl who can ride her own motorbike or be driven as a member of parliament. If God could allow it, I would love to be a doctor or a minister. In ten years I should have at least built for my parents a house. An iron sheet house with bricks and not a grass-thatched house. And they should have stopped digging. I should help them as they have helped me since I was young. (Faith, 13 years old)

Even over the brief time span from early adolescence to marriage examined in this study, the expectations of youth change dramatically. While they maintain their hope for a better community, their personal aspirations become more limited – focusing largely on their ability to support and educate their children, and only occasionally on their own education. Older boys often express the hope that they will obtain land or make some money from selling cattle or produce which they can use to improve their financial situation – perhaps by establishing a small store. There is a marked shift during this period among girls, who by the time they have children have redirected their own aspirations for education and a career to their children. “In case I cannot study, then I hope my son should at least be able to study. Among all these hopes that I mentioned,

education, business, and a good marriage partner, I hope for education as my greatest dream,” shared new mother Martha.

Roles and responsibilities. Children work hard from a young age, with increasing responsibilities over time, caring for their younger siblings, fetching water, grazing cattle, sweeping the compound or helping with other chores. In the quote below, Faridah explains the evolution of her responsibilities over time, “When I was young I babysat my uncle’s child. I was already five. Around that time my uncle loved me; he bought me clothes, took care of me and gave me anything I wanted. When I was about ten I started fetching firewood and selling it for money. After I turned 13 I started brewing *warangi* [alcohol].” Younger adolescents conduct domestic chores, attend school and do homework, while their older counterparts are expected to take on heavier chores and begin contributing to the household economy. They may, for example, be asked to purchase school supplies or contribute to school fees. “They want me to plant something of my own like cotton so that when I sell it, I can pay school fees and buy other small things. They also want me to study so that in the future I can help them,” commented 14-year-old Simon in Lira.

Boys feel pressured to become economically productive so that they can marry, support a wife and children and contribute to the broader family economy. Eighteen-year-old Isaac explained, “When I started seeing body changes, my feelings changed. I had to stop being childish and start acting like an adult. Boys get worried about how they should start living because some of them are becoming big and there are things they cannot ask for from their parents.” Newly married Paul recollects feeling pressured to assume adult responsibilities before he felt ready.

When I noticed body changes I felt I was getting difficulties in my life. It was difficult to take care of my mother. Everything needed me. Like when the cow is detained in someone's garden, I have to go and bail it out. I didn't feel good because I still didn't know how to behave as an older person, because I am still in the stage of a younger person.

Girls may face the same pressure if they are unmarried and living at home. "Your family should not care for you once when you have a child. The elders have already taken care of you. Now you are an adult so you should get a garden and dig because in the future the child will need clothes and shoes," explained Ann, a 19-year-old new mother living with her parents.

Sexual and reproductive health. The SRH needs and attitudes of young women and boys evolve dramatically over time. As children, they learn about sex and observe the behavior of those around them, but it isn't until puberty that they begin to be concerned about their sexual desires. As children mature, they begin to engage in sexual games ("hide and seek"), which involve going into the bush with a boy/girl, touching each other and sometimes having sex. The sense from the narratives is that these games range from touching and exploration to actual intercourse, depending on age and mindset. As mentioned in the section on puberty, it is during early adolescence that boys and girls become aware of their sexual feelings and begin to worry about and form sexual relationships. At this age, their need for information and FP/STI prevention services becomes increasingly imperative.

Study participants readily recalled the events leading up to their sexual debut, a physical and social turning point marking their passage into a new phase of life. They attributed their first sexual experiences to growing sexual feelings, fun, and the desire to

mark their passage from child to adult. Several other boys shared their first sexual experiences as well:

I started by talking to her when she was on her way to the well. I insisted until we had sex. Having sex makes you feel grown up and most times you are proud of yourself. Also you feel that if they are grading people you can be somewhere that you have also passed through some ritual. The first person I told about her was my best friend. Other people got to know, even my sister. I do not want my father to know. He is very tough and does not like such things. He will say he is not happy about the money he spent on school fees. (Joseph, 19 years old)

I fell in love at 15. The reason I decided to have her just for fun is because there is a Lango word which says learning. Let me say that I enjoyed having sex for the first time. We used to go and play in the bush, and pretend to build different things like a house.” (Amos, 19 years old)

Newly married youth have significant need for SRH information and services in a number of areas, including contraception, HIV/AIDS, pregnancy care, and delivery, breastfeeding, and newborn and child care. The ability of youth to obtain this information and act upon it is influenced by rigid expectations guiding newlyweds and pressure from the extended family for children. Boys are also pressured by gendered responsibilities to support the family and earn respect of the clan.

Gender-based violence. Violence affects women and men through the life course across the globe, and it is no different in northern Uganda. A look across life stages provides a panorama of evolving attitudes and experiences over the life course. As children, boys and girls are affected by intimate partner violence in their household. Not only does it upset them and model violence, it interferes with the ability of their parents to care for them and often results in separation (temporary or permanent), which diminishes protection and support (especially when their mother leaves their father). Parental separation increases children’s vulnerability when surrogates such as

stepmothers, aunts, or grandmothers step in. These individuals may not wish to invest scarce resources in a child not their own, or may have few resources to share. The story below, told by newly married Martha, provides an example of the negative influence of her aunt, with whom she lived after her mother and father separated.

I remember when my mother was still there, she had a fight with my father and he chased her out of the house. We suffered. I was seven. It wasn't my uncle who mistreated me but his wife. Whenever my uncle left for work, she would beat me terribly and this happened every day. She would also deny me food on top of that. Every morning when I woke up, she would force me to first mop the house, wash all the dishes, and put food on the fire before I went to school. I would reach school late every day and get more beatings from the teacher.

Youth also mention that alcohol use by their parents and others they depend on, contributed to the challenges they face, as illustrated in the quote below.

At that time (between 5 and 10 years) my mother and father were still drinking alcohol. Some days we came back from school and found that there is no food. Sometimes they might also have gone to the place where they drink alcohol. So when we came back at lunchtime, and if we couldn't find a way out, we might sleep hungry. When we came home and found them drunk, we might go and look around for some cassava, we go for potatoes and make *labakaro* (way of cooking potatoes under clay) and eat it and go back to school. After my parents were saved, we didn't find life so hard. (Michael, new father)

Children are sometimes the targets of violence in the household. Although only one study participant shared an experience of sexual abuse during childhood (this topic was not probed for ethical reasons), many children (boys and girls) related stories of harsh and humiliating physical discipline.

Once children start going to school, they face increased risk of violence (sexual and otherwise) on the way to school and from peers and teachers in school. Many boys

were indignant with the “unfair” and “harsh” treatment from their teachers, while girls told stories of sexual harassment by teachers. Amos, a new father, recalled, “The teachers made you dig, which did not make me happy. The teachers beat you, but you don’t know why you are being beaten.”

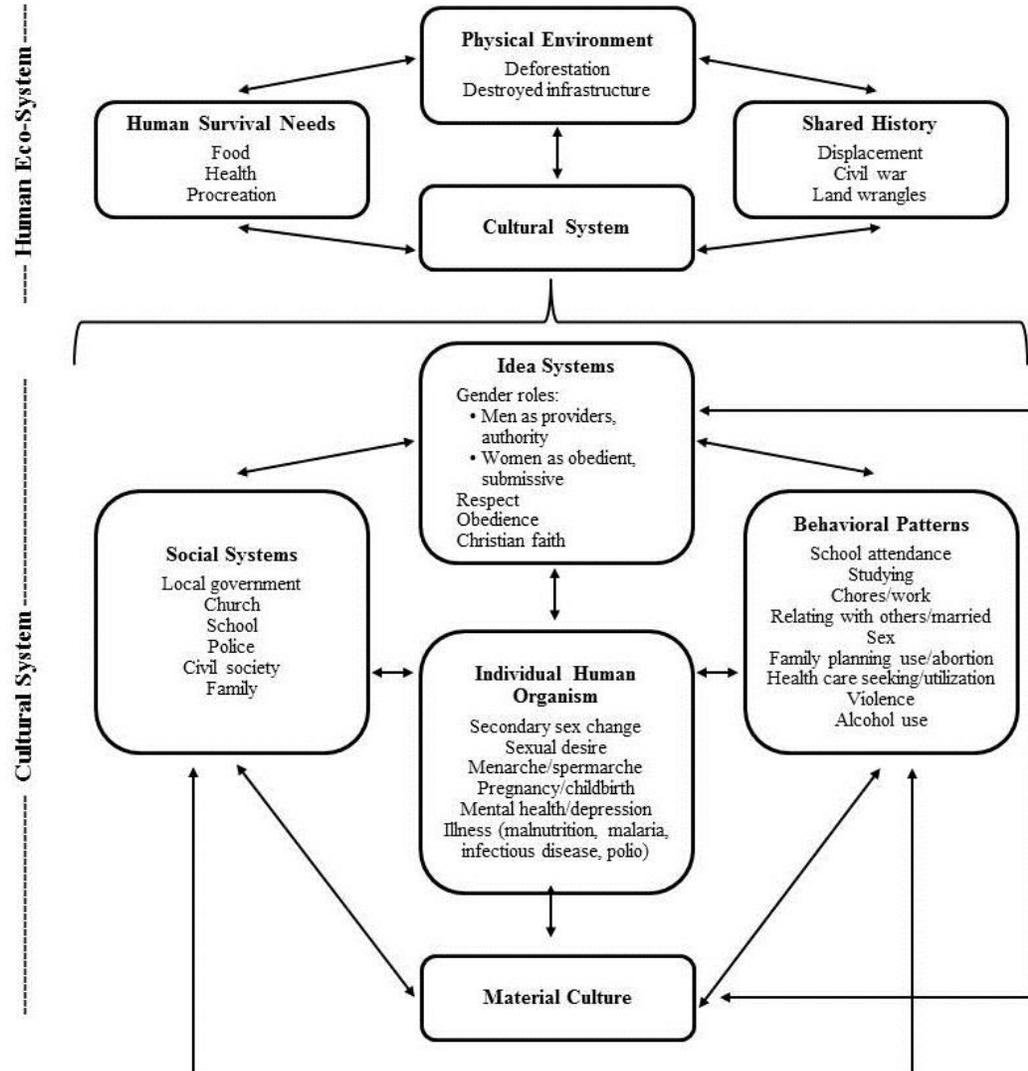
Girls who have entered puberty fear being “disturbed” by men. Martha commented that she feared sexual harassment after her menstruation started, “I had been seeing older men disturb big girls and I would also hear the girls complain that older men disturb them. Let’s say those who have fully grown breasts, men would make fun of their breasts.” Teasing and bullying are common among older youth, and often occur while fetching water from the borehole, where young people stand in line for long periods and sometimes fight over water. During this time, boys and girls gossip and tease, sometimes getting into physical arguments. As boys and girls form sexual relationships and marry, there is risk of violence within their new household. Rape is a very strong concern among girls of all ages.

10.2 Ecological Models: Body, Mind and Context

Figure 21 illustrates the way that the salient themes of this research fit into the CSP, using the one-page version of the framework adapted by Aronson. Application of this model facilitates a holistic understanding of the system within which children grow into adults and elucidates the ways in which puberty changes and social transitions are embedded in the broader cultural system which comprises not only idea systems, but shared historical and ecological context. This figure reveals areas of intersection between elements of the cultural system that provide meaning to the physical and social changes

youth experience during adolescence which consequently shape their journey to adulthood.

Figure 21. Cultural Systems Paradigm (Northern Uganda)



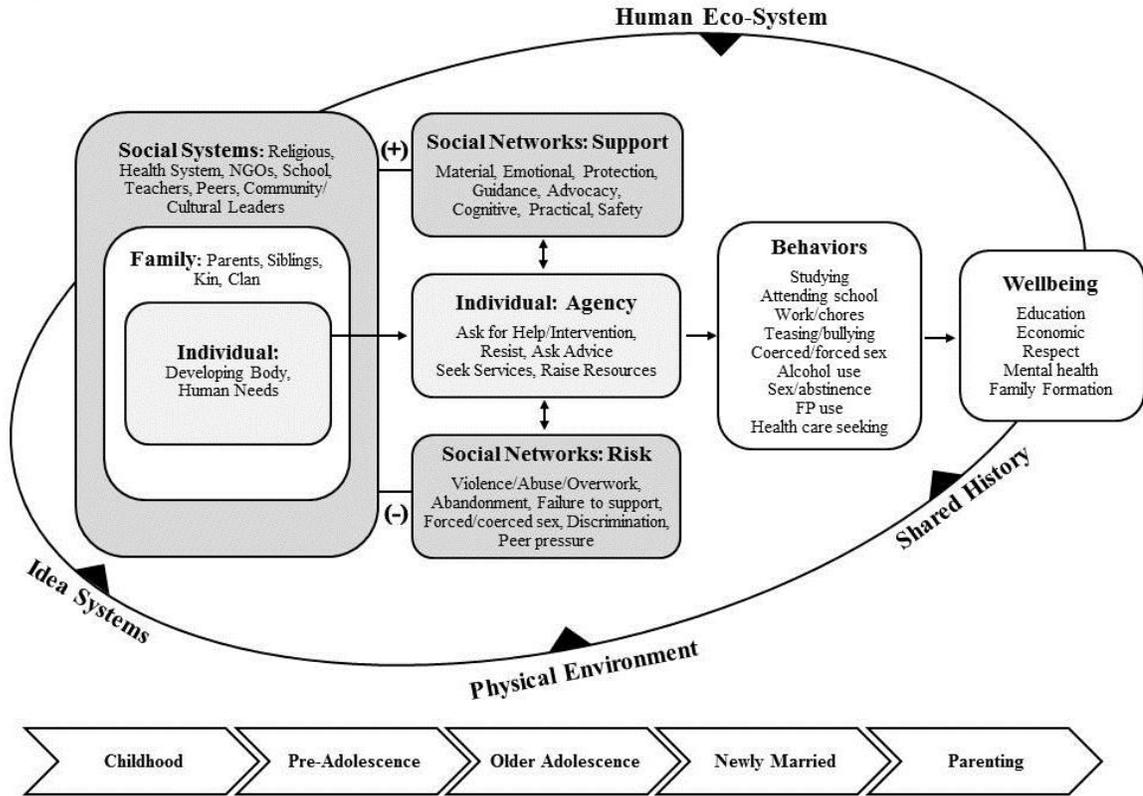
Currently, ecological approaches are the sine qua non of public health. No report, proposal, or intervention description is complete without at least a cursory line reassuring readers that the analysis/study/intervention takes a holistic approach to the subject matter. However, ecological models, such as the CSP, less frequently explicitly applied as a

theory of change or logic model to guide intervention implementation. In an effort to guide future programming, the results of this study are portrayed in the behavioral model below (

Figure 22) which reveals specific areas of risk and resilience that suggest potential opportunities for intervention. This figure situates a developing girl or boy and their needs (sex, affection, respect, and livelihood) within their social systems, influenced by shared idea systems, the human ecosystem, physical environment, and history. The adolescent life course continuum from childhood to marriage and parenthood is represented at the bottom and signals the need for tailored interventions that build on the strengths and needs of different life stages. Individuals are embedded within social systems, which provide networks offering support (practical, economic, cognitive) or risk (violence, abuse, neglect), leading to certain behavioral patterns and eventual well-being or vulnerability. These social networks (or absence of them) carry social capital credit or deficit and facilitate or constrain youth trajectories as they seek to become respected, educated members of community with healthy families and a strong economic base. Social networks may facilitate youth trajectories by providing advocacy and guidance within a safe environment, or may constrain youth by exposing youth to malnutrition and illness, coerced/forced sex or curtailed educational opportunities. Adolescents, however, are not inanimate objects buffeted by their environment, rather they have agency to take advantage of or mitigate the influence of their environment by actions such as asking for advice, resisting peer pressure or seeking services. Programs may intervene in any element of the model, for example by supporting youth experiencing puberty changes, strengthening the agency of older adolescents to delay sex, developing supportive

networks and parent-child connectedness or increasing access to quality health services or safer schools and communities.

Figure 22. Opportunities for Ecological Interventions to Support Adolescent Trajectories



10.3. Implications for Policy and Practice

The results of this research provide guidance to programs that seek to support the transitions of young people into adulthood, and reveal the importance of intervening early to lay a strong foundation for SRH. Analysis of the factors that influence youth trajectories reveals ways that gendered social norms and structures influence girls and boys from a young age. This influence can be seen in areas as diverse as school success, physical and emotional safety, romantic relationships, health care utilization, and family formation. Social networks influence the well-being of youth in multiple ways by providing (or failing to provide) the social and material resources needed to prevent and

treat illness, achieve educational success, avoid unplanned pregnancy or make a living. Changes in the social networks of youth caused by events such as illness, death, separation, or marriage can radically alter the fate of a young person, for better or worse.

Programs can strengthen social networks and intervene to mobilize support at key turning points in the lives of young people. This research identified moments when intervention to support life course transitions is particularly important, such as during puberty when physical changes signal that it is time to treat children differently based on their masculine and feminine social roles. For girls, physical development often heralds teasing and sexual harassment, coupled with the imposition of new limitations on their ability to move outside the home. Some boys may feel compelled to have sex in order to gain respect from others, viewing it as a necessary rite of passage. Other boys and girls are driven to fulfill their growing sexual desires. Critical turning points or transitions for intervention include school dropout, getting in trouble/going to prison, starting a romantic/sexual relationship and marriage.

The life stories uncovered a number of ways that young people use their agency to negotiate passage to adulthood. Interventions can encourage youth to advocate for themselves, and strengthen their ability to seek help and advice and resist the paths imposed upon on them by others. Study results also reveal opportunities to build on attitudes that support gender equality and nonviolent conflict resolution. For example, VYAs viewed all forms of violence as wrong, regardless of the situation. These attitudes, however, evolve over the life course, with greater acceptance of GBV among newly married adolescents and young parents. This suggests that well-designed interventions

could bring about changes in norms related to violence if they start early and include ongoing initiatives tailored to the life phase.

Study results suggest that holistic interventions which reach girls and boys at an early age, address others who are influential in their lives, and attend to factors related to macro-level influences such as land tenure, alcohol use, and unsafe schools will be most effective helping boys and girls complete their education and achieve their long-term aspirations. Programs designed to build the resilience of youth, increase their social assets such as connections to others, and address risk factors, hold the most promise. Results also yielded useful insights for programs seeking to transform inequitable gender norms, support boys and girls during puberty, reduce GBV and improve SRH. These are discussed below.

Gender norms. This research revealed the ways that study participants conceptualize how men and women should behave and what it means to be an “ideal” man and woman over the life course. It also explored the processes that pass on the meanings of gendered identities to new society members. Many of the ways boys and girls learn about being an Acholi or Lango man or a woman were recognized by study participants, such as learning by observation, experience and instruction. However, less visible influences such as gendered time and space and the organization and operation of social institutions such schools, clan structures, the economic system and religious organizations also shape gender attitudes and roles. The power of these hidden influences, along with social sanctions for gender role transgressions, is one of the reasons that achieving equitable gender norms is challenging and requires approaches which bring hidden assumptions to light, such as popular education methodologies.

Efforts to transform gender norms face multiple barriers at both the individual and system levels. Children largely learn about gender from their elders – by watching and imitating those around them, and from explicit advice, encouragement and reinforcement. This means that in order to bring about long lasting and widespread social norm change, those in a position to teach new society members must transform their own attitudes and behaviors. Many adults are unwilling to change the models they present to youth, or if willing, find it difficult to change behaviors (such as drinking or partner violence) learned from a very young age. Moreover, in northern Uganda, due to many years of civil war, elders responsible for teaching young people cultural values, gender equitable or otherwise, are scarce. Strong social sanctions, applied by peers as well as elders, tend to maintain traditional gender norms and roles, making it difficult for young people to forge new ways of interacting as men and women.

Structural forces also constrain change efforts. Unsafe environments make it risky for girls to expand the space they occupy, thus limiting their access to new information and role models, and may even interfere with their education. The precarious economic situation of most families in northern Uganda means that women depend on assistance from their daughters to feed and care for their family. Constrained resources may also mean that parents are unable to educate their daughters, even if they wish to (and most do). Finally, systems of kinship and property inheritance, which position girls as economic burdens and provide them few resources of their own, significantly inhibit the ability of girls to navigate the limited opportunities available to them.

Nevertheless, this research revealed factors that can facilitate change, such as youth clubs which provide young people learning opportunities, the positive influence of

some peers and adults and the ability and interest of young people to embrace new ideas and behaviors. Most importantly, the desire of women, men, and youth to rebuild their communities with less violence, more harmony and greater opportunities for all can support efforts to bring about more equitable gender norms.

Program design and implementation can build upon the mechanisms of gender formation identified by this research. The powerful influence of modeling on gender norms must be addressed in change efforts, first by changing the models that adults provide youth and secondly by encouraging youth to reflect critically on the examples in their lives. Individuals and organizations that hold or promote equitable gender norms can be supported and amplified to shape more gender equitable attitudes, roles, and norms. Some of the places where youth spend time – such as schools and churches – may be fruitful places to implement interventions.

Supporting boys and girls during puberty. The embodiment literature makes a case for the body as a sociocultural construction. Indeed, experience and understanding of menarche and spermarche among the youth in this study were overlaid with social expectations of masculine and feminine roles, such as the obedience and respect men demand from women, as well as cultural expectations governing reproduction. Efforts to bring about more equitable experiences and opportunities for girls and boys as they mature can profit from this liminal moment to engage youth in learning how their bodies work and how to care for them, understanding their sexuality, and reflecting on the gendered meanings tagged to their bodies and reproductive functions. Discussion of puberty changes before they occur helps boys and girls manage their changing bodies with greater comfort and confidence.

Working together with individuals and institutions such as families, schools and religious organizations that acculturate children into gendered identities may be more effective bringing about widespread changes in attitudes and behaviors than a narrow focus on individuals. Community members and youth could be encouraged to consider how their attitudes about topics such as menarche/spermarche, sexual pleasure, and number and timing of children are influenced by the cultural roles assigned to women and men. Activities which engage youth and adults in reflection on the ways that cultural norms and attitudes influence their perceptions of their bodies, their sexuality and their reproduction – combined with accurate, comprehensible information – may increase the agency of adolescents over their sexual and reproductive lives.

Preventing gender-based violence. Strategies to address GBV include awareness raising, structural interventions, services and law enforcement. Efforts to prevent violence must tackle the challenge of transforming gender norms. However, this challenge can only be met successfully with broad community support. It is essential to work with clan leaders to help them comprehensively address domestic violence, a domain where they have legitimate influence. A good starting point would be to work with leaders who already oppose violence, especially clan and religious leaders with vested authority in that sphere. Approaches which encourage reflection on the negative impacts of violence on family and community well-being may be more effective than rights-based approaches, given that domestic violence is currently viewed as unacceptable only when it is excessive, uncontrolled, or causes significant physical harm to victim.

This study uncovered a number of opportunities to address GBV through existing cultural traditions, including: 1) harness processes such as modeling, teaching and advice-giving to reshape gender norms and roles; 2) rebuild cultural and family structures which support adolescents and socialize them into adult roles; 3) mobilize communities to reflect on gender and violence through dance gatherings, village *wang-oos*, and other activities; and 4) engage religious, elected, and clan leaders in reflection and action to strengthen their capacity to promote and sustain behavior change.

Gender disparities in educational opportunities and property rights shape gender norms associated with violence. Initiatives that address issues such as girls' education, women's access to resources, poverty, land rights and unemployment, in addition to underlying gender norms, are needed. This research also suggests that alcohol abuse is a significant driver of GBV must be addressed.

Healthcare providers could be trained to incorporate violence prevention and treatment into their services (e.g. counseling, post-exposure prophylaxis), given that there are few support services for survivors. Police and clan leaders need training to streamline access to treatment. It is also important to strengthen established enforcement institutions that address domestic violence. In fact, police training was seen by study participants as an important violence prevention strategy.

Improving sexual and reproductive health. Study results suggest that more accessible, higher quality services, although essential, may not be the panacea to meet the SRH needs of adolescents. Empowering young women and couples to realize their desired fertility intentions will require interventions that support shifts in gender norms to create an enabling environment for effective FP use. Efforts could build on cultural

norms revealed in the life histories and interviews such as ideal timing and spacing of pregnancies, the high value placed on children and the nurturing and protective elements of hegemonic masculinity and emphasized femininity. Men's support of birth spacing and desire to protect their family may serve as a platform for increasing positive male engagement in FP. However, such efforts alone will be insufficient to address the underlying issues constraining contraceptive use. Deliberate initiatives are needed to engage youths in critical analysis of gender roles and their influence on reproduction. Efforts to help young people view gender norms as socially constructed mandates shaped by individuals, social structures, and historical and local contexts can empower them to act in more gender-equitable ways and increase their reproductive control, potentially improving SRH across the life course.

The results reported here have been translated into approaches designed to resonate positively with Acholi and Lango communities. The research team, in collaboration with Save the Children and Pathfinder International staff, designed tailored, complementary interventions that target adolescents at critical moments of passage from childhood to adulthood, and aim to create an environment that supports the elimination of GBV. These interventions, implemented as part of the GREAT Project, are designed to improve adolescent SRH and address a continuum of violence ranging from teasing and bullying to rape.

GREAT is anchored on a serial radio drama that poses challenging dilemmas through intergenerational stories which generate reflection and dialogue to bring about more equitable gender attitudes, decrease tolerance of all kinds of violence, encourage nonviolent conflict resolution, and model positive child discipline practices. The storyline

incorporates key research results, such as the value of rebuilding community and revitalizing culture in a more gender-equitable way. It is accompanied by a toolkit of scalable products (puberty flipbooks for boys and girls, a community board game, and activity cards) designed to be rolled out through existing platforms such as child clubs, village savings and loans, farmer's associations, and youth groups. Use of the tool kit enables groups to reflect and dialogue on the radio drama plot, extrapolate the themes to their own life experiences, and move into action. The momentum generated by the radio drama and small group reflection is reinforced by collaboration with community, religious, and clan leaders.

Figure 23. Girls demonstrate use of the GREAT puberty flip book



Figure 24. Newly married men use the GREAT community game to reflect on FP decision-making



Figure 25. Community elders at a wang-oo discuss evolving Acholi ideas about masculinity



10.4. Contributions to Research Methods

This research contributes to efforts to develop effective approaches for conducting research with early adolescents and offers ways to incorporate ethnography into intervention science. An innovative feature of this study is the tactic of conducting life histories with youth in different transitional phases of the life course in order to simulate the type of data that would be collected in a longitudinal study. While this technique does not eliminate the need for a panel study, it does provide information on how attitudes, roles and responsibilities evolve over time among a group of youth in the same setting. Combining these data with information from “significant others” nominated by youth at each life stage yielded insights into youth transitions over time, and how youth are embedded in their social, economic, political and historical contexts.

There is increasing recognition of the need to intervene early in adolescence to build a solid foundation for future SRH. However, there are few documented programs which address the needs and opportunities of 10-14 year olds, and even fewer have been adequately evaluated, making it difficult to develop effective programs or to advocate for resources for this age group. This is in part due to a lack of proven, well-documented research methods for working with younger adolescents. Quantitative surveys and focus group discussions do not work well with children, who have difficulty articulating their responses, and may feel pressured to please the interviewer. Most research methods advantage adults in terms of social and communication skills and knowledge; and do not actively engage youth in a meaningful matter. The participatory, visual, and metaphorical methods utilized in this study were designed to address this gap, helping to shift the balance of power from researcher to participant.

As recently as five years ago, when recognition of the need to address this age group in SRH programs began to grow, the prevailing wisdom was that early adolescents did not have the cognitive ability to participate in research, and that it would be impossible to obtain approval from ethical review boards to enroll them as research subjects. Instead, most researchers opted to gather retrospective information from older adolescents. In part due to this study, as well as others conducted by myself and colleagues, researchers are recognizing that it is both feasible and worthwhile to engage early adolescents in research. I have shared the process and protections used to obtain IRB approval for this research widely, including practical steps to facilitate the process of obtaining consent from parents and simplification of the language to gain assent from children. Additional measures required include rigorous confidentiality training with case studies and role play to ensure that well-meaning interviewers do not share confidential information with parents, teachers or siblings and putting in place referral systems for study participants in the event that counseling or services are needed. Training and support systems are also needed to help interviewers deal with the stress of hearing stories of poverty, violence, coerced and forced sex, and other traumatic events.

As noted above, most research about early adolescents relies on retrospective reports from their older counterparts and is often limited to measuring knowledge changes. In this study I expanded methodological approaches for this age group; based on recognition that 10- to 14-year-olds can be competent, reliable informants, with their own perspectives to share, when cognitively appropriate methods are used. The methods used in this study allowed a combination of visual and verbal communication, reduced the need for written literacy, and established rapport between respondent and interviewer.

Use of visual methods provided children a focus other than the interviewer, reducing the social and emotional demands of the interview. Techniques designed to tap into underlying motivations by offering youth stimuli onto which they project their feelings proved particularly useful when respondents hold contradictory attitudes, are reluctant to discuss sensitive topics; or unable to articulate responses.

Effective methods included asking children to draw a timeline of their life and noting positive and negative events; community mapping to illustrate where/how youth spend time and to indicate with symbols how safe they feel in each location; and making “spider maps” of people who influence them, varying size and location by affinity. Free listing also worked well, for example, children listed the “bad things people do to each other” and used post-it notes to place answers on a continuum from acceptable to non-acceptable. Thus youth maintained control over whether/ when to raise an issue, avoiding the ethical dilemma of “teaching” children about problems they were unaware of or forcing them to discuss traumatic experiences. Metaphorical techniques successfully explored meanings, emotions and values related to gender in terms of concrete concepts, for example, an array of toy animals. Participants began the activity by choosing an animal to represent an “ideal women” or “ideal man” and then explained their choice. The techniques for engaging youth used in this study have been widely disseminated at international fora and peer review articles (Lundgren and Igras 2010, Igras et al. 2014, Lundgren et al. 2012) and adopted by researchers at international agencies such as USAID, UNFPA, WHO and United Nations Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF).

In addition, this study provides an example for anthropologists working in implementation practice of an approach designed to retain the benefits of classical

ethnographic methods while producing actionable information to guide intervention design in timely and cost-effective manner. This approach, described in Chapter 3, included five key elements: 1) review of secondary data sources such as statistical information, program reports, and popular media; 2) team approach to data collection and analysis which engaged cultural insiders as ethnographers and key informants working in collaboration with the principal investigator; 3) brief periods of participant observation before data collection; 4) interview methods designed to elicit holistic understanding of cultural systems through use of participatory techniques; and 5) participant observation by the principal researchers during project activities.

10.5. Theoretical Contributions

In terms of theoretical contributions, this research contributes to greater understanding of the way that cultural systems shape the lives of children as they grow into adults while affirming the active, agentive role of early adolescents, despite their young age. Study results reveal the ways that young people advocate for themselves and seek the support and resources they need from their networks, especially in settings where few resources (affective or material) are available from the adults in their lives. Early adolescents depend on others for care and resources, and their social networks play highly influential roles in their lives (both positive and negative), manifesting idea systems and imposing or mediating historical and economic context.

Understanding of embodiment is expanded by these study results, which explore the ways in which idea systems (particularly gender norms) are transcribed on the bodies of boys and girls during puberty and have long-lasting effects on their life pathways and outcomes. This research suggests that puberty is a pivotal moment in the life course, not

only because it signals the unfolding of sexual maturity, but because it is during this life phase in particular that gender is stamped on the bodies of developing boys and girls and they are expected to assume increasingly gendered social roles. This stage also marks the beginning of vigilant enforcement of gender roles by family, peers and community.

The stories of the boys and girls participating in this research elucidate the pervasive influence of GBV on boys and girls throughout their life cycle. Violence in all of its forms (teasing and bullying, sexual harassment, coerced sex, intimate partner violence and structural violence, among others) is increasingly recognized as a priority public health concern, as well as an urgent human rights issue. The results of this study elucidate the ways that the violence children experience within their own home, school and community influences their understanding of ways to behave as men and women. Their masculine and feminine identities are shaped by observation of intimate partner violence in their home or the experience of harsh physical punishment. Violence influences children in many ways, reducing the resources and support they rely on from others, limiting their ability to move freely in their community, and modeling and enforcing hegemonic forms of masculinity and femininity. Violence on the way to school or at school can interrupt learning, discourage school attendance and result in school dropout. Another form of violence, coerced or forced sex, represents a pivotal moment in the life course, often resulting in unwanted pregnancy, sexually transmitted disease, early marriage or school dropout.

10.6. Study Limitations

This study was conducted during the first phase of a six-year study with the goal of developing and testing an intervention to prevent GBV and improve SRH among

youth in northern Uganda. The purpose of this research was to provide timely information to guide design of the intervention, which included a serial radio drama. Due to a number of constraints, including time, funding, conflicting obligations, and lack of language skills, it was not possible for me to apply traditional ethnographic methods. Additionally, although the study aimed to understand evolving attitudes and behaviors during adolescence, the need to complete fieldwork and analysis within a year precluded the possibility of a longitudinal study. These constraints are familiar to anthropologists working in applied endeavors, and, as discussed earlier, my research design and procedures were designed to address them.

An important limitation of the study is that although the interviews were conducted in Luo, they were transcribed in English, which most likely resulted in a loss of nuance and precision. In order to mitigate this, transcripts were discussed with the interviewers weekly to explore any areas that were unclear or of particular interest and to discuss local terms which emerged as important to the analysis. Interviewers included a list of Luo/Langi words of interest at the end of each transcript (and sometimes English words with unusual use or meaning), and we discussed these weekly. In addition, the codebook, emerging themes, and analysis were reviewed by the local study coordinator. Due to the immediate post-conflict setting (most families had returned to their villages from IDP camps within only one or two years), it is likely that there are aspects of their life stories that youth did not share, especially those related to violence during the war. A final limitation is that, although the study sought to produce generalizable knowledge about the process and context of adolescent transitions, the unique situation of post-conflict northern Uganda may limit wide spread applicability of these findings.

10.7. Future Research

The experience of conducting this research uncovered a number of methodological and theoretical areas for further exploration. First is the need to conduct a longitudinal study following 10- to 14-year-olds over time to explore changing gender attitudes and social relationships. I currently serve as a consultant for such a study that will be conducted by Johns Hopkins University with local research partners in ten countries with support from WHO, UNFPA, and other donors. There is little documented experience on conducting research with VYAs, and the lessons learned from this study are guiding the design of this multi-country initiative that includes a two-year qualitative phase.

Ethnography is needed to confirm and further explore the themes addressed during narrative data collection in this study. Much of the information on VYAs from around the world comes from school ethnographies (primarily in the United Kingdom and Canada), and a similar endeavor in northern Uganda would make an important contribution to the evidence base. Results would complement the findings of this study, provide information to compare to other school settings, and further elucidate the ways in which schools, as a primary socializing institution, serve as a crucible of gender formation. Ethnography, especially participant observation, outside of school settings would also be informative, however it is challenging for adults to fit into groups of children without significantly influencing their behavior. Perhaps a methodology which engages older youth (secondary students) as ethnographers might be a feasible approach to better understand the ways that children construct and engage in their own cultural spaces.

Finally, an underexplored theme of this study is the role of religious organizations, specifically Christian and Catholic churches. During the interviews, young people discussed spending time in faith-based settings, either in social events or religious services. Although youth identified churches on their maps as a place where they spend time, the nature and meaning of their interactions with religious communities and leaders was not explored in depth during the interviews, and no religious leaders were nominated by youth to be interviewed as a “significant other.” While this may indicate that youth do not identify these social structures and actors as salient in their lives, in retrospect this seems an oversight. The failure to explore these topics in greater depth may be attributed to the fact that participants did not volunteer details about them, or perhaps by the focus of the research on SRH. Members of the team may have been conditioned to ignore religious structures, which are frequently not engaged in SRH programs as a result of their opposition to premarital sex and, sometimes, to contraceptive use. This represents a promising area for further research, given the importance of religious teaching and beliefs in shaping attitudes and behaviors, particularly in the area of gender relations, marriage, sex, and family formation.

Appendices

Appendix A: Family Formation: Summaries of Outcomes and Antecedents

	Girls (n=12)	Boys (n=7)
Living with partner: Arranged marriage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faridah. Fell in love and married at 27. Messenger introduced them because husband was looking for wife. Parents met and approved of him before marriage. She moved from home to husband's village. Hopes to have children soon. • Grace: She fell in love early (at 14) and lives with her husband. She regrets her decision; she doesn't believe he cares for her. Initially he gave her money and gifts but now he doesn't give her enough, instead he supports his sister. She was 18 when they married and he was 30. Her marriage was arranged and both sets of parents approved. She finds him controlling and is afraid of angering him. Although they agreed to use a family planning method, she is afraid he will change his mind and become angry with her. • Stella: Met her husband while she was going to school. He brought her clothes and paid for her books. He asked her parents for permission to marry her, but he was arrested for defilement. She fell in love at 15 and married at 16. Her husband paid her school fees until she dropped out. • Millie: Fell in love for the first time at 16 and eventually married her boyfriend. She lives in her husband's home and is using the injection to prevent pregnancy. She and her husband want to wait some time before their first child, although her in-laws are eager for children. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amos: He had his first girlfriend at 18 with marriage in mind. They agreed to wait to marry until they finished school. They were tested for HIV and waited to have sex until after marriage. He would like to wait one year before having their first child. He discusses FP with his wife and uses condoms. • Paul: He wanted a formal commitment and someone to help his mother at home. Paul fell in love at 18, and married at 19. His mother had been able to save up the cattle so that he could pay the bride-price. They have no children yet, and want to wait some time. • Robert: He met his wife at the home of a relative. Later he expressed his love to her and she accepted. He is happy to be married because his wife provides him good advice and assistance. His wife uses the injection but he would be pleased with a pregnancy.
Living with partner: Needed a home or	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hope: She started going out with her boyfriend when she was 15. At 17 she finally dropped out of school because she was unable to pay the 	

<p>economic support</p>	<p>fees. She got married at 17 because she needed a home. She is happy with her husband's family and is waiting to have children.</p>	
<p>Living with partner: Married due to pregnancy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peace: Friends introduced them when they were in senior one and two, insisting that it would be a good opportunity because she had no one. She had planned to finish school, but got pregnant sneaking out of house. Although they used condoms, she became pregnant. She tried to abort and his friends told him to leave her. She went to live with her boyfriend when she found out she was pregnant. She was 16 and he was 19. Her boyfriend dropped out after senior four. His father was dead and his mother was sick so there is no one to pay his fees. They dig together on his mother's land. Their family is happy with her child and is looking forward to another. • Patience: Met husband in the camp. She believes they got together because they had too much free time. She regrets their union because he does not support her as well as she would like. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • James: Returned from prison in October, met a girl in the dance hall in Nov, had sex with her in December and she was pregnant by Feb. He brought her home, saying that he needed someone to help his family and that he would not turn his back on a pregnant girl. His family is happy with the pregnancy. • George: Met his wife (and apparently had sex) at a school-sponsored athletic event in another village when he was 21. Later she came to his house and told his family that she was pregnant. He denied it initially, but their families said they should live together as both are healthy (HIV-free) and they will just get into further trouble if they do not marry. His family supported him and handled told the community not to criticize them. His wife is 19 and he would like her to continue her studies. He does not want another child and is using withdrawal. His family, however, would like them to have more children. • Okello: 19 year old living at home with his pregnant wife. He is finding it difficult to support his family. He found out his girlfriend was pregnant when he was 18. He wasn't very concerned about the pregnancy; he knew they would bring her to his house. Before they married they were using rhythm, but now they use condoms. He and his wife want more children, but they want to space them well. He discusses FP with his wife. • Michael: He had his sexual debut with the girl who is now his wife when he was 13 and living in the camp. When her brothers found out she was pregnant they chased her out and she came to him. Now he wishes that he had never had sex because it has caused so many problems. He

		lives with his brothers. He is 17. He did not use condoms before, but is using them now because having another child will make life difficult. His family agrees that he should wait to have more children.
Moved back home: Arranged marriage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gloria: Fell in love at 14, used Panadol (acetaminophen) to prevent pregnancy. Her parents supported the union, but she says her boyfriend is spoiled by his mother. She became pregnant after joining his household, and he was not happy with the pregnancy. She returned home after conceiving due to conflicts with her mother-in-law. She was 19 when she gave birth. Her boyfriend sends money to support his child. She loves him and would like to be together some day. • Ann: Fell in love at 16, her boyfriend who is 30 asked her parents for permission to marry her, but when she went to live with his family, he refused to marry her. She was using the injectable, but discontinued because there was too much bleeding. She had an unplanned pregnancy at 18 and her boyfriend was unhappy. He began seeing other women and sent her back to her parents. She returned home to give birth and raise her child. The baby's father has never visited or seen the child. She was very hurt by his behavior, but her parents welcomed her home. She is very unhappy and feels ashamed to be raising a child in her parent's home. 	
Living at home with baby: Married due to pregnancy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lilian: Lilian explains that she dropped out of school because she couldn't pay fees due to a poor harvest and she had no one to help her with the expense. However, she also says that she found out she was pregnant while still in school. At that point she eloped and moved into her boyfriend's home. She had the baby at his house, but he had already left for the army. The pregnancy was not wanted by either of them. They have now separated and she lives with her stepmother. 	

<p>Living at home with family and baby: Never lived with partner</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Martha: “I dropped out of school, worse became pregnant and now I live with my parents.” She was 17 and he was 23 when they met through her Church. He assured her that he could prevent a pregnancy (presumably using some form of rhythm), and sometimes used condoms. He also told her he would solve her problems and pay her school fees. She became pregnant when she was 18 and her boyfriend wanted her to get an abortion- but the doctor he consulted refused. Her boyfriend was afraid her family would have him imprisoned for defilement. He left for police training in Kampala and she raises her baby at her parents’ home. She feels ashamed and is criticized by the community. She hopes to marry her baby’s father when he returns from training. He has already given part of the bride-price to her parents (2 heads of cattle), but he needs to give three more. • Joyce: Lives with her parents who want her to return to school. She is 17 and her baby’s father is 22. He is a doctor and wants to marry her, but her parents won’t allow it because they are afraid she will conceive again. She hopes to finish school, marry and give the bride-price to her parents. Her boyfriend continues to visit and sends money to support the child. She says she will use condoms with him when he visits. 	
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Appendix B: Abbreviated Life Stories

Very Young Adolescents: Girls (n=4)	
Susan	Susan is 10 and lives with her mother because her parents are separated. She was disturbed by the violence she saw between her mother and father. She lived with her father for a short time, but her father's new wife was very unkind to her and her siblings. She has a good relationship with her mother and her relatives and they pay her school fees. She is afraid of getting pregnant and wary of boys. Susan spends her time at school and doing her chores. She values education highly hopes to be a teacher when she grows up.
Lucy	Lucy, 12 years old, lives with her parents. However, she never talks with her father and he is rarely home and she relies primarily on her mother for support. Lucy is sometimes beaten by her mother and teachers for disobedience. During the week she goes to school and does her chores. During the weekend she does chores and also goes to Church. She participates in a child rights group and does community service. Her breasts have started developing but she has not yet started menstruating. Lucy is afraid of boys and says that girls need to be careful. She wants to be a doctor someday and help her family.
Faith	Faith is 13 years old and lives with her parents. She feels loved and supported despite land wrangles in family. Many of her relatives died in the war. She remarks that she is growing up in a Christian family; and spends her time at school, in Church and doing chores. She is supported by her family, Church, friends, teachers and the youth resource center. Faith denounced a teacher at her school for trying to seduce a friend. She loves school and God and hopes to have a job to support family when she grows up.
Carol	11 year old Carol currently lives with her parents. In the past she lived with her Aunt. She saw a lot of fighting in her Aunt's home which made her very sad. She is beaten by her father who drinks, but is supported by her mother. She has not been able to attend school consistently because her family has not always been able to pay her fees. Currently, her mother is paying her fees. Carol belongs to a Red Cross club and finds the Pastors in her Church supportive. She receives both positive and negative support from friends. She is afraid to move in the community, primarily because she fears rape. She spends most of her time doing chores and going to school. Her aspiration is to complete her education, get a job and support her family.
Very Young Adolescents: Boys (n=4)	
Denis	13 year old Denis lives with his parents and goes to school. He has very sad memories of life in the camp. He recalls hearing gun shots, hearing that people had been killed and feeling hungry. Now, however, he feels loved and cared for. He counts on support from a mixed social network – his brothers and sisters and the Church. His brothers provide him both advice and economic support. When he is not in school, he plays football, does chores and goes to Church. He is also a member of the Peace Club. He feels uncomfortable in the video hall where the boys spend time. He wants to be a “good” boy and hopes to help his family when he grows up.
Simon	Simon lives with his parents and goes to school. He explains that he is recovering from the terrible times in the camp and the loss of many family members. He recalls being teased by his classmates when he was 7 because he started school late and was behind in reading. Today, this 14 year-old feels that his family (brothers, sisters, parents, grandmother) provide for his needs. Simon spends his time playing football, doing chores and going to school and Church. He finds the video hall an uncomfortable place to spend time and is wary of relationships with girls. He is only beginning to experience the physical changes of puberty and feels he is too young to to have a girlfriend. His goals are to finish school, support his family, and be a good, respectful boy.
Peter	“This one has paid all that he has eaten from our hands,” is what 14 year old Paul wants others to say about him. He lives with his parents and goes to school. He wants

	<p>to study hard to fight poverty at home. When he was small he was very malnourished and almost died. He feels supported by his family but is uncomfortable with pressure from his friends to have a girlfriend. He is also worried about violence in the town center. He goes to school, does his chores such as grazing cattle or planting maize, attends Church and enjoys playing football and volleyball at school. Education is the focus of his life, he wants to achieve what his father could not due to the war. He feels that his family has struggled on his behalf and he must repay their efforts. His father is a well-respected man and he looks up to him and trusts his advice.</p>
Mark	<p>Mark recalls running from the rebels and living in the camp. He recalls beating and quarreling in his home, fighting with children in school and being beaten by teachers. He lives with his mother who pays his school fees. He feels supported by his family despite “overbeating”. He attends school and is involved with the youth center and choir. He goes to school, does his chores and plays football. He remarks that his parents count on him to finish his studies and support them.</p>

Older Adolescents: Girls (n=3)	
Sarah	15 year old Sarah lives with her mother and siblings, her father has passed away. As a child (7 – 10) she lived in a camp and remembers the hard times. She is close to her mother, although she beats her. Her mother advises her and pays her school fees. When she started puberty she was very worried, but her mother reassured her. Sarah feels less protected now, because her mother expects her to earn money to contribute to her school fees. She is worried about boys disturbing her and afraid to go out at night. Sarah has not had a boyfriend yet. She aspires to finish school, become a nurse or a teacher, contribute to the household economy and educate her children.
Elizabeth	“If I don’t finish school they will be annoyed and quarrel with me. They may curse you and you will never give birth until the curse is broken,” explains 16 year old Elizabeth. Elizabeth aspires to finish school, get a job, support her family and become a respected woman. She lives with her mother and her maternal family because her father never paid the bride-price. As a child she lived with her stepmother for some time and had problems going to school because she had too many chores. Her siblings live with her aunt. Elizabeth explained that she is close to her mother who pays her school fees and also receives support from her teachers. She is in senior one but struggles to get by – to pay her school fees, buy sanitary napkins and purchase other essentials. She often arrives late and is teased by her classmates. She is a year behind because one year she could not pay the fees. She is afraid to go out at night and fears teasing from the boys. She has had boyfriends since before she started puberty at 14. Elizabeth currently has a boyfriend, who sends her letters. She doesn’t trust the advice of her friends, because she feels that they sometimes give her bad advice.
Judith	16 year old Judith lives at home; she does not yet have a boyfriend. She remembers that when she was younger she did not have enough food to eat or money to buy things she needed, because, “there was too much poverty”. Judith lives in a loving home with support from her mother and brothers. Even though she failed 6th grade, her brother and her Aunt encouraged her to go back to school and repeat the year. Once she began puberty, she began to be afraid of rape. Judith goes to school, does her chores and sometimes spends time with friends or plays sports. Her aspiration is to finish school, become a nurse and support her family. She is concerned about violence and wants to promote peace.
Older Adolescents: Boys (n=5)	
Joseph	Joseph is 19 years old, unmarried and living with parents. He was exposed to violence as a child when his father beat his mother. As a result of this violence, he lived without his mother for some time. He lived in an IDP camp from 12 to 16 years of age, and he remembers hunger and disease and that he could not pay his school fees. Today he feels supported by his family and attends school, although he remarks that his father overworks him and beats him to correct him. At 15 when he began puberty, he began thinking about sex and fell in with friends who had a bad influence on him. Joseph had his sexual debut at 16 playing hide and seek, but he was discovered and beaten by the girl’s brother. He has a girlfriend who he plans to marry. First, however, he wants to finish school and meet his parent’s expectations. He believes education is his key to success and he values justice and equality, and fairness over tradition.
Isaac	“My heart is strong, I am growing and learning what is wrong and right,” commented 18 year old Isaac who moved in with his sister after his mother’s death when he was 15. He recalls this as a painful experience. His father is also deceased. He feels nurtured by sister and brothers, and receives advice from the Peace Club. Isaac describes a teacher who changed his life. He was imprisoned for one year on false charges of stealing, but once he was released he returned to school. When he was 16, he started to like a girl for the first time, but he didn’t tell anyone. He is quite concerned with contracting HIV and wants he and his partner to be tested

	before they have sex. His family prioritizes school and he wants to be successful and help his family and community.
Opio*	This 16-year-old boy lives with his aunt and spends vacations with mother. Opio has had a difficult life already: abducted by the rebels and returned at 10, he mentions seeing things he should not have seen. He also refers to the difficulty of times in the camp when many died due to lack of health care. Opio's life has been challenging from birth. His mother was very young when he was born and she had problems with his father. As a small child Opio was often sick (malnourished) and his Aunt took him in when he was three. He has suffered challenges at school- academically and socially, perhaps as a result of his abduction. When he returned to school he had difficulty learning and was teased by his peers. In early adolescence he was blamed for stealing by his peers (he feels unjustly) and lost his friends. Opio finds it challenging to keep up in school. His aunts keep him on track, although his mother sometimes prefers that he does chores rather than go to school. He remarks that he loves and feels supported by his aunts, who he sees as role models, but comments that it is not the same as having a mother. He had a girlfriend this year, blaming in part his friends who pressured him to drink, smoke and have sex. He told his Aunt about it and she spoke to the girl who was pressuring him for sex and her family. As a result they quarreled. He feels supported by his family and teachers to continue studying. Opio values education and hopes to contribute to his family's well-being, but feels they have lost faith in him.
Solomon	17-year-old Solomon remembers running from the LRA from 10 to 15 and the difficult times of living in the camp. He was beaten during the war by soldiers, and also by fellow students at school. Solomon goes to school, with help from his sister and his family who pay the fees. He is unsure, however, if he will be able to continue studying because it is difficult to raise the money for his school fees. Solomon is not in a relationship now because he does not want to be distracted from school, but he has had sex, and worries about contracting HIV. He spends his time going to school, doing chores and playing football. He is Catholic and goes to Church on the weekends. He hopes to continue school and become an engineer.
Ronald	"He has changed his ways, now he is acting like a man," is what 16 year old Ronald wants others to say about him. He was been well cared for by his mother and receives good advice from his friends and family. He got into trouble when he was younger and dropped out of school at 15, when he was in primary 7. He cannot return to school because he is needed at home because his mother is ill. He was not frightened by puberty; rather he was inspired to act more responsibly. He has a girlfriend but does not want to marry until he can build her a house. His dream is to return to school, make a living and support his family.

Newly Married: Girls (n=5)	
Hope*	Hope has struggled mightily in her short life - she was abducted by the rebels at 15, watched her parents fight as a child, was beaten by her siblings and teacher and eventually left an orphan. For some time she lived alone caring for her younger siblings, until she went to live with her elder sister. She missed her parents and few of her relatives helped. Despite success at school and sports from 11 to 15, seemingly the highlight of her life, Hope was not able to complete her studies. Although her siblings, teacher and boyfriend tried to keep her in school, she eventually could not come up with the money to pay her school fees and dropped out at 17 to marry her boyfriend. Hope initially avoided sex when she met her boyfriend at 15, but her options were few. She explains that although her husband is a farmer with no money or education, he gave her a home when she had none. Hope considers herself a Christian, hardworking, woman who is obedient and respects her husband; she trusts him and counts on him for support. They use condoms because he is afraid of the side effects

	of contraceptive methods. She no longer hopes she will be educated, but has transferred her aspirations to her children.
Grace	Grace was raised by her mother without enough money for food, clothes or health care. Nevertheless she felt loved and supported by her mother. She has had little education because her mother couldn't pay the fees, in fact she didn't start school until she was 14. Grace, an 18 year old, is living with her 30 year-old husband. She feels this union was a mistake because she is too young to protect herself, and he isn't giving her the economic support she needs. At 14 and 15 she had a number of casual sexual relationships, and speaks of her friends encouraging her to have sex in exchange for clothes. Grace works in a shop as well as in the gardens and doing chores at home. She loves to socialize and spends time at the round She is in a VSLA group.
Stella	Stella's mother left her with her abusive father when she was young. Eventually she moved in with her grandmother. Around the age of fourteen or fifteen she met her husband, fell in love and started having sex. She remembers that she began wanting to have sex after puberty and thinks her mother should have been stricter with her. Stella started going out with her boyfriend while in school and dropped out this year at the age of 16 to move in with him. He insisted they be tested for HIV and afterwards they did not use condoms because they were clean and committed to each other. Now she wants to wait two more years to have children and is using the injectable. Stella sells bread at the trading center and works in the garden.
Millie	Millie's education was interrupted by the war at 15 when her father asked her to leave school to help in the garden. She has a difficult relationship with her mother – she says she started having sex because her family was disturbing her. At 16 she fell in love with her husband who she met at her Aunt's home where she helps brew alcohol. Millie is now 17 and lives with her husband and his family. She has no children yet, although her in-laws would like children. She uses the injection, with her husband's agreement, which she pays for. Now, however, he has changed his mind and wants her to stop using the method. Her mother has not come to visit her yet, but her husband's family received her well.
Faridah	"Pregnancy would be a blessing from God and I would give thanks to him," comments 18 year old Faridah. She is married, living with husband's family and not using contraception because, "If you give birth to a child then you are loved; people will also trust you. They will believe you have brought something good for them." Stella finished her primary leaving exam at 15 and began tailoring school. Her husband paid her fees until she dropped out. Hers was an arranged marriage, with the support of both families. She came from a supportive, happy home. When she reached puberty, her mother told her to "avoid moving in the night and keeping bad company". At 14 she was beaten on the way home from school by "spoiled" girls who thought that she should have a boyfriend like them. Her hope is that they can make a good living and educate their children.
Newly Married: Boys (n=3)	
Paul*	19-year-old Paul is married and lives with his wife. As a youngster he fled from the rebels who killed his father. His mother has cared for him throughout his life and was able to save his bride-price. Although his extended family is supportive, he recalls that he found it difficult to assume new responsibilities at puberty. Paul married his wife at 18 because he "needed someone to help his mother at home". He feels he must make the decisions in the household, since he brought his wife to his home. Paul wants children later, in the meantime he wishes he knew his wife's fertile period to avoid pregnancy. He works as a mechanic and spends his free timing relaxing with friends.
Amos*	As a child, Amos was injured by Karamoja cattle rustlers, abducted by the rebels and lived in a camp. His mother died when he was a child and his brother took care of him. His father has not supported him, but Amos says that other family, friends and community members have helped him with resources and advice. His education was

	<p>interrupted because as a child he was hungry and unable to pay attention. He also had problems paying his school fees and then dropped out when he was 15 and moved to the camp. When Amos returned to the village his father wouldn't help pay his school fees and he was unable to raise the money to cover them. 19 year old Amos is married and living with his wife. There are no children yet, he uses condoms. Amos feels his peers gave him bad advice and he married before he was ready. He aspires to be a respected man and farmer and serve as a LC.</p>
Robert	<p>18-year-old Robert is married and lives with his mother. As a child he first ran from the Karamoja (neighboring tribe who dedicate themselves to cattle rustling) and then from the rebels – he recalls that he was often hungry. After his father's death, the saddest event in Robert's life, his mother was embroiled in land wrangles with her family and became ill because she was bewitched. His mother taught him, supported him and gave him a small business. Now, however, she is too sick to care for him. Robert digs with his brother and his uncle has taught him to be a good man. Robert met his wife at relative's home when he was 17. He married her soon after and is happy because she provides him advice and help. He feels he should be the authority in the home because he brought her to live at his home. Robert's wife is using the injection for now while they get to know each other. However, Robert shared that he would be happy if she were pregnant and hopes to have three children. He dropped out of school and would like to return to vocational school to learn a trade; however, he fears it is too late. In addition to farming, Robert has a small, unsuccessful business.</p>

Newly Parenting (Women) [n=7]

Lilian	<p>Lilian is 18 with a two year old son, and lives with her stepmother. The father of her son is in the army and does not send her any money, but she dreams of him returning for her. She feels that her situation would be different today if she had parents or elder siblings to support her, “I feel that if I had parents something like this would not have happened to me. Parents defend their children. No one defends me.”</p> <p>Lilian struggled with poverty and poor health as a child. She recalls her parents fighting and her finally her father left her mother. As a child Lilian suffered from a chronic disease (possibly tuberculosis), and was helped by Save the Children to get medical care. She feels that her illness was caused by her step aunt who charmed her. While she was struggling with her medical problems she considered suicide. Liliana struggled to remain in school, but her father did not help her with fees or her uniform, until she reported him to the LC. Her father died when she was young and she was raised by her stepmother. At first she hated her stepmother, but later she realized that she was just trying to guide her.</p> <p>Lilian had her first boyfriend at 15 but she didn’t have sex with him until she started menstruating. She got pregnant within the year, and blames in part the bad influence of her friends who pressured her to have sex. She used condoms because she was afraid of the side effects of other methods. She dropped out of senior two and eloped with her husband because she had no one to support her. Her boyfriend paid 40,000 Ugandan shillings to her parents for compensation for the lost investment in her.</p> <p>During the interview, Lilian commented that she had sex with her boyfriend because she needed someone to support her and her siblings. When she found out she was pregnant, Lilian was very unhappy and wanted to abort. Her husband left her after she got pregnant, she thinks because of a jealous neighbor’s advice. When Lilian gave birth at 16 he had already left for the army.</p> <p>Lilian farms in other people’s gardens to support her child. She has formed an alliance with her stepmother since there is no one else to care of them. She spends her time in the garden, doing chores at home, at Church, and also finds some time to spend with her friends. Lilian dreams of economic stability, an education for her son and a partner who loves her and trusts her the way she is.</p>
Martha	<p>“Tell the community to treat their daughters with respect. They should avoid saying demanding words that break our hearts,” is the request of 18 year old Martha who lives at her parents’ home with her baby. Her husband was not able to pay the bride-price and is in police training in Kampala. Her mother resents her and Martha feels guilty because she is a burden, living at home with a child when she should be helping her family. As a child she lived with her aunt and uncle, where she was overworked and beaten by her aunt. Martha sometimes missed school because of her chores and was beaten by her teachers. At 12 Martha went to live with her mother where things improved.</p> <p>She feels criticized for being an unmarried mother. She met her husband at 17 while she was still studying. He was 23 at the time and promised to pay her school fees. Martha tried to use condoms but it was a struggle because her boyfriend did not like them. He thought he could prevent her from getting pregnant himself by timing intercourse according to her menstrual cycle. They were both unhappy with the pregnancy, she feared it would ruin his studies and he feared they would arrest him for defilement. He asked a doctor to abort the baby, but the doctor refused.</p> <p>He is now studying in Kampala, and Martha hopes when he returns they will marry. She digs in a garden and does chores around the compound. Her dream is to be able to provide for and educate her children.</p>
Peace	<p>Peace lives with her husband and his family. She works in the garden with her husband and does household chores, “My husband and I dig together. We don’t have our own garden. We are under the care of his mother”. Peace and her husband both dropped out of school after reaching secondary. Her father-in-law has passed away and his mother is ill so there was no one to pay her husband’s school fees.</p>

	<p>Her parents were killed when she was young, and she stayed in her home caring for her younger siblings, with food and money from her uncle. She tried to go to school and send her siblings to school but found it very difficult. Most of her relatives abandoned her after her Uncle's death, "So I saw I was a useless person". Others such as Sophie at the resource center and the pastors from her Church gave her advice when she was despondent.</p> <p>Peace recalls that her friends gave her bad advice, "Since I didn't have anyone to pay school fees, they advised me to get my own home. I took their advice and threw myself in a hole." Her school friends introduced her to her boyfriend when she was 15, and she was pregnant within the year, even though she used condoms. Peace was in senior one and her husband in senior two when they met. They planned to wait to marry until they finished their studies but she got pregnant sneaking out to meet him. Peace reflected, "We tried using condoms but failed. He asked me to let him study before having a child. Since I had no one paying for me, at least he could complete his studies, but I got pregnant first." Peace went to stay with her husband when she was 16 and he was 18, "I was so angry at myself. I wouldn't eat, I just cried all the time. I knew that was the end of my life." She tried swallowing tablets to abort and became weak and was taken to the hospital. Her boyfriend told her that he had no means to care for a child because he was still young and struggling. His friends told him to chase her away and encourage her to have an abortion.</p> <p>Today, her child is five months old. She and her husband went to the health center so that she could start using the injectable but they told her that she cannot use it now and she should return when she is no longer breastfeeding. Her dream, which is fading, is that an NGO will help her complete her studies. She concluded, "I want to be good. I don't want to be poor. I don't know God's plans. I ask God for health and wisdom to teach me to care for my children and husband."</p>
Joyce	<p>17-year-old Joyce has a three week old baby girl and lives with her parents. She met the father of her baby at his house and began a relationship with him. She commented that he used to give her money which she became accustomed to. Although they were using condoms, she got pregnant. She did not realize she was pregnant until her sister took her to the health center because of uncontrolled vomiting. The baby's father wanted to marry her, but her family encouraged her to have the baby at home, rather than marry him, because they want her to return to school. Although she recalls sad memories of the war, she was protected by her family and able to continue her studies until she had to leave due to her pregnancy.</p> <p>The people in her life have conflicting views of her pregnancy, "They say now I am a big girl and not a child. My partner thanks God for giving us the child. My parents feel it wasn't time for me to have a child." Joyce says that he was happy with the baby and has brought gifts for the child. Joyce dreams both of marrying him and returning to school, "The baby will help me. The father will be giving me more help and we shall all be happy."</p>
Gloria	<p>"I am alone and everything about this child depends on me," comments 18-year-old Gloria. Gloria is married, and has left her husband. She met and fell in love with the father of her child when she was 14. She married him soon after. She did not want a pregnancy right away and used Panadol (aspirin) as birth control. After she conceived, Gloria moved back to her parent's home because she had problems with her abusive mother-in-law. The baby's father provides money to support the child and Gloria hopes to return to him some day. She grew up happily, until her family was forced to relocate to the IDP camp. Her home was very strict, but she feels this helps her to live well now. In the future she hopes to earn enough to create a better life for her children.</p>
Ann	<p>19-year-old married Ann is living with her family because her husband kicked her out. She grew up poor, but her family and social network provided her support to study until she got pregnant. Her father, who promised her land and a house, passed away before he could provide her any support. Ann fell in love at 16 and had unprotected sex. She was not using any method because she had stopped using the</p>

	<p>injectable because she was concerned about the bleeding she experienced while using it. Ann lived with her husband until she became pregnant when she was about 18. The pregnancy wasn't planned and her husband (who is 30) told her he didn't want her anymore and sent her home and began seeing other women. He has never seen the baby or sent any support. Ann works hard to support her child, "You should not hope that your family will take care of you when you have a child. The elders have already taken care of you and you are an adult so you should get a garden and dig because in the future the child will need clothes and shoes and you will not have money for health care and the basics." Although Ann is happy with her child, she is embarrassed to be living at home in this situation and wants to support herself and her child. She aspires to buy a goat and cow with from her crops.</p>
Patience	<p>17-year-old Patience lives with her 28-year-old husband. As a child she witnessed intimate partner violence in her home and many of her relatives were killed during the war. She was 16 years old and living in the camp when she began a relationship with her husband. Patience recalls that she started the relationship because she had "too much time on her hands." She regrets the relationship now because her husband does not provide for her. She started school at 10 but dropped out in Senior 2 and became pregnant. Around that time her uncle died and no longer supported her. When Patience found out she was pregnant she wanted to abort and considered suicide. She and her husband use condoms, although she says her family would be pleased with another pregnancy. She values education and pays her sister's fees.</p>
Newly Parenting: Boys (n=4)	
George	<p>19-year-old George lives with his wife and child at his brother's home. His parents died when he was young and he was raised by his uncle. Although when he was younger he felt he was overbeaten; now he realizes that he was being trained. George was arrested for shoplifting at 13 and his uncle paid the fine and beat him. He had his first girlfriend at 14, she miscarried and the relationship ended. He went to school, played football and met his current wife who he married when she came to his house and told his family she was pregnant. "I met my wife at a school athletic event. She came to my house and told my people that I had planted a seed." Their families supported their marriage since she was already pregnant. He finished his PLE and his wife completed her senior exams. George uses withdrawal because he doesn't want another child now.</p>
James	<p>17-year-old James lives with his uncles and his pregnant wife. He has a strong sense of his authority in his home now that he is married, "I am the top decision-maker". As a child he ran from the rebels and then lived in the camp where he cared for his grandmother and was often ill and hungry. James has lived many places- with his parents, then in his mother's home, then back to his father's home and later with his aunt and uncles after his mother's death. He reflects that although some of his extended family support him, others are a negative influence. He was arrested at 14 and spent a year in prison. Around this time his parents urged him to take a wife to help him. When he returned from prison he met a girl in the dance hall and she quickly became pregnant and they married. James recalls, "When I found out she was pregnant, I thought I should run away, but the thought never came again because it would not be possible to run away because she is someone's daughter. If you made her pregnant, it is not proper to abandon her, it's better to take her." His family is happy with the pregnancy, but after the baby is born he wants to use condoms or the injection to make sure they have no more than three children. James farms with his uncle, burns charcoal and does other odd jobs to support himself and his wife.</p>
Michael	<p>Michael (19) recalls tough times when he was younger and living in the camp, "We went to sleep hungry". When his family returned to the village, they struggled to find land to farm. Land wrangles have become a big part of his reality. Now living with his brother, 17 year old wife and two children, Michael reflects, "I wish we had never had sex because there are so many problems." When his girlfriend discovered she</p>

	<p>was pregnant her brothers chased her away and she came to him. His brothers told him that if the child is yours we must take her in. As a child he lived with his parents who drank and often left him and his siblings to fend for themselves. Although he started school at six, it was not always possible to get to the far- away school and at 11 he was sent home because he didn't have a uniform. His father was killed by the rebels and there was no one to care for him. When he reached puberty, his friends began telling him that he should get a wife, although he wanted to wait until he could build a hut for her. He first had sex at 13. During his short life he has already lived in many different places, due to the war, including the camp. As an orphan without land of his own, he has struggled all his life. He is working with his family to try to make some money so they will have cash invest some money. "The most difficult thing was the war, unnecessary killings and so forth. They abducted my father and killed him, so when we came to the camp and later when we went back home there was no one to take care of us."</p>
<p>Okello</p>	<p>"When you don't have a child, life is easy," remarks 19-year-old Okello, who is married and living at home with his pregnant wife. Okello grew up with both parents who supported him and provided him advice. He had his first girlfriend at 18, they were using rhythm and she got pregnant. Once she got pregnant, he knew she would come to live with them. They use condoms now and want to space their next child by at least two years. In the future, he hopes to become an engineer and earn enough money to give his family a comfortable life, but doubts if he will be able to achieve this there is no money for him to continue his studies.</p>

*Abducted by the LRA for some period of time

Appendix C: Sexual and Reproductive Health – Fertility Intentions, Boys

FDIC#	Age	Life Course	Planned	Comment	Future Plans	Using FP	Family
Amos	18	New Parent	Yes (within year of marriage)	He was happy his wife was pregnant. Made his love for her develop even more. Could not stay in the same house and not have children. Discuss FP together. View planned children as a way of improving life.	If had unplanned pregnancy would abort.	No/ Periodic abstinence	Concerned with what others think about using FP
George	19	New Parent	Yes	Aborted a previous child which brought an end to that relationship. Conceived due to fear that he would die early because men in his family die young. Wife thinks it's very important to have more children. Wife used to use pill which he was ok with. Has discussed FP.	Wants to have another child in 10 years. Doesn't want more children unless he can support them. Wants to have at least one girl so that she can "keep the home". If wife got pregnant he would ask her to abort or leave.	No/ Periodic abstinence	Wants them to have children
Michael	19	New Parent	No (not using a condom)	Had his first child at age 17 and really regretted it. His partner was chased from her home by her parents and he felt regret about the pregnancy and wished they never had sex. Discusses FP with partner.	Doesn't want many children due to the difficulty of raising them. Wants 4 or less children.	Yes/ Condoms	Wants them to space
Paul	19	Newly married	Not clear	Has not discussed FP with partner because she hasn't given birth. Seems that he is familiar with periodic abstinence because he says one thing he would have wanted to know about his wife is her menstrual cycle to avoid getting her pregnant. He married her to help him with his mother and other family responsibilities.	Wants 4 children because there is not enough land and 4 seems like a manageable number	No (wife pregnant)	

Okello	19	New parent	Yes	Happy wife is pregnant and wants to plant roots. Not sure how wife felt about pregnancy. Has discussed FP. Unplanned pregnancy when 17 and wife was 16. He didn't have the money to marry, but now that they are living together it is better.	Wants more kids but wants to space them. One should be able to care of their children. Not properly spacing children makes women look old. If they had an unplanned pregnancy he wants his wife to abort.	Implant	Now he is seen as responsible because he has a child, but people will criticize him if he doesn't space.
James	17	Newly married	No	He makes the decisions regarding when to have kids. In response to one question he answers that he has not discussed timing of pregnancy because wife was already pregnant when she came to live with him, but they have discussed how many children to have in the future. However, later he says he has discussed using condom during pregnancy with his wife because the semen is dangerous to the fetus.	Wants 3 kids. Easier to care for them and pay for school fee.	Currently using condoms to protect fetus, wife would use condom after they have 3 children, or if she doesn't want to, he will use condoms.	
Robert	18	Newly married		Has discussed FP with wife. She started the discussion. He made the decision that she should go to the health center for the injection.	Decided together to wait one year to have a child. Wants 3 children. Feels that if they have too many kids they won't be able to take care of them, pay for their school fees, and buy their clothes.	Injection	

Appendix D: Sexual and Reproductive Health – Fertility Intentions, Girls

FDIC#	Age	Life Course	Planned	Comment	Future Plans	Using FP	Family opinion
Martha	18	New parent	No	Using condom, but “it burst”. She was 16 and still in school when she met him. Tried to abort by taking aspirin. She started her menses two months after she met him. He paid the fine and she went to live with his family, but then went back home. They talked about FP and he proposed that she go to the hospital. To get a method. She never went because he left to join the army.		No (separated)	
Gloria	19	New parent	No	He wanted children but she did not. Whenever they had sex she took aspirin to prevent pregnancy. Did not use FP. They discussed FP and they agreed she would use the injection. Unhappy about getting pregnant. Didn’t feel she was ready to have a child. No choice but to raise the child. She has left her partner.	Wants to have 4 children	No (no longer together)	
Grace	17 or 19	Newly married		Has communicated to her partner about FP use but not about family size. They have discussed FP in the past and agreed to use injectable, but now he has changed his mind. She cannot continue to use because he is opposed to it. Now she doesn’t discuss with him because she is afraid he will refuse. Goes	Would be happy if had a planned child	Yes (Injectables) (but has/or is planning to discontinue due to	They want her to stop using FP. She says their family will be happy if she gets pregnant but

				to clinic on her own and pays for the contraceptives herself. He does not agree with methods other than condoms because he is worried that the side effects will cost money. She wanted another method because she was afraid he would forget to use a condom, but he promised not to. She says they discuss together but he makes the decision.		husband opposition)	the timing isn't good
Ann	19	New parent	No	<p>She was 16 when she had her first child. She had this baby when she was 19. She was not happy when she became pregnant. Her partner paid the fine and she went to live with him. Then his behavior changed towards her. He said he didn't want her anymore and sent her back to live with her parents.</p> <p>Took one dose of the injectable but stopped because she had too much bleeding. She said it was a struggle; they tried using the condom but he never accepted. <i>"Yes, we did try using safer sex but he never allows it (with emphasis)."</i></p> <p>She started using injection on her own because she thinks he would send her away if she gets pregnant. She talked to him about FP but he didn't agree because he says that FP causes a lot of bleeding. She doesn't use any other method because it is "hard to contradict someone you are living with."</p>	She is hoping that he will "officially" marry her and she will go to live at his house. In that case she might want another child.	No (separated now)	
Hope	16	Newly married		Views children as gifts that unite people. Thinks that it is bad to have too many children that you can't provide for. Has	She wants 4 children due to limited livelihood options.	Yes (Condoms)	

				<p>discussed FP with husband and uses condoms as contraception.</p> <p>She says she is not using any FP method, but that they try condoms once in a while. They have discussed other methods but he doesn't accept due to the side effects. He is worried about headache, body weakness, lost weight which might lead to spending a lot of money.</p> <p>They had a disagreement because she wants to use another FP method other than the condom because she is afraid he will forget and she will get pregnant. He accepted and promised he would never forget.</p>	<p>Her husband thinks that 4 is too many. Will take anything but two boys and two girls would be ideal. She says they discuss the topic but he is the one who decides.</p>		
Faridah	17	Newly married	No	<p>Has communicated with partner about FP. Uses condoms because of dual HIV and pregnancy prevention. Does not use FP and does not discuss FP with husband. Husband doesn't accept FP and believes that it disturbs people. She is afraid it would make her barren.</p>	<p>Wants 4 children because this is a more manageable number of children to provide for. It would be a blessing for her husband if she were pregnant.</p> <p>Have discussed desire to have four children-two boys/two girls.</p> <p>May consider using FP after already has two kids. Wants to space pregnancies</p>	No (wants pregnancy Yes (Condoms)	<p>Her family would like her to get pregnant. They would trust her and believe she brought something good to them.</p>

Joyce	17	New parent	No	Wanted to abort when she learned that she was pregnant. Afraid of her parent's reaction but her parents supported her and said that she could come home and go back to school after giving birth. The father of her child was very happy but she felt no happiness about her pregnancy. Hasn't discussed FP with her partner.	Plans to use condoms if she begins having sex again.	No (not sexually active)	
Stella	16	Newly married		She started having sex while she still lived at home. She did not use condoms. Her husband forced her to have an HIV test and neither was positive. They talked about having more children and he agreed that she should start using the injection.	Now has started injections.	Injection	Family tells her that it is up to her.
Peace	17	New parent	No	She got pregnant at 15 sneaking out of her house to see her boyfriend. She didn't know she would have a baby; they tried using condoms but failed. Now they are married. They have spoken about FP. They discussed that since they have nothing to take care of the children they should wait until her husband goes back to school and gets some money before they add another child. He agreed and told her to go use the injection. ".....he is also not yet ready and since God has given us this one child we should try to take care of him with the little we have".	Would be sad if became pregnant again. Would be shameful to have closely timed children. Her husband would feel the same.	Plans to use injection, but when she went to the hospital the other day they told her she had to wait until her baby five months to start.	If her family found out that she was pregnant, it would be "so shameful and sad".

Appendix E: Life History Interview Guides

LIFE HISTORY DISCUSSION GUIDE- FOR USE WITH VERY YOUNG ADOLESCENTS (AGES 10-14)

FIRST INTERVIEW (90 MINUTES)

INTRODUCTION (5 minutes)

Welcome. Thank you for agreeing to talk with me to today. I hope our time together will be as meaningful to you as it will be helpful to me. As we discussed during recruitment, we are planning to hold two interviews with you and each one will be about 90 minutes. Before we begin, it is very important to make sure that you can do a second interview within the next two weeks. Will you be able to meet again? If so, what might be a good time? (*Write down the date and time that you have agreed to meet with the participant*)

During these interviews, we are going to do a lot of fun things such as drawing and playing different types of games. From our time together, I hope to learn more about you and other young people in this area so that we can begin to identify ways of helping young people grow up in a healthy way. Imagine that you are a teacher and I am your student. The answers that you provide to my questions will help me to learn from you. There are no right or wrong answers to any of these questions, so you should feel free to just tell me what is on your mind. If you want, we can take a break at any time. If there are any topics that you don't want to speak about, you can just let me know and we will move on to a different one. I really appreciate that you are willing to spend this time with me to share your thoughts and experiences. Do you have any questions or concerns before we begin? Are you ready to begin?

MAP OF COMMUNITY (25 min)

Purpose:

- To understand in a physical space context, how adolescents live their daily lives, their safety concerns and safe and non-safe spaces, as well as girls-only/boys-only spaces.

Materials:

- Flip chart paper
- Markers
- Colored pencils

Process:

Introduce the exercise:

I would like to start by learning more about this area that you are living in and how young people here spend their time. Now, let's imagine that we are birds flying through the sky and we look down when flying over this area. I would like for you to draw a picture of all the things we would see. The picture doesn't have to be perfect (a good drawing) so do not worry. This is just to help me understand and learn about this area since I am new here. *[Note: As participant answers the questions and identifies different locations, ask them to draw it on the map]*

1. Let us start with... *[Use appropriate nearby landmark such as main road, youth center, health center etc.]*
 - a. Where would you put this on our map?

2. Can you show me the place where you live?
 - a. How long have you lived in this area?
 - b. Where did you live before coming here?

3. Now, I'd like for you to tell me about how you spend your time. During the week where are the different places that you go to?
 - a. *[If not mentioned, probe for where they go to school, where they fetch water, where they go to garden etc.]*

4. What about on the weekend? Where are the places that you spend your time?
 - a. *[If not mentioned, probe about time they spend at: the church or mosque, youth center etc.]*

5. Where are the places that you like to go to have fun?
 - a. Why is it fun there?
 - b. How would this be different if you were a boy/girl?

6. What clubs/groups/organizations do you belong to?
 - a. *[If participant is part of a group]:* What do you like about this group/club/organization?
 - b. *[If participant is not part of a group]:* Why don't you belong to any clubs/groups/organizations?

7. Where do you spend time with your friends?
 - a. What types of things do you like to do together?

8. Where do you go to get health information or services?
 - a. Why do you go to those places?
 - b. What type of information and services do you get from there?

9. Where do you go if you want to be alone?
 - a. When are the times that you like going to this place?
 - b. How do you feel when you are there?

10. Looking at your map, can you show me the places where mostly men spend their time?
 - a. Can you show me the places where mostly women spend their time?
 - b. What about boys and girls? Are there places where only boys go?
 - c. Are there places where only girls go?

11. Now, I would like for you to show me on the map the places in this area that you like the best. *[Have the participant use a ☺ to indicate the places on the map that they like]*
 - a. Why do you like these places?

12. Can you show me the places that you do not like? *[Have the participant use a ☹ to indicate the places on the map that they do not like]*
 - a. Why don't you like these places?

13. How safe do you feel in this area?
 - a. Why or why not?
 - b. Can you show me the places on the map that you feel are unsafe? *[Mark these with a red dot]*
 - c. Why do these places make you feel unsafe?
 - d. Do you think this would be the same if you were a boy/girl?

14. What would you like to change about this area that you are living in?
 - a. Why or why not?

SPIDER-MAPPING (25 minutes)

Purpose:

- To understand young people's social networks and identify which members influence attitudes, opportunities, and behaviors

Materials:

- One large piece of flip chart paper
- Markers
- Three different colored post-it notes
- Post-it notes with different type of media written on each paper: mobile phone, television, radio, newspaper, Internet (you can also use images/pictures of the different forms of media)

Introduce the exercise:

Thank you for drawing the map and helping me to learn more about this area and the places you spend your time. Now I would like to learn more about the people that are in your life.

1. Can you help me make a list of the people that have had a positive and negative influence on your life? We do not have to use their real names. These people can be part of your family or they can be outside your family. For example, they can be people you ask advice from, who take care of you, who teach you, who are close friends, who you look up to, or people who have hurt you, have been bad role models, or have shown you the wrong way *[Allow participant to write the names and relationships of each person on a separate post-it note (use different color paper for positive and negative influences). If they do not feel comfortable writing, then you can write it down for them]*
2. *[Draw a circle in the middle of flip chart]* This circle represents you.
 - a. I would like you to pick the people you think have influenced you the most (both positively and negatively) and place them on the paper closest to the circle that represents you.
 - b. Those that have influenced you less – put further away. *[Allow the person time to place all the people on the paper.]*
3. Can you tell me about each person on this paper? *(Point to each post-it in their spider map. If there are very many, ask about 5-6).*
 - a. How has s/he influence your life?
4. Who do you trust to talk to when something worries you?
 - a. For example, if you are worried about your body and your health?
 - i. What type of problems do you talk to them about?
 - b. What if you are having problems with your friends, who would you talk to?
 - c. Why do you trust these people?
5. If you want to talk to someone about things such as liking someone romantically or falling in love, who would you talk to?
 - a. Why do you talk to these people rather than *[Probe: father, mother, grandmother, teacher, peers]*?
 - b. What type of things do you talk about?

6. Out of all the people on this paper, who has shaped and influenced your life the most, either positively or negatively? *[Circle the name they mention]*
 - a. Why? In what way?

7. Who are the heroes and heroines in your life? *[Put a star near the names of the people mentioned.]*
 - a. Why?
 - b. What do you admire about him/her?

8. *[Hand participant the post-it notes (different color than the ones used before) with the different types of media written or drawn on them]* I have these papers that have different types of media on them: mobile phone, radio, television, newspaper, and Internet.
 - a. I would like you to place the forms of media that have influenced you most close to you and the ones that have influenced you less, further way.
 - b. *[probe for the ones that are posted closest]* In what way does this form of media influence your thinking or behavior?
 - c. Do you think that this is a good influence or a bad influence?

BREAK- 10 minutes

Let's take a small break now. *[Offer the participant a snack]*

TIMELINE (30 minutes)

Purpose:

- To understand which life events are perceived as significant by participants and how they are experienced

Materials:

- Two large pieces of flip chart paper
- Tape
- Markers

Process:

Introduce the exercise:

Thank you for telling me about the important people in your life. Now I would like to know more about some of the life experiences that you have had. I would like for us to put together your life story. Have you ever heard a story (read a book/seen a movie) about someone interesting? Most people have good and bad things happen to them during their life. They have happy and sad times. That is part of what makes an interesting life. I am sure that you have had

an interesting life –and I want you to help me create a story about the important things that have happened in your life. I have a long sheet of paper with a line down the middle and some markers and crayons (*Lay out 4-5 foot strip of paper*) and together I want us to draw a timeline of your life.

1. First, on one end, we will put a mark to represent the day that you were born. If you don't remember the exact date, don't worry we can just guess based on your age.
2. On the other end, we are going to mark TODAY on the timeline.
3. All of this space in between shows all of the days and years between the time you were born and today.
4. We are going to write events in your life that you think are important to include in your life story. They can be either positive or negative. If it was a happy time, we will write them above the striped line. If it was a sad time, we will write them below the stripe.
5. Once we have finish making your time line today, we'll look at it again next time we meet and you can add to it.
6. Ok. Let's start with the first five years of your life. [*as memories or experiences are shared, place them on the time line*]
 - a. What is your very earliest memory?
 - b. What other memories do you have from that time of your life?
 - c. Are there any stories that your family told you about how you were as a baby?
 - d. Who took care of you when you were younger?
 - e. Who did you play with?
 - f. Did you feel loved and protected as you were growing up?
 - g. What were some of your problems as a child?
 - i. How did that affect you?
 - h. Do you think your life would have been the same or different if you were a boy/girl?
 - i. *Probe:* In what way? Tell me more.
7. Now let's talk about from 5 years until 10 years old
 - a. What is your saddest memory from this time?
 - i. *Probe:* tell me more, help me understand
 - b. What is your happiest memory from this time?
 - i. *Probe:* tell me more, help me understand?
8. Did you attend school?
 - a. If yes:
 - i. How old were you when you first entered school?
 - ii. What is your first memory of going to school?
 - iii. What was it actually like?

- iv. What are your best memories of school?
 - v. What are your worst memories of school?
 - vi. Are boys and girls treated differently at school? How so?
 - c. If no:
 - i. How did this make you feel?
 - ii. How did you spend your time?
9. If participant has not started bodily changes:
- a. You likely have noticed changes in the bodies or behaviors of older sisters, brothers, or friends or perhaps you yourself have started to experience some changes.
 - i. What have your older friends or siblings said about those changes?
 - ii. How do you feel about those changes, especially when you think about yourself changing in the same way?
 - iii. What are your expectations about these changes?
 - iv. What are your concerns or fears about these changes?
 - b. Have you talked with anyone about this?
 - i. Who have you spoken to?
 - ii. What have they said to you?
 - c. Do you feel prepared?
 - i. In what way?
 - ii. *Probe: tell me more, help me understand*
10. If participant has started bodily changes:
- d. How old were you when your body started to change from a girl/boy to a woman/man?
 - e. How did you feel when you started noticing these changes?
 - i. *Probe: Tell me more. Help me understand why you felt that way.*
 - f. So that's how you felt when you first started noticing changes. What did you say to friends or family when you noticed these changes?
 - i. What did you talk about?
- FOR GIRLS:**
- g. Other girls have mentioned that they worried about pregnancy, how to handle their periods, or how people responded to them differently.
 - i. Did you ever worry about these things?

- ii. Why or why not?
- iii. Is there anything else that you worried about? *Probe, again if needed, asking about dating, looks from older men, fear of going alone at night etc.*

FOR BOYS:

- h. Other boys have mentioned that they worry about their changing voice or being teased because of how they look or act.
 - i. Did you ever worry about those things?
 - ii. Is there anything else that you worried about?
11. Help me make a list of things girls/boys talk or worry about when their body starts to change.
- iii. So far, you mentioned ... *(Repeat what they said earlier)*
 - iv. What's missing from this list? *(Read list aloud. Don't assume they can read.)*
12. Ok, Let's finish by looking at the past 5 years:
- a. What has been your saddest memory in the past 5 years?
 - i. *Probe:* tell me more, help me understand
 - b. What has been your happiest memory in the past five years?
 - i. *Probe:* tell me more, help me understand
13. What does your family expect from you now (at this stage in your life)?
- a. Are the expectations the same for your brothers/sisters?
 - i. In what way?
 - b. What happens if you do not follow these expectations?
 - c. What does your family expect from you in the future?
 - i. How does this make you feel?
14. Who makes decisions about your life? For example, about going to school, doing chores, having food?
- i. How do you feel about that?
15. Are there any other important events, that you feel have shaped your life and made you who you are today that we should add to the story?

That is the end of our time today. I want to thank you again so much for sharing your story with me. I really believe that your story will help other boys and girls living in northern Uganda. Do you have any questions or concerns that you would like to discuss? Thank you so much. I look forward to our next conversation on (date/time).

SECOND INTERVIEW- 90 MINUTES

WELCOME (5 minutes)

(Name) it is good to see you again. I have thought a lot about your story and I want to get it right because it is such an interesting one. Before we begin today's session, I would like us to review the timeline that you created last week. *[Read the events out loud, do not assume that they can read easily]* Does it sound correct? What needs to change? What should be erased? Added? Ok. If there is nothing else, let us move on to the next exercise.

IDEAL MEN/WOMEN (30 minutes)

Purpose:

- To understand gender norms and attitudes and the degree to which young people reflect upon these critically and feel empowered to transform them.
- To understand what would motivate young people to change (or not change) these attitudes

Materials:

- Plastic animals

Process:

Introduce the exercise:

Today, I would like to learn a little more about the men and women in this area and how you think they should behave. In order to do this we are going to play a game. As you can see, I have a lot of plastic animals on the table. I am going to ask you to pick an animal that has the characteristics of an ideal man and woman in this area. By this I mean that I would like you to pick an animal that behaves the way you think all men or all women should behave. For example, if I were to pick an animal that represents the way I'd like my little brother to behave, I would pick a dog because dogs are very obedient, respectful, and they listen well and this is how I think my brother should be as well. Do you understand how this game works? Ok. Remember- there are no right or wrong answers. This is just a game to make it more fun to talk about the topic. Let's give it a try.

1. Can you think of two people that you consider to be an ideal man and an ideal woman?
 - a. What about that man makes him an ideal man?
 - b. What about that woman makes her an ideal woman?

2. Now, I would like you to pick two animals: one that represents the characteristics of an ideal man and one that represents the characteristics of an ideal woman.
 - a. In what way does the animal you chose represent the ideal man?
 - b. In what way does the animal you chose represent the ideal woman?

3. Can you describe someone you know who is not an ideal man? (I don't want you to tell me his name, I just want you to tell me how he acts.)
 - a. Why do you think he is not an ideal man?
 - b. What made him become this way? Why do you think he acts like this?
 - c. How do people in this area feel about him?
 - d. How do you know that people feel that way about this man?

4. Can you describe someone you know who is not an ideal woman?
 - a. Why do you think she is not an ideal woman?
 - b. What made her become this way? Why do you think she acts this way?
 - c. How do people in this area feel about her?
 - d. How do you know that people feel that way about this woman?

5. What are the different ways that boys learn to become ideal men?

6. What are the different ways that girls learn to become ideal women?

7. What is an ideal boy like?
 - a. How is he different from an ideal man?

8. What is an ideal girl like?
 - a. How is she different from an ideal woman?

CONTINUUM OF ACCEPTABLE/UNACCEPTABLE (30 minutes)

Purpose:

- To understand how young people perceive various acts of violence

Materials:

- Flip chart paper
- Markers
- Post-it notes

Process:

Introduce the exercise: Now I would like to understand more about the different forms of violence that happen in this area and what you think about them.

1. Lay out a long roll of paper with “Acceptable/ok” written at one end and “Unacceptable/not ok” at the other end.
2. What are the different types of violence that happen in this area?” (*Write each example on a separate post-it note*).
 - a. *Probe about different types of violence that can take place inside the home, for example: violence between parents/guardians and children, between husband and wife, between siblings?*
 - b. *Probe about violence that takes place outside the home, for example: between friends, between teacher and student, between strangers, etc.*
 - c. *Be sure to probe about emotional (yelling, insulting, belittling etc.) and physical (slapping, beating, kicking etc.) forms of violence.*
3. After each situation or example has been put on a post-it note ask: where does this action fit on the acceptable/unacceptable line?
 - a. *Probe: Why is one action more acceptable than another action?*
4. Would any of these actions be more acceptable if it was a boy or a girl experiencing it?
 - a. *Ask this question for 2-3 of the actions they mention, for example: would it be more or less acceptable for a husband to beat his wife than for a wife to beat her husband? Why or why not?*
5. Would any of these actions be more acceptable if the person experiencing the violence was older/younger?
 - a. *Probe about 2-3 of the forms of violence mentioned.*
6. *Ask about items toward the unacceptable side of the continuum:*
 - a. *Are there ever any circumstances when any of these actions are acceptable, even good?*
 - b. *Which ones? How so? Tell me more.*
7. Have any of these actions ever happened to someone you know, even you?
 - a. *What happened?*

- b. How did you feel about it?

BREAK (10 minutes)

Let's take a small break now.

DOORS TO MY FUTURE (20 minutes)

Purpose:

- To understand the hopes and dreams of participants

Materials:

- Photographs of different types of doors

Process:

We are almost done with our interview. Before we finish, I would like for you to tell me about your hopes for the future.

OPTION 1: USING PHOTOS OF DOORS

Here are some very special doors. They're "hope" doors. Behind these doors lie the hopes of all people.

1. Pick a door that represents the hopes you have for yourself. Let's see your door.
Thanks. Now I want you open that door and walk through it. What do you see?
2. Imagine that it is 10 years from now, and you are xxx years old. You walk through the door and look around you.
 - a. How do you feel?
 - b. What hopes lie behind the door?
3. Of all the hopes you have, what is the biggest or most important hope that you have for yourself?
 - a. *Probe:* tell me more, why is this so important to you?
 - b. Do you think that this hope will come true? Or do you think that it will not come true?
 - i. What makes you think so?
4. What is the biggest hope that you have for your community?

- a. Do you think that this hope will come true? Or do you think that it will not come true?
 - i. What makes you think so?
- b. What hope do you have for how boys/men and girls/women should relate to one another?

OPTION 2: WITHOUT USING PHOTOS OF DOORS

1. Tell me about your hopes for the future.
 - a. How would you like your life to be like in 10 years?
2. Of all the hopes you have, what is the biggest or most important hope that you have for yourself?
 - a. *Probe:* tell me more, why is this so important to you?
 - b. Do you think that this hope will come true? Or do you think that it will not come true?
 - i. What makes you think so?
3. What is the biggest hope that you have for your community?
 - a. Do you think that this hope will come true? Or do you think that it will not come true?
 - i. What makes you think so?
 - b. What hope do you have for how boy/men and girls/women should relate to one another?

CLOSING (5 minutes)

1. Thank you so much for telling me your story. I have really learned a lot from talking with you.
2. Is there anything that we've left out of your story?
3. How do you feel about our conversations and everything we have talked about?
4. Do you have any questions that you would like to ask me?
5. Now I am going to take some time to write up everything you told me in a story. Once I have it finished, I'll get in touch with you so that we can go over it together. At that point, I can make any changes you like, and then I will give you a copy to keep if you want it.
6. Also, we are interested in speaking with people who play an important role in the lives of young people in this area and who have a lot of influence over young people. These could be other young people, parents, community leaders, teachers etc. This can also include some of the people we discussed as being important in your life such as...

7. If there is anyone that you think we should speak with please give them this letter of invitation. It has information on how they can reach us and meet with us.

Thank you again.

LIFE HISTORY DISCUSSION GUIDE-
FOR USE WITH OLDER ADOLESCENTS (AGES 15-19)

FIRST INTERVIEW (90 MINUTES)

INTRODUCTION (5 minutes)

Welcome. Thank you for agreeing to talk with me to today. I hope our time together will be as meaningful to you as it will be helpful to me. As we discussed during recruitment, we are planning to hold two interviews with you and each one will be about 90 minutes. Before we begin, it is very important to make sure that you can do a second interview within the next two weeks. Will you be able to meet again? If so, what might be a good time? *(Write down the date and time that you have agreed to meet with the participant)*

During these interviews, we are going to do a lot of fun things such as drawing and playing different types of games. From our time together, I hope to learn more about you and other young people in this area so that we can begin to identify ways of helping young people grow up in a healthy way. Imagine that you are a teacher and I am your student. The answers that you provide to my questions will help me to learn from you. There are no right or wrong answers to any of these questions, so you should feel free to just tell me what is on your mind. If you want, we can take a break at any time. If there are any topics that you don't want to speak about you can just let me know and we will move on to a different one. I really appreciate that you are willing to spend this time with me to share your thoughts and experiences. Do you have any questions or concerns before we begin? Are you ready to begin?

MAP OF COMMUNITY (25 min)

Purpose:

- To understand in a physical space context, how adolescents live their daily lives, their safety concerns and safe and non-safe spaces, as well as girls-only/boys-only spaces.

Materials:

- Flip chart paper
- Markers
- Colored pencils

Process:

Introduce the exercise:

I would like to start by learning more about this area that you are living in and how young people here spend their time. Now, let's imagine that we are birds flying through the sky and we look down when flying over this area. I would like for you to draw a picture of all the things we would see. The picture doesn't have to be a good drawing so do not worry. This is just to help me understand and learn about this area since I am new here. *[Note: As participant answers the questions and identifies different locations, ask them to draw it on the map]*

1. Let us start with... *[Use appropriate nearby landmark such as main road, youth center, health center etc.]*
 - a. Where would you put this on our map?

2. Can you show me the place where you live?
 - d. How long have you lived in this area?
 - e. Where did you live before coming here?

3. Now, I'd like for you to tell me about how you spend your time. During the week where are the different places that you go to?
 - a. *[If not mentioned, probe for where they go to school, where they fetch water, where they go to garden etc.]*

4. What about on the weekend? Where are the places that you spend your time?
 - a. *[If not mentioned, probe about time they spend at: the church or mosque, youth center etc.]*

5. Where are the places that you like to go to have fun?
 - a. Why are these places fun?
 - b. How would this be different if you were a boy/girl?

6. What clubs/groups/organizations do you belong to?
 - a. *[If participant is part of a group]:* What do you like about this group/club/organization?
 - b. *[If participant is not part of a group]:* Why don't you belong to any clubs/groups/organizations?

7. Where do you spend time with your friends?
 - a. What types of things do you like to do together?

8. Where do you go to get health information or services?
 - a. What type of information and services do you get from there?
9. Where do you go if you want to be alone?
 - a. When are the times that you like going to this place?
 - b. How do you feel when you are there?
10. Looking at your map, can you show me the places where mostly men spend their time?
 - a. Can you show me the places where mostly women spend their time?
 - b. What about boys and girls? Are there places where only boys go?
 - c. Are there places where only girls go?
 - d. Why do you think that is?
11. Are there places that boys and girls go when they want to be alone together (*e.g. hidden places*)?
 - a. Where are these places?
 - b. What types of things do boys and girls do in these places?
12. Now, I would like for you to show me on the map the places in this area that you like the best. [*Have the participant use a ☺ to indicate the places on the map that they like*]
 - a. Why do you like these places?
13. Can you show me the places that you do not like? [*Have the participant use a ☹ to indicate the places on the map that they do not like*]
 - a. Why don't you like these places?
14. How safe do you feel in this area?
 - a. Why or why not?
 - b. Can you show me the places on the map that you feel are unsafe? [*Mark these with a red dot*]
 - c. Why do these places make you feel unsafe?
 - d. Do you think this would be the same if you were a boy/girl?
15. What would you like to change about this area that you are living in?
 - a. Why or why not?

SPIDER-MAPPING (25 minutes)

Purpose:

- To understand young people's social networks and identify which members influence attitudes, opportunities, and behaviors

Materials:

- One large piece of flip chart paper
- Markers
- Three different colored post-it notes
- Post-it notes with different type of media written on each paper: mobile phone, television, radio, newspaper, Internet (you can also use images/pictures of the

Process:

Introduce the exercise:

Thank you for drawing the map and helping me to learn more about this area and the places you spend your time. Now I would like to learn more about the people that are in your life.

1. Can you help me make a list of the people that have had a positive and negative influence on your life? We do not have to use their real names. These people can be part of your family or they can be outside your family. For example, they can be people you ask advice from, who take care of you, who teach you, who are close friends, who you look up to, or people who have hurt you, have been bad role models, or have shown you the wrong way *[Allow participant to write the names and relationships of each person on a separate post-it note (use different color paper for positive and negative influences). If they do not feel comfortable writing, then you can write it down for them]*
2. *[Draw a circle in the middle of flip chart]* This circle represents you.
 - a. I would like you to pick the people you think have influenced you the most (both positively and negatively) and place them on the paper closest to the circle that represents you.
 - b. Those that have influenced you less – put further away. *[Allow the person time to place all the people on the paper.]*
3. Can you tell me about each person on this paper? *(Point to each post-it in their spider map. If there are very many, ask about 5-6).*
 - a. How has s/he influence your life?
4. Who do you trust to talk to when something worries you?
 - a. For example, if you are worried about your body and your health?

- i. What type of problems do you talk to them about?
 - b. What if you are having problems with your friends, who would you talk to?
 - c. Why do you trust these people?
5. If you want to talk to someone about things such as liking someone romantically or falling in love, who would you talk to?
 - a. Why do you talk to these people rather than [*Probe: father, mother, grandmother, teacher, peers*])?
 - b. What type of things do you talk about?
6. Out of all the people on this paper, who has shaped and influenced your life the most, either positively or negatively? [*Circle the name they mention*]
 - a. Why? In what way?
7. Who are the heroes and heroines in your life? [*Put a star near the names of the people mentioned.*]
 - a. Why?
 - b. What do you admire about him/her?
8. [*Hand participant the post-it notes (different color than the ones used before) with the different types of media written or drawn on them*] I have these papers that have different types of media: mobile phone, radio, television, newspaper, and Internet on them.
 - a. I would like you to place the forms of media that have influenced you most close to you and the ones that have influenced you less, further way.
 - b. [*probe for the ones that are posted closest*] In what way does this form of media influence your thinking or behavior?
 - c. Do you think that this is a good influence or a bad influence?

BREAK- 10 minutes

Let's take a small break now. [*Offer the participant a snack*]

TIMELINE (30 minutes)

Purpose:

- To understand which life events are perceived as significant by participants and how they are experienced

Materials:

- Two large pieces of flip chart paper
- Tape
- Markers

Process:*Introduce the exercise:*

Thank you for telling me about the important people in your life. Now I would to know more about some of the life experiences that you have had. Have you ever read a book/saw a movie that told a story about someone? I think you have had an interesting life also. I would like for us to put together a story of your life. I have a long sheet of paper with a line down the middle and some markers and crayons (*Lay out 4-5 foot strip of paper*) and together I want us to draw a timeline of your life.

1. First, on one end, we will put a mark to represent the day that you were born. If you don't remember the exact date, don't worry we can just guess based on your age. On the other end, we are going to mark TODAY on the timeline. All of this space in between shows all of the days and years between the time you were born and today.
2. We are going to write events in your life that you think are important to include in your life story. They can be either positive or negative. If it was a happy time, we will write them above the striped line. If it was a sad or difficult time, we will write them below the stripe. Once we have finish making your time line today, we'll look at it again next time we meet and you can add to it.
3. Ok. Let's start with the first five years of your life. [*as memories or experiences are shared, place them on the time line*]
 - a. What is your earliest memory?
 - b. What other memories do you have from that time of your life?
 - c. Who took care of you when you were younger?
 - d. Did you feel loved and protected as you were growing up?
 - e. What were some of your problems as a child?

- i. How did that affect you?
 - f. Do you think your life would have been the same or different if you were a boy/girl?
 - i. *Probe:* In what way? Tell me more.
- 4. Now let's talk about from 5 years until 10 years old
 - a. What is your saddest memory from this time?
 - i. *Probe:* tell me more, help me understand
 - b. What is your happiest memory from this time?
 - i. *Probe:* tell me more, help me understand?
- 5. Did you attend school?
 - a. If yes:
 - i. How old were you when you first entered school?
 - ii. What are your best memories of school?
 - iii. What are your worst memories of school?
 - iv. Are boys and girls treated differently at school? How so?
 - f. If no:
 - i. How did this make you feel?
 - ii. How did you spend your time?
- 10. How old were you when your body started to changing from a girl/boy to a woman/man?
 - a. How did you feel when you started noticing these changes?
 - i. *Probe:* Tell me more. Help me understand why you felt that way.
 - b. So that's how you felt when you first started noticing changes. What did you say to friends or family when you noticed these changes?
 - i. What did you talk about?

FOR GIRLS:

- c. Other girls have mentioned that they worried about pregnancy, how to handle their periods, or how people responded to them differently.
 - i. Did you ever worry about these things?
 - ii. Why or why not?
 - iii. Is there anything else that you worried about? *Probe, again if needed, asking about dating, looks from older men, fear of going alone at night etc.*

FOR BOYS:

- d. Other boys have mentioned that they worry about their changing voice or being teased because of how they look or act.
 - i. Did you ever worry about those things?
 - ii. Is there anything else that you worried about?
11. Help me make a list of things girls/boys talk or worry about when their body starts to change.
- a. So far, you mentioned ... *(Repeat what they said earlier)*
 - b. What's missing from this list? *(Read list aloud. Don't assume they can read.)*
16. Ok, what about between 10-15 years of age?
- a. What has been your saddest memory during that time?
 - i. *Probe:* tell me more, help me understand
 - b. What has been your happiest memory during that time?
 - i. *Probe:* tell me more, help me understand
17. How old were you when you like someone in romantic way?
- a. How did you show it?
 - b. How would a boy/girl show it?
 - c. Do you remember the first time you spent time together?
 - i. What were your expectations and concerns about spending time with someone you like romantically?
 - ii. What was it like in reality?
18. Do you have a boyfriend/girlfriend or someone that you really like?
- a. What does it mean having a boyfriend/girlfriend?
 - b. Does the boy expect something?
 - c. Does the girl expect something?
 - d. How did you get together?
 - i. Tell me about it
 - e. Who was the first person you told?
 - i. Is there anyone who you don't want to know?
19. Let's finish by talking about the last 5 years:
- a. What has been your saddest memory during this time?
 - i. *Probe:* tell me more, help me understand

- b. What has been your happiest memory during this time?
 - i. *Probe:* tell me more, help me understand

- 20. What does your family expect from you now (at this stage in your life)?
 - d. Are the expectations the same for your brothers/sisters?
 - i. In what way?
 - e. What happens if you do not follow these expectations?
 - f. What does your family expect from you in the future?
 - i. How does this make you feel?

- 21. Who makes decisions about your life? For example, about going to school, doing chores, having food?
 - a. How do you feel about that?

- 22. Are there any other important events, that you feel have shaped your life and made you who you are today that we should add to the story?

CLOSING – 5 minutes

That is the end of our time today. I want to thank you again so much for sharing your story with me. I really believe that your story will help other boys and girls living in northern Uganda. Do you have any questions or concerns that you would like to discuss? Thank you so much. I look forward to our next conversation on (date/time).

SECOND INTERVIEW- 90 MINUTES

WELCOME (5 minutes)

(Name) it is good to see you again. I have thought a lot about your story and I want to get it right. Before we begin today's session, I would like us to review the timeline that you created last week. *[Read the events out loud, do not assume that they can read easily. Ask probing questions, if anything needs more explanation (e.g. what did this event mean to you?)]* Does it sound correct? What needs to change? What should be erased? Added? Ok. If there is nothing else, let us move on the next exercise.

IDEAL MEN/WOMEN (30 minutes)

Purpose:

- To understand gender norms and attitudes and the degree to which young people reflect upon these critically and feel empowered to transform them.
- To understand what would motivate young people to change (or not change) these attitudes

Materials:

- Plastic animals

Process:*Introduce the exercise:*

Today, I would like to learn a little more about the men and women in this area and how you think they should behave. In order to do this we are going to play a game. As you can see, I have a lot of plastic animals on the table. I am going to ask you to pick an animal that has the characteristics of an ideal man and woman in this area. By this I mean that I would like you to pick an animal that behaves the way you think all men or all women should behave. For example, if I were to pick an animal that represents the way I'd like my little brother to behave, I would pick a dog because dogs are very obedient, respectful, and they listen well and this is how I think my brother should be as well. Do you understand how this game works? Remember there are no right or wrong answers, just say whatever comes to mind. Ok. Let's give it a try.

1. Can you think of two people that you consider to be an ideal man and an ideal woman?
 - a. What about that man makes him an ideal man?
 - b. What about that woman makes her an ideal woman?
2. Now, I would like you to pick two animals: one that represents the characteristics of an ideal man and one that represents the characteristics of an ideal woman.
 - a. In what way does the animal you chose represent the ideal man?
 - b. In what way does the animal you chose represent the ideal woman?
3. Can you describe someone you know who is not an ideal man?

- a. Why do you think he is not an ideal man?
 - b. What made him become this way?
 - c. How do people in this area feel about him?
 - d. How do you know that people feel that way about this man?
4. Can you describe someone you know who is not an ideal woman?
 - a. Why do you think she is not an ideal woman?
 - b. What made her become this way?
 - c. How do people in this area feel about her?
 - d. How do you know that people feel that way about this woman?
 5. What are the different ways that boys learn to become ideal men?
 6. What are the different ways that girls learn to become ideal women?
 7. What is an ideal boy like?
 - a. How is he different from an ideal man?
 8. What is an ideal girl like?
 - a. How is she different from an ideal woman?
 9. Ask the respondent to select one last animal that represents their ideal mate, the perfect person to marry. Assure them this isn't representative of WHO they married but rather what they view as the perfect partner.
 - a. How is that animal like the perfect mate?

CONTINUUM OF ACCEPTABLE/UNACCEPTABLE (30 minutes)

Purpose:

- To understand how young people perceive various acts of violence

Materials:

- Flip chart paper
- Markers
- Post-it notes

Process:

Introduce the exercise: Now I would like to understand more about the different forms of violence that happen in this area and what you think about them.

1. Lay out a long roll of paper with “Acceptable/ok” written at one end and “Unacceptable/not ok” at the other end.
2. What are the different types of violence that happen in this area?” (*Write each example on a separate post-it note*).
 - a. *Probe about different types of violence that can take place inside the home, for example: violence between parents/guardians and children, between husband and wife, between siblings?*
 - b. *Probe about violence that takes place outside the home, for example: between friends, between teacher and student, between strangers, etc.*
 - c. *Be sure to probe about emotional (yelling, insulting, belittling etc.), physical (slapping, beating, kicking etc.) and sexual (coercive sex, rape, molestation) forms of violence*
3. After each situation or example has been put on a post-it note ask: where does this action fit on the acceptable/unacceptable line?
 - a. *Probe: Why is one action more acceptable than another action?*
4. Would any of these actions be more acceptable if it was a boy or a girl experiencing it?
 - a. *Probe about 2-3, for example: would it be more or less acceptable for a husband to beat his wife than for a wife to beat her husband? Why or why not?*
5. Would any of these actions more acceptable if the person experiencing the violence was older/younger?
 - a. *Probe about 2-3 of the forms of violence mentioned.*
6. *Ask about items toward the unacceptable side of the continuum:*
 - a. Are there ever any circumstances when any of these actions are acceptable, even good?
 - b. Which ones? How so? Tell me more.
7. Have any of these actions ever happened to someone you know, even you?
 - a. What happened?
 - b. How did you feel about it?
8. What type of support is available to boys/men who experience violence?
 - a. What about for girls/women?

b. *(Probe about resources that are available for physical, emotional, and sexual violence)*

9. What form of violence are you most concerned about in this area?

- a. Who does this happen to?
- b. Why does it happen?
- c. Where does this happen?
- d. How often or frequently are these incidences?
- e. Who carries it out?
- f. How do people in area view the victims? Perpetrators? The act?
- g. What does the community do about it?

10. What more do you think should be done to address violence in this area?

- a. *(Probe about what various actors such as institutions, government, and the community can do)*

BREAK (10 minutes)

Let's take a small break now.

DOORS TO MY FUTURE (20 minutes)

Purpose:

- To understand the hopes and dreams of participants

Materials:

- Photographs of different types of doors

Process:

We are almost done with our interview. Before we finish, I would like for you to tell me about your hopes for the future.

OPTION 1: USING PHOTOS OF DOORS

1. Here are some very special doors. They're "hopes" doors. Behind these doors lie the hopes of all people.

2. Pick a door that represents the hopes you have for yourself. Let's see your door.
Thanks. Now open the door and walk through that door.
3. Imagine that it is 10 years later and you are x years old. What hopes lie behind the door?
4. What are those hopes that are invisible or cannot be seen and touched?
5. Of all the hopes you have, what is the biggest or most important hope that you have for yourself?
 - a. *Probe*: tell me more, why is this so important to you?
 - b. Do you think that this hope will come true? Or do you think that it will not come true?
 - i. What makes you think so?
6. What is the biggest hope that you have for your family?
 - a. *Probe*: tell me more, why is this so important to you?
 - b. Do you think that this hope will come true? Or do you think that it will not come true?
 - i. What makes you think so?
7. What is the biggest hope that you have for this area you are living in?
 - c. Do you think that this hope will come true? Or do you think that it will not come true?
 - ii. What makes you think so?
 - d. What hope do you have for how boys/men and girls/women should relate to one another?

OPTION 2: WITHOUT USING PHOTOS OF DOORS

1. Tell me about your hopes for the future.
 - a. How would you like your life to be like in 10 years?
 - b. What are those hopes that are invisible or cannot be seen and touched?
2. Of all the hopes you have, what is the biggest or most important hope that you have for yourself?
 - a. *Probe*: tell me more, why is this so important to you?
 - b. Do you think that this hope will come true? Or do you think that it will not come true?
 - i. What makes you think so?
3. What is the biggest hope that you have for your family?
 - a. *Probe*: tell me more, help me understand, why is this so important to you?
 - b. Do you think that this hope will come true? Or do you think that it will not come true?
 - i. What makes you think so?
4. What is the biggest hope that you have for this area you are living in?

- b. Do you think that this hope will come true? Or do you think that it will not come true?
 - i. What makes you think so?
- b. What hope do you have for how boy/men and girls/women should relate to one another?

CLOSING (5 minutes)

1. Thank you so much for telling me your story. I have really learned a lot from talking with you.
2. Is there anything that we've left out of your story?
3. How do you feel about our conversations and everything we have talked about?
4. Do you have any questions that you would like to ask me?
5. Now I am going to take some time to write up everything you told me in a story. Once I have it finished, I'll get in touch with you so that we can go over it together. At that point, I can make any changes you like, and then I will give you a copy to keep if you want it.
6. Also, we are interested in speaking with people who play an important role in the lives of young people in this area and who have a lot of influence over young people. These could be other young people, parents, community leaders, teachers etc. This can also include some of the people we discussed as being important in your life such as...
7. If there is anyone that you think we should speak with please give them this letter of invitation. It has information on how they can reach us and meet with us.

Thank you again.

LIFE HISTORY DISCUSSION GUIDE-
FOR USE WITH NEWLY MARRIED ADOLESCENTS (AGES 15-19)

FIRST INTERVIEW (90 MINUTES)

INTRODUCTION (5 minutes)

Welcome. Thank you for agreeing to talk with me to today. I hope our time together will be as meaningful to you as it will be helpful to me. As we discussed during recruitment, we are planning to hold two interviews with you and each one will be about 90 minutes. Before we begin, it is very important to make sure that you can do a second interview within the next two weeks. Will you be able to meet again? If so, what might be a good time? *(Write down the date and time that you have agreed to meet with the participant)*

During these interviews, we are going to do a lot of fun things such as drawing and playing different types of games. From our time together, I hope to learn more about you and other young people in this area so that we can begin to identify ways of helping young people grow up in a healthy way. Imagine that you are a teacher and I am your student. The answers that you provide to my questions will help me to learn from you. There are no right or wrong answers to any of these questions, so you should feel free to just tell me what is on your mind. If you want, we can take a break at any time. If there are any topics that you don't want to speak about you can just let me know and we will move on to a different one. I really appreciate that you are willing to spend this time with me to share your thoughts and experiences. Do you have any questions or concerns before we begin? Are you ready to begin?

MAP OF COMMUNITY (25 min)

Purpose:

- To understand in a physical space context, how adolescents live their daily lives, their safety concerns and safe and non-safe spaces, as well as girls-only/boys-only spaces.

Materials:

- Flip chart paper
- Markers
- Colored pencils

Process:

Introduce the exercise:

I would like to start by learning more about this area that you are living in and how young people here spend their time. Now, let's imagine that we are birds flying through the sky and we look down when flying over this area. I would like for you to draw a picture of all the things we would see. The picture doesn't have to be perfect so do not worry. This is just to help me understand and learn about this area since I am new here. *[Note: As participant answers the questions and identifies different locations, ask them to draw it on the map]*

1. Let us start with... *[Use appropriate nearby landmark such as main road, youth center, health center etc.]*
 - a. Where would you put this on our map?

2. Can you show me the place where you live?
 - g. How long have you lived in this area?
 - h. Where did you live before coming here?

3. Now, I'd like for you to tell me about how you spend your time. During the week where are the different places that you go to?
 - a. *[If not mentioned, probe for where they go to school, where they fetch water, where they go to garden etc.]*

4. What about on the weekend? Where are the places that you spend your time?
 - a. *[If not mentioned, probe about time they spend at: the church or mosque, youth center etc.]*

5. Where are the places that you like to go to have fun?
 - a. How would this be different if you were a boy/girl?

6. What clubs/groups/organizations do you belong to?
 - a. *[If participant is part of a group]:* What do you like about this group/club/organization?
 - b. *[If participant is not part of a group]:* Why don't you belong to any clubs/groups/organizations?

7. Where do you spend time with your friends?
 - a. What types of things do you like to do together?

8. Where do you go to get health information or services?
 - a. What type of information and services do you get from there?

9. Now, I would like for you to show me on the map the places in this area that you like the best. [*Have the participant use a ☺ to indicate the places on the map that they like*]
 - a. Why do you like these places?

10. Can you show me the places that you do not like? [*Have the participant use a ☹ to indicate the places on the map that they do not like*]
 - a. Why don't you like these places?

11. How safe do you feel in this area?
 - a. Why or why not?
 - b. Can you show me the places on the map that you feel are unsafe? [*Mark these with a red dot*]
 - c. Why do these places make you feel unsafe?
 - d. Do you think this would be the same if you were a boy/girl?

12. What would you like to change about this area that you are living in?
 - a. Why or why not?

SPIDER-MAPPING (25 minutes)

Purpose:

- To understand young people's social networks and identify which members influence attitudes, opportunities, and behaviors

Materials:

- One large piece of flip chart paper
- Markers
- Three different colored post-it notes
- Post-it notes with different type of media written on each paper: mobile phone, television, radio, newspaper, Internet (you can also use images/pictures of the different forms of media)

Process:

Introduce the exercise:

Thank you for drawing the map and helping me to learn more about this area and the places you spend your time. Now I would like to learn more about the people that are in your life.

1. Can you help me make a list of the people that have had a positive and negative influence on your life? We do not have to use their real names. These people can be part of your family or they can be outside your family. For example, they can be people

you ask advice from, who take care of you, who teach you, who are close friends, who you look up to, or people who have hurt you, have been bad role models, or have shown you the wrong way [Allow participant to write the names and relationships of each person on a separate post-it note (use different color paper for positive and negative influences). If they do not feel comfortable writing, then you can write it down for them]

2. [Draw a circle in the middle of flip chart] This circle represents you.
 - a. I would like you to pick the people you think have influenced you the most (both positively and negatively) and place them on the paper closest to the circle that represents you.
 - b. Those that have influenced you less – put further away. [Allow the person time to place all the people on the paper.]
3. Can you tell me about each person on this paper? (Point to each post-it in their spider map).
 - a. How has s/he influence your life?
4. Who do you trust to talk to when something worries you?
 - a. For example, if you are worried about your body and your health?
 - i. What type of problems do you talk to them about?
 - b. What if you are having problems with your friends, who would you talk to?
 - c. Why do you trust these people?
5. Out of all the people on this paper, who has shaped and influenced your life the most, either positively or negatively?
 - a. In what way?
6. [Hand participant the post-it notes (different color than the ones used before) with the different types of media written or drawn on them] I have these papers that have different types of media: mobile phone, radio, television, newspaper, and Internet on them.
 - a. I would like you to place the forms of media that have influenced you most close to you and the ones that have influenced you less, further way.
 - b. [probe for the ones that are posted closest] In what way does this form of media influence your thinking or behavior?
 - c. Do you think that this is a good influence or a bad influence?

BREAK- 10 minutes

Let's take a small break now. *[Offer the participant a snack]*

TIMELINE (30 minutes)

Purpose:

- To understand which life events are perceived as significant by participants and how they are experienced

Materials:

- Two large pieces of flip chart paper
- Tape
- Markers

Process:

Introduce the exercise:

Thank you for telling me about the important people in your life. Now I would like to know more about some of the life experiences that you have had. I would like for us to put together your life story. I have a long sheet of paper with a line down the middle and some markers and crayons (*Lay out 4-5 foot strip of paper*) and together I want us to draw a timeline of your life.

1. First, on one end, we will put a mark to represent the day that you were born. If you don't remember the exact date, don't worry we can just guess based on your age. On the other end, we are going to mark TODAY on the timeline. All of this space in between shows all of the days and years between the time you were born and today.
2. We are going to write events in your life that you think are important to include in your life story. They can be either positive or negative. If it was a happy time, we will write them above the striped line. If it was a sad time, we will write them below the stripe. Once we have finished making your time line today, we'll look at it again next time we meet and you can add to it.
3. Ok. Let's start with the first five years of your life. *[as memories or experiences are shared, place them on the time line]*
 - a. What is your earliest memory?
 - b. What other memories do you have from that time of your life?
 - c. What were some of your problems as a child?
 - i. How did that affect you?
4. Now let's talk about from 5 years until 10 years old
 - a. What is your saddest memory from this time?

- i. *Probe:* tell me more, help me understand
 - b. What is your happiest memory from this time?
 - i. *Probe:* tell me more, help me understand?
- 5. How old were you when your body started to change from a girl/boy to a woman/man?
 - c. How did you feel when you started noticing these changes?
 - i. *Probe:* Tell me more. Help me understand why you felt that way.
 - d. So that's how you felt when you first started noticing changes. What did you say to friends or family when you noticed these changes?
 - i. What did you talk about?
- 6. Ok, what about between 10-15 years of age?
 - a. What has been your saddest memory during that time?
 - i. *Probe:* tell me more, help me understand
 - b. What has been your happiest memory during that time?
 - i. *Probe:* tell me more, help me understand
- 7. About what age were you when you first fell in love?
 - a. Did you consider your first love to be a future partner or was it more sexual, with no formal commitments in your mind at all? (*Probes: Tell me more. Help me understand.*)
 - b. What's something about that first love experience that you will never forget?
- 8. Now, I'd like you to tell me about your current spouse/partner:
 - a. How old is he or she?
 - b. What does he or she do (student, worker, etc.)?
 - c. Where does he or she live?
- 9. When and how did you meet your spouse?
 - a. How did this relationship start?
 - b. What were the main stages of your relationship with your spouse? *Probe for courtship, gifts, spending time together, telling friends about the relationship, meeting one's family, developing physical intimacy, getting married?*
- 10. When did you get married?
 - a. How old were you when you got married?
 - b. How old was your partner?

11. Thinking back to the beginning of your relationship, did you ever exchange benefits such as clothes, money, school fees, etc. with this person in the context of your relationship?
 - a. Can you tell me more about that? How did it work? What was exchanged?
 - b. How did it affect the relationship?

12. Who generally has more influence on making decisions in your household? You or your partner?
 - a. Tell me more about this (Probe about different types of decisions such as how money is spent, whether or not to have children etc.)

13. Have you ever talked to your husband/wife about how many children to have or when to get pregnant?
 - a. Can you tell me more about your discussion? How did the topic come up?

14. Let's talk a little about what you and your spouse do to plan your family. How many children would you like to have?
 - a. Why is having that many children important to you?
 - b. Would you like to have boys or girls? Why?
 - c. How and why have your goals regarding children changed over time?

15. Some people take measures to keep themselves from getting pregnant, while other people do not. How about you and your spouse – what do you do?
 - a. Do you or your spouse use anything (pills, injections, herbs, withdrawal, condoms, etc.) to keep from getting pregnant?
 - i. Why or why not?
 - b. Did you discuss using this method with your spouse?
 - i. Why or why not?
 - ii. What was his/her reaction?
 - c. *[If no family planning is used:]* What are the main reasons you/your partner do/did not currently use a method to delay or avoid a pregnancy?
 - d. Have you had any disagreements with your husband/wife about these topics?
 - i. How did you feel about these disagreements?
 - ii. Have you had any disagreements about this topic with your family? Tell me more.

16. How would you feel if you found out you/your wife were pregnant today?
 - a. What are the first things that would run through your mind?
 - b. What would you be happy about?
 - c. What would concern you?

17. How important (or unimportant) is it to your parents and relatives that you have a child?
 - d. How important (or unimportant) is it to you to have children?

18. Let's finish by talking about the last 5 years of your life so far:

- e. What has been your saddest memory during this time?
 - i. *Probe:* tell me more, help me understand

- f. What has been your happiest memory during this time?
 - i. *Probe:* tell me more, help me understand

19. Are there any other important events, that you feel have shaped your life and made you who you are today that we should add to the story?

CLOSING – 5 minutes

That is the end of our time today. I want to thank you again so much for sharing your story with me. I really believe that your story will help other boys and girls living in northern Uganda. Do you have any questions or concerns that you would like to discuss? Thank you so much. I look forward to our next conversation on (date/time).

SECOND INTERVIEW- 90 MINUTES

WELCOME (5 minutes)

(Name) it is good to see you again. I have thought a lot about your story and I want to get it right. Before we begin today's session, I would like us to review the timeline that you created last week. *[Read the events out loud, do not assume that they can read easily]* Does it sound correct? What needs to change? What should be erased? Added? Ok. If there is nothing else, let us move on the next exercise.

IDEAL MEN/WOMEN (30 minutes)

Purpose:

- To understand gender norms and attitudes and the degree to which young people reflect upon these critically and feel empowered to transform them.
- To understand what would motivate young people to change (or not change) these attitudes

Materials:

- Plastic animals

Process:

Introduce the exercise:

Today, I would like to learn a little more about the men and women in this area and how you think they should behave. In order to do this we are going to play a game. As you can see, I have a lot of plastic animals on the table. I am going to ask you to pick an animal that has the characteristics of an ideal man and woman in this area. By this I mean that I would like you to pick an animal that behaves the way you think all men or all women should behave. For example, if I were to pick an animal that represents the way I'd like my little brother to behave, I would pick a dog because dogs are very obedient, respectful, and they listen well and this is how I think my brother should be as well. Do you understand how this game works? Remember there are no right or wrong answers and whatever you share is helpful. Ok. Let's give it a try.

1. Can you think of two people that you consider to be an ideal man and an ideal woman?
 - a. What about that man makes him an ideal man?
 - b. What about that woman makes her an ideal woman?

2. Now, I would like you to pick two animals: one that represents the characteristics of an ideal man and one that represents the characteristics of an ideal woman.
 - a. In what way does the animal you chose represent the ideal man?
 - b. In what way does the animal you chose represent the ideal woman?

3. Can you describe someone you know who is not an ideal man?
 - a. Why do you think he is not an ideal man?
 - b. What made him become this way?
 - c. How do people in this area feel about him?
 - d. How do you know that people feel that way about this man?

4. Can you describe someone you know who is not an ideal woman?
 - a. Why do you think she is not an ideal woman?
 - b. What made her become this way?
 - c. How do people in this area feel about her?
 - d. How do you know that people feel that way about this woman?

5. What are the different ways that boys learn to become ideal men?

6. What are the different ways that girls learn to become ideal women?

7. I'm curious: Do you consider yourself to be an ideal man/woman?
 - a. Why or why not?

- b. *[If they consider themselves an ideal man/woman]* What do you think it is about your life that has made you into an ideal man/woman?
 - c. *[If they do not consider themselves an ideal man/woman]* What do you think it is about your life that has made you different from an ideal man/woman?

8. Ask the respondent to select one last animal that represents their ideal mate, the perfect person to marry. Assure them this isn't representative of WHO they married but rather what they view as the perfect partner.
 - a. How is that animal like the perfect mate?
 - b. How is your husband/wife like that animal, the perfect mate?
 - i. How is your husband/wife different from that perfect mate?
 - c. What do you wish you knew now about husbands/wives that you didn't know when you got married?

CONTINUUM OF ACCEPTABLE/UNACCEPTABLE (30 minutes)

Purpose:

- To understand how young people perceive various acts of violence

Materials:

- Flip chart paper
- Markers
- Post-it notes

Process:

Introduce the exercise: Now I would like to understand more about the different forms of violence that happen in this area and what you think about them.

1. Lay out a long roll of paper with "Acceptable/ok" written at one end and "Unacceptable/not ok" at the other end.

2. What are the different types of violence that happen in this area?" (*Write each example on a separate post-it note*).
 - a. *Probe about different types of violence that can take place inside the home, for example: violence between parents/guardians and children, between husband and wife, between siblings?*
 - b. *Probe about violence that takes place outside the home, for example: between friends, between teacher and student, between strangers, etc.*
 - c. *Be sure to probe about emotional (yelling, insulting, belittling etc.), physical (slapping, beating, kicking etc.) and sexual (coercive sex, rape, molestation) forms of violence*

3. After each situation or example has been put on a post-it note ask: where does this action fit on the acceptable/unacceptable line?
 - a. *Probe: Why is one action more acceptable than another action?*
4. Would any of these actions be more acceptable if it was a boy or a girl experiencing it?
 - a. *Probe about 2-3, for example: would it be more or less acceptable for a husband to beat his wife than for a wife to beat her husband? Why or why not?*
5. Would any of these actions more acceptable if the person experiencing the violence was older/younger?
 - a. *Probe about 2-3 of the forms of violence mentioned.*
6. *Ask about items toward the unacceptable side of the continuum:*
 - a. Are there ever any circumstances when any of these actions are acceptable, even good?
 - b. Which ones? How so? Tell me more.
7. Have any of these actions ever happened to someone you know, even you?
 - a. What happened?
 - b. How did you feel about it?
8. What type of support is available to boys/men who experience violence?
 - a. What about for girls/women?
 - b. *(Probe about resources that are available for physical, emotional, and sexual violence)*
9. What form of violence are you most concerned about in this area?
 - h. Who does this happen to?
 - i. Why does it happen?
 - j. Where does this happen?
 - k. How often or frequently are these incidences?
 - l. Who carries it out?
 - m. How do people in area view the victims? Perpetrators? The act?
 - n. What does the community do about it?
10. What more do you think should be done to address violence in this area?
 - a. *(Probe about what various actors such as institutions, government, and the community can do)*

BREAK (10 minutes)

Let's take a small break now.

DOORS TO MY FUTURE (20 minutes)

Purpose:

- To understand the hopes and dreams of participants

Materials:

- Photographs of different types of doors

Process:

We are almost done with our interview. Before we finish, I would like for you to tell me about your hopes for the future.

OPTION 1: USING PHOTOS OF DOORS

1. Here are some very special doors. They're "hopes" doors. Behind these doors lie the hopes of all people.
2. Pick a door that represents the hopes you have for yourself. Let's see your door. Thanks. Now walk through that door.
3. Imagine that it is 10 years later and you are xx years old: What hopes lie behind the door?
4. What are those hopes that are invisible or cannot be seen and touched?
5. Of all the hopes you have, what is the biggest or most important hope that you have for yourself?
 - a. *Probe:* tell me more, why is this so important to you?
 - b. Do you think that this hope will come true? Or do you think that it will not come true?
 - i. What makes you think so?
6. What is the biggest hope that you have for your family?
 - c. *Probe:* tell me more, why is this so important to you?
 - d. Do you think that this hope will come true? Or do you think that it will not come true?
 - ii. What makes you think so?
7. What is the biggest hope that you have for this area you are living in?

- e. Do you think that this hope will come true? Or do you think that it will not come true?
 - iii. What makes you think so?
- f. What hope do you have for how boys/men and girls/women should relate to one another?

OPTION 2: WITHOUT USING PHOTOS OF DOORS

1. Tell me about your hopes for the future.
 - a. How would you like your life to be like in 10 years?
 - b. What are those hopes that are invisible or cannot be seen and touched?

2. Of all the hopes you have, what is the biggest or most important hope that you have for yourself?
 - a. *Probe*: tell me more, why is this so important to you?
 - b. Do you think that this hope will come true? Or do you think that it will not come true?
 - i. What makes you think so?

3. What is the biggest hope that you have for your family?
 - c. *Probe*: tell me more, help me understand, why is this so important to you?
 - d. Do you think that this hope will come true? Or do you think that it will not come true?
 - ii. What makes you think so?

4. What is the biggest hope that you have for your community?
 - c. Do you think that this hope will come true? Or do you think that it will not come true?
 - i. What makes you think so?
 - b. What hope do you have for how boy/men and girls/women should relate to one another?

CLOSING (5 minutes)

1. Thank you so much for telling me your story. I have really learned a lot from talking with you.
2. Is there anything that we've left out of your story?
3. How do you feel about our conversations and everything we have talked about?
4. Do you have any questions that you would like to ask me?
5. Now I am going to take some time to write up everything you told me in a story. Once I have it finished, I'll get in touch with you so that we can go over it together. At that

point, I can make any changes you like, and then I will give you a copy to keep if you want it.

6. Also, we are interested in speaking with people who play an important role in the lives of young people in this area and who have a lot of influence over young people. These could be other young people, parents, community leaders, teachers etc. This can also include some of the people we discussed as being important in your life such as...
7. If there is anyone that you think we should speak with please give them this letter of invitation. It has information on how they can reach us and meet with us.

Thank you again.

LIFE HISTORY DISCUSSION GUIDE-
FOR USE WITH NEW PARENTS ADOLESCENTS (AGES 15-19)

FIRST INTERVIEW (90 MINUTES)

INTRODUCTION (5 minutes)

Welcome. Thank you for agreeing to talk with me to today. I hope our time together will be as meaningful to you as it will be helpful to me. As we discussed during recruitment, we are planning to hold two interviews with you and each one will be about 90 minutes. Before we begin, it is very important to make sure that you can do a second interview within the next two weeks. Will you be able to meet again? If so, what might be a good time? *(Write down the date and time that you have agreed to meet with the participant)*

During these interviews, we are going to do a lot of fun things such as drawing and playing different types of games. From our time together, I hope to learn more about you and other young people in this area so that we can begin to identify ways of helping young people grow up in a healthy way. Imagine that you are a teacher and I am your student. The answers that you provide to my questions will help me to learn from you. There are no right or wrong answers to any of these questions, so you should feel free to just tell me what is on your mind. If you want, we can take a break at any time. If there are any topics that you don't want to speak about you can just let me know and we will move on to a different one. I really appreciate that you are willing to spend this time with me to share your thoughts and experiences. Do you have any questions or concerns before we begin? Are you ready to begin?

MAP OF COMMUNITY (25 min)

Purpose:

- To understand in a physical space context, how adolescents live their daily lives, their safety concerns and safe and non-safe spaces, as well as girls-only/boys-only spaces.

Materials:

- Flip chart paper
- Markers
- Colored pencils

Process:

Introduce the exercise:

I would like to start by learning more about this area that you are living in and how young people here spend their time. Now, let's imagine that we are birds flying through the sky and we look down when flying over this area. I would like for you to draw a picture of all the things we would see. The picture doesn't have to be perfect so do not worry. This is just to help me understand and learn about this area since I am new here. *[Note: As participant answers the questions and identifies different locations, ask them to draw it on the map]*

1. Let us start with... *[Use appropriate nearby landmark such as main road, youth center, health center etc.]*
 - a. Where would you put this on our map?

2. Can you show me the place where you live?
 - i. How long have you lived in this area?
 - j. Where did you live before coming here?

3. Now, I'd like for you to tell me about how you spend your time. During the week where are the different places that you go to?
 - a. *[If not mentioned, probe for where they go to school, where they fetch water, where they go to garden etc.]*

4. What about on the weekend? Where are the places that you spend your time?
 - a. *[If not mentioned, probe about time they spend at: the church or mosque, youth center etc.]*

5. Where are the places that you like to go to have fun?
 - a. How would this be different if you were a boy/girl?

6. What clubs/groups/organizations do you belong to?
 - a. *[If participant is part of a group]:* What do you like about this group/club/organization?
 - b. *[If participant is not part of a group]:* Why don't you belong to any clubs/groups/organizations?

7. Where do you spend time with your friends?
 - a. What types of things do you like to do together?

8. Where do you go to get health information or services?
 - a. What type of information and services do you get from there?

9. Where do you go if you want to be alone?
 - a. When are the times that you like to going to this place?
 - b. How do you feel when you are there?

10. Now, I would like for you to show me on the map the places in this area that you like the best. *[Have the participant use a 😊 to indicate the places on the map that they like]*
 - a. Why do you like these places?

11. Can you show me the places that you do not like? *[Have the participant use a ☹ to indicate the places on the map that they do not like]*
 - a. Why don't you like these places?

12. How safe do you feel in this area?
 - a. Why or why not?
 - b. Can you show me the places on the map that you feel are unsafe? *[Mark these with a red dot]*
 - c. Why do these places make you feel unsafe?
 - d. Do you think this would be the same if you were a boy/girl?

13. What would you like to change about this area that you are living in?
 - a. Why or why not?

SPIDER-MAPPING (25 minutes)

Purpose:

- To understand young people's social networks and identify which members influence attitudes, opportunities, and behaviors

Materials:

- One large piece of flip chart paper
- Markers
- Three different colored post-it notes
- Post-it notes with different type of media written on each paper: mobile phone, television, radio, newspaper, Internet (you can also use images/pictures of the different forms of media)

Process:

Introduce the exercise:

Thank you for drawing the map and helping me to learn more about this area and the places you spend your time. Now I would like to learn more about the people that are in your life.

1. Can you help me make a list of the people that have had a positive and negative influence on your life? We do not have to use their real names. These people can be part of your family or they can be outside your family. For example, they can be people you ask advice from, who take care of you, who teach you, who are close friends, who you look up to, or people who have hurt you, have been bad role models, or have shown you the wrong way *[Allow participant to write the names and relationships of each person on a separate post-it note (use different color paper for positive and negative influences). If they do not feel comfortable writing, then you can write it down for them]*
2. *[Draw a circle in the middle of flip chart]* This circle represents you.
 - a. I would like you to pick the people you think have influenced you the most (both positively and negatively) and place them on the paper closest to the circle that represents you.
 - b. Those that have influenced you less – put further away. *[Allow the person time to place all the people on the paper.]*
3. Can you tell me about each person on this paper? *(Point to each post-it in their spider map)*.
 - a. How has s/he influence your life?
4. Who do you trust to talk to when something worries you?
 - a. For example, if you are worried about your body and your health?
 - i. What type of problems do you talk to them about?
 - b. What if you are having problems with your friends, who would you talk to?
 - c. Why do you trust these people?
5. Out of all the people on this paper, who has shaped and influenced your life the most, either positively or negatively?
 - a. In what way?
6. *[Hand participant the post-it notes (different color than the ones used before) with the different types of media written or drawn on them]* I have these papers that have

different types of media: mobile phone, radio, television, newspaper, and Internet on them.

- a. I would like you to place the forms of media that have influenced you most close to you and the ones that have influenced you less, further way.
- b. [*probe for the ones that are posted closest*] In what way does this form of media influence your thinking or behavior?
- c. Do you think that this is a good influence or a bad influence?

BREAK- 10 minutes

Let's take a small break now. [*Offer the participant a snack*]

TIMELINE (30 minutes)

Purpose:

- To understand which life events are perceived as significant by participants and how they are experienced

Materials:

- Two large pieces of flip chart paper
- Tape
- Markers

Process:

Introduce the exercise:

Thank you for telling me about the important people in your life. Now I would like to know more about some of the life experiences that you have had. I would like for us to put together your life story. I have a long sheet of paper with a line down the middle and some markers and crayons (*Lay out 4-5 foot strip of paper*) and together I want us to draw a timeline of your life.

1. First, on one end, we will put a mark to represent the day that you were born. If you don't remember the exact date, don't worry we can just guess based on your age. On the other end, we are going to mark TODAY on the timeline. All of this space in between shows all of the days and years between the time you were born and today.
2. We are going to write events in your life that you think are important to include in your life story. They can be either positive or negative. If it was a happy time, we will write them above the striped line. If it was a sad time, we will write them below the stripe. Once we have finish making your time line today, we'll look at it again next time we meet and you can add to it.

3. Ok. Let's start with the first five years of your life. *[as memories or experiences are shared, place them on the time line]*
 - a. What is your earliest memory?
 - b. What other memories do you have from that time of your life?
 - c. What were some of your problems as a child?
 - i. How did that affect you?
 - d. Do you think your life would have been the same or different if you were a boy/girl?
 - i. *Probe:* In what way? Tell me more.

4. Now let's talk about from 5 years until 10 years old
 - a. What is your saddest memory from this time?
 - i. *Probe:* tell me more, help me understand

 - b. What is your happiest memory from this time?
 - i. *Probe:* tell me more, help me understand?

10. How old were you when your body started to change from a girl/boy to a woman/man?
 - c. How did you feel when you started noticing these changes?
 - i. *Probe:* Tell me more. Help me understand why you felt that way.

 - d. So that's how you felt when you first started noticing changes. What did you say to friends or family when you noticed these changes?
 - i. What did you talk about?

16. Ok, what about between 10-15 years of age?
 - a. What has been your saddest memory during that time?
 - i. *Probe:* tell me more, help me understand

 - b. What has been your happiest memory during that time?
 - i. *Probe:* tell me more, help me understand

17. About what age were you when you first fell in love?
 - a. Did you consider your first love to be a future partner or was it more sexual, with no formal commitments in your mind at all? (*Probes: Tell me more. Help me understand.*)
 - b. What's something about that first love experience that you will never forget?

18. Now, I'd like you to tell me about your current spouse/partner:
 - a. How old is he or she?

- b. What does he or she do (student, worker, etc.)?
 - c. Where does he or she live?
19. When and how did you meet your spouse?
- a. How did this relationship start?
 - b. What were the main stages of your relationship with your spouse? *Probe for courtship, gifts, spending time together, telling friends about the relationship, meeting one's family, developing physical intimacy, getting married?*
20. When did you get married?
- a. How old were you when you got married?
 - b. How old was your partner?
21. Thinking back to the beginning of your relationship, did you ever exchange benefits such as clothes, money, school fees, etc. with this person in the context of your relationship?
- a. Can you tell me more about that? How did it work? What was exchanged?
 - b. How did it affect the relationship?
22. Who generally has more influence on making decisions in your household? You or your partner?
- a. Tell me more about this (Probe about different types of decisions such as how money is spent, whether or not to have children etc.)
23. How old were you when you had your first child?
- a. How did you feel when you found out you were pregnant/your partner was pregnant?
 - i. *For women only*] Did you tell your partner? If so, what was your partner's reaction?
 - ii. *[For men only]* What was your reaction when your partner told you she was pregnant?
 - b. What were the things that pleased you about the pregnancy? Made you unhappy?
 - c. Was the pregnancy planned or was it a surprise?
 - d. *If pregnancy was not planned (trying to prevent pregnancy):*
 - i. What happened?
 - ii. Why did you get pregnant/get someone pregnant? (*Probes: hadn't used family planning, (why?) family planning method did not work, wasn't planning to have sex, experienced forced sex.*)
 - e. *If pregnancy was planned:*
 - i. Why did you want to get pregnant/get someone pregnant? (*Probes: wanted to marry, wanted security in relationship, wanted to have a baby/to be a mother/father, family pressure to show fertility.*)

24. For some people having a baby is an important part of their relationship.
 - a. Was this the case for you? Please tell me more.
25. Do you feel differently about yourself now that you/your wife is pregnant/now that you are a mother/father?
 - a. In what way? (*Probe for whether the respondent feels like an adult, has more responsibility at home, is seen as an adult in the community, is treated differently by others in the community*)
26. Now that you have a child/children/are pregnant), how important is it to you to have more children?
 - a. How important is it to your spouse?
 - b. How important is it to your parents and relatives that you have a/another child?
27. How many children would you like to have?
 - a. Why is having that many children important to you?
 - b. Do you want to have boys or girls? Why?
 - c. How and why have your goals regarding children changed over time?
28. Some people take measures to keep themselves from getting pregnant, while other people do not. How about you and your spouse/partner – what do you do?
 - a. Do you or your spouse/partner use anything (pills, injections, herbs, withdrawal, condoms, etc.) to keep from getting pregnant?
 - i. Why or why not?
 - b. Did you discuss using this method with your spouse?
 - i. Why or why not? What was his/her reaction?
29. [*If no family planning is used:*] What are the main reasons you/your partner do not currently use a method to delay or avoid a pregnancy?
30. If you/your wife/partner were to become pregnant right now, how would you feel?
 - a. How do you think your spouse/partner would feel?
31. How would your family members feel?
 - a. Would they react positively or negatively? Why?
32. Let's finish by talking about the last 5 years:
 - a. What has been your saddest memory during this time?
 - i. *Probe*: tell me more, help me understand
 - b. What has been your happiest memory during this time?
 - i. *Probe*: tell me more, help me understand

33. Are there any other important events, that you feel have shaped your life and made you who you are today that we should add to the story?

CLOSING – 5 minutes

That is the end of our time today. I want to thank you again so much for sharing your story with me. I really believe that your story will help other boys and girls living in northern Uganda. Do you have any questions or concerns that you would like to discuss? Thank you so much. I look forward to our next conversation on (date/time).

SECOND INTERVIEW- 90 MINUTES

WELCOME (5 minutes)

(Name) it is good to see you again. I have thought a lot about your story and I want to get it right. Before we begin today's session, I would like us to review the timeline that you created last week. *[Read the events out loud, do not assume that they can read easily]* Does it sound correct? What needs to change? What should be erased? Added? Ok. If there is nothing else, let us move on the next exercise.

IDEAL MEN/WOMEN (30 minutes)

Purpose:

- To understand gender norms and attitudes and the degree to which young people reflect upon these critically and feel empowered to transform them.
- To understand what would motivate young people to change (or not change) these attitudes

Materials:

- Plastic animals

Process:

Introduce the exercise:

Today, I would like to learn a little more about the men and women in this area and how you think they should behave. In order to do this we are going to play a game. As you can see, I have a lot of plastic animals on the table. I am going to ask you to pick an animal that has the characteristics of an ideal man and woman in this area. By this I mean that I would like you to pick an animal that behaves the way you think all men or all women should behave. For example, if I were to pick an animal that represents the way I'd like my little brother to behave, I would pick a dog because dogs are very obedient, respectful, and they listen well and this is how

I think my brother should be as well. Do you understand how this game works? Ok. Let's give it a try.

1. Can you think of two people that you consider to be an ideal man and an ideal woman?
 - d. What about that man makes him an ideal man?
 - e. What about that woman makes her an ideal woman?
2. Now, I would like you to pick two animals: one that represents the characteristics of an ideal man and one that represents the characteristics of an ideal woman.
 - f. In what way does the animal you chose represent the ideal man?
 - g. In what way does the animal you chose represent the ideal woman?
3. Can you describe someone you know who is not an ideal man?
 - h. Why do you think he is not an ideal man?
 - i. What made him become this way?
 - j. How do people in this area feel about him?
 - k. How do you know that people feel that way about this man?
4. Can you describe someone you know who is not an ideal woman?
 - l. Why do you think she is not an ideal woman?
 - m. What made her become this way?
 - n. How do people in this area feel about her?
 - o. How do you know that people feel that way about this woman?
5. What are the different ways that boys learn to become ideal men?
6. What are the different ways that girls learn to become ideal women?
7. I'm curious: Do you consider yourself to be an ideal man/woman?
 - p. Why or why not?
 - q. *[If they consider themselves an ideal man/woman]* What do you think it is about your life that has made you into an ideal man/woman?
 - r. *[If they do not consider themselves an ideal man/woman]* What do you think it is about your life that has made you different from an ideal man/woman?
8. Ask the respondent to select one last animal that represents their ideal mate, the perfect person to marry. Assure them this isn't representative of WHO they married but rather what they view as the perfect partner.

- s. How is that animal like the perfect mate?
- t. How is your husband/wife like that animal, the perfect mate?
 - i. How is your husband/wife different from that perfect mate?
- u. What do you wish you knew now about husbands/wives that you didn't know when you got married?

CONTINUUM OF ACCEPTABLE/UNACCEPTABLE (30 minutes)

Purpose:

- To understand how young people perceive various acts of violence

Materials:

- Flip chart paper
- Markers
- Post-it notes

Process:

Introduce the exercise: Now I would like to understand more about the different forms of violence that happen in this area and what you think about them.

1. Lay out a long roll of paper with "Acceptable/ok" written at one end and "Unacceptable/not ok" at the other end.
2. What are the different types of violence that happen in this area?" (*Write each example on a separate post-it note*).
 - a. *Probe about different types of violence that can take place inside the home, for example: violence between parents/guardians and children, between husband and wife, between siblings?*
 - b. *Probe about violence that takes place outside the home, for example: between friends, between teacher and student, between strangers, etc.*
 - c. *Be sure to probe about emotional (yelling, insulting, belittling etc.), physical (slapping, beating, kicking etc.) and sexual (coercive sex, rape, molestation) forms of violence*
3. After each situation or example has been put on a post-it note ask: where does this action fit on the acceptable/unacceptable line?
 - a. *Probe: Why is one action more acceptable than another action?*
4. Would any of these actions be more acceptable if it was a boy or a girl experiencing it?

- a. *Probe about 2-3, for example:* would it be more or less acceptable for a husband to beat his wife than for a wife to beat her husband? Why or why not?
5. Would any of these actions more acceptable if the person experiencing the violence was older/younger?
 - a. *Probe about 2-3 of the forms of violence mentioned.*
6. *Ask about items toward the unacceptable side of the continuum:*
 - a. Are there ever any circumstances when any of these actions are acceptable, even good?
 - b. Which ones? How so? Tell me more.
7. Have any of these actions ever happened to someone you know, even you?
 - a. What happened?
 - b. How did you feel about it?
8. What type of support is available to boys/men who experience violence?
 - a. What about for girls/women?
 - b. *(Probe about resources that are available for physical, emotional, and sexual violence)*
9. What form of violence are you most concerned about in this area?
 - o. Who does this happen to?
 - p. Why does it happen?
 - q. Where does this happen?
 - r. How often or frequently are these incidences?
 - s. Who carries it out?
 - t. How do people in area view the victims? Perpetrators? The act?
 - u. What does the community do about it?
10. What more do you think should be done to address violence in this area?
 - a. *(Probe about what various actors such as institutions, government, and the community can do)*

BREAK (10 minutes)

Let's take a small break now.

DOORS TO MY FUTURE (20 minutes)

Purpose:

- To understand the hopes and dreams of participants

Materials:

- Photographs of different types of doors

Process:

We are almost done with our interview. Before we finish, I would like for you to tell me about your hopes for the future.

OPTION 1: USING PHOTOS OF DOORS

1. Here are some very special doors. They're "hopes" doors. Behind these doors lie the hopes of all people.
2. Pick a door that represents the hopes you have for yourself. Let's see your door. Thanks. Now walk through that door.
3. Imagine that it is 10 years later: What hopes lie behind the door?
4. What are those hopes that are invisible or cannot be seen and touched?
5. Of all the hopes you have, what is the biggest or most important hope that you have for yourself?
 - a. *Probe*: tell me more, why is this so important to you?
 - b. Do you think that this hope will come true? Or do you think that it will not come true?
 - i. What makes you think so?
6. What is the biggest hope that you have for your family?
 - e. *Probe*: tell me more, why is this so important to you?
 - f. Do you think that this hope will come true? Or do you think that it will not come true?
 - iii. What makes you think so?
7. What is the biggest hope that you have for this area you are living in?
 - g. Do you think that this hope will come true? Or do you think that it will not come true?
 - iv. What makes you think so?
 - h. What hope do you have for how boys/men and girls/women should relate to one another?

OPTION 2: WITHOUT USING PHOTOS OF DOORS

1. Tell me about your hopes for the future.
 - a. How would you like your life to be like in 10 years?

- b. What are those hopes that are invisible or cannot be seen and touched?
2. Of all the hopes you have, what is the biggest or most important hope that you have for yourself?
 - a. *Probe:* tell me more, why is this so important to you?
 - b. Do you think that this hope will come true? Or do you think that it will not come true?
 - i. What makes you think so?
 3. What is the biggest hope that you have for your family?
 - e. *Probe:* tell me more, help me understand, why is this so important to you?
 - f. Do you think that this hope will come true? Or do you think that it will not come true?
 - iii. What makes you think so?
 4. What is the biggest hope that you have for this area you are living in?
 - d. Do you think that this hope will come true? Or do you think that it will not come true?
 - i. What makes you think so?
 - b. What hope do you have for how boy/men and girls/women should relate to one another?

CLOSING (5 minutes)

1. Thank you so much for telling me your story. I have really learned a lot from talking with you.
2. Is there anything that we've left out of your story?
3. How do you feel about our conversations and everything we have talked about?
4. Do you have any questions that you would like to ask me?
5. Now I am going to take some time to write up everything you told me in a story. Once I have it finished, I'll get in touch with you so that we can go over it together. At that point, I can make any changes you like, and then I will give you a copy to keep if you want it.
6. Also, we are interested in speaking with people who play an important role in the lives of young people in this area and who have a lot of influence over young people. These could be other young people, parents, community leaders, teachers etc. This can also include some of the people we discussed as being important in your life such as...
7. If there is anyone that you think we should speak with please give them this letter of invitation. It has information on how they can reach us and meet with us.

Thank you again.

Appendix F: In-Depth Interview Guides

IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW GUIDE WITH SIGNIFICANT OTHERS – ADULT RELATIVES

(This guide is intended for significant others not in intimate relationships with the adolescent, that is, people who are not married to or in union with the referring adolescent)

INTRODUCTION

I am talking with people in the area to gather information to design a program to help young people grow up to be healthy, happy individuals and good partners and parents. I'd like to talk with you about your ideas about the needs of youth in this area and the best way to serve them.

Imagine that you are a teacher and I am your student. The answers that you provide to my questions will help me to learn from you. There are no right or wrong answers to any of these questions, so you should feel free to just tell me what is on your mind.

If you want, we can take a break at anytime. If there are any topics that you don't want to speak about you can just let me know and we will move on to a different one. I really appreciate that you are willing to spend this time with me to share your thoughts. Do you have any questions or concerns before we begin? Are you ready to begin?

SITUATING THE SIGNIFICANT OTHER (25 minutes)

Purpose:

To understand participants' experiences with and attitudes toward youth

Materials:

- None

Process:

1. Can you tell me a bit about yourself?
 - a. Who do you live with?
 - b. How long have you been living in this area?
 - c. What kind of work do you do?
2. We all influence the lives of others in one way or another, how do you think you have influenced the lives of a/some young people in this area?
3. Who influenced you the most when you were growing up?
 - a. In what way did this person influence you?
 - b. Who influences you the most now? In what way?
4. How does it feel being the _____ (aunt, uncle, grandmother, grandfather, cousin) of a child who is in the 10-19 year old age range?
 - a. What do you find most rewarding?
 - b. What do you find most challenging?
5. Tell me about the time you spend with your niece/nephew/grandchild/cousin.
 - a. What do you do together?
 - b. How often do you spend time together?
6. What do you talk about with them?
 - a. Do you talk about their relationships with friends and others?
 - b. Do you talk about their romantic relationships?
 - c. Who usually starts these conversations?

7. Can you tell me about a time when you had to discipline a young person for misbehaving?
 - a. What are the different ways that children should be corrected when they do something wrong?

8. At what point do you consider a person an adult?
 - a. *Probe: If the respondent has a hard time coming up with an answer, probe for physical changes, roles in the family, peer relationships, development of romantic relationships, having a child, getting married, getting a job, moving out of parents home, death of parents.*

IDEAL MAN/WOMAN (30 minutes)

Purpose:

To understand gendered expectations, norms, and socialization processes

Materials:

- Plastic Animals

Process

Introduce the exercise:

Today, I would like to learn a little more about the men and women in this area and how you think they should behave. In order to do this we are going to play a game. As you can see, I have a lot of plastic animals on the table.

I am going to ask you to pick an animal that has the characteristics of an ideal man and woman in this area. By this I mean that I would like you to pick an animal that behaves the way you think all men or all women should behave. For example, if I were to pick an animal that represents the way I'd like my little brother to behave, I would pick a dog because dogs are very obedient, respectful, and they listen well and this is how I think my brother should be as well. Do you understand how this game works? Ok. Let's give it a try.

1. First, can you tell me about two people that you consider to be an ideal man and an ideal woman?
 - a. What about that man makes him an ideal man?
 - b. What about that woman makes her an ideal woman?

2. Now, I would like you pick two animals: one that represents the characteristics of an ideal man and one that represents the characteristics of an ideal woman.
 - a. In what way does the animal you chose represent the ideal man?
 - b. In what way does the animal you chose represent the ideal woman?

3. Can you describe someone you know who is not an ideal man?
 - a. Why do you think he is not an ideal man?
 - b. What made him become this way?
 - c. How do people in this area feel about him?
 - d. How do you know that people feel that way about this man?

4. Can you describe someone you know who is not an ideal woman?

- a. Why do you think she is not an ideal woman?
 - b. What made her become this way?
 - c. How do people in this area feel about her?
 - d. How do you know that people feel that way about this woman?
5. What are the different ways that boys learn to become ideal men?
 6. What are the different ways that girls learn to become ideal women?
 7. What are some of the proverbs, songs, and poems that teach young people about the role and expectations of being an ideal man?
 - a. What about proverbs, songs, and poems that teach girls about being an ideal woman?
 8. In your opinion, how does the media (mobile phones, television, radio, newspaper, internet) influence young people?
 - a. What values do the media promote?
 - b. How does the media shape the values and attitudes of young people?
 - c. Do you agree with the values that the media promotes?
 9. What else do you think influences young people as they grow up here?
 - a. *Probe:* school, church, politics, town life, disease.....)
 10. Your community has gone through a lot of struggle and violence.
 - a. How has this affected the way boys and girls grow into men and women?
 - b. How has it affected the way men and women see themselves, their roles, and how they treat each other?
 11. I'm curious: Do you consider yourself to be an ideal man/woman?
 - a. Why or why not?
 - b. *[If they consider themselves an ideal man/woman]* What do you think it is about your life that has made you into an ideal man/woman?
 - c. *[If they do not consider themselves an ideal man/woman]* What do you think it is about your life that has made you different from an ideal man/woman?
 12. Ask the respondent to select one last animal that represents their ideal mate, the perfect person to marry. Assure them this isn't representative of WHO they married but rather what they view as the perfect partner.
 - a. How is that animal like the perfect mate?
 - b. *If married:* How is your husband/wife like that animal, the perfect mate?
 - i. How is your husband/wife different from that perfect mate?
 - ii. What do you wish you knew now about husbands/wives that you didn't know when you got married?

BREAK (5 Minutes)

Let's take a small break now.

REPRODUCTIVE AND SEXUAL HEALTH (30 minutes)

Purpose:

To understand beliefs about marriage, sex, and reproduction

Materials:

- Flip chart with timeline, of ages 0 to 30 with 5 year increments marked (i.e. 0, 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30)
- Post-it notes of different colors (one color for boys, one color for girls) with the following statements written on them in advance:
 - First interested in sex
 - Ready for girlfriend/boyfriend
 - Sex for the first time
 - Get married
 - Become Parent

Process:

Introduce the exercise: Now I would like to talk with you now about the reproductive and sexual health of young people. As you can see, I have a timeline here that represents the life of a young person. Above the line, will represent a girl's life and below the line will represent a boy's life. I would like you to post the answer to each question I give you on the time line.

1. At what age do you think boys are first interested in sex? [*have participant place the post-it with the statement: "first interested in sex" near the age below the timeline*]
 - a. In what way is a child that age interested in sex?
 - b. What does he do to satisfy his curiosity?
 - c. What about for girls? At what age are girls first interested in sex? [*have participant place a post-it with the statement: "first interested in sex" near the age above the timeline*]
 - d. In what way is she interested in sex at that age?
 - e. What does she do to satisfy her curiosity?
2. At what age do you think a boy is old enough to have his first girlfriend? [*have participant place a post-it with the statement: "ready for girlfriend/boyfriend" near the age below the timeline*]
 - a. Why is he old enough at that age?
 - b. At what age are girls old enough to have a boyfriend? [*have participant place a post-it with the statement: "ready for girlfriend/boyfriend" near the age above the timeline*]
 - c. How are girls and boys different in this regard?
3. At what age do boys usually have sex for the first time? [*repeat same process with post-it note labeled "sex for first time"*]
 - a. Do they choose to have sex?
 - b. What about for girls?
 - i. At what age do girls usually have sex? [*participant should place post-it "sex for first time" in appropriate location*]
 - ii. Do they choose to have sex?

- c. Are there ever occasions when young people are coerced or forced to have sex (girls and boys)?
2. When do you think is the best time for a boy to get married? [*participant should place post-it "get married" in appropriate location*]
 - a. What about a girl? [*participant should place post-it "get married" in appropriate location*]
 - b. When do boys usually get married in this area?
 - i. What about girls?
 - ii. What do you think about that?
 - c. How soon after a couple gets married should they become parents?
 - i. What would make it a good time? A bad time? Why?
 - ii. Let's say they've been married a year and don't yet have a child. How would their family react?
3. When do you think is the best time in a person's life to become a parent?
 - a. Is the time the same for boys and girls? [*participant should place post-its "become parent" in appropriate location*]
 - b. Is it important for a boy to be married before becoming a parent?
 - i. What about a girl?
 - c. What are the social consequences that happen to an unmarried girl when she becomes pregnant?
 - i. What happens to an unmarried boy if he gets a girl pregnant?
4. What FP, RH, and HIV services are currently available in this area?
 - a. How could the services be improved?
5. Do you think unmarried adolescent boys and girls should have access FP, RH, and HIV information?
 - a. What about FP, RH, and HIV services?
 - b. Why/why not?
6. Can adolescents get condoms here?
 - a. Where?
 - b. What do you think about that? Why?

CONTINUUM OF ACCEPTABLE/UNACCEPTABLE (20 minutes)

Purpose:
To understand attitudes toward violence

- Materials:**
- Flip chart paper
 - Markers
 - Blank Post-it notes
 - Post-it notes with 6 action statements

Process:

Introduce the exercise: Now I would like to understand more about the different forms of violence that happen in this area and what you think about them.

1. Lay out a long roll of paper with "Acceptable/ok" written at one end and "Unacceptable/not ok" at the other end.
2. What are the different types of violence that happen in this area?" (*Write each example on a separate post-it note*).
 - a. *Probe about different types of violence that can take place inside the home, for example: violence between parents/guardians and children, between husband and wife, between siblings?*
 - b. *Probe about violence that takes place outside the home, for example: between friends, between teacher and student, between strangers, etc.*
 - c. *Be sure to probe about emotional (yelling, insulting, belittling etc.) physical (slapping, beating, kicking etc.) and sexual (coercive sex, rape, molestation) forms of violence*
3. After each situation or example has been put on a post-it note ask: where does this action fit on the acceptable/unacceptable line?
4. *After each situation or example has been placed on the continuum, ask participants to also place the following examples if they haven't already been listed:*

Action statements:

- Using force to defend your reputation if someone insults you
 - A husband beating his wife if she disobeys him
 - A woman hitting her husband if he has sex with another woman
 - A father yelling at his daughter if she burns the food
 - A teacher hitting a student for disobeying
 - A mother yelling at her son for not showing respect
 - A husband forcing his wife to have sex when she does not want to
5. Would any of these actions be more acceptable if it was a boy or a girl experiencing it?
 - a. *Probe about 2-3, for example:* would it be more or less acceptable for a husband to beat his wife than for a wife to beat her husband? Why or why not?
 - b. Would it be more acceptable or less acceptable for a father to yell at his daughter than for a father to yell at his son? Why or why not?
 6. Would any of these actions be more acceptable if the person experiencing the violence was older/younger?
 - a. *[Probe about 2-3 of the forms of violence mentioned].*
 7. *[Ask about the items toward the unacceptable side of the continuum]:*
 - a. Are there every any circumstances when this action is acceptable, even good?
 - b. How so? Tell me more.
 8. Have any of these actions ever happened to someone you know, even you?
 - a. What happened?
 - b. How did you feel about it?
 9. What type of support is available to boys/men who experience violence?

- a. What about for girls/women?
- b. *(Probe about resources that are available for physical, emotional, and sexual violence)*

10. What form of violence are you most concerned about in this area?

- a. Who does this happen to?
- b. Why does it happen?
- c. Where does this happen?
- d. How often or frequently are these incidences?
- e. Who carries out?
- f. How do people in area view the victims? perpetrators? the act?
- g. What does the community do about it?

11. What more do you think should be done to address violence in this area?

- a. *(Probe about what various actors such as institutions, government, and the community can do)*

VALUES AND HOPES (10 minutes)

Process

Purpose:

To understand the hopes and dreams that participants have for themselves, youth, and their community

Materials:

- None

1. What is the most important advice that you could give to boys?
 - a. To girls?
 - b. Why?
2. What are your hopes for the boys in this area?
 - a. For the girls?
3. What values do you hope to share with young people?
4. What changes would you like to see in the ways that men and women relate to one another?

CLOSING (10 MINUTES)

1. Today we have talked about.... Is there any other topic you would like to discuss before we finish?
2. Do you have any recommendations for others who play important roles in the lives of young people?
3. How well prepared do you feel you are to support/advise the young people in your life?
 - a. Is there anything that could be done to make you feel better prepared?
4. Do you have any questions you want to ask me?
5. Thank you for sharing your views and your time.

IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW GUIDE WITH SIGNIFICANT OTHERS – COMMUNITY MEMBER

(This guide is intended for significant others not in intimate relationships with the adolescent, that is, people who are not married to or in union with the referring adolescent)

INTRODUCTION

I am talking with people in the area to gather information to design a program to help young people grow up to be healthy, happy individuals and good partners and parents. I'd like to talk with you about your ideas about the needs of youth in this area and the best way to serve them.

Imagine that you are a teacher and I am your student. The answers that you provide to my questions will help me to learn from you. There are no right or wrong answers to any of these questions, so you should feel free to just tell me what is on your mind.

If you want, we can take a break at anytime. If there are any topics that you don't want to speak about you can just let me know and we will move on to a different one. I really appreciate that you are willing to spend this time with me to share your thoughts. Do you have any questions or concerns before we begin? Are you ready to begin?

SITUATING THE SIGNIFICANT OTHER (25 minutes)

Purpose:

To understand participants' experiences with and attitudes toward youth

Materials:

- None

Process:

1. Can you tell me a bit about yourself?
 - a. Who do you live with?
 - b. How long have you been living in this area?
 - c. What kind of work do you do?
2. We all influence the lives of others in one way or another, how do you think you have influenced the lives of a/some young people in this area?
3. Who influenced you the most when you were growing up?
 - a. In what way did this person influence you?
 - b. Who influences you the most now? In what way?
4. How does it feel being the _____ (teacher/healthcare provider/religious leader etc) of a child who is in the 10-19 year old age range?
 - a. What do you find most rewarding?
 - b. What do you find most challenging?
5. Tell me about the time you spend with young people.
 - a. What do you do together?
 - b. How often do you spend time together?
6. What do you talk about with them?
 - a. Do you talk about their relationships with friends and others?
 - b. Do you talk about their romantic relationships?
 - c. Who usually starts these conversations?

7. Can you tell me about a time when you had to discipline a young person for misbehaving?
 - a. What are the different ways that children should be corrected when they do something wrong?

8. At what point do you consider a person an adult?
 - a. *Probe: If the respondent has a hard time coming up with an answer, probe for physical changes, roles in the family, peer relationships, development of romantic relationships, having a child, getting married, getting a job, moving out of parents home, death of parents.*

IDEAL MAN/WOMAN (30 minutes)

Purpose:

To understand gendered expectations, norms, and socialization processes

Materials:

- Plastic Animals

Process

Introduce the exercise:

Today, I would like to learn a little more about the men and women in this area and how you think they should behave. In order to do this we are going to play a game. As you can see, I have a lot of plastic animals on the table.

I am going to ask you to pick an animal that has the characteristics of an ideal man and woman in this area. By this I mean that I would like you to pick an animal that behaves the way you think all men or all women should behave. For example, if I were to pick an animal that represents the way I'd like my little brother to behave, I would pick a dog because dogs are very obedient, respectful, and they listen well and this is how I think my brother should be as well. Do you understand how this game works? Ok. Let's give it a try.

1. First, can you tell me about two people that you consider to be an ideal man and an ideal woman?
 - a. What about that man makes him an ideal man?
 - b. What about that woman makes her an ideal woman?

2. Now, I would like you pick two animals: one that represents the characteristics of an ideal man and one that represents the characteristics of an ideal woman.
 - a. In what way does the animal you chose represent the ideal man?
 - b. In what way does the animal you chose represent the ideal woman?

3. Can you describe someone you know who is not an ideal man?
 - a. Why do you think he is not an ideal man?
 - b. What made him become this way?
 - c. How do people in this area feel about him?
 - d. How do you know that people feel that way about this man?

4. Can you describe someone you know who is not an ideal woman?
 - a. Why do you think she is not an ideal woman?

- b. What made her become this way?
 - c. How do people in this area feel about her?
 - d. How do you know that people feel that way about this woman?
5. What are the different ways that boys learn to become ideal men?
 6. What are the different ways that girls learn to become ideal women?
 7. What are some of the proverbs, songs, and poems that teach young people about the role and expectations of being an ideal man?
 - a. What about proverbs, songs, and poems that teach girls about being an ideal woman?
 8. In your opinion, how does the media (mobile phones, television, radio, newspaper, internet) influence young people?
 - a. What values do the media promote?
 - b. How does the media shape the values and attitudes of young people?
 - c. Do you agree with the values that the media promotes?
 9. What else do you think influences young people as they grow up here?
 - a. *Probe:* school, church, politics, town life, disease.....)
 10. Your community has gone through a lot of struggle and violence.
 - a. How has this affected the way boys and girls grow into men and women?
 - b. How has it affected the way men and women see themselves, their roles, and how they treat each other?
 11. I'm curious: Do you consider yourself to be an ideal man/woman?
 - a. Why or why not?
 - b. *[If they consider themselves an ideal man/woman]* What do you think it is about your life that has made you into an ideal man/woman?
 - c. *[If they do not consider themselves an ideal man/woman]* What do you think it is about your life that has made you different from an ideal man/woman?
 12. Ask the respondent to select one last animal that represents their ideal mate, the perfect person to marry. Assure them this isn't representative of WHO they married but rather what they view as the perfect partner.
 - a. How is that animal like the perfect mate?
 - b. *If married:* How is your husband/wife like that animal, the perfect mate?
 - i. How is your husband/wife different from that perfect mate?
 - ii. What do you wish you knew now about husbands/wives that you didn't know when you got married?

BREAK (5 Minutes)

Let's take a small break now.

REPRODUCTIVE AND SEXUAL HEALTH (30 minutes)

Purpose:

To understand beliefs about marriage, sex, and reproduction

Materials:

- Flip chart with timeline, of ages 0 to 30 with 5 year increments marked (i.e. 0, 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30)
- Post-it notes of different colors (one color for boys, one color for girls) with the following statements written on them in advance:
 - First interested in sex
 - Ready for girlfriend/boyfriend
 - Sex for the first time
 - Get married
 - Become Parent

Process:

Introduce the exercise: Now I would like to talk with you now about the reproductive and sexual health of young people. As you can see, I have a timeline here that represents the life of a young person. Above the line, will represent a girl's life and below the line will represent a boy's life. I would like you to post the answer to each question I give you on the time line.

1. At what age do you think boys are first interested in sex? [have participant place the post-it with the statement: "first interested in sex" near the age below the timeline]
 - a. In what way is a child that age interested in sex?
 - b. What does he do to satisfy his curiosity?
 - c. What about for girls? At what age are girls first interested in sex? [have participant place a post-it with the statement: "first interested in sex" near the age above the timeline]
 - d. In what way is she interested in sex at that age?
 - e. What does she do to satisfy her curiosity?
2. At what age do you think a boy is old enough to have his first girlfriend? [have participant place a post-it with the statement: "ready for girlfriend/boyfriend" near the age below the timeline]
 - a. Why is he old enough at that age?
 - b. At what age are girls old enough to have a boyfriend? [have participant place a post-it with the statement: "ready for girlfriend/boyfriend" near the age above the timeline]
 - c. How are girls and boys different in this regard?
3. At what age do boys usually have sex for the first time? [repeat same process with post-it note labeled "sex for first time"]
 - a. Do they choose to have sex?
 - b. What about for girls?
 - i. At what age do girls usually have sex? [participant should place post-it "sex for first time" in appropriate location]
 - ii. Do they choose to have sex?
 - c. Are there ever occasions when young people are coerced or forced to have sex (girls and boys)?

2. When do you think is the best time for a boy to get married? [participant should place post-it "get married" in appropriate location]
 - a. What about a girl? [participant should place post-it "get married" in appropriate location]
 - b. When do boys usually get married in this area?
 - i. What about girls?
 - ii. What do you think about that?
 - c. How soon after a couple gets married should they become parents?
 - i. What would make it a good time? A bad time? Why?
 - ii. Let's say they've been married a year and don't yet have a child. How would their family react?
3. When do you think is the best time in a person's life to become a parent?
 - a. Is the time the same for boys and girls? [participant should place post-its "become parent" in appropriate location]
 - b. Is it important for a boy to be married before becoming a parent?
 - i. What about a girl?
 - c. What are the social consequences that happen to an unmarried girl when she becomes pregnant?
 - i. What happens to an unmarried boy if he gets a girl pregnant?
4. What FP, RH, and HIV services are currently available in this area?
 - a. How could the services be improved?
5. Do you think unmarried adolescent boys and girls should have access FP, RH, and HIV information?
 - a. What about FP, RH, and HIV services?
 - b. Why/why not?
6. Can adolescents get condoms here?
 - a. Where?
 - b. What do you think about that? Why?

CONTINUUM OF ACCEPTABLE/UNACCEPTABLE (20 minutes)

Purpose:

To understand attitudes toward violence

Materials:

- Flip chart paper
- Markers
- Blank Post-it notes
- Post-it notes with 6 action statements

Process:

Introduce the exercise: Now I would like to understand more about the different forms of violence that happen in this area and what you think about them.

1. Lay out a long roll of paper with “Acceptable/ok” written at one end and “Unacceptable/not ok” at the other end.
2. What are the different types of violence that happen in this area?” *(Write each example on a separate post-it note).*
 - a. *Probe about different types of violence that can take place inside the home, for example: violence between parents/guardians and children, between husband and wife, between siblings?*
 - b. *Probe about violence that takes place outside the home, for example: between friends, between teacher and student, between strangers, etc.*
 - c. *Be sure to probe about emotional (yelling, insulting, belittling etc.) physical (slapping, beating, kicking etc.) and sexual (coercive sex, rape, molestation) forms of violence*
3. After each situation or example has been put on a post-it note ask: where does this action fit on the acceptable/unacceptable line?
4. *After each situation or example has been placed on the continuum, ask participants to also place the following examples if they haven’t already been listed:*

Action statements:

- Using force to defend your reputation if someone insults you
 - A husband beating his wife if she disobeys him
 - A woman hitting her husband if he has sex with another woman
 - A father yelling at his daughter if she burns the food
 - A teacher hitting a student for disobeying
 - A mother yelling at her son for not showing respect
 - A husband forcing his wife to have sex when she does not want to
5. Would any of these actions be more acceptable if it was a boy or a girl experiencing it?
 - a. *Probe about 2-3, for example: would it be more or less acceptable for a husband to beat his wife than for a wife to beat her husband? Why or why not?*
 - b. *Would it be more acceptable or less acceptable for a father to yell at his daughter than for a father to yell at his son? Why or why not?*
 6. Would any of these actions be more acceptable if the person experiencing the violence was older/younger?
 - a. *[Probe about 2-3 of the forms of violence mentioned].*
 7. *[Ask about the items toward the unacceptable side of the continuum]:*
 - a. *Are there every any circumstances when this action is acceptable, even good?*
 - b. *How so? Tell me more.*
 8. Have any of these actions ever happened to someone you know, even you?
 - a. *What happened?*
 - b. *How did you feel about it?*
 9. What type of support is available to boys/men who experience violence?
 - a. *What about for girls/women?*
 - b. *(Probe about resources that are available for physical, emotional, and sexual violence)*

10. What form of violence are you most concerned about in this area?
 - a. Who does this happen to?
 - b. Why does it happen?
 - c. Where does this happen?
 - d. How often or frequently are these incidences?
 - e. Who carries out?
 - f. How do people in area view the victims? perpetrators? the act?
 - g. What does the community do about it?

11. What more do you think should be done to address violence in this area?
 - a. *(Probe about what various actors such as institutions, government, and the community can do)*

VALUES AND HOPES (10 minutes)

Purpose:

To understand the hopes and dreams that participants have for themselves, youth, and their community

Materials:

- None

Process

1. What is the most important advice that you could give to boys?
 - a. To girls?
 - b. Why?
2. What are your hopes for the boys in this area?
 - a. For the girls?
3. What values do you hope to share with young people?
4. What changes would you like to see in the ways that men and women relate to one another?

CLOSING (10 MINUTES)

1. Today we have talked about.... Is there any other topic you would like to discuss before we finish?
2. Do you have any recommendations for others who play important roles in the lives of young people?
3. How well prepared do you feel you are to support/advise the young people in your life?
 - a. Is there anything that could be done to make you feel better prepared?
4. Do you have any questions you want to ask me?
5. Thank you for sharing your views and your time.

IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW GUIDE WITH SIGNIFICANT OTHERS – PARENTS

(This guide is intended for significant others not in intimate relationships with the adolescent, that is, people who are not married to or in union with the referring adolescent)

INTRODUCTION

I am talking with people in the area to gather information to design a program to help young people grow up to be healthy, happy individuals and good partners and parents. I'd like to talk with you about your ideas about the needs of youth in this area and the best way to serve them.

Imagine that you are a teacher and I am your student. The answers that you provide to my questions will help me to learn from you. There are no right or wrong answers to any of these questions, so you should feel free to just tell me what is on your mind.

If you want, we can take a break at anytime. If there are any topics that you don't want to speak about you can just let me know and we will move on to a different one. I really appreciate that you are willing to spend this time with me to share your thoughts. Do you have any questions or concerns before we begin? Are you ready to begin?

SITUATING THE SIGNIFICANT OTHER (25 minutes)

Purpose:

To understand participants' experiences with and attitudes toward youth

Materials:

- None

Process:

1. Can you tell me a bit about yourself?
 - a. Who do you live with?
 - b. How long have you been living in this area?
 - c. What kind of work do you do?
2. We all influence the lives of others in one way or another, how do you think you have influenced the lives of a/some young people in this area?
3. Who influenced you the most when you were growing up?
 - a. In what way did this person influence you?
 - b. Who influences you the most now? In what way?
4. How does it feel being the _____ (father/mother/guardian) of a child who is in the 10-19 year old age range?
 - a. What do you find most rewarding?
 - b. What do you find most challenging?
5. Do you think that your parenting experience differs from the experience of your parents?
 - a. In what ways?
 - b. Why do you think this is?
6. Tell me about the time you spend with your child.
 - a. What do you do together?
 - b. How often do you spend time together?

7. What do you talk about with them?
 - a. Do you talk about their relationships with friends and others?
 - b. Do you talk about their romantic relationships?
 - c. Who usually starts these conversations?

8. Can you tell me about a time when you had to discipline a young person for misbehaving?
 - a. What are the different ways that children should be corrected when they do something wrong?

9. At what point do you consider a person an adult?
 - a. *Probe: If the respondent has a hard time coming up with an answer, probe for physical changes, roles in the family, peer relationships, development of romantic relationships, having a child, getting married, getting a job, moving out of parents home, death of parents.*

IDEAL MAN/WOMAN (30 minutes)

Purpose:

To understand gendered expectations, norms, and socialization processes

Materials:

- Plastic Animals

Process

Introduce the exercise:

Today, I would like to learn a little more about the men and women in this area and how you think they should behave. In order to do this we are going to play a game. As you can see, I have a lot of plastic animals on the table.

I am going to ask you to pick an animal that has the characteristics of an ideal man and woman in this area. By this I mean that I would like you to pick an animal that behaves the way you think all men or all women should behave. For example, if I were to pick an animal that represents the way I'd like my little brother to behave, I would pick a dog because dogs are very obedient, respectful, and they listen well and this is how I think my brother should be as well. Do you understand how this game works? Ok. Let's give it a try.

1. First, can you tell me about two people that you consider to be an ideal man and an ideal woman?
 - a. What about that man makes him an ideal man?
 - b. What about that woman makes her an ideal woman?

2. Now, I would like you pick two animals: one that represents the characteristics of an ideal man and one that represents the characteristics of an ideal woman.
 - a. In what way does the animal you chose represent the ideal man?
 - b. In what way does the animal you chose represent the ideal woman?

3. Can you describe someone you know who is not an ideal man?
 - a. Why do you think he is not an ideal man?
 - b. What made him become this way?

- c. How do people in this area feel about him?
 - d. How do you know that people feel that way about this man?
4. Can you describe someone you know who is not an ideal woman?
 - a. Why do you think she is not an ideal woman?
 - b. What made her become this way?
 - c. How do people in this area feel about her?
 - d. How do you know that people feel that way about this woman?
 5. What are the different ways that boys learn to become ideal men?
 6. What are the different ways that girls learn to become ideal women?
 7. What are some of the proverbs, songs, and poems that teach young people about the role and expectations of being an ideal man?
 - a. What about proverbs, songs, and poems that teach girls about being an ideal woman?
 8. In your opinion, how does the media (mobile phones, television, radio, newspaper, internet) influence young people?
 - a. What values do the media promote?
 - b. How does the media shape the values and attitudes of young people?
 - c. Do you agree with the values that the media promotes?
 9. What else do you think influences young people as they grow up here?
 - a. *Probe:* school, church, politics, town life, disease.....)
 10. Your community has gone through a lot of struggle and violence.
 - a. How has this affected the way boys and girls grow into men and women?
 - b. How has it affected the way men and women see themselves, their roles, and how they treat each other?
 11. I'm curious: Do you consider yourself to be an ideal man/woman?
 - a. Why or why not?
 - b. *[If they consider themselves an ideal man/woman]* What do you think it is about your life that has made you into an ideal man/woman?
 - c. *[If they do not consider themselves an ideal man/woman]* What do you think it is about your life that has made you different from an ideal man/woman?
 12. Ask the respondent to select one last animal that represents their ideal mate, the perfect person to marry. Assure them this isn't representative of WHO they married but rather what they view as the perfect partner.
 - a. How is that animal like the perfect mate?
 - b. *If married:* How is your husband/wife like that animal, the perfect mate?
 - i. How is your husband/wife different from that perfect mate?

- ii. What do you wish you knew now about husbands/wives that you didn't know when you got married?

BREAK (5 Minutes)

Let's take a small break now.

REPRODUCTIVE AND SEXUAL HEALTH (30 minutes)

Purpose:

To understand beliefs about marriage, sex, and reproduction

Materials:

- Flip chart with timeline, of ages 0 to 30 with 5 year increments marked (i.e. 0, 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30)
- Post-it notes of different colors (one color for boys, one color for girls) with the following statements written on them in advance:
 - First interested in sex
 - Ready for girlfriend/boyfriend
 - Sex for the first time
 - Get married
 - Become Parent

Process:

Introduce the exercise: Now I would like to talk with you now about the reproductive and sexual health of young people. As you can see, I have a timeline here that represents the life of a young person. Above the line, will represent a girl's life and below the line will represent a boy's life. I would like you to post the answer to each question I give you on the time line.

1. At what age do you think boys are first interested in sex? *[have participant place the post-it with the statement: "first interested in sex" near the age below the timeline]*
 - a. In what way is a child that age interested in sex?
 - b. What does he do to satisfy his curiosity?
 - c. What about for girls? At what age are girls first interested in sex? *[have participant place a post-it with the statement: "first interested in sex" near the age above the timeline]*
 - d. In what way is she interested in sex at that age?
 - e. What does she do to satisfy her curiosity?
2. At what age do you think a boy is old enough to have his first girlfriend? *[have participant place a post-it with the statement: "ready for girlfriend/boyfriend" near the age below the timeline]*
 - a. Why is he old enough at that age?
 - b. At what age are girls old enough to have a boyfriend? *[have participant place a post-it with the statement: "ready for girlfriend/boyfriend" near the age above the timeline]*
 - c. How are girls and boys different in this regard?
3. At what age do boys usually have sex for the first time? *[repeat same process with post-it note labeled "sex for first time"]*
 - a. Do they choose to have sex?
 - b. What about for girls?

- i. At what age do girls usually have sex? *[participant should place post-it "sex for first time" in appropriate location]*
 - ii. Do they choose to have sex?
 - c. Are there ever occasions when young people are coerced or forced to have sex (girls and boys)?
2. When do you think is the best time for a boy to get married? *[participant should place post-it "get married" in appropriate location]*
 - a. What about a girl? *[participant should place post-it "get married" in appropriate location]*
 - b. When do boys usually get married in this area?
 - i. What about girls?
 - ii. What do you think about that?
 - c. How soon after a couple gets married should they become parents?
 - i. What would make it a good time? A bad time? Why?
 - ii. Let's say they've been married a year and don't yet have a child. How would their family react?
3. When do you think is the best time in a person's life to become a parent?
 - a. Is the time the same for boys and girls? *[participant should place post-its "become parent" in appropriate location]*
 - b. Is it important for a boy to be married before becoming a parent?
 - i. What about a girl?
 - c. What are the social consequences that happen to an unmarried girl when she becomes pregnant?
 - i. What happens to an unmarried boy if he gets a girl pregnant?
4. What FP, RH, and HIV services are currently available in this area?
 - a. How could the services be improved?
5. Do you think unmarried adolescent boys and girls should have access FP, RH, and HIV information?
 - a. What about FP, RH, and HIV services?
 - b. Why/why not?
6. Can adolescents get condoms here?
 - a. Where?
 - b. What do you think about that? Why?

CONTINUUM OF ACCEPTABLE/UNACCEPTABLE (20 minutes)

Purpose:
To understand attitudes toward violence

- Materials:**
- Flip chart paper
 - Markers
 - Blank Post-it notes
 - Post-it notes with 6 action statements

Process:

Introduce the exercise: Now I would like to understand more about the different forms of violence that happen in this area and what you think about them.

1. Lay out a long roll of paper with "Acceptable/ok" written at one end and "Unacceptable/not ok" at the other end.
2. What are the different types of violence that happen in this area?" (*Write each example on a separate post-it note*).
 - a. *Probe about different types of violence that can take place inside the home, for example: violence between parents/guardians and children, between husband and wife, between siblings?*
 - b. *Probe about violence that takes place outside the home, for example: between friends, between teacher and student, between strangers, etc.*
 - c. *Be sure to probe about emotional (yelling, insulting, belittling etc.) physical (slapping, beating, kicking etc.) and sexual (coercive sex, rape, molestation) forms of violence*
3. After each situation or example has been put on a post-it note ask: where does this action fit on the acceptable/unacceptable line?
4. *After each situation or example has been placed on the continuum, ask participants to also place the following examples if they haven't already been listed:*

Action statements:

- Using force to defend your reputation if someone insults you
 - A husband beating his wife if she disobeys him
 - A woman hitting her husband if he has sex with another woman
 - A father yelling at his daughter if she burns the food
 - A teacher hitting a student for disobeying
 - A mother yelling at her son for not showing respect
 - A husband forcing his wife to have sex when she does not want to
5. Would any of these actions be more acceptable if it was a boy or a girl experiencing it?
 - a. *Probe about 2-3, for example:* would it be more or less acceptable for a husband to beat his wife than for a wife to beat her husband? Why or why not?
 - b. Would it be more acceptable or less acceptable for a father to yell at his daughter than for a father to yell at his son? Why or why not?
 6. Would any of these actions be more acceptable if the person experiencing the violence was older/younger?
 - a. *[Probe about 2-3 of the forms of violence mentioned].*
 7. *[Ask about the items toward the unacceptable side of the continuum]:*
 - a. Are there every any circumstances when this action is acceptable, even good?
 - b. How so? Tell me more.
 8. Have any of these actions ever happened to someone you know, even you?
 - a. What happened?
 - b. How did you feel about it?

9. What type of support is available to boys/men who experience violence?
 - a. What about for girls/women?
 - b. *(Probe about resources that are available for physical, emotional, and sexual violence)*

10. What form of violence are you most concerned about in this area?
 - a. Who does this happen to?
 - b. Why does it happen?
 - c. Where does this happen?
 - d. How often or frequently are these incidences?
 - e. Who carries out?
 - f. How do people in area view the victims? perpetrators? the act?
 - g. What does the community do about it?

11. What more do you think should be done to address violence in this area?
 - a. *(Probe about what various actors such as institutions, government, and the community can do)*

VALUES AND HOPES (10 minutes)

Purpose:

To understand the hopes and dreams that participants have for themselves, youth, and their community

Materials:

- None

Process

1. What is the most important advice that you could give to boys?
 - a. To girls?
 - b. Why?
2. What are your hopes for your children?
 - a. What about for other boys and girls in this area?
3. What values do you hope to share with young people?
4. What changes would you like to see in the ways that men and women relate to one another?

CLOSING (10 MINUTES)

1. Today we have talked about.... Is there any other topic you would like to discuss before we finish?
2. Do you have any recommendations for others who play important roles in the lives of young people?
3. How well prepared do you feel you are to support/advise the young people in your life?
 - a. Is there anything that could be done to make you feel better prepared?
4. Do you have any questions you want to ask me?
5. Thank you for sharing your views and your time.

IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW GUIDE WITH SIGNIFICANT OTHERS – PEERS

(This guide is intended for significant others not in intimate relationships with the adolescent, that is, people who are not married to or in union with the referring adolescent)

INTRODUCTION

I am talking with people in the area to gather information to design a program to help young people grow up to be healthy, happy individuals and good partners and parents. I'd like to talk with you about your ideas about the needs of youth in this area and the best way to serve them.

Imagine that you are a teacher and I am your student. The answers that you provide to my questions will help me to learn from you. There are no right or wrong answers to any of these questions, so you should feel free to just tell me what is on your mind.

If you want, we can take a break at anytime. If there are any topics that you don't want to speak about you can just let me know and we will move on to a different one. I really appreciate that you are willing to spend this time with me to share your thoughts. Do you have any questions or concerns before we begin? Are you ready to begin?

SITUATING THE SIGNIFICANT OTHER (25 minutes)

Purpose:

To understand participants' experiences with and attitudes toward youth

Materials:

- None

Process:

1. Can you tell me a bit about yourself?
 - a. Who do you live with?
 - b. How long have you been living in this area?
 - c. Are you in school or do you work?
 - i. What kind of work do you do?
2. We all influence the lives of others in one way or another, how do you think you influence the lives of another/other young person/people in your community?
 - a. Tell me more, help me better understand
3. Do other young people come to you to talk about things that are important to them?
 - a. What do they want to talk about?
 - b. What do they need help with?
 - c. Do you talk to both boys and girls?
 - d. If so, what do you talk about with each?
 - e. How are your conversations similar or different?
4. Is there any topic that you find difficult to talk about?
 - a. Can you tell me about that (probe: romantic relationships, sex, violence, abuse)?
 - b. Do you think it is easier to talk with other boys or girls? Why?
5. At what point do you consider a person an adult?
 - a. *Probe: If the respondent has a hard time coming up with an answer, probe for physical changes, roles in the family, peer relationships, development of romantic relationships, having a child, getting*

married, getting a job, moving out of parents home, death of parents.

IDEAL MAN/WOMAN (30 minutes)

Purpose:

To understand gendered expectations, norms, and socialization processes

Materials:

- Plastic Animals

Process

Introduce the exercise:

Today, I would like to learn a little more about the men and women in this area and how you think they should behave. In order to do this we are going to play a game. As you can see, I have a lot of plastic animals on the table.

I am going to ask you to pick an animal that has the characteristics of an ideal man and woman in this area. By this I mean that I would like you to pick an animal that behaves the way you think all men or all women should behave. For example, if I were to pick an animal that represents the way I'd like my little brother to behave, I would pick a dog because dogs are very obedient, respectful, and they listen well and this is how I think my brother should be as well. Do you understand how this game works? Ok. Let's give it a try.

1. First, can you tell me about two people that you consider to be an ideal man and an ideal woman?
 - a. What about that man makes him an ideal man?
 - b. What about that woman makes her an ideal woman?
2. Now, I would like you pick two animals: one that represents the characteristics of an ideal man and one that represents the characteristics of an ideal woman.
 - a. In what way does the animal you chose represent the ideal man?
 - b. In what way does the animal you chose represent the ideal woman?
3. Can you describe someone you know who is not an ideal man?
 - a. Why do you think he is not an ideal man?
 - b. What made him become this way?
 - c. How do people in this area feel about him?
 - d. How do you know that people feel that way about this man?
4. Can you describe someone you know who is not an ideal woman?
 - a. Why do you think she is not an ideal woman?
 - b. What made her become this way?
 - c. How do people in this area feel about her?
 - d. How do you know that people feel that way about this woman?
5. What are the different ways that boys learn to become ideal men?

6. What are the different ways that girls learn to become ideal women?
7. What are some of the proverbs, songs, and poems that teach young people about the role and expectations of being an ideal man?
 - a. What about proverbs, songs, and poems that teach girls about being an ideal woman?
8. In your opinion, how does the media (mobile phones, television, radio, newspaper, internet) influence young people?
 - a. What values do the media promote?
 - b. How does the media shape the values and attitudes of young people?
 - c. Do you agree with the values that the media promotes?
9. What else do you think influences young people as they grow up here?
 - a. *Probe:* school, church, politics, town life, disease.....)
10. Your community has gone through a lot of struggle and violence.
 - a. How has this affected the way boys and girls grow into men and women?
 - b. How has it affected the way men and women see themselves, their roles, and how they treat each other?
11. I'm curious: Do you consider yourself to be an ideal man/woman?
 - a. Why or why not?
 - b. *[If they consider themselves an ideal man/woman]* What do you think it is about your life that has made you into an ideal man/woman?
 - c. *[If they do not consider themselves an ideal man/woman]* What do you think it is about your life that has made you different from an ideal man/woman?
12. Ask the respondent to select one last animal that represents their ideal mate, the perfect person to marry. Assure them this isn't representative of WHO they married but rather what they view as the perfect partner.
 - a. How is that animal like the perfect mate?
 - b. *If married:* How is your husband/wife like that animal, the perfect mate?
 - i. How is your husband/wife different from that perfect mate?
 - ii. What do you wish you knew now about husbands/wives that you didn't know when you got married?

BREAK (5 Minutes)

Let's take a small break now.

REPRODUCTIVE AND SEXUAL HEALTH (30 minutes)

Purpose:

To understand beliefs about marriage, sex, and reproduction

Materials:

- Flip chart with timeline, of ages 0 to 30 with 5 year increments marked (i.e. 0, 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30)
- Post-it notes of different colors (one color for boys, one color for girls) with the following statements written on them in advance:
 - First interested in sex
 - Ready for girlfriend/boyfriend
 - Sex for the first time
 - Get married
 - Become Parent

Process:

Introduce the exercise: Now I would like to talk with you now about the reproductive and sexual health of young people. As you can see, I have a timeline here that represents the life of a young person. Above the line, will represent a girl's life and below the line will represent a boy's life. I would like you to post the answer to each question I give you on the time line.

1. At what age do you think boys are first interested in sex? [have participant place the post-it with the statement: "first interested in sex" near the age below the timeline]
 - a. In what way is a child that age interested in sex?
 - b. What does he do to satisfy his curiosity?
 - c. What about for girls? At what age are girls first interested in sex? [have participant place a post-it with the statement: "first interested in sex" near the age above the timeline]
 - d. In what way is she interested in sex at that age?
 - e. What does she do to satisfy her curiosity?
2. At what age do you think a boy is old enough to have his first girlfriend? [have participant place a post-it with the statement: "ready for girlfriend/boyfriend" near the age below the timeline]
 - a. Why is he old enough at that age?
 - b. At what age are girls old enough to have a boyfriend? [have participant place a post-it with the statement: "ready for girlfriend/boyfriend" near the age above the timeline]
 - c. How are girls and boys different in this regard?
3. At what age do boys usually have sex for the first time? [repeat same process with post-it note labeled "sex for first time"]
 - a. Do they choose to have sex?
 - b. What about for girls?
 - i. At what age do girls usually have sex? [participant should place post-it "sex for first time" in appropriate location]
 - ii. Do they choose to have sex?
 - c. Are there ever occasions when young people are coerced or forced to have sex (girls and boys)?

2. When do you think is the best time for a boy to get married? *[participant should place post-it "get married" in appropriate location]*
 - a. What about a girl? *[participant should place post-it "get married" in appropriate location]*
 - b. When do boys usually get married in this area?
 - i. What about girls?
 - ii. What do you think about that?
 - c. How soon after a couple gets married should they become parents?
 - i. What would make it a good time? A bad time? Why?
 - ii. Let's say they've been married a year and don't yet have a child. How would their family react?
3. When do you think is the best time in a person's life to become a parent?
 - a. Is the time the same for boys and girls? *[participant should place post-its "become parent" in appropriate location]*
 - b. Is it important for a boy to be married before becoming a parent?
 - i. What about a girl?
 - c. What are the social consequences that happen to an unmarried girl when she becomes pregnant?
 - i. What happens to an unmarried boy if he gets a girl pregnant?
4. What FP, RH, and HIV services are currently available in this area?
 - a. How could the services be improved?
5. Do you think unmarried adolescent boys and girls should have access FP, RH, and HIV information?
 - a. What about FP, RH, and HIV services?
 - b. Why/why not?
6. Can adolescents get condoms here?
 - a. Where?
 - b. What do you think about that? Why?

CONTINUUM OF ACCEPTABLE/UNACCEPTABLE (20 minutes)

Purpose:

To understand attitudes toward violence

Materials:

- Flip chart paper
- Markers
- Blank Post-it notes
- Post-it notes with 6 action statements

Process:

Introduce the exercise: Now I would like to understand more about the different forms of violence that happen in this area and what you think about them.

1. Lay out a long roll of paper with “Acceptable/ok” written at one end and “Unacceptable/not ok” at the other end.
2. What are the different types of violence that happen in this area?” (*Write each example on a separate post-it note*).
 - a. *Probe about different types of violence that can take place inside the home, for example: violence between parents/guardians and children, between husband and wife, between siblings?*
 - b. *Probe about violence that takes place outside the home, for example: between friends, between teacher and student, between strangers, etc.*
 - c. *Be sure to probe about emotional (yelling, insulting, belittling etc.) physical (slapping, beating, kicking etc.) and sexual (coercive sex, rape, molestation) forms of violence*
3. After each situation or example has been put on a post-it note ask: where does this action fit on the acceptable/unacceptable line?
4. *After each situation or example has been placed on the continuum, ask participants to also place the following examples if they haven’t already been listed:*

Action statements:

- Using force to defend your reputation if someone insults you
 - A husband beating his wife if she disobeys him
 - A woman hitting her husband if he has sex with another woman
 - A father yelling at his daughter if she burns the food
 - A teacher hitting a student for disobeying
 - A mother yelling at her son for not showing respect
5. Would any of these actions be more acceptable if it was a boy or a girl experiencing it?
 - a. *Probe about 2-3, for example: would it be more or less acceptable for a husband to beat his wife than for a wife to beat her husband? Why or why not?*
 - b. *Would it be more acceptable or less acceptable for a father to yell at his daughter than for a father to yell at his son? Why or why not?*
 6. Would any of these actions be more acceptable if the person experiencing the violence was older/younger?
 - a. *[Probe about 2-3 of the forms of violence mentioned].*
 7. *[Ask about the items toward the unacceptable side of the continuum]:*
 - a. *Are there every any circumstances when this action is acceptable, even good?*
 - b. *How so? Tell me more.*
 8. Have any of these actions ever happened to someone you know, even you?
 - a. *What happened?*
 - b. *How did you feel about it?*
 9. What type of support is available to boys/men who experience violence?
 - a. *What about for girls/women?*
 - b. *(Probe about resources that are available for physical, emotional, and sexual violence)*
 10. What form of violence are you most concerned about in this area?

- a. Who does this happen to?
- b. Why does it happen?
- c. Where does this happen?
- d. How often or frequently are these incidences?
- e. Who carries out?
- f. How do people in area view the victims? perpetrators? the act?
- g. What does the community do about it?

11. What more do you think should be done to address violence in this area?

- a. *(Probe about what various actors such as institutions, government, and the community can do)*

VALUES AND HOPES (10 minutes)

Purpose:

To understand the hopes and dreams that participants have for themselves, youth, and their community

Materials:

- None

Process

1. What is the most important advice that you could give to boys?
 - a. To girls?
 - b. Why?
2. What are your hopes for the boys in this area?
 - a. For the girls?
3. What values do you hope to share with young people?
4. What changes would you like to see in the ways that men and women relate to one another?

CLOSING (10 MINUTES)

1. Today we have talked about.... Is there any other topic you would like to discuss before we finish?
2. Do you have any recommendations for others who play important roles in the lives of young people?
3. How well prepared do you feel you are to support/advise the young people in your life?
 - a. Is there anything that could be done to make you feel better prepared?
4. Do you have any questions you want to ask me?
5. Thank you for sharing your views and your time.

Glossary

Agency – Individuals construct their own life course through the choices and actions they take within the opportunities and constraints of history and social circumstances (Elder and Giele 2009, 10). The planning and choices individuals make, within the particular limitations of their context, can have important consequences for future trajectories.

Linked lives – The life course perspective recognizes that lives are lived interdependently and socio-historical influences are expressed through this network of shared relationships. (Elder and Giele 2009,13).

Timing – The developmental antecedents and consequences of life transitions, events and behavioral patterns vary according to their timing in a person's life. Leaving the parental home, entering marriage or a cohabitating relationship or becoming a parent have different consequences if they occur early, late or "on time" according to normative expectations.

Turning points – Turning points are specific events or milestones that substantially alter the direction and/or slope of a life trajectory. Turning points are often described as "defining moments" or "watershed experiences" There is a general expectation that turning points will affect specific outcomes. (Elder and Giele 2009, 169).

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