DISPLACED SEXUALITY

A STUDY OF GENDER RELATIONS AND SEXUAL GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE IN THE CONTEXT OF DISPLACEMENT IN NORTHERN UGANDA

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Master Thesis in Development Management

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Abstract

There are many barriers to human development; gender inequality is generally acknowledged to be one of these. In the patriarchal and displaced society of the Acholi in Northern Uganda, this inequality has for decades been played out directly on the bodies of girls and women. As females, many have experienced Sexual-Gender Based Violence (SGBV), whether in physically forceful ways such as rape and forced sex by intimate partners, or in structurally forceful ways such as transactional sex for subsistence.

This thesis examines SGBV in post-conflict Gulu and Amuru districts in Northern Uganda from an endogenous perspective. Fieldwork was carried out in six different camps for internally displaced persons in Gulu and Amuru from October to December 2009. A qualitative research methodology, based on semi-structured in-depth interviews and focus group dicussions provides the research framework of the study.

Through an exploration of local perceptions on how gender relations have been affected by displacement, as well as an assessment of how internally displaced men and women in the region talk about rape, forced sex between intimate partners and transactional sex, the thesis sheds light on some of the causes and circumstances in which SGBV occurs. Finally, through knowledge of the context studied, we attempt to pinpoint the ways in which SGBV can be prevented. We argue that SGBV can be attributed to the interplay of factors on three levels: on an individual level, on the contextual level of displacement, and on the overarching structural level of patriarchy. Attempts to prevent SGBV should therefore consider this interplay of factors, closely bearing in mind how individual factors are inextricably bound up with structural factors and how victimisation is inextricably bound up with agency. The importance of addressing gender relations and adapting policies to the local cultural context is also emphasised throughout our study.

Foreword

This thesis is a collaborative venture between two students of Development Management; Borghild Berge and Christina Milsom. Our interest in collaborating on this project arose on a study trip to Sri Lanka in May 2009. Following positive experience collaborating on academic work in previous group assignments in our Master's programme, we saw the possibility to collaborate on our thesis work as a great opportunity. Our previous academic backgrounds – Christina's in Social Anthropology and Borghild's in Journalism and Development Studies – have been mutually enriching through our collaboration, and we have been able to draw on aspects of these disciplines throughout our fieldwork and writing up phases.

Our familiarity with the topic of Sexual Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) arose as a consequence of our general interest in gender issues and the position of women in Africa, as well as Norwegian and international efforts to raise awareness about the phenomenon, believed to be more common in conflict or post-conflict settings such as Northern Uganda (IASC 2005; NRC 2007). In the words of Norwegian Jan Egeland, former UN Under-Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs: 'If sexual violence is not fully addressed in ceasefires and peace processes, there will be no peace for women' (UNIFEM 2009:1).

We believe that our thesis has benefited greatly from our collaboration. There are numerous elements related to SGBV, and we believe we have been able to shed light upon more aspects than we would have singlehandedly. Moreover, supporting each other in the field and throughout the writing of the paper has increased motivation. As both of us have previous experience living in Africa, East Africa in particular, we also avoided what many experience as 'culture shock' in the field, as we were familiar with many of the common social codes in advance.

Our chapter division has been as follows: We have collaborated in writing chapters 1, 2, 5, 8 and 9. Borghild has been primarily responsible for chapters 3 and 7, and Christina has been primarily responsible for chapters 4 and 6. We have, however, continuously provided each other with constructive criticism and incorporated each other's comments in the chapters we have been responsible for throughout the paper.

Acknowledgements

List of Abbreviations

AI	Amnesty International
AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
ARC	American Refugee Committee
ARV	Antiretroviral
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CoE	Council of Europe
EVI	Extremely Vulnerable Individual
FCF	Free Choice First
GAD	Gender and Development
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GDNGOF	Gulu District NGO Forum
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HSM	Holy Spirit Movement
IASC	Inter Agency Standing Committee
ICC	International Criminal Court
ICLA	Information Counselling & Legal Assistance
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IDMC	Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre
ILO	International Labour Organization
IRIN	Integrated Regional Information Networks
LIGI	Liu Institute for Global Issues
LRA	Lord's Resistance Army
MSF	Médecins Sans Frontières
NCA	Norwegian Church Aid
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NRA	National Resistance Army
NRC	Norwegian Refugee Council
NRM	National Resistance Movement
ODA	Overseas Development Assistance
PPP	Purchasing Power Parity
REI	Race/Ethnicity/Imperialism
RHRC	Reproductive Health Response in Conflict Consortium
SEF	Sexual Equality First
SGBV	Sexual Gender-Based Violence
STD	Sexually Transmitted Disease
STI	Sexually Transmitted Infection
TASO	The AIDS Support Organisation
UBOS	Uganda Bureau of Statistics
ULRC	Uganda Law Reform Commission
UN	United Nations
UNAIDS	United Nations Joint Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNOCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

UNSC   United Nations Security Council
UNSCR   United Nations Security Council Resolution
UPDA   Uganda People's Democratic Army
UPDF   Uganda People's Defence Force
WCRWC   Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children
WFP   World Food Programme
WID   Women in Development
WHO   World Health Organization

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Chapter 1:   Introduction

Globally, sexual gender-based violence (SGBV) is a major threat to women's participation in development efforts (NCA 2008:x). This thesis examines SGBV in the context of displacement in the post-conflict districts of Gulu and Amuru in Northern Uganda. 22 years of civil war in the region between the rebel group the Lord's Resistance Army and the Government of Uganda have left their mark on the Acholi people of Northern Uganda. According to the Liu Institute for Global Issues (LIGI) and the Gulu District NGO Forum (GDNGOF) (2007:2), 'the consequences of disorder and violence have fallen disproportionately upon the women and children of Acholi-land'. Due to the social and economic insecurity brought on by the war, many internally displaced girls and women have been raped or forced into sex by both soldiers, camp dwellers and intimate partners, and some have been driven to engage in transactional sex – the exchange of sex for money, goods or services (IASC 2005; Hentonnen et al. 2008:22). The developmental implications of sexual violence are significant (NCA 2008; Johnson 2009:2), which makes the SGBV phenomenon a cause of great concern.

This study explores the perspectives of women, men and NGO professionals on rape, forced sex between intimate partners and transactional sex, and their perceptions on how displacement has affected gender relations. Finally, the study assesses management strategies through which SGBV can be prevented.

1.1   Background and Rationale

Sexual violence in conflict and post-conflict settings is increasingly being placed on the international development agenda. Worldwide, at least one in three women is reported to have been physically or sexually abused during their lifetime (Heise et al., cited in IASC 2005:3). Sexual violence is not limited to developing countries. However, it is believed to be more common here, and although disputed by Allen (2006:58), reports indicate that the vulnerability of women to sexual violence particularly increases in emergency settings or in contexts of displacement (IASC 2005; NRC 2007; El-Bushra & Sahl 2005).

The International Criminal Court (ICC) defines sexual violence as an umbrella term that covers various abuses, some of which include 'rape, sexual mutilation, forced pregnancy and prostitution, and non-penetrating sexual assault' (ICC 2000:6). While this definition may obscure the aspect of voluntarism present in many cases of prostitution, or – transactional sex – it is useful as it takes into account the forced aspect of transactional sex for economic necessity that many women in displacement settings experience. The ICC (2000:6) goes on to state that sexual violence 'should not be confused with the broader term gender-based violence, with the latter meaning violence committed due to the victim's gender but not necessarily with any form of sexual contact.'

Sexual violence can, however, be gender-based, and sexual gender-based violence (SGBV) may be a more helpful term as it considers the 'gender dimension of these types of acts; in other words, the relationship between females' subordinate status in society and their increased vulnerability to violence' (IASC 2005:7). Although men may also be victims of sexual violence (IASC 2005:7) and may prostitute themselves for subsistence, this thesis focuses on sexual violence against women and girls and female forced prostitution,

henceforth collectively referred to as SGBV. Through rape, forced sex by intimate partners and transactional sex, women may experience trauma and social stigmatisation, unwanted pregnancies, infanticide and sexually transmitted diseases like HIV/AIDS (IASC 2005:4). As Norwegian Church Aid (NCA) (2008:x) states, gender-based violence 'has been identified as a foremost hindrance to women's involvement and participation not only on matters relating to peace and security but also in the overall development of their communities.' This is particularly the case in war-torn communities such as Northern Uganda, where education has been largely absent (Dolan 2009:135), community support structures such as the clan system have broken down (El-Bushra and Sahl 2005:19) and the judicial infrastructure is weak and corrupt (ULRC 2000) – thus making women more vulnerable to SGBV. In order for sustainable development to be promoted, a gender sensitive approach that acknowledges the many contributing factors to SGBV and aims to prevent them is necessary.

This study was undertaken in six camps for Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in Gulu and Amuru districts, part of the Acholi sub-region or 'Acholiland'. Acholiland comprises four of the northernmost districts in Uganda; Kitgum, Pader, Gulu and Amuru. For feasibility purposes, this study is primarily concerned with the Acholi people of Gulu and Amuru. In the area, rape, forced sex between intimate partners and forced prostitution (labelled in this study as transactional sex) have been rampant, particularly during the heights of displacement. UNICEF (2005) estimates, for example, that 'at least 60 percent of women in the largest camp for internally displaced persons (IDPs) in war-torn northern Uganda have encountered some form of sexual and domestic violence'. However, the 'actual incidence of sexually inappropriate behaviour is estimated to be much higher than the cases reported' (UNICEF 2005:1). Furthermore, the exclusion of transactional sex in many definitions of what constitutes sexual violence is likely to make the incidence of sexual violence even higher, as selling sex in exchange for material gain or services has emerged as a coping strategy for women who struggle to make ends meet in the aftermath of armed conflict (WCRWC & UNPFA 2007; IASC 2005).

Few international in-depth studies have attempted to link attitudes toward various forms of sexual violence, including transactional sex, to gender relations in a context of displacement. In fact, since the adoption of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 in 2000, which emphasises women's particular vulnerability in conflict situations, a disproportionate amount of the literature on gender and violence has focused on women. The exclusion of the male perspective has, in many cases, been to the detriment of men (Dolan 2009:203; Gilbert 2006:9), which in some cases has culminated in increasing cases of male sexual violence towards women (Kalyango , cited in Lende 2010:42). It is therefore important to study people's perceptions of how displacement has affected gender relations, and, in turn, cases of SGBV. Indeed, an assessment of gender relations and not solely the experience of women is crucial when attempting to understand the contributing factors and attitudes to SGBV, as well as the ways in which such acts can be prevented. This is a complex topic, and we believe a thorough treatment of it will benefit from the combined efforts of two researchers. Both the fieldwork, data analysis and writing phases have therefore been a collaborative project.

1.2   Objective

The main objective of this study is to explore sexual gender-based violence among internally displaced women and girls in post-conflict Gulu and Amuru Districts, Northern Uganda, from an endogenous perspective. Firstly, perceptions of how gender relations have changed since

displacement will be scrutinised. Secondly, men and women's attitudes towards rape, forced sex between intimate partners and transactional sex will be explored. Finally, we aim to identify management strategies that may be employed to prevent sexual gender-based violence in Northern Uganda.

1.3 Research Questions

1) What perceptions do IDPs in Gulu and Amuru and NGO professionals have of the impact of displacement on gender relations?

2) How do IDPs in Gulu and Amuru talk about the rape of women and girls, forced sex between intimate partners and transactional sex?

3) How can knowledge of the above shed light on management strategies that can be employed to prevent sexual gender-based violence towards women and girls in Gulu and Amuru districts?

1.4 Methodology

The study was carried out from mid-October to mid-December 2009 in six IDP camps (Amuru, Awer, Keyo, Lacor, Unyama and Pabbo) in Gulu and Amuru districts of Northern Uganda. NGO professionals and representatives from the Local Government working with SGBV in these districts were also consulted. A qualitative approach was selected as the most appropriate way to answer the research questions, (cf. chapter 5). The methods used included focus group discussions and semi-structured in-depth interviews of IDP women, men and NGO professionals.

1.5 Outline of the Thesis

Chapter 2 describes the contextual background of the region under study. After discussing the conflict and the current IDP situation in Northern Uganda, it examines the culture of the Acholi people, with particular reference to gender relations and how they have been affected by displacement.

Chapter 3 explores different theories of gender and sexuality, and how they relate to development. Feminist theories are explored in particular. The chapter also discusses the transferability of dominant gender theories to Africa and the Acholi context.

Chapter 4 is a continuation of the theoretical framework of the study, and focuses on the SGBV phenomenon, its prevalence in Africa and in IDP camps in Northern Uganda from a more practical perspective. Examining theories of the factors contributing to SGBV, the chapter also seeks to assess some of the ways in which SGBV can be prevented.

Chapter 5 is a description and critical discussion of the methodology used to collect and analyse data in this study.

Chapters 6 to 8 present the empirical findings of this study. Data analysis and interpretation are structured according to the research questions. Chapter 6 presents respondents' perceptions of the impact of displacement on gender relations. Chapter 7 explores IDP men and women's views on rape, forced sex between intimate partners and transactional sex, with individual accounts exemplifying experiences of SGBV. Chapter 8 discusses how the findings of Chapter 6 and 7 can shed light on management strategies that can be employed to prevent SGBV towards women and girls in Gulu and Amuru.

Chapter 9 summarises our findings and is the conclusion of the thesis.

Chapter 2:   Contextual Background

In order to understand the phenomenon of SGBV in Northern Uganda, it is of great importance to explore the context in which this takes place. This chapter begins by providing a brief background to Uganda, before investigating the complexities surrounding the enduring conflict in the North, including the IDP situation. Finally, gender relations among the Acholi are examined in order to shed more light on the link between displacement and SGBV.

2.1   Uganda

Figure 2.1   Map of Uganda

Country Facts
(CIA 2010)

- Population: 32.4 million
- Population growth rate: 2.6 %
- Fertility rate: 6.77 children/woman
- Life expectancy at birth: 52.72 years
- HIV/AIDS prevalence rate: 6.4% (UNAIDS & WHO 2009)
- GDP per capita (PPP): $1300
- Population below poverty line: 35%

Uganda is a land-locked country in the heart of Africa, bordering Rwanda, Tanzania, Kenya, Sudan and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The country became a British protectorate in 1894, with a great number of ethnic groups living within its colonial boundaries (CIA 2010). The British colonists introduced a divide-and-rule strategy, and various ethnic groups were favoured for certain activities, e.g. the Baganda of the South for agriculture and the Acholi of the North for security. Consequently, no ethnic group had both military and economic power at the same time, hence 'discourses of ethnic difference were established which live on to this day', argues Chris Dolan (2009:41f), Director of the Refugee Law Project at the University of Makerere. Religion also came to play an important role in Ugandan politics; the political parties introduced prior to independence in 1962 were based on

religious and ethnic divisions. According to Swedish anthropologist Sverker Finnström (2008:38), these divisions were made much more rigid through colonial practices. With reference to Churchill's depiction of Uganda as the 'Pearl of Africa', the country has therefore been described as a 'fragmented pearl' (O'Brien 1997, cited in Dolan 2009:42).

With reference to the above quotations, it appears that a lot of post-colonial literature on Uganda upholds a type of essentialism about the 'pureness' of Ugandan society before the advent of colonialism. Indeed, pre-colonial Uganda is portrayed as inherently pure and peaceful, free from religious and ethnic divisions or the conflicts these engendered. This view is questionable, however, as Professor Adam Branch (2008) and Hountondji (1996, cited in Branch 2008) have espoused. Hountondji (1996, cited in Branch 2008:5) criticises the tendency of a lot of 'ethnophilosophy' to portray pre-colonial Africa as 'immutable, ahistorical and inert', with a 'refusal to accept that a non-Western society could contain a plurality of opinions that might conceivably diverge'. Such narratives ignore:

> 'a century of extensive, extremely violent conflict and upheaval that preceded the advent of British colonialism, a period not of primitive harmony and cultural purity, but of destructive foreign incursion, slave raiding, and internecine warfare with modern weaponry' (Hountondji, cited in Branch 2008:13).

As a consequence of neglecting social divisions and conflicts preceding the colonial era, scholars portray the image that change in non-Western cultures is not possible from within, but only from the outside (Hountondji 1996, cited in Branch 2008:5), from whence religious and ethnic divisions are believed to have been created in the first place. As Branch (2008:9) puts it, 'through its reification, ethnophilosophy serves certain ideological purposes and can be manipulated so as to serve certain political purposes.' In our study of sexual gender-based violence in Northern Uganda and the ways in which this can be prevented, it is important not to attribute all sources of conflict and devastation to outsiders, lest SGBV be viewed as a foreign phenomenon requiring foreign solutions (cf. chapter 8.2).

However, while it is important to be aware of the possible weaknesses of post-colonial academia, it is simultaneously crucial to consider the overarching socio-political history in which our study takes place. During the 1970s and 1980s, Uganda was infamous for human rights abuses; it is estimated that at least 300 000 opponents were killed during the despotic regime of Idi Amin (1971-1979), giving him the nickname 'the butcher' (Quinn 2008:56). Furthermore, at least another 100.000 people lost their lives during the second Milton Obote period from 1980 to 1985. Since his rise to presidency in 1986, Yoweri Museveni has initiated democratic reforms, and in recent years the overall economic performance of the country has improved. Uganda has considerable natural resources, such as fertile soils, copper, gold and other minerals, and oil has recently been discovered. Still, agriculture continues to be the principal economic sector, employing more than 80 percent of the Ugandan work force (CIA 2010).

Under Museveni's rule the majority of Ugandans have also experienced relative political stability, with the notable exception being Northern Uganda (CIA 2010). Although Museveni has been criticised for changing the constitution in order to run for a third term of presidency in the 2006 elections, which he won (Goldstein & Rotich 2008:3), observers still commend his political actions. According to Tim Allen (2006) at the London School of Economics, even those who are generally very critical of African politics often describe Uganda as a country 'where the logic of violence has been replaced by political processes of negotiation

and rebuilding' (Bayart et al. 1999, cited in Allen 2006:27). As put forth by Allen (2006:27), 'this hides a great deal', particularly in the case of Northern Uganda.

The region of Northern Uganda has been ravaged by war for over twenty years, and human rights abuses have been commonplace. In the following discussion we give a brief account of the lines of conflict in Northern Uganda, and the politics of displacement, since these provide the backdrop for our focus on sexual gender-based violence among IDPs in the region.

2.2   The Conflict in Northern Uganda

The war in Northern Uganda has been brutal, and Jan Egeland, former United Nations Under-Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs, described the situation at one point as 'the biggest forgotten, neglected humanitarian emergency in the world today' (Egeland 2007:266). Abductions of civilians, including children, as well as murder, rape and maiming have been carried out in the region of Northern Uganda over the last two decades. Civilians 'have had lips, hands and fingers cut off. Some have even been forced to slaughter their own parents, or drink the blood of those they have murdered' (Allen 2006:1). There have been a number of massacres of civilians; tens of thousands of people have been killed since the war started two decades ago (UNOCHA & IRIN 2004:7). Furthermore, an estimated 1.8 million people have been forced into IDP camps in the region since the onset of the conflict (IDMC 2009). However, the conflict has been accorded little international attention (UNOCHA & IRIN 2004:7).

Years of displacement and unrest have led to a dire socio-economic situation in the region. Development indicators in Northern Uganda are severely lower than for the rest of the Ugandan population; while the average number of people below the poverty line is 31 percent in Uganda (CIA 2010), more than 60 percent of rural dwellers in Northern Uganda live in absolute poverty (Kavuma 2010). The Government of Uganda (2007:vi) states in its Peace, Recovery and Development Plan for Northern Uganda that 'income poverty remains significantly high, literacy rates are low and access to basic services is poor.'

2.2.1   Historical Background

Conflict was present in Acholiland long before colonialism; Allen (2006:25) mentions, for example, that adventurers and armed traders came from Khartoum in the 1850s, initiating long conflicts about ivory, slaves and the like. However, the political and religious divide between the 56 different ethnic groups in Uganda is believed to have increased in the decades following independence in 1962. When Amin came to power, his disfavour was directed towards those who had been supporting Uganda's first president, Milton Obote, namely the Acholi and Langi tribes who used to dominate the army (Quinn 2008:55). Museveni and his National Resistance Movement's (NRM) rise to power in 1986 also induced substantial opposition all over Uganda, and between 1986 and 2006 there were more than 27 armed uprisings against Museveni (Quinn 2008:56). Northern Uganda was no exception, and several rebel groups were formed in the region. The most notable of these were the Uganda People's Democratic Army (UPDA) and the prophetic Holy Spirit Movement (HSM) under the guidance of Alice Lakwena, who was allegedly possessed with different spirits (Dolan 2009:43). The conflict was 'triggered [in part] by the NRM's methods for consolidating control over the northern parts of the country' (Barnes and Lucima 2002, cited in Quinn

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2008:56). Museveni's National Resistance Army (NRA) responded to the uprisings with brutal violence, but the UPDA and the HSM were also blameworthy of raiding, murder and burning (Dolan 2009:44).

The dire socio-economic situation in the region instilled fear in many Acholi that the end was near (Jackson 2009:323), resulting in widespread support for Alice Lakwena and the HSM. By the end of 1986, Lakwena was said to have as many as 18.000 soldiers (Allen 2006:35). Her approach to the liberation of the Acholi people was 'a rejection of modernity and a retreat to spiritualism based on the traditional cosmology of the Acholi with added biblical elements' (Jackson 2009:323). Lakwena claimed that 'war is a form of healing through which people can be purified. The healing is on both sides, as those who die are like the rotten flesh cut out by a surgeon. The pure on the other hand, cannot be killed' (Allen 2006:34). In order to be pure, the soldiers had to abstain from sex and alcohol, and they had to undergo healing rituals performed by Lakwena (Allen 2006:35). In October 1987, the HSM experienced military success in a march towards Kampala, but were finally defeated in Jinja, and Lakwena managed to escape to Kenya (Dolan 2009:44).

The defeat of the HSM gave rise to several new prophetic insurgent groups in Northern Uganda, of which the movements of Alice Lakwena's father, Severino Lukoya, and Joseph Kony were the most prominent ones. However, Lukoya's movement was eventually defeated, and by 1990, Kony's group was the only noteworthy armed faction remaining in Acholiland (Allen 2006:36,39). Kony eventually named his movement the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) (Dolan 2009:44). In its rebellion towards the government, the LRA turned violent on its own people, which effectively 'left the majority of the population stranded between the LRA on one hand and a hostile army on the other, leading to widespread marginalisation that feeds into current demands for justice and rehabilitation' (Jackson 2009:323).

2.2.2   The Lord's Resistance Army

Like Alice Lakwena, Kony claims to be possessed with various spirits, and the spirits supposedly guide the whole organisation. The spirits are said to 'advise on a range of matters, including health, military decisions, and ritual processes, and to communicate through the medium of Joseph Kony, who is sometimes referred to as Laor (the messenger)' (Dolan 2009:80). Kony can allegedly enter a trance at any time of day due to visits from spirits, whereby all that he says is taken note of by LRA secretaries and is later used for decision-making (Dolan 2009:80).

The objectives of the Lord's Resistance Army may appear vague and inconsistent at first glance, but Dolan argues that they are in fact not. He describes LRA's agenda as a 'three-in-one-formula' based on three elements; politics, religion and spiritualism put under 'a military umbrella' (Dolan 2009:90f). Dolan further states that 'by playing them off against each other at different times and for different purposes, Kony was able, in his capacity as a spirit medium, to maintain a tight grip and a degree of independence for himself' (Dolan 2009:90). The main *political* element in the organisation is the aspiration to overthrow the Government of Uganda and remove Museveni from power, while the key *religious* element is the obligation to run Uganda by the Ten Commandments. Finally, the *spiritual* element is manifested through the spirits, which are at the core of decision-making and for whom Kony is a medium (Dolan 2009:90). As Pham et al. (2005:13) at the University of California,

Berkeley, state, Kony has developed 'his own belief system and set of rituals, drawing from a mix of Christianity, Islam and animist beliefs'.

There is no exact information available regarding the size of the LRA; an approximation from 1997 suggested as many as 3000-4000 combatants, but other estimates are significantly lower. The confusion may be attributed to the fact that the number of combatants has varied and the LRA headquarters have been located in Sudan. According to Allen (2006:40), 'the number of combatants operating in northern Uganda at any one time has rarely been more than a few hundred'. Allen proceeds by stating that large numbers of LRA soldiers have not been necessary due to the nature of the warfare; rather than engaging in large-scale battles with the Government army, the Uganda People's Defence Force (UPDF) (formerly NRA) - the rebels have used terror tactics (Allen 2006:40).

Like Alice Lakwena, Kony asserts that the Acholi society needs to be 'purified by violence' (Allen 2006:40) in order to build a New Acholi society. The 'New Acholi' can, according to Dolan (2009:86), be described as 'a mythologized 'Old' Acholi, cleansed of the corruption of westernising influences, though building on Christian messages about creating a new society'. Thus, interestingly, also the LRA essentialises life before colonialism and idealises earlier times, just as scholars have been criticised for doing (Branch 2008). An overall strategy to reach this and other objectives has been to abduct tens of thousands of civilians, including children, using them as porters, combatants and sex slaves (Pham et al. 2005:7) and training them to be part of the new society. Jackson (2009:323) states that 'virtually every extended family in Acholi-land has had someone abducted'. The methods used are extremely brutal, and many of the abductees are installed as soldiers. Some have been forced to maim and kill civilians in order to 'punish them for accepting President Museveni's rule, demonstrate their loyalty and make it difficult for them to return home because of the fear of reprisals' (Allen 2006:42).

As in the broader Acholi society, gender relations are taken advantage of as an important tool for maintaining control over men and women (Dolan 2009:81). The LRA have reportedly abducted just half as many girls as boys, but those who are abducted are among other things used for sexual and reproductive purposes. According to Pham et al. (2005:14f), preadolescent girls are preferred since they are thought to not be infected with sexually transmitted diseases. Sex is used as a reward for 'loyal male followers', and some female abductees are selected as 'wives' for the commanders. Although episodes of sexual violence have occurred, Allen (2006:43) states that 'sexual access to women has been regulated, and random rape has not been an LRA trait'. Pham et al. (2005:14f) also stress that the LRA allegedly has a tradition of not 'raping the younger girls so that they will be free of infection when, at the age of 14 or 15, they may be 'married' to commanders'. The chairman decides which combatants that are given wives, and those that are chosen are 'expected to perform sexually'. Fertility is of great importance, which can be linked to the 'purity of the 'New Acholi'' (Dolan 2009:81). Within the LRA, 'prostitution' is prohibited, and homosexuality is punished with execution (Dolan 2009:81). According to Dolan (2009:93), the gender roles and expectations within the LRA are in line with 'the stereotypical 'masculine' and 'feminine' ones held in northern Uganda more generally'. In the patriarchal society of the Acholi, women are looked upon as men's property, and Dolan argues that a great number of Acholi share Kony's worries regarding the 'social breakdown and the loss of their value system – concerns which have 'uncontrolled' (i.e. not controlled by elders) sexual relations at their very heart' (Dolan 2009:94).

The LRA has never enjoyed broad support among the Acholi population, but according to Allen (2006:49), the rebel group has never been reliant on mass support either, mainly due to substantial support from the Government of Sudan. President Omar Bashir's regime in Khartoum decided to 'assist the LRA in retaliation for the Uganda government's barely disguised support for the Sudan People's Liberation Army' (Allen 2006:49). The relationship eventually soured in the late 1990s (Dolan 2009:83). Still, although Presidents Bashir and Museveni signed a deal to 'stop supporting cross-border rebel groups', in reality they kept on doing so (Allen 2006:51).

Since their own children are involved in the atrocities, the Acholi population has mixed sentiments towards the LRA. As put forward by Pham et al. (2005:14), 'when the government announces that '20 rebels were killed,' many Acholi grieve, as they know these casualties could be their own offspring'.

2.2.3 President Museveni and the Government of Uganda

The Government of Uganda claims to be following a triple strategy to address the conflict with the LRA: '1) a military response, 2) peaceful negotiation and 3) prayer' (Pham et al. 2005:16). However, Dolan (2009:96) argues that the Government of Uganda through the Uganda People's Defence Force (UPDF) could have defeated the LRA a long time ago if actual political will was there. He claims that the government has been unwilling to find both military and non-military solutions to the conflict. Allen (2006:48) stresses that the war has had political benefits for Museveni in that 'the horrific violence and weird spirituality of the LRA allowed his government to present the north as a kind of barbaric periphery', which has been useful since he hardly has any political support in the region. Furthermore, having the LRA as an internal enemy has allowed the President to gain support from ethnic groups in the country with whom he is not so popular. There is also a financial side to it, as the war 'kept the army occupied, and benefited many soldiers economically'. The army is also known to have been engaging in cattle raids in Acholiland (Allen 2006:49).

The UPDF are accused of severe human rights violations in Northern Uganda, including murder, the burying alive of civilians and systematic rape of internally displaced persons that they have been responsible for protecting, which has led to increased antagonism in the local population (Jackson 2009:324). According to Jackson (2009:324), some southerners put the blame for UPDF's atrocities on the Acholi themselves, and the Acholi are often regarded as 'the very epitome of primitiveness' (Finnström 2008:79). As Lt. General Kazini of the UPDF once put it; 'if anything, it is the local Acholi soldiers causing the problems. It's the cultural background of the people here; they are very violent. It's genetic' (Van Acker 2003, cited in Jackson 2009:324).

2.2.4 Peace Negotiations and the Way Forward

The above presentation implies that the lines of conflict are more complex than what one may presume, suggesting that it is highly challenging to find a durable solution to the conflict in Northern Uganda. Several peace initiatives have been launched, but a final peace agreement is yet to be seen. A number of civil society actors in Northern Uganda have opted for finding non-military solutions, but according to Dolan (2009:98), 'the Government responded to such

calls by adopting a compromise position in which it pursued the military option while appearing to allow non-military alternatives to be pursued in parallel by civil society actors'.

Dolan (2009:99) argues that the government's reluctance to become involved in non-military initiatives was also demonstrated in the Amnesty Act of 2000. The act was intended to give amnesty to rebel fighters throughout Uganda. Those who openly admitted to have been involved in armed insurgencies against the Government of Uganda were to be forgiven and not brought to trial (Dolan 2009:51). However, Museveni himself was reluctant to recognise that the act should include LRA commanders (Allen 2006:74). By April 2002 fewer than 400 LRA soldiers had been granted amnesty (Dolan 2009:52).

Kony on his side also disapproved of the Amnesty Act, and after a group of LRA commanders laid down their arms in 2004, Kony's reacted with anger. The rebels attacked Pagak, from where one of the commanders originated, and hacked to death at least thirty people, including mothers with children. This shows how Kony tried to threaten LRA members to refrain from surrendering. Despite these challenges, civil society actors in Northern Uganda continue to be strong supporters of the Amnesty Act (Allen 2006:75f).

The international focus on anti-terrorism in the aftermath of the September 11 attacks in the United States led the Government of Uganda to introduce an Anti-Terrorism Act of its own in March 2002, partly due to the fact that the U.S. Department of State had incorporated the LRA on its 'B-list' of 'other terrorist organisations' (Dolan 2009:53). The Anti-Terrorism Act in effect contradicted the Amnesty Act, resulting in fewer LRA members seeking amnesty. Civil society actors also became more hesitant to talk to the LRA, 'as any dialogue with them could be interpreted as treason' (Dolan 2009:53). The global 'war on terrorism' further resulted in a military offensive in Northern Uganda named *Operation Iron Fist* in March 2002, which came into action after a meeting between President Bashir, the U.K. Secretary of State for Development Clare Short, and President Museveni. The idea was to 'deal with the LRA once and for all' by attacking LRA bases in Southern Sudan. However, this initiative drove the LRA back into Northern Uganda, leading to a number of new insurgencies in the region. By 2003, the LRA also carried out attacks in Eastern Uganda (Dolan 2009:54f). Thus, instead of defeating the LRA, Operation Iron Fist 'aggravated the military and humanitarian situation beyond anybody's worst fears' (Dolan 2009:101).

In January 2004, President Museveni decided to 'make a referral to the newly established International Criminal Court (ICC)', which further complicated the situation (Dolan 2009:56). Warrants were issued for the capture of Kony and four other LRA commanders in July 2005, and Kony is 'charged with 12 counts of crimes against humanity and 21 counts of war crimes, including 'rape, murder, enslavement, sexual enslavement, [and] forced enlistment of children'' (Moreno-Ocampo 2006, cited in Quinn 2008:65).

Museveni's call for the ICC to take legal action against the LRA for war crimes gave rise to an occasionally hostile debate among civil society actors and representatives of the international community. Opponents argue that 'the ICC's intervention will prolong the conflict and undermine peace talks between the LRA and the government's mediator, Betty Bigombe' (Pham et al. 2005:3). They further state that it will also challenge local peace proposals, such as the Amnesty Act and initiatives based on traditional means of negotiation. Promoters of the ICC, on the other hand, state that 'pursuing peace at the expense of justice is not a viable long-term option, and that the Court's activities in Uganda have already drawn greater international and regional attention to the conflict and put pressure on both sides to

resolve it' (Pham et al. 2005:3). Some critics also argue that the ICC is simply playing a role in Museveni's political game, since the court is in fact acting on behalf of the Government of Uganda, one of the key parties to the conflict (Jackson 2009:326).

Unexpectedly as it may seem, a new round of peace talks between the LRA and the Government of Uganda began in 2006 in Juba, South Sudan. The Government of South Sudan was instrumental in initiating the talks, and Norway is one of eight Western countries which have been actively involved. The UN has also been at the forefront; Egeland met several times with the parties prior to the peace talks (Quinn 2009:63). The talks resulted in a ceasefire by September 2006, but the peace talks broke down in 2008, and currently no final peace agreement exists. According to Egeland (2007:284), President Museveni was never really interested in the Juba talks, but sees a military solution as the only way to end the conflict. Furthermore, Kony – considered a key to securing a peace agreement – has been largely absent from the talks (Quinn 2009:60).

Since September 2008, the LRA have been active in the Central African Republic, Southern Sudan and the northern parts of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (IDMC 2009:4), and have recently been accused of carrying out massacres against civilians in DR Congo (BBC 2010). There are, however, thought to be no active LRA cells remaining in Northern Uganda (Jackson 2009:325). This has provided the population of Northern Uganda with at least temporary relief, and many IDPs are now taking the opportunity to return to their homes.

Still, a final peace agreement is yet to be seen, and Pham et al. (2005:5) argue that:

> 'Peace and justice will be achieved in Northern Uganda only through an inclusive process that involves a wide range of stakeholders, including victims, bystanders, and perpetrators. This requires consulting widely and broadly on the feasibility and applicability of transitional justice measures and, most of all, giving those most affected by the violence a voice in the process.'

2.3   *Internal Displacement*

At the peak of the conflict, approximately 1.8 million people lived in IDP camps in Northern Uganda (IDMC 2009), which, according to Pham et al. (2005:15), constituted roughly 94 percent of the population in Gulu, 93 percent in Kitgum, 39 percent in Lira, and 24 percent in Soroti. The period of massive displacement started in 1996, and 'in some places, anyone who refused to move from their rural homes was forcibly displaced' (Allen 2006:53). Ultimately, the Acholi were 'herded into camps where they [are forced to] survive on relief aid' (Odokonyero 2006, cited in Quinn 2008:57). The intentions behind the establishment of the 'protected villages' were dual; firstly to protect the Acholi population, secondly to hinder civilian interaction with the LRA (Dolan 2009:108).

The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) (2004) defines internally displaced persons as:

> '[…] persons or groups of persons who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalised violence, violations of

human rights or natural or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognised State border'.

Swedish anthropologist Finnström (2008:134) is highly critical of the term 'IDP' developed by humanitarian organisations, and argues that 'internally displaced persons are completely dehumanized in the frequently used short form, 'IDPs''. There should be no differentiation between 'IDP' and 'refugee', according to Finnström, and he describes the Acholi people as being 'refugees in their own country'. However, we still believe that IDP, in the definition provided by UNOCHA, is a relevant term to use because they have not crossed a national border, and the term is also the leading one on the international agenda.

2.3.1 Life in the Camps

The living situation in the IDP camps has been described as 'living hell' (Dolan 2009:109). Allen (2006:53) portrays the protected villages as 'overcrowded, spatially constrained, lacking adequate water, and heavily dependent on relief food', making the conditions 'almost universally grim and in some instances appalling'. A total of 80 percent of the IDP population consists of women and children, according to UNICEF (2007:8); this suggests that the vulnerability of the IDP population is significant. According to Pham et al. (2005:16), displacement has in many cases led to social collapse. Employment opportunities are few, and as a consequence men 'often resort to self-destructive coping mechanisms, such as alcoholism', and domestic violence and rape are reportedly common. The impact of displacement on gender relations will be explored more in depth below.

Sanitation facilities have been poor in many camps; according to Dolan (2009:112), there was only one pit latrine for every 168 people in the largest camp, Pabbo, in 1998. Malnutrition rates are reported to be high, as is the mortality rate, especially the under-five mortality rate. A study conducted in 2004 found that the main causes of death were 'malaria/fever (47 percent), respiratory diseases (28 percent) and diarrhoeal diseases (21 percent)' (Allen 2006:56). Mental health issues have also been common; an MSF-Holland survey found that 62 percent of the female respondents thought about committing suicide (Allen 2006:58). Furthermore, the HIV rate in Northern Uganda is at an estimated 8.2 percent, which is substantially higher than in the south where the rate is around 6.4 percent (UNAIDS & WHO 2009:19,24). Condoms have not been accessible in many camps, and some local churches also disapprove of condom use (Dolan 2009:142). Allen (2006:58) quotes a young Acholi woman whom he interviewed saying that 'the war that we will see will be the war with HIV; we will really have to fight that after [this one ends]'.

As noted above, the access to livelihoods has been limited. In people's home areas, their land (the 'garden') was located nearby and easily accessible, whereas in the camps the distance to their gardens was substantial. Moreover, there were often curfews in the camps, 'limiting movement to daylight hours and making it difficult for people to move back to their home areas to dig their land, or even forbidding such movement altogether' (Dolan 2009:119). In effect, the large majority became dependent on food aid, and it is estimated that around 500.000 people are still currently 'food insecure' in Northern Uganda (USAID 2010:1).

Interestingly, the IDMC (2009:7) claims that women become even more vulnerable to SGBV when food security is low, as has been the case with the low amounts of overall rainfall in Acholiland since April 2009, resulting in harvest predictions of around 40 percent of the

normal yields. The link between food insecurity and SGBV will be discussed further in chapter 4.

Displacement has also severely affected children's education opportunities. At the peak of the war, those who were lucky enough to be in school tended to drop out at a very early age, and the gender imbalances were significant. Dolan (2009:135) states that 'lack of access to education was perpetuating disadvantage across the board, as well as perpetuating gender inequalities'. There were also major administrative challenges connected to displacement as people from a great number of villages were squeezed into single camp units. Village authority structures often conflicted with the local council of the area, as well as the camp management, which was elected by the residents (Dolan 2009:113, cf. figure 4.1).

The protection situation was precarious in most camps during the war. As argued by Dolan (2009:144), 'the failings of the 'protected villages' in protecting people's access to subsistence opportunities, education and health services, might have been more excusable had their stated purpose, the physical protection of their inhabitants been assured. But it was not.' As mentioned above, the soldiers who were supposed to protect the civilians were often the perpetrators of human rights abuses themselves, including sexual gender-based violence. According to Dolan (2009:151), 'the 'protected villages' violated all major categories of rights, and just about all the UN's 'Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement''. This includes principle 11 stating that IDPs shall be protected against 'rape, mutilation, torture, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment and other outrages upon personal dignity, such as acts of gender-specific violence, forced prostitution or any form of indecent assault' (UNOCHA 2004:6).

Consequently, Dolan (2009:151) argues that 'this fundamentally alters the parameters within which to analyse the situation in northern Uganda'. Instead of current representations of the conflict as a war being solely between the LRA and the Government of Uganda, the conflict should rather be appreciated as a form of 'social torture'. The ultimate function of this is, according to Dolan (2009:1) 'the subordinate inclusion of the population in northern Uganda', whereby the IDP camps are the main locations where this is played out. Dolan proceeds by stating that multiple actors are involved in the torture as 'complicit bystanders', such as donors, NGOs, multilateral organisations and churches. 'Like doctors in a torture situation, they appear to be there to ease the suffering of victims, but in reality they enable the process to be prolonged by keeping the victims alive for further abuse' (Dolan 2009:1f). While this is a controversial argument, it is interesting in so far as it provides a critical analysis of the role of the Government of Uganda and external actors in prolonging the suffering of the Acholi.

2.3.2 Current IDP Situation

The Government of Uganda is currently attempting to close all IDP camps in a bid for the region to return to normality, and *Camp Phase-Out Guidelines* were issued in May 2009. According to the IDMC (2009:4), 60 out of 121 IDP camps in Acholiland were attempted closed by July 2009, and 70 percent of the IDPs in Northern Uganda had returned to their areas of origin by December 2009 (UNHCR 2010). However, it is estimated that 370.000 people were still living in camps and Transit Centres at the end of the year (UNHCR 2010). This number may have declined further after the UNHCR's report, but provides a rough indication of the current situation. UNHCR (2010) anticipates that a further 190.000 IDPs will return to their home villages by the end of 2010.

Figure 2.2   IDP Distribution in Uganda
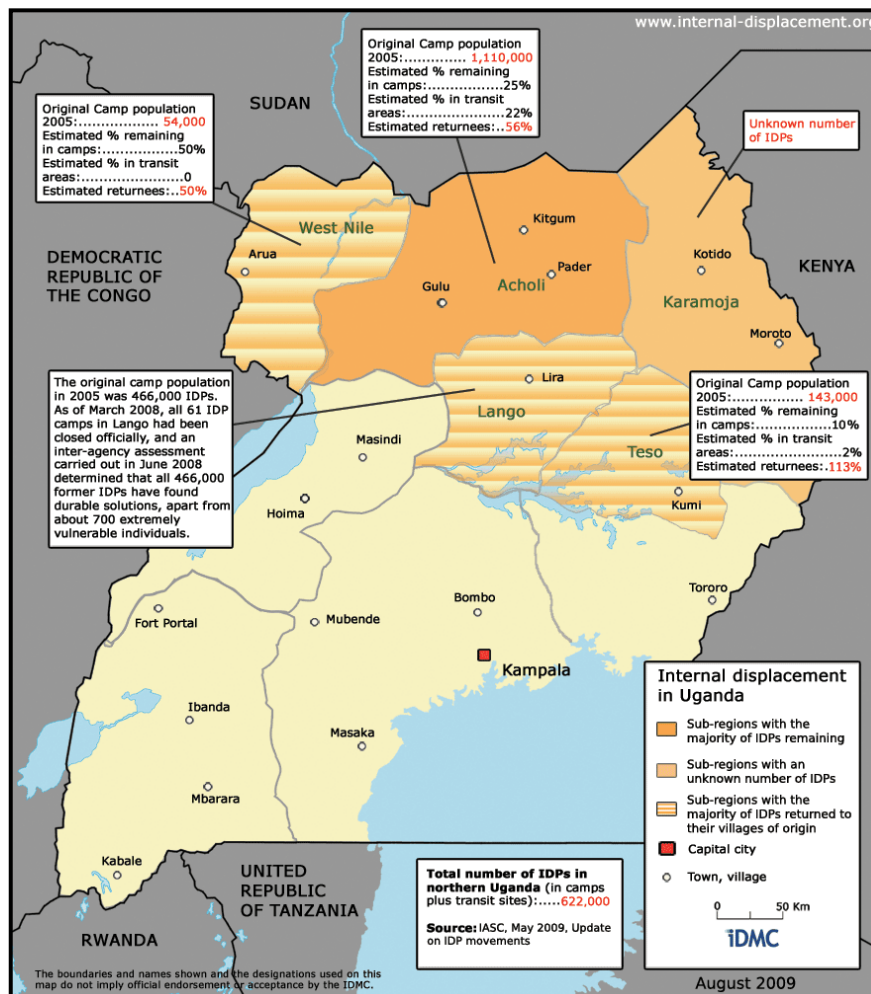
The IDMC (2009:4) claims that the government has prioritised returnees to the detriment of current IDPs. Those who remain in IDP camps comprise four separate groups, according to the IDMC (2009:4). Firstly, 'extremely vulnerable individuals (EVIs)' and people with special needs, including elderly people, child- and female headed households and severely traumatised people. Secondly, people who are prevented from returning home due to land disputes; female headed households are often among these, as the patriarchal system exposes women to particular risks of being denied access to land by their relatives. Thirdly, children and youth who have been left behind in the camps by their families due to the provision of better education and health services in the camps; and fourthly, those who do not intend to return home due to the economic opportunities that the camps and their vicinities provide. Due to the fact that many of the remaining internally displaced peoples are women, our study of aspects of sexual gender-based violence is conducted in and around IDP camps where access to vulnerable women's stories may be greater than outside them.

Currently, humanitarian organisations are withdrawing to an increasing extent from Acholiland, both because of an increased interest in the impoverished Karamoja region of Uganda, and because Acholiland is becoming increasingly peaceful (IDMC 2009:7). The transition from international humanitarian assistance to long-term development assistance has not been problem-free, but instead been characterised by 'institutional confusion and weak leadership', as Oxfam (2008, cited in IDMC 2009:9) puts it. As a result, food security and other services such as 'health care, justice, security and social support' have worsened, creating problems for people still living in IDP camps in the area and increasing women's vulnerability to gender-based violence 'such as domestic violence, rape, and early and forced marriage' (IDMC 2009:7). Because most development programmes in Northern Uganda are currently focused on the long term, the IDMC (2009:8) states that 'in the short and medium

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terms, there is a risk that people in return areas may end up worse off than they were in the camps, with obvious implications for peace and stability in the region.' This must be kept in mind when discussing management strategies that can be employed to prevent SGBV in the region.

2.4   Gender Relations in Acholi

To learn more about the cultural context within which this research is situated, it is important to aid the reader's familiarity with the Acholi people and gender relations in Acholi society.

The Acholi people are an ethno-linguistic group descending from various Luo-speaking peoples of northern Uganda and southernmost Sudan. At the turn of the 21st century, the Acholi numbered more than one million people. Most Acholi now live in the Acholi sub-region of Uganda, to where they are believed to have migrated from adjacent areas of Southern Sudan three or four hundred years ago (Encyclopædia Britannica 2010). Clans have a strong significance and constitute 'the most important social and political unit of the Acholi people'. Clans are 'based on the extended family system' and arose as a result of military alliances formed during 'constant moves in search of better farming and grazing' experienced by the Acholi in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (Olaa 2001:101). Traditionally, social order in Acholi has been maintained through the clan being responsible for the welfare of all individual members, and individual clan-members having the same responsibility toward the welfare of the clan. The solidarity of clan members towards each other is made apparent through communal work and the sharing of food between all households (Olaa 2001:101).

Before 1986, the Acholi relied on animal husbandry and agriculture for subsistence. They cultivate millet, sweet potato, sesame seed, peanuts and cassava (Kemirere 2007:80). However, 'as the conflict spread and villagers became displaced, their access to their crops was limited or cut off completely' (Olaa 2001:107).

In Uganda, the Acholi mainly inhabit four of the country's northernmost districts– Gulu, Amuru, Pader and Kitgum. While the Acholi from Pader and Kitgum are called the *Acholi mamalo* or the upper Acholi, as they 'descended from the hills', those of Gulu and Amuru districts are called *Acholi mapiny* - the lower Acholi. Interestingly, the lower Acholi, of which this thesis is primarily concerned, are often called less traditional and less 'backward' than their brothers in the north, and lower Acholi women are believed to be less stubborn than their counterparts in Kitgum (Finnström 2009:33).

Acholi society is based on patrilineal descent, which means that only male family members have the rights to parentage, inheritance and land ownership (Koenig et al. 2004:788). The society does, however, have a strong matrifocality (Finnström 2008:34), indicating that mothers have a strong affective and cultural significance in Acholi. The Acholi practice polygyny, and 25.4 percent – more than one in five – of currently married men between the ages of 15 and 49 in the IDP districts of Northern Uganda have two or more wives (UBOS 2007:87). Having many wives and children generally enhances the status of Acholi men, although there is a 'conflict between Christian and non-Christian value systems in terms of polygamy, and between having many children and being able to feed and educate them in a weak economic climate' (Dolan 2002:3).

According to Girling (1960), who conducted an ethnographic study of the Acholi people of

Uganda in the 1950s, there is a strict taboo against incest in Acholi society. While incest in a Euro-American context usually refers to sexual relations between close blood relatives, incest in the Acholi context is more broadly defined and includes relationships between people of the same village lineage or clan. Thus, according to LIGI and GDNGOF (2007:5), life in displacement camps, where young generations have grown up, has contributed to an increase of cases of incest, 'due to the fact that clan lineages are no longer clearly delineated to those of marriageable age'.

Cultural beliefs of the Acholi hold that incest and other assaults including rape and abduction dehumanise the victim, whose relationship with the good spirits and the rest of the community must be restored through cleansing ceremonies. However, such ceremonies have been few and far between as a result of displacement and the enduring conflict (Olaa 2001:109). Gender relations are also said to have been affected by the ongoing conflict in the region (Dolan 2009, El-Bushra & Sahl 2005). Through a further exploration of these, more light can be shed on the impact of displacement in Acholiland.

In Acholi society, the socialisation into masculinity and femininity traditionally 'relies on creating difference between men and women' (Dolan 2009:194). As Connell (1995, cited in Dolan 2009:196) argued, ''masculinity' does not exist except in contrast with 'femininity''. Traditionally, an Acholi father is expected to teach his sons how to be a boy, or a man, and a mother is expected to teach her daughters how to be a girl, or a woman (Dolan 2009:198). While there have been clear expectations about what roles and responsibilities pertain to a specific gender, gender relations in Acholi society or the 'parameters of models of masculinity and femininity had long been in a state of flux' (Dolan 2009:203), even before the conflict began. As Girling (1960:194) wrote in 1960, 'the status of women has increased in relation to that of men. Women own property of their own, including livestock.' Nevertheless, Acholi women are frequently portrayed as subordinate to Acholi men in most things. Dolan (2009:193) writes, for example, that the Acholi women of today are 'often ignored and they are denied ownership of family assets. To this day women do not participate in clan meetings or the traditional leadership, which is all male'. Instead, the Acholi words for 'head of family (*won paen*), elders (*ludito*), clergy men (*ludito kanicha*), and doctor (*daktor*) are all masculine', which underlines that men have traditionally inhabited positions of highest authority in Acholi society (Dolan 2002:2).

2.4.1   Women and Femininity in Acholi Society

Women and girls in Acholi society have traditionally been 'expected to carry out whatever was agreed upon by the leaders in the society, and never oppose family or clan decisions' (El-Bushra and Sahl 2005:16). According to El-Bushra and Sahl (2005:16), 'the ideal Acholi woman was humble, gentle and submissive to authority […] She accepted the position life bestowed on her, whether as co-wife or as inherited wife'. Consequently, an Acholi woman is culturally not allowed to refuse sex in marriage (LIGI and GDNGOF 2007:13).

The Acholi saying 'when the hen crows it must be slaughtered' indicates that a woman who disobeys must be put back in her place. Other Acholi sayings are equally telling: 'women are always cats who seek sympathy' and 'when there is constant drizzling it is like women quarrelling' (Dolan 2009:193). This suggests that Acholi women are often regarded with some apprehension.

Furthermore, Acholi women are often considered weaker than men; they are regarded as 'incapable and a burden, a position legitimised by the Biblical story in Genesis that man was created first, woman from his rib, and the saying that women are the 'weaker vessels'' (Dolan 2009:192). Referring to accounts of abduction by the LRA where boys were tied together and girls were not, Dolan (2009:192) suggests that Acholi girls are considered more controllable than boys. He also highlights the Acholi belief that:

> 'Women cannot perform to the level of men, and must conform to the culture of their husbands. Women are regarded as unfit for formal education, and it is argued that education of women is a waste of family resources because they get married and move elsewhere' (Dolan 2009:192).

However, it is important to note that this view may be more widespread in the political village structure than in the local government, where many Acholi civil servants are women, which suggests that the above quotation may be an expression of class rather than culture/ethnicity. Nevertheless, as most of our respondents are originally rural dwellers who have been forced into IDP camps, the education level is low, particularly among women. The Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS 2007:23) estimates that 'slightly more than one in four females (28 percent) in the IDP camps have no education while only about one in ten males (9 percent) have no education.' Of the IDP women who do have education, 'only very small percentages' of women have more than an incomplete primary education. In fact, less than one percent of secondary-school-age females and five percent of secondary-school-age males attend secondary school, which is significantly lower than the average secondary school net attendance ratios of 35 percent in urban areas of Uganda and 13 percent in rural areas (UBOS 2007:27). Thus, Acholi women are triply marginalised; their status as rural dwellers, IDPs and women accords them a place far beneath that of their counterparts (urban dwellers, rural non-IDPs and men). In the political village structure, food distribution is also structured in favour of the man. Historically, Acholi women have not been allowed to eat chicken, and according to the World Food Programme (1999, cited in Dolan 2009:193), women and girls are 'prone to malnutrition as a result of household food allocation patterns favouring males'.

The diagram below presents differences between Acholi women and men living in IDP camps, in relation to certain development indicators, based on statistics from UBOS (2007).

Figure 2.3   Development Indicators Among IDPs in Northern Uganda
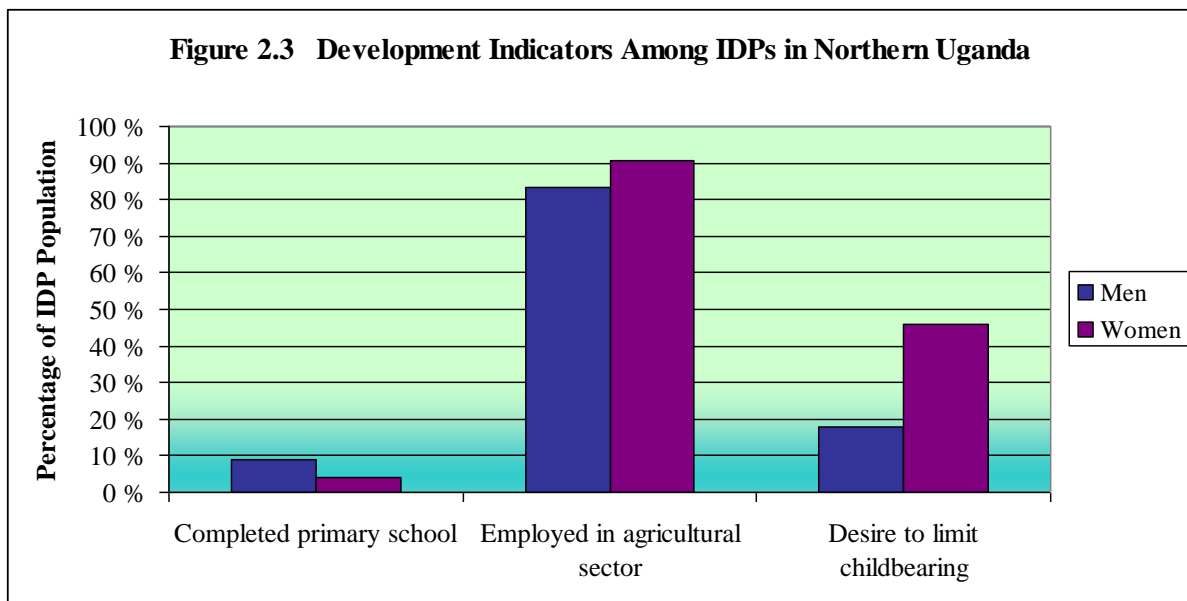
From the diagram it becomes apparent that more men than women have completed primary school, more women than men are employed in the agricultural sector, and more women than men want to limit childbearing (cf. 2.4.2). Thus, although development indicators are significantly low in the Acholi sub-region to begin with, they are considerably worse for women than for men.

2.4.2   Reproductive Health in Acholi

Examining women's reproductive health can help shed further light on the position of women in Acholi society. As the Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS) (2007:258) puts it, 'a woman's ability to control her fertility and the contraceptive model she chooses are likely to be affected by her status, self-image, and sense of empowerment.' According to the Uganda Demographic and Health Survey of 2006, the average fertility rate for Uganda is 6.7 births per woman (UBOS 2007:xxiii). Thus, Uganda has the world's second highest total fertility rate, preceded only by Niger (CIA 2010). Uganda also has one of the world's highest population growth rates; at a growth rate of 3.2 percent per annum, the population is projected to increase from today's 31 million to 130 million in 2050. This is of great concern to the UN, due to its developmental implications (Emorut 2009:1).

Interestingly, the fertility rate for IDPs in the North is the highest in the whole of Uganda, at 8.6 births per woman (UBOS 2007:xxiii). While 48 percent of women in Kampala use contraceptives, only 11 percent of women in the North do (UBOS 2007:xxiv). This is significantly lower than the unmet need for contraception, which is estimated at 58 percent (WCRWC and UNFPA 2007:7). This can, perhaps, be explained by the poverty and low education rate among women in the North, for as UBOS (2007) argues, the more educated and wealthy a woman is, the less children she has, on average. However, the low contraception rate in the North can also be explained by the difficulty of accessing reproductive health services in IDP camps, or by men's and women's attitudes toward contraception. The Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children (WCRWC) and UNFPA (2007:13) argue, for example, that women's desire to use contraceptives is sometimes equated to mean she is planning to be unfaithful to her husband. This can

'illustra[te] men's fears of losing control over their wives' behaviour' (Schmidt 2009:14), which in the patriarchal context of the Acholi is particularly significant. Thus, Acholi women have also been marginalised in relation to controlling their own bodies, of which men claim ownership.

2.4.3   Bridewealth

Men's control over their wives' bodies is, to a large extent, connected to the practice of bridewealth. Before a man gets married, he is expected to pay a bride price (usually in the form of cattle, but hoes and beads have traditionally also been exchanged) to his prospective wife's family (El-Bushra and Sahl 2005:17). When this is paid, the woman becomes the asset or property of the husband, and moves to his home. In the process, 'she loses her own clan identity on marriage but does not fully assume the clan identity of her husband, and is viewed as an outsider and therefore not to be trusted' (Dolan 2009:193). Nevertheless, according to Finnström (2008:192), bridewealth secures and makes certain women's position in Acholi society.

Girling (1960:21) observed that the highest status achievable for an Acholi woman comes with the production of children: 'As a mother of a child and as the mistress of a household she achieves the highest status possible for a woman in Acholi society. The more children she bears, the greater the respect she will enjoy'. However, even marriage and childbearing do not liberate the Acholi woman from the subordinate position she is expected to take in society. On the contrary, if a married Acholi woman fails to bear children, or if she produces only girl children, her husband may take another wife, or she may be sent back to her father (Girling 1960:21). This indicates that an Acholi woman's value is first and foremost related to her reproductive capacity to produce men, just as Thomas of Aquinas argued in the Thirteenth Century (McGowan 1985:224). A woman's inferior status is further underlined as a woman's children are not her own property, but her husband's, and upon divorce a woman has to leave her children behind with their father (Dolan 2002:2).

2.4.4   Men and Masculinity in Acholi Society

In the same way that a woman is defined largely by what she manages to produce in the home, an Acholi man is defined by his ability to take care of his dependents. According to Dolan (2009:194), the normative and hegemonic model of masculinity (cf. chapter 3.2) in the Acholi society rests on three major responsibilities: marriage, provision for and protection of his family. Gilbert (2006) and El-Bushra and Sahl (2005.16) reinforce this model, with particular emphasis on the roles of provider and protector. Dolan calls this model hegemonic because it 'largely precludes alternatives and is buttressed by major forms of social and political power' (Dolan 2009:196). Although a man has a source of income, he will not be considered a man or taken seriously unless he has married and fathered children. However, when these expectations have been met, his provision for and protection of his family allows him to exert considerable control over his wife and children. Furthermore, he is 'entitled to control the youth. Thus attaining adult masculinity gives men power over other (unmarried) men as well as women' (Dolan 2009:196).

According to El-Bushra and Sahl (2005:16), the ideal Acholi man 'never accepted defeat. The ideal man was a breadwinner; he was responsible and hard-working, and generous in

responding to the material or moral support needs of the community'. An Acholi man is supposed to be the opposite of his female counterpart; he is supposed to be 'richer, stronger, more capable, knowledgeable and skilled, trustworthy' (Dolan 2009:194). As a consequence of being regarded as more capable than women, males are 'supposed to take priority in education and all other benefits' (Dolan 2009:194).

2.5 The Impact of Conflict on Gender Relations

2.5.1 Conflict and Changed Experiences of Masculinity

Interestingly, many have argued that the conflict which has dominated Acholiland for over twenty years has altered gender relations or, more specifically, Acholi notions and experiences of masculinity (Dolan 2009; El-Bushra & Sahl 2005). In addition to the general emasculation that the Acholi man is said to have experienced under the ethnocentric and racist attitudes of the British, and of southerners during the Obote II regime, which equated the Acholi 'with primitivism and backwardness' (Dolan 2009:202), the conflict is said to have made it more difficult for men to be masculine. According to El-Bushra and Sahl (2005:19), the social dislocation caused by displacement contributed to an erosion of the traditional clan system, which has caused a 'massive breakdown of social relationships'. As elders and men lost their traditional symbols of wealth, cattle and land, they simultaneously lost some of their authority (El-Bushra and Sahl 2005:20). Moreover, as a consequence of families breaking up and women acting as the sole guardians of children in many cases, fathers 'no longer act as authority figures and educators as they did in the past' (El-Bushra and Sahl 2005:23).

As a result of tightly crammed IDP camps, the need to hide in the bush to avoid abduction, and the 'night commuting' into towns that many children started engaging in, 'one of the focal points of informal education, the household hearth (*wang oo)* around which old and young would sit in the evening, exchanging information and knowledge', was lost (Dolan 2009:198). Thus, men lost a key aspect of their masculinity through the loss of opportunities to transmit cultural information and knowledge to their children. The war also made it more difficult for men to accumulate more knowledge and skills, thought to be essential in the making of the Acholi man. According to Dolan, the war brought with it a severe decline in both formal and informal education. Tertiary education became extremely limited, and secondary schooling ceased to exist outside district capitals. As a consequence of the war, 'university students from local secondary schools from all fourteen northern districts amounted to only 120 out of a national total of 20,000' (Dolan 2009:197). This difficulty of attaining knowledge further challenged the performance of masculinity, argues Dolan.

Indeed, although the hegemonic model of masculinity became increasingly important as 'anchors and points of leverage in the midst of economic, social and political disorientation created by war' (Dolan 2009:197ff), it became increasingly difficult to live up to this model. Through war, displacement and an increased dependency on external sources of aid for survival, men became less independent and less able to live up to the hegemonic model of marriage, provision and protection (Dolan 2009; El-Bushra & Sahl 2005).

Aside from the difficulties of acquiring and sharing knowledge, it became increasingly difficult to get married in the camps due to the difficulty of accumulating bride price and paying for the marriage ceremony (El-Bushra & Sahl 2005:21). Through cattle rustling and raiding, the Acholi were deprived of their economic guarantee of marriage, and as soldiers

often had more money, they frequently prevailed in marriage offers (Dolan 2009:199). According to Finnström (2008:34), only two percent of the pre-war cattle in Acholiland remain, and 'the symbolic significance of this cultural loss should not be underestimated'. Furthermore, accumulating an alternative for cattle through cash cropping was made more difficult through settlement in camps, as was the hunting and gathering of wild foods. Consequently, the 'glue' of social relations, and the common denominator of masculinity – marriage based upon the payment of bridewealth – declined considerably (Dolan 2009:199).

Men also lost their identity as providers as camp life threatened their ability to provide for their wives and children. According to Dolan (2009:200), 'economic context and lack of schooling available made it very difficult to pay school fees and associated costs, thus undermining one of the key responsibilities of the 'masculine' role'. Furthermore, as food security was low, a man failed to cater for the nutritional needs of his dependents. According to a *New Vision* (1998) report mentioned by Dolan (2009:201), 'How can a husband speak with confidence before his wife when other men provide his daily sustenance? How can parents discipline children when the little ones' distended stomach and sunken eyes speak of meals eaten five days ago?' Thus, low food security was linked to the decline of masculinity as it significantly impacted on men's self esteem and roles as providers. As a result of husbands proving incapable of supporting their wives, some women divorced their husbands and moved in with more 'responsible' men (El-Bushra & Sahl 2005:20), indicating that women contributed to upholding the traditional understandings of masculinity.

Finally, as the state largely took over the role of physical protection of its citizens, through forcing citizens into camps and restricting their freedom of movement, men also lost the ability to protect their dependents – the third main feature of masculinity, according to Dolan. Men were further emasculated by the heavy presence of soldiers in the camp – 'a constant reminder of civilian men's failures' (Dolan 2009:204). Furthermore, through attacks by the military on the 'most fundamental bases of their adult masculine identity; wives, children and economic assets', men's sense of self and of masculinity has been undermined even further (Dolan 2002:12).

2.5.2   Conflict and Changed Experiences of Femininity

At the same time, however, displacement has been said to improve women's position in society. While women's vulnerability may have increased with the decline in bridewealth that accompanied displacement, El-Bushra and Sahl (2005:22) point to some of the positive effects that displacement has had for women. Although a large number of women have experienced sexual violence as a result of the war, they argue that many women have also become economically empowered through becoming breadwinners and heads of households. Thus, 'they are no longer inclined to accept their previous subordinate status. Moreover, women have become more assertive and more visibly active in public life'. Consequently, 'women appear to have gained and men to have lost'. However, in the process women have stepped away from the 'Acholi ideals of submissive womanhood', which has resulted in their separation from their traditional sources of support – their families or their husbands (El-Bushra & Sahl 2005:28). This may have increased their independence at the same time as increasing their vulnerability.

Nevertheless, it is important to note that 'the fact that everyday behaviour has changed does not necessarily mean that attitudes and values have changed' (El-Bushra & Sahl 2005:23).

However, this antagonism between traditional gender expectations and the contradictory everyday behaviour may have served to exacerbate divisions between men and women. As the position of women improved, men's antagonism towards their female counterparts may have increased, thus creating more problems for the Acholi people.

2.5.3   Gender Relations and Their Link to Violence

Indeed, many scholars have linked altered gender relations to the heightened occurrence of violence. El-Bushra and Sahl (2005:4), for example, point to the strong 'relationship between gender identity on the one hand and continuing cycles of violence on the other'. As Finnström (2008:183) puts it, gendered divisions are often 'reified by social unrest and wartime violence, just as ethnic divides are'. As a result of being emasculated on so many fronts, and as a consequence of losing the traditional power over women and youth, Acholi men are said to have resorted to acts of violence against themselves and others (Dolan 2009; El-Bushra & Sahl 2005; Gilbert 2006). Thus, in Northern Uganda, it could be argued that 'violence and debilitation were closely linked to a sense of humiliation, and a collapse of masculinities' (Dolan 2009:191).

This violence found its expressions in alcohol abuse - which 'embrace the loss of masculinity in the widest sense of a loss of social power and control' (Dolan 2009:207) -, suicide, domestic violence and the joining of armed forces (Dolan 2009:191). Thus, 'violence could become a means of empowering men when socially-acceptable ways of proving themselves were absent' (Gilbert 2006:7).

According to Foreman (1999, cited in Dolan 2009:205), 'fear of ridicule, of being seen as 'less than a man', lies behind much of the violence men inflict on strangers or their wives', and Zur (1998, cited in Dolan 2009:205), with evidence from Guatemala, writes that 'the humiliation of not being able to protect and provide for their families… led to anger and resentment, which some men took out on their wives'. Thus, gender-based violence in Northern Uganda can be seen as directly linked to men's experiences of emasculation in the context of internal displacement. This will be explored more thoroughly in Chapter 4.

2.6   Gendered Challenges Associated with External Aid

2.6.1   Acholi Perceptions of External Aid

To further understand the relationship between the sexes in Acholi society, it is necessary to examine how Acholi perceptions of marginalisation are projected onto the clash between tradition (Acholi society before the conflict began) and modernity (post-conflict camp life with a heavy reliance on external aid). As Girling wrote in 1960, 'the [taboo] observances of both women and men are connected with the fear of barrenness and sterility, which are regarded as the greatest afflictions any person can suffer among the Acholi' (Girling 1960, cited in LIGI and GDNGOF 2007:8). The common perceptions of external actors waging war on the Acholi must, therefore, be understood in this context. Finnström (2008) mentions several interesting examples of the Acholi people attributing infertility or barrenness to external aid. For example, when the NRC distributed maize flour that had gone off date in 2002, this was refused by the leaders of some camps due to the fear of what expired food might do to the Acholi. Similarly, when expired USA-produced cooking oil was distributed as

relief, many believed this caused infertility and male impotence, as external actors are believed to be trying to 'make Acholi men unable to father future generations' (Finnström 2008:193). In the same vein, many Acholi believe the vaccinations of young women are making women infertile and unable to produce more children. Thus, there is a widespread belief that 'there must be a hidden agenda behind all this, namely 'a war on the Acholi'' (Finnström 2008:194). Those seeking solutions to developmental challenges such as sexual gender-based violence must therefore bear in mind this view many Acholi have of the outside world, and acknowledge the cosmological explanations many attribute to daily events.

2.6.2   The Discourse on 'Gender' and 'Rights'

Furthermore, it is important to explore the discourse within which gender roles are negotiated, and the contributions made by external actors and NGOs to this. According to Dolan (2009:203), a 'gender perspective' by NGOs and others could contribute to worsening gender relations among the Acholi, as it often 'lead[s] to a near-blanket dismissal of all men'. It could be argued that the 'gender' discourse, particularly among women's empowerment organisations, has tended to portray all men as idle drunkards, while women have been disproportionately appraised for undertaking economic initiatives (Dolan 2009:203). Little attention has been paid to the fact that many men are agents, not victims, of their own circumstances, and that many actively turn their unfortunate circumstances into opportunities through taking up income generating activities such as *boda-boda* (moped taxi) riding, agricultural groups etc. As Jackson (2002b, cited in Finnström 2008:10) puts it, many struggle to find 'a sense of agency in the face of disempowering circumstances'. Thus, feminist literature and NGOs working with these issues can be criticised for their very own tendency to emasculate men through the language and activities they use when theorising about or implementing gender specific programmes. Dolan (2009:203) argues that the introduction of rights-based terminology to the Acholi, when 'over-simplified into a zero-sum game of women's rights versus men's rights', has 'paradoxically also served to undermine men's sense of masculinity'. For example, the Government of Uganda's political education course on human rights has focused on the rights of women, and 'in the interests of the project of 'equality', some interventions showed a lack of understanding for the relational aspects of gender and effectively emasculated men' (Dolan 2009:203). Even Dolan cannot escape criticism that his writing on gender relations tends to emasculate men; in his argument that men in the camps usually failed to live up to the hegemonic model of masculinity due to external circumstances beyond their control, he also tends to portray men as victims rather than agents. Thus, he could also be critiqued for undermining the continued efforts of many men to create alternative livelihoods and perform masculinity in ways that do not include becoming violent towards self or others. For example, as El-Bushra and Sahl (2005:20) argue, some men 'apply artisanal skills such as woodwork to make goods such as stools and chairs for sale in town'. Others 'set up home with economically active women for reasons of economic   security'.

As Gilbert (2006:9) argues, therefore, 'men's voices, experiences and knowledge must be heard: their contribution as culture-bearers for the next generation must be explicitly valued and actively supported'. Indeed, rather than portraying all men as villains and all women as victims, both men and women must be considered agents in their own right. Perhaps a thorough examination of how various theories of gender and sexuality relate to development can shed more light on the interaction between men and women in Acholi society, and the contributing factors to the phenomenon under study – sexual gender-based violence.

Chapter 3: Gender, Sexuality and Development

In order study SGBV and gender relations in a setting of displacement, it is valuable to examine some of the dominant theories on gender, sexuality and development. Feminist theories of gender will be explored in particular. Even though many of these theories are controversial, they provide important insights into gender relations in society, that can be related to Acholi society. Although we acknowledge that gender is a socially constructed phenomenon, and that masculinity and femininity are 'constantly re-constructing themselves in a context of shifting priorities' (Tripathy 2010:120), our research employs the dominant biological categories of males and females for feasibility purposes. However, we will explore how these categories are employed and constructed.

The chapter begins by examining feminist theories of gender, as well as theories of masculinity and gender relations. This is followed by a presentation of dominant theories on gender and development, as well as a discussion of the relationship between sexuality and development and theories of prostitution. Finally, the chapter examines the transferability of gender theories to an African context such as the Acholi.

3.1 Feminist Theories of Gender

The term 'gender' has come to be widely used within a great number of fields, including development, and can be defined as 'the social process of dividing up people and social practices along the lines of *sexed identities*', according to the Australian scholar Chris Beasley (2005:11). The differences between males and females are learned, 'and though deeply rooted in every culture, are changeable over time, and have wide variations both within and between cultures' (IASC 2005:7). The two sexed categories are not solely seen as 'distinct and opposed, they are also put into a hierarchy in which one is typically cast as positive and the other negative' (Beasley 2005:11). This gendered binary division of human beings 'determines the roles, responsibilities, opportunities, privileges, expectations, and limitations for males and for females in any culture' (IASC 2005:7).

Feminist scholars are mainly preoccupied with women, whereas masculinity studies focus on men. Nevertheless, researchers from both disciplines are gradually discussing both (Beasley 2005:12). Beasley (2005) identifies five main directions within feminism; modernist emancipatory feminism, identity politics to 'sexual difference' feminism, race/ethnicity/imperialism (REI) feminisms, feminist social constructionism and postmodern feminism. We have chosen to focus mainly on modernist emancipatory feminism, REI feminism and postmodern feminism, as we find these directions to be of greatest relevance to an Acholi context. In the following discussion the three directions are presented, along with the ideas of a few important feminist scholars operating within these paradigms.

3.1.1 Modernist Emancipatory Feminism

In the 'first wave' of feminism that began in the late eighteenth century and lasted until around 1960, the critique of Western liberalism was central. Although the freedom of all individuals was promoted, in reality this referred exclusively to men. Consequently, first-wave feminists emphasised that 'women were regarded as irrational creatures, were not

permitted to vote, own property once married, and had little legal control over their children or their bodies' (Beasley 2005:18). This can be linked to the patriarchal and patrilineal Acholi context in which these aspects are still prevalent (cf. chapter 2.4).

Some first-wave feminists were orientated towards Marxism and socialism, and hence disapproved of the liberalist focus on individualism and capitalism (Beasley 2005:18). Friedrich Engels was more concerned with gender equality than Marx himself, and in *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State* from 1884, Engels demonstrated how women's social position worsened as private property gained strength as an organising principle for society. Before the rise of the state, women were free and equally productive members of society, argued Engels, and economic and political decision-making had involved both men and women (Mitchell 2000). In his work, Engels stated; 'that woman was the slave of man at the commencement of society is one of the most absurd notions that have come down to us from the period of the Enlightenment of the 18th century' (Engels 1884, cited in Mitchell 2000:365). According to Engels, the rise of the state radically changed the political and economic relations in society, thus transforming relations between men and women. Women became reliant on their relations to men, and they started to desire, and depend on, both husbands and sons to ensure their economic survival through the acquisition of their male relatives' property (Mitchell 2000). This can be linked to the Acholi context in which women cannot own family assets and are considered the property of their husbands after the bride price has been paid (cf. chapters 2.4). Marxist feminists have a structural perspective and argue that women's subordination is a result of the liberal capitalist and patriarchal society and its emphasis on private property. The early liberal feminists, on the contrary, supported liberalism's individualist standard, but 'advocated the extension of this standard to women to enable women to have access to full adult citizenship within liberal capitalist society' (Beasley 2005:18).

The American cultural anthropologist Margaret Mead's work has been central in the development of feminist gender theories. Mead made pioneering research in the 1930s in cultures such as the New Guinea Arapesh and the Tchambuli, in which men were sensitive, affectionate and volatile, and women were aggressive and calculating. This demonstrated a reversal of the typical Western gender attributes and suggested that what the West takes to be 'natural' endowments of man and woman are not necessarily natural or universal but rather 'culturally constructed behaviors and ideologically endowed sex-role expectations' (Tarrant 2006:87). Mead put significant emphasis on the social valuation of labour – and the fact that men's work was always considered more important than women's work. She stated that 'whatever men do, even if it is dressing dolls for religious ceremonies – is more prestigious than what women do and is treated as a higher achievement' (Tarrant 2006:96).

Another famous feminist intellectual, Simone de Beauvoir, a French existentialist, was also highly influential in the process of developing gender as a concept. Her most renowned work, *The Second Sex*, was published in 1949 and is considered a feminist classic (Tarrant 2006:165f). As a post-war thinker, Beauvoir operated largely in the period between first-wave feminism and second-wave feminism starting in the 1960s, which she also came to influence. Still, similar to both first-wave and second-wave feminists, one may argue that her orientation was emancipatory; 'in discovering the key mechanism/truth about power, the aim is to throw off macro (large-scale) structures of power that oppress women' (Beasley 2005:19). As an existentialist, Beauvoir argued that the inequalities between women and men can largely be attributed to 'existentialist meanings of identity', however, 'they are also the result of economic, historical and social elements' (Tarrant 2006:170f).

In *The Second Sex*, the first question Beauvoir raised was 'Woman? What is Woman?', and she asserted that 'woman is her biological capacity to reproduce and to mother', and that 'woman is her physical body'. Moreover, she argued that 'one is not born, but rather becomes, a woman' (Beauvoir 1949, cited in Tarrant 2006:171). According to Beauvoir, a woman is 'defined and differentiated with reference to man and not he with reference to her; she is incidental, the inessential as opposed to the essential. He is the Subject, he is the Absolute – she is the Other' (Beauvoir 1949, cited in Tarrant 2006:171). Thus, one of her key points is that the subordination of women is principally a result of social forces – not nature, which can be related to the discussion of the term 'gender' above. As stated by Beauvoir, 'the body of a woman is one of the essential elements in her situation in the world. But that body is not enough to define her as a woman; there is no true living reality except as manifested by the conscious individual through activities' (Beauvoir 1949, cited in Tarrant 2006:172). Although Beauvoir argues that the oppression of women is socially constructed, she also presents essentialist arguments in that e.g. 'woman is her biological capacity to reproduce and to mother', thus there is an inherent tension in her two categories of arguments (Tarrant 2005:171).

In a society based on gender equality, women and men acknowledge jointly that the Other is equally free, according to Beauvoir. However, in societies where Otherness prevails through relations of social or political inequality, 'reciprocity is abolished and is replaced by relations of oppression and subjection'. Thus, for Beauvoir women were the Other because men had defined them as such in a system where Otherness and being different was synonymous with inferiority, a system characterised by the objectification of women by men and non-reciprocity in male and female relations (Tarrant 2006:172). Women are trapped by their bodies, and Beauvoir 'rejected the institution of marriage and the maternity slavery that went with it'. However, she did not object to motherhood as such, but to the notion of 'maternity as women's main reason for being', and she promoted reproductive rights for women (Tarrant 2006:178,183).

As previously noted, Beauvoir inspired the second-wave feminists of the 1960s and 1970s, who had an emancipatory orientation. Second-wave feminists were both liberal, Marxist/socialist and radical, but they had a common 'assimilationist stance' and were 'concerned with removing barriers to women's full social participation, enabling women to participate and be recognised in the social world as men are' (Beasley 2005:20). A number of second-wave feminists focused on the similarities among women across the world. Sherry Ortner (1974) is an example of an American feminist theorist whose first work was published during this era, and who is still a leading feminist scholar today. Ortner argues that due to their capacity to give birth, women are universally associated with nature, whereas men everywhere are associated with culture, and thus take on a higher social position. As she puts it: 'Since it is always culture's project to subsume and transcend nature, if women were considered part of nature, then culture would find it 'natural' to subordinate, not to say oppress, them' (Ortner 1974:73). Similarly, other feminist writers from this era claimed that patriarchy was a global system in which women worked in the domestic sphere and men in the public sphere, and women were thus dependent on men. This reliance was 'reinforced and maintained by male violence towards women' (Charles 2002:8).

Radical feminists argue that 'the appropriation of women's bodies and sexuality' is a key feature of patriarchal societies, a notion that may be related to the male-dominated Acholi society (cf. chapter 2.4). Men control women's reproductive and childrearing roles, and according to the radical feminist Shulamith Firestone (1971, cited in Giddens 2009:617), the

sole way of liberating women is to abolish the family and the power relations within it. Violence towards women has often been viewed as a means for men to dominate women, as mentioned above, and radical feminists argue that 'domestic violence, rape and sexual harassment are all part of the systematic oppression of women, rather than isolated cases with their own psychological or criminal roots' (Giddens 2009:617). Furthermore, popular notions of beauty and sexuality are enforced upon women by men, and are expressed through the media, fashion industry and other public channels – turning 'women into sexual objects whose main role is to please and entertain men'. According to radical feminists, gender equality can only be achieved by putting an end to the patriarchal society (Giddens 2009:617).

The perspectives of modernist emancipatory feminists are interesting and highly relevant to our research, as it is argued that the economic and social oppression of women is a direct result of patriarchal structures in society. Within this discourse, violence towards women and male control of female reproduction are considered to be two strategies of maintaining patriarchy (Giddens 2009; Charles 2002).

3.1.2   Feminism and Race / Ethnicity / Imperialism (REI)

In the late 1970s and 1980s, feminists increasingly rejected the liberalist notion of a universal human category, and argued that equality based on such a notion 'requires women to become *the same as men*'. Thus, it was argued that the liberalist equality model is male-biased and cannot generate gender justice. One should instead focus on women's group identity as women and refrain from employing masculine categories as the standard of comparison (Beasley 2005:46).

What Beasley (2005:76) terms Race / Ethnicity/ Imperialism (REI) feminists also oppose the idea of a liberalist universal human conception. However, they additionally challenge a universal categorisation of women, and argue that such a notion is based on the practical knowledge of privileged, white, middle-class, Western women. Consequently, women whose perspectives diverge from this group are rejected. Beauvoir is among the scholars who have been criticised for 'falsely universalizing women's experience while ignoring issues of diversity, race, and ethnicity among women' (Tarrant 2006:170). Mead was also criticised on this point; as Tarrant (2006:106) argues, 'replacing biological paradigms with a cultural theory of difference may have worked in terms of gender but did not purge mid-twentieth century feminist theory of its Western, ethnocentric, and white racist biases'.

Post-colonial REI feminists question 'arrogantly universal claims and homogenising tendencies in Western thought', and challenge the hegemony of Western ideas in general (Beasley 2005:79). Edward Said, an important intellectual within post colonial theory, argues that the hegemony of Western thought persists through the dichotomy that has been created between the West and the 'Other'. The West is viewed as essential and as the model, 'while other cultures and peoples are represented as different and therefore inferior'. The principle of 'Othering' retains dichotomous power structures such as the West/Other and Men/Other – and 'presumes that difference must be regarded negatively' (Beasley 2005:80).

The Indian scholar Gayatri Spivak, a renowned post-colonial feminist, puts further emphasis on the principle of 'Othering'. She argues that Western dichotomies need to be 'deconstructed' so that their functions can be disclosed, and stresses that 'the dichotomous character of Western thinking and the practices of (gendered) imperialism' are closely linked

together. Thus, Spivak objects to the use of fixed categories such as 'Third World' or 'Women' and instead employs a more pluralistic analysis, aiming to overcome imperialist and male-centred dichotomies. However, she does not promote the disaggregation of identity categories to the extent that postmodern feminists do, and still finds it useful to employ certain identity categories in order to describe power structures and marginalisation – although 'with a constant sense of their limitations' (Beasley 2005:81).

Thus, feminist theories developed in the West may not necessarily be applicable to African societies such as the Acholi, and one must be critical of attempts to universalise feminist theories across cultures, which is further discussed in section 3.4.

3.1.3   Postmodern Feminism

Postmodern feminists not only reject the notion of a common gender identity, but argue that in order to object to power one must resist identity itself, based on the ideas of Michel Foucault and other postmodern thinkers. Thus, postmodern feminists aim to displace identity categories and the 'binary thinking in which they are embedded' (Beasley 2005:100). Judith Butler, a renowned postmodern feminist, states that 'gender does not 'express' a self, a way of being, or a bodily difference, but rather is a performance or enactment of power. One is a woman or a man as an effect of power' (Beasley 2005:101).

Foucault's theories of power have been influential as he argued that power is 'constitutive of social relations and intimately connected with every aspect of social life, even the construction of the self' (Charles 2002:12). Consequently, power exists not merely in the public sphere, but also in the private sphere and in intimate relations – and resistance to power is thus possible in all spheres of life. These ideas gained wide support among feminists, and the slogan 'the personal is political' was frequently proclaimed (Charles 2002:12). However, Foucault may be criticised for failing to consider 'systematic power relations', on which feminist theories of patriarchy are based, and some feminist scholars argue that his theory of power is in fact thus a threat to feminism as a political project (Hartsock 1990, cited in Charles 2002:12).

Butler argues that the body is also a cultural product, suggesting that a person's gender is not automatically derived from the anatomical sex – and gender may hence refer to more than two categories. Anatomical differences between the sexes are not of greater significance than the colour of a person's eyes, according to Butler. Consequently, Butler calls for a complete disruption of categories in order to 'disrupt the fixity of identity, by showing up its non-natural incoherence'. As argued by Butler, if gender is not 'an immutable fact of social life, then the whole of existing society can be questioned and can be viewed as potentially radically different. There is no core to which we must adhere. We can re-make our own rules' (Beasley 2005:102). The risk of oppression is greater when employing fixed identities like 'women' than when such categories are disrupted, according to Butler (Beasley 2005:103).

Although we find Butler's argument interesting and consider it to be an important addition to analyses of gender relations, we have chosen to employ the biological categories of women and men in our research, which makes our project more manageable. We are however aware of the limitations of employing fixed gender categories, and will bear in mind the theories of Butler and other feminist scholars who reject the uncritical use of permanent gender identities.

3.2   Theories of Masculinity and Gender Relations

When studying gender relations it is crucial to not solely consider feminist theories of gender and women's subordination, but also to bring in perceptions from masculinity theory. Since the late 1980s, men and masculinities have received greater attention among scholars, particularly with reference to gender relations, or the 'socially patterned interactions between men and women' (Giddens 2009:609). As argued by R. W. Connell (1987, 2001, 2005), masculinities are a vital part of the so-called 'gender order', and must be analysed accordingly. Connell emphasises that gender inequality is maintained through men's social power in society. Gender relations are produced through daily activities and communication among people, and people's private undertakings are closely linked to collective social arrangements in society. According to Connell, these arrangements are constantly reproduced, but can also be changed. Connell presents three main features which constitute a society's *gender order*, referring to 'patterns of power relations between masculinities and femininities that are widespread throughout society' (Giddens 2009:610). These three aspects are labour, power and cathexis (personal/sexual relationships), and a society's gender relations are predominantly produced in these three areas of society. *Labour* refers to 'the sexual division of labour both within the home and in the labour market'. *Power* 'operates through social relations such as authority, violence and ideology in institutions, the state, the military and domestic life'. *Cathexis* 'concerns dynamics within intimate, emotional and personal relationships, including marriage, sexuality and childrearing'. Gender relations are however not fixed, according to Connell, and can therefore be transformed and challenged (Giddens 2009:610).

There are multiple masculinities and femininities in society, argues Connell, and in society these 'contrasting versions are ordered in a hierarchy which is oriented around one defining premise – the domination of men over women' (Giddens 2009:611). The dominating category is termed *hegemonic masculinity*, and is related to heterosexuality and marriage, authority, paid work, strength and physical toughness. However, although hegemonic masculinity is considered an 'ideal form of masculinity', not many men can live up to it, which Dolan (2009) has demonstrated from the Acholi context of displacement, as discussed in chapter 2.4.4. Still, the majority of men benefit from patriarchy and the hegemonic masculinity; hence they show *complicit masculinity*. A number of masculinities and femininities are in a subordinate position to the hegemonic masculinity; *homosexual masculinity* is regarded as the most marginalised subordinate masculinity, while *emphasised femininity* exists in a complementary relationship with hegemonic masculinity and is 'oriented to accommodating the interests and desires of men and is characterized by compliance, nurturance and empathy'. According to Connell, there are also femininities which are in opposition to emphasised femininity – but these are often given little attention (Giddens 2009:611f).

Connell's theories of masculinities and gender relations are highly relevant for our study, particularly since we are exploring the impact of displacement on gender relations. Connell has also examined gender in an international context, and argues that 'gender itself has become globalized', involving 'interaction between previously distinct, local gender orders as well as the creation of new arenas of gender relations beyond individual localities'. Arenas which facilitate the globalisation of gender are e.g. multinational corporations, NGOs, UN organisations, the international media and global markets (Giddens 2009:613). Still, as argued by Giddens, it is important to recognise that feminism looks different across the world, an aspect which will be explored in greater depth in section 3.6. In developing countries such as Uganda, feminism largely means 'working to alleviate absolute poverty and to change

traditional male attitudes, which favour large families and dislike contraception', while in the developed world the focus is usually on employment opportunities and satisfactory childcare provision (Giddens 2009:622). However, male violence towards women remains a pertinent issue in both rich and poor countries, but is even more widespread in strongly patriarchal societies such as the Acholi (WHO 2002), an issue which is further examined in chapter 4.1.

3.3   Theories of Gender and Development

As argued by Connell above, gender has become globalised, and the Danish economist Ester Boserup was among the first scholars to focus on the position of women in the development process. After her work *Women's Role in Economic Development* was published in 1970, the international community increasingly came to acknowledge that development processes do not necessarily benefit women and men equally (El-Bushra 2000:55). Over the past decades there have been two dominant paradigms exploring the relations between women and development; the Women in Development (WID) approach and the Gender and Development (GAD) approach (Beetham & Demetriades 2007:200). These two directions are briefly presented below.

3.3.1   Women in Development

The term 'Women in Development' (WID) was first used by a group of American female development professionals who challenged the dominant 'trickle down' development theories, which claimed that benefits from development efforts automatically trickle down to women and other disadvantaged groups in society. It was argued that development has different implications for women and men, and that in many cases development actually leads to female disempowerment (Razavi & Miller 1995:2). Second-wave feminism, in particular liberal feminism, highly influenced WID supporters and their political strategy. As noted above, liberal feminists argue that 'women's disadvantages stem from stereotyped customary expectations held by men and internalised by women', and if only these stereotypes are broken down, women can achieve equality with their male counterparts. Consequently, the focus was on women; men and gender relations received little attention (Razavi & Miller 1995:3).

In addition to liberal feminism, contemporary research on women in developing countries, particularly Boserup's work, was influential for WID theories. Boserup asserted that women in sub-Saharan Africa play a central role in the agricultural economy, a fact which had been widely neglected in Western-dominated agricultural policies. Instead, such policies gave men priority when it came to new technologies and cash crops, resulting in reduced income, status and power for women. Boserup's insights led to a rejection of the 'narrow view of women's roles (as mothers and wives) underlying much of development policy concerning women' (Razavi & Miller 1995:4). According to WID advocates, women should not be viewed as 'needy beneficiaries', but rather as 'productive members of society'. Thus, women were seen as a ''missing link' in development, a hitherto undervalued economic resource in the development process' (Tinker 1990, cited in Razavi & Miller 1995:4). WID held that the oppression of women was directly connected to their exclusion from the economic sphere, and integrating women in the market economy would therefore contribute to development and facilitate gender equality simultaneously. This came to be known as the 'efficiency approach' (Beetham & Demetriades 2007:201).

The focus on economic efficiency was important for generating support from policy-makers and development agencies, as this was a dominant concern on the development agenda at the time. Although efficiency arguments are still prevalent within the women and development discourse, WID advocates have been criticised for over-focusing on productivity and thereby neglecting the ways in which other social arenas influence women's lives (Razavi & Miller 1995:6). As argued by Goetz (1994, cited in Razavi & Miller 1995:7), ''[d]emonstrating the efficiency dividends of investing in women' meant that WID advocates shifted the emphasis away from 'women's needs and interests in development, to calculating what development needs from women''. Thus, women were targeted in order to accomplish specific development goals, which were not necessarily benefiting women directly. Furthermore, the WID approach has been criticised for implicitly assuming that Western institutions are superior, neglecting the importance of indigenous knowledge (Connelly et al. 2002).

3.3.2   Gender and Development

By the late 1970s, WID advocates were increasingly criticised for focusing solely on women and ignoring men's roles and the relations between women and men. Social researchers highlighted 'the importance of power, conflict and gender relations in understanding women's subordination', and argued that gender identity is socially constructed (Razavi & Miller 1995:12). WID supporters were also critiqued for distancing themselves from welfare issues, and it was argued that instead of focusing primarily on women's productive roles one should rather pinpoint the close links between production and reproduction (Razavi & Miller 1995:11). Furthermore, women of the Global South started critiquing the WID paradigm, arguing that 'WID and the Northern-defined and imposed theory of development with which it is associated are based on Western ideals that do not translate to the contexts in the Global South' (Beetham & Demetriades 2007:201).

As a result of this criticism, a new framework called Gender and Development (GAD) was developed and the focus shifted from 'women-only research and programmes to a broader consideration of 'gender relations', or the hierarchical power relations between men and women that tend to disadvantage women' (AWID 2005, cited in Beetham & Demetriades 2007:201). It was acknowledged that women's subordination is not produced solely in the economic sphere, but on multiple arenas in society, including the household, the community and the state. The GAD paradigm further shifted the focus from the 'practical gender needs' of the efficiency approach, which only to a limited degree confronted gender relations, to include 'strategic gender interests' such as gender roles and division of labour. Thus, women were no longer regarded as beneficiaries who could ameliorate their lives without altering gender relations, but where rather perceived as 'agents who can be empowered to improve their position in society' (Connelly et al. 2000, cited in Beetham & Demetriades 2007:202).

The thoughts of Race/Ethnicity/Imperialism-feminists discussed in section 3.1.2, as well as Black feminists and African or Third World feminists, also came to be influential; they argued that multiple identities affect people's lives, including ethnicity, class, sex and religion – and that these in turn influence gender relations. Thus, it was recognised that 'the combination of interlocking forms of oppression' not only impinge on how women live their lives, but also how they are affected by development projects and policies (Beetham & Demetriades 2007:202).

However, even though there was a shift from WID to GAD in the late 1980s, El-Bushra (2000:56) argues that 'in practice 'gender work' is still seen first and foremost as concerning women', effectively ignoring men's roles in society. El-Bushra further claims that women are still viewed as a homogenous category in spite of an increased focus on multiple identities. Moreover, the economic perspectives from the WID paradigm are still dominant, according to El-Bushra, who states that 'many development agencies adopt women's economic empowerment as their main strategy for achieving gender equity, assuming that it will lead automatically to gender equality', hence ignoring that women are discriminated against in other social areas of life as well. Thus, El-Bushra calls for an increased focus on men and gender relations, as well as an acknowledgement of the complexities regarding both the discrimination of women and social differentiation among people in general (El-Bushra 2000). Additionally, Cornwall (1997:8) highlights the importance of taking account of the complexities surrounding men and masculinities in society rather than 'characterising men as 'the problem''. This can be linked to the Acholi context (cf. chapter 4.5.1) in which it has been argued that a disproportionate focus on women in relief operations has led to more cases of sexual violence towards women (Kalyango 2010, in Lende 2010).

The arguments presented above suggest that there are several ambiguities attached to the GAD paradigm. GAD actually raises more questions than it answers, according to Tripathy (2010:115), who also argues that there is still a disproportionate focus on women, and hence only 'one' gender. Tripathy claims that 'although it is acknowledged that different cultures construct different ideas of femininity, the conventional understanding of men and masculinity is one of uniformity and singular formation'. Cornwall (1997:11) brings Connell's concept of hegemonic masculinity into the discussion, and stresses that men who belong to subordinate masculinities can be as oppressed as women, but that they are seldom included in processes that aim to promote gender equality. If men discover that they are in fact already behaving differently in various social settings without their masculinity being challenged, it may also be easier for them to acknowledge some of the impacts of hegemonic masculinity, according to Cornwall. She further states that 'by deconstructing cultural assumptions about being a man, awareness can be raised', and men can 'be offered to empower themselves to change' (Cornwall 1997:12) (cf. 4.4.3). Interestingly, she highlights that 'men who have already begun to embrace change are allies, rather than part of 'the enemy', and opportunities should be made to involve them more in Gender and Development work'.

3.3.3   Millennium Development Goal Number 3

Gender issues and the empowerment of women are considered crucial by researchers, development practitioners and policy makers alike, which is reflected in the UN Millennium Development Goals, particularly in goal number 3, aiming to 'promote gender equality and empower women'. Target 3a sets out to 'eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education preferably by 2005, and at all levels by 2015' (UNDP 2010a). It also aims to increase the share of women in wage employment in the non-agricultural sector, as well as the proportion of seats held by women in national parliament. Interestingly, the UNDP (2010b) states that 'achieving the goals will be impossible without closing the gaps between women and men in terms of capacities, access to resources and opportunities, and vulnerability to violence and conflict'. Kabeer (2005:23) argues that each of the three indicators (education, wage employment and political representation) may potentially contribute positively to gender equality. Nevertheless, Kabeer claims that 'unless provision is made to ensure that

policy changes are implemented in ways that allow women themselves to participate, to monitor, and to hold policy makers, corporations, and other relevant actors accountable for their actions, this potential is unlikely to be realised' (Kabeer 2005:23). Thus, a holistic approach which takes account of women at all levels in society is deemed vital.

3.4   Sexuality and Development

Although sexual and reproductive rights are considered vital for women's empowerment and gender equality, little attention has been devoted to sex and sexuality in the development discourse. As argued by Cornwall and Jolly (2006:1), who work with gender and sexuality issues at the Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex, 'consigned to being treated as a health issue, or disregarded altogether as a 'luxury', sexuality barely features in development debates'. El-Bushra (2000:61) attributes the inattentiveness in sexuality to a lack of interest in reproductive health and sexual relations in general, and claims that interpersonal relations and emotional life are neglected in dominant development paradigms. Surprisingly, even gender advocates tend to be silent regarding sexual issues, although as argued by Tamale (2007:18), the endorsement of sexual secrecy and taboos is one of the most effective tools used to maintain gender hierarchy in African societies. According to Tamale (2007:21), the Ugandan women's movement remains silent when it comes to sexual rights partly due to all the sexual taboos in society in general.

Sexuality and sexual rights relate to 'everyone's rights to life and to good life', according to Carin Jämtin, former Swedish Minister for International Development Cooperation (2006, cited in Cornwall & Jolly 2006:2). Because sexuality is vital to people, the issue should not be ignored on the development agenda, according to Cornwall and Jolly (2006:3), who highlight that 'the silences, taboos and societal expectations that surround sex reinforce unhelpful gender stereotypes'. It should thus be a developmental task to break with these stereotypes and promote equal, mutually respectful and satisfying sexual relationships.

While the AIDS epidemic has obliged development agencies to place certain aspects of sexuality on the international development agenda, 'representations of sex and sexuality in AIDS discourses are not only persistently negative, they are also profoundly normative' (Pigg 1999; Gosine 2004, cited in Cornwall & Jolly 2006:1). Thus, sexuality is still seen as a problem which needs to be controlled. Within the development sector, sexuality is mainly considered a health issue, with the focus being on preventing pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections (STIs). Even though such prevention strategies are important, Cornwall and Jolly (2006:3) argue that 'they limit sexuality to the physical act of sex and its consequences'. The sexual health framework should instead be enlarged so that broader aspects of sexuality are accounted for, including sexual pleasure and mutual respect, according to the authors. A Namibian participant at the International Community of Women Living with HIV/AIDS Young Women's Dialogue 2004 argued that:

> 'Wanted sex, good sex and right to enjoy sex is not something that is covered in many intervention programmes… How do we expect young women to understand the importance of consensual sex and negotiating skills, if education is only limited to prevention of pregnancy, STIs, and sex being a no go area in many societies?' (Cornwall & Jolly 2006:3).

As a result of the narrow approach to sexuality, Cornwall and Jolly (2006:2) claim that women are seen as 'powerless victims, men as voracious sexual predators, and children as innocents' within the development discourse. This can be linked to the dominant stereotype of women as the 'passive recipients of penetrative male pleasure; sex that is not penetrative does not count as 'real' sex' (Tamale 2007:19). As a result, Ugandan women's sexuality is often reduced solely to their ability to reproduce and to perform their mothering role (Tamale 2007:19) (cf. sections 3.1.1 and 2.4.2).

Thus, Cornwall and Jolly (2006:2) call for a more comprehensive approach which moves away from taken-for-granted notions about women's powerlessness in order to appreciate 'how they themselves make sense of their own sexual realities'. They point to the fact that in many contexts, women are not supposed to confess to wanting sex, which can be linked to the Acholi culture where it is considered inappropriate for women to initiate sex, an issue which will be explored further in chapter 4. Several observers also highlight the strong linkage between poverty and sexual rights. As Cornwall and Jolly (2006:4) put it:

> 'The right to control one's own body – whether to protect its integrity or to enjoy its pleasures – is the most basic of all rights. If we lack the possibility to prevent our bodies from being violated by others, and if we are denied the opportunity to protect ourselves from pregnancy or disease, then how can we take part in or claim any of the other benefits of development?'

Thus, a more comprehensive approach to sexuality should be promoted on the development agenda, with an increased focus on sexual empowerment and the pleasurable aspects of sexuality. As argued by Chambers (2005, cited in Cornwall & Jolly 2006:1), 'we need to enable people to become as comfortable in talking about sexuality as they have become about gender'. Such positive approaches, which include 'the right to ask for or say 'yes' to the pleasures we seek as well as 'no' to that which we do not desire' can, according to Cornwall and Jolly (2006:8), be a means to confront sexual power structures in society. The importance of promoting a more holistic and positive approach to sexuality will be further examined in chapter 8, which discusses possible SGBV prevention strategies.

3.5 *The Prostitution Divide*

Prostitution remains a highly debated issue within the gender and sexuality discourse, and the core topic of debate is whether or not the female prostitute is an agent or a victim in her own situation – whether she is an empowered woman or a woman sexually enslaved in a male-dominated society. The issue of prostitution is controversial both among feminist scholars, policy-makers and the general public, and Jolin (1994:70) attributes this to a cultural contradiction in patriarchal societies, originating in the 'desire of men to ensure promiscuity for themselves, but chastity for women'. This can be related to the Acholi context in which a woman is traditionally expected to be a virgin until her wedding day, while this has not been a requirement for men (interview with Francis, traditional leader, 02.12.09). In order to account for the sexual aspirations of men, a number of women have historically been 'set aside' to serve as prostitutes. In such a context, 'voluntary entrance of women into prostitution seems highly unlikely, given a social order that linked female worth and economic survival to marriage, and marriageability to chastity', argues Jolin (1994:70). In the West, sexual liberation, the possibility of divorce, and a higher number of women in the public work force have resulted in promiscuity and chastity becoming less culturally significant (Jolin 1994:75).

However, the controversies regarding prostitution remain, and among contemporary feminists, two main categories may be identified; the Free Choice First (FCF) group in which freedom of choice is emphasised and the Sexual Equality First (SEF) approach where the prostitute is considered a victim.

3.5.1   The Free Choice First (FCF) Approach

Supporters of this approach claim that 'the fight for women's equality depends on the rejection of *all* attempts by *men or women* to forcibly impose their will on women' (Jolin 1994:77). Thus, so long as women engage in prostitution voluntarily, prostitution is a demonstration of women's equality – not a feature of women's oppression. The strongest supporters of this view are feminist sex workers and feminist prostitutes' rights groups, and many of the FCF proponents consider prostitution to be mainly an economic issue (Jolin 1994:77,79). As vibrantly expressed by the prostitute rights advocate Margo St. James in 1988: 'A blow job is better than no job' (Ringdal 2004:377). Female prostitutes are in some cases portrayed not as 'sexual slaves but as rebels and resistors of male power and as women who are cleverly seeking to maximise their conditions and opportunities in a problematic environment' (Sullivan 1995:5). Following from this, Perkins (1991, cited in Sullivan 1995:7) argues that a great number of prostitutes exercise control over their working lives, and consider themselves empowered by their work. This notion is supported by Chapkis et al. (1997, cited in Giddens 2009:599) who state that many prostitutes view themselves as 'independent women who have taken control of their lives, which makes them little different from successful women working in other employment sectors'.

3.5.2   The Sexual Equality First (SEF) Approach

The SEF proponents, on the contrary, argue that 'equality for women depends directly on their ability to eliminate male sexual oppression', and argue that 'until women are equal members of society, free choice is essentially illusory'. Male power is 'inextricably linked with female sexual subjugation'; hence gender equality cannot be obtained as long as prostitution exists (Jolin 1994:76). Prostitution institutionalises women's dependence on men, and is therefore inherently exploitative. Some feminists state that prostitution is ultimately 'little more than rape in installments' (Hoigard & Finstad 1987, cited in Jolin 1994:76).

The notion that prostitution is no different from other paid work is rejected by Pateman (1988, cited in Sullivan 1995:5), due to the fact that 'economically or otherwise, vulnerable women are coerced into selling sexual access to their bodies' (cf. chapter 4.1.3). According to Pateman, such 'sale of sexual access is regarded as sale of self', which implies that prostitution is best described as sexual slavery, and should therefore be abolished. The view that prostitution inherently empowers women is also challenged by SEF proponents. As argued by O'Leary (1992, cited in Sullivan 1995:7), prostitutes can merely be empowered 'within pre-existing patriarchal confines', meaning that 'they cannot do what is necessary, which is to mount an overall challenge to patriarchy'.

The objectification of women is another important issue for SEF proponents, who claim that prostitution propagates the notion that men may treat women as sexual objects (Giddens 2009:599). Prostitution convinces men that all women are sexually accessible free of charge or for money, according to Barry (1995, cited in Ringdal 2004:386). The next step is, argues

Barry, 'violence in marriage and rape on the streets', thus the dangers associated with prostitution places 'all women in bondage and slavery'.

An internal contradiction in the SEF approach is that women's sexual freedom is promoted unless the sex is exchanged for money. SEF feminists may therefore be critiqued for giving sexuality priority over economic survival, which is 'a luxury in which many women cannot indulge' (Jolin 1994:78), particularly in settings with widespread poverty such as Northern Uganda.

Following from the above discussion, it appears nearly impossible to depict prostitution as either empowering or disempowering for women (Sullivan 1995:7), as it is to a large degree context-dependent. Proponents of both sides of the prostitution divide present valid arguments, but may also be critiqued at several points. Jolin (1994:77) expresses it well when stating that:

> 'As an observer, one can either believe that true equality for women will not exist so long as women sell their bodies to men or one can believe that true equality will not exist so long as women are prevented from exercising choice, including the choice to sell their bodies to men.'

However, in a context of displacement and poverty, like that of Northern Uganda, we would argue that prostitution, or transactional sex, is in most cases engaged in by women and girls due to lack of other economic possibilities. The activity may therefore be considered as structurally enforced upon women and girls, and is hence included in many definitions of SGBV. As argued by Ringdal (2004:387), 'prostitution in the third world must be analyzed as a housekeeping strategy, not an individual choice'. Nevertheless, Thomas (2007:54) stresses the importance of avoiding 'the analytical pitfalls of branding all sexual relations that involve the exchange of material things as prostitution' in an African context. Thus, as researchers it is crucial to be aware of the context-specific complexities surrounding sexual relations in Northern Uganda and East Africa in general. The phenomenon of transactional sex will be explored in greater depth in chapter 4.1.3.

3.6   Transferability of Gender Theories to an African Context

Following from the increased focus on women in the development process over the last decades, the concept of 'gender mainstreaming' emerged. At the 1995 UN Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, a gender mainstreaming strategy was adopted, in which the concept was defined as follows:

> 'Mainstreaming a gender perspective is the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in any area and at all levels. It is a strategy for making the concerns and experiences of women as well as of men an integral part of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres, so that women and men benefit equally, and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal of mainstreaming is to achieve gender equality' (ILO 2002).

Thus, gender mainstreaming has become a global strategy, posing a number of challenges for development practitioners, researchers and policy-makers alike, particularly since the gender

concept originates from the West. Gender and Development is frequently looked upon as the territory of 'an exclusive group of gender experts, mostly Western women, who decide what constitutes gender awareness and devise ways to implement this agenda', according to Tripathy (2010:115). In their study of gender research in Malawi, Ntata and Biruk (2009:7) argue that the notion of gender mainstreaming implies that 'gender' is in fact foreign to Malawi, and is not yet an established category in the country – which may in turn be related to the Ugandan context. But what, then, is gender in Malawi or Uganda? And as Ntata and Biruk (2009:5) put it, 'does gender inequality mean the same thing in the US that it does in Malawi?'

In line with the argumentation of Race/Ethnicity/Imperialism-feminists and post-colonial feminists discussed in section 3.1.2, a number of African scholars question the transferability of feminist concepts developed in the West, including gender itself, to an African context. As argued by Oyewùmí (2003b:28), Professor of Sociology at State University of New York and originally from Nigeria, 'the ethnocentric idea that the white woman (or man) is the norm […] has dominated Western scholarly writings in at least the last two centuries'. As a consequence, 'cross-cultural women's studies have largely focused on finding patriarchy, and deciding what strategy Western feminists can use to liberate women of Africa, Latin America and Asia from its shackles'.

The Global North and the Global South do not necessarily share the same conceptions and understandings of gender, with the result that 'translation of the concept across both the theoretical/technical dichotomy and across cultural boundaries is fraught', according to Ntata and Biruk (2009:3). This has in turn led to a tense relationship between Western and African scholars of gender (Miescher et al. 2007:1). As highlighted above by Oyewùmí, there has been widespread suspicion towards feminism and the concept of gender in Africa due to the fact that it originates from the West. Western feminists are blamed for portraying African women solely as victims, denying them their agency. The dominant image is that of 'a weak and helpless African woman who needs to be saved from barbaric customs and a brutal, all-powerful, misogynistic group of men', according to Oyewùmí (2003b:34). Ntata and Biruk (2009:6) also highlight the tendency of researchers to depict Malawian women as 'wholly and only vulnerable'. Not only are Western feminists and researchers victimising African women, but gender experts within the GAD paradigm also see them as weak and not able to challenge their culture. Thus, African women 'remain 'objects' of development packages', according to Tripathy (2010:116f), who argues that the 'professionalisation and NGO-isation of the gender project' exacerbates the tendency of victimisation and promotes a Western hegemonic understanding of gender. The fact that the concept of gender has its origins in the West and is linked to Western values also brings with it challenges at the grassroots level. As highlighted by Ntata and Biruk (2009:7) in their study from Malawi, gender is often viewed negatively because it represents Westernisation, which is considered by many as a threat to local life (cf. chapter 4.3).

Following from the inclination to victimise African women is the notion that African societies are indeed 'male-dominated and anti-women' (Oyewùmí 2003b:33), and that African men are nothing but lazy. Both Oyewùmí (2003b:36) and Taiwo (2003) criticise Boserup (1970) at this point, arguing that Boserup provided Western feminists with the arguments needed for supporting their idea of patriarchy in Africa. As stated by Taiwo (2003:50), 'reading all these assertions about women and agriculture in Africa, one often wonders what the men do while the women are busy breaking their backs on the fields'.

The inabilities of what are termed 'gender imperialists' to take account of African realities are further demonstrated in their views on motherhood, argues Oyewùmí. In many African societies, including the Acholi, the family system is characterised by a strong matrifocality, as mentioned in chapter 2.4. In such family systems, as opposed to the Western nuclear family, 'motherhood is the most important source and model of solidarity, and being a mother is perceived as an attractive and desirable goal to achieve. The privileging of motherhood in the African family organization contrasts with the ambivalence about motherhood in feminism' (Oyewùmí 2003a:13). The importance of motherhood is also highlighted by Ntata and Biruk (2009:10), who stress that African women typically value motherhood, the family, and status accumulated over the life course higher than their Western counterparts. Consequently, gender experts often take for granted that women who value interpersonal relationships higher than their independence are 'suffering from 'false consciousness' about the nature of their oppression', according to El-Bushra (2000:57). This may be interpreted as a critique of Beauvoir (cf. section 3.1.1).

Polygamy, which is common among the Acholi, is another hot topic of discussion among gender scholars. The African man is often portrayed as a 'bestial savage' among Western feminists, according to Oyewùmí (2003b:31), with polygamy 'symbolizing the degradation of African women and hence the low state of Africans' – without accounting for the views of African women and men themselves. Polygamy has also been interpreted by Europeans as 'a sign of innate lust and sexual indiscipline on the part of the African man', and has been considered as 'proof of his primitivism' (Oyewùmí 2003b:37).

These controversies suggest that there is a strong need to adapt feminist theories and the concept of gender to context-specific realities both in African societies and elsewhere. As stated by Awe (1977, cited in Taiwo 2003:51) already three decades ago, women's problems must be 'examined within many contexts and with an awareness of differences'. Indeed, Miesher et al. (2007:2,3) argue that 'gender has been widely adopted – and adapted – in Africa', and that the concept has 'come to mean something in Africa, even if there is little agreement about *what* it actually means', painting a somewhat more optimistic picture of the status of gender on the continent. What is needed in Africa, according to Okome (2003:91), is a recognition that manifold manifestations of the gender concept are unavoidable; hence 'studies of African women must be clear on the differences that set apart African societies'. Following implicitly from this is the notion that African women's experiences differ from those of their Western sisters, and Okome (2003:92) states that it must be acknowledged that the West has as much to learn from Africa as Africa has to learn from the West. In order to combat ethnocentrism, Boris (2007:191) argues that 'we need to view gender as a product of location' with different meanings of and ways of doing gender. Studies of African societies have, for example, expanded the range of identity categories beyond gender, race, class, and nation, to also include lineage and kinship (Boris 2007:197).

Thus, it is crucial to take account of all these categories when studying gender in Africa, not merely the category of gender. As argued by Mugambi (2007:289), 'scholarship should simultaneously engage all categories of analysis and delve even deeper into gender and its intersections with other categories'. She suggests a new approach to African gender studies based on the principle of circular configuration, in which gender and other identity categories are situated within a circle, thus making all categories equally observable. This would allow for under-theorised categories to become visible, and internal hierarchies among the categories could be dismantled (Mugambi 2007:289). It is also crucial to view culture as different from tradition, according to Tripathy (2010), and to recognise that culture is not

static, but rather dynamic. As Tripathy (2010:117) puts it, 'to say that culture traps women underestimates the resilience of women as subjects, and also the transformative character of culture'. Thus, instead of victimising African women, they should instead be viewed as agents with a free will.

To summarise the discussion, we would argue that it is crucial for us as Western gender researchers to take account of the critique levelled at Western feminists and the gender concept by African scholars and others. As argued by Oyewùmí (2003b:40), 'information generated through research coded as knowledge is a major tool of domination', and it is therefore highly important that we remain critical towards Western 'gender imperialism'. However, we must simultaneously avoid the pitfall of romanticising the Acholi culture; as researchers we should aim to be equally critical of possibly female-oppressive gender relations in Acholi society.

Chapter 4: Exploring Sexual Gender-Based Violence (SGBV)

'It is obvious that we cannot end poverty unless we also end violence against women', argues the UNFPA (2008:1). The World Health Organisation (WHO) (2002:174) places gender inequality at the heart of SGBV towards women, and it can be argued that 'sexual and gender-based violence both contributes to, and is exacerbated by, the economic and socio-political discrimination experienced by women in many countries' (Population Council 2008:8). Indeed, 'entrenched gender roles and unequal power relationships make women more vulnerable and less able than men to exercise control over their bodies and lives. Nearly universally, cultural norms of masculinity foster aggressive and often violent behaviour for men' (CARE International 2009:1). It can therefore be assumed that SGBV can be found to varying extents everywhere where there is inequality between men and women, and where women are discriminated against economically and socially.

This chapter explores the SGBV phenomenon in more detail from a practical perspective, both in a global context, and more specifically in the Acholi context of displacement. During this chapter's discussion, the extent and causes of the problem are explored, as are ways in which SGBV can be prevented.

The investigation of sexual violence towards women risks portraying women as essentially victims of war rather than survivors or agents in their own right. This has been a common criticism against much of the literature on women in conflict (Mjaaland 2006). There is also a danger of portraying a polarised image of women as victims and men as perpetrators, when the reality may not be so simple (Kemirere 2007:52; Population Council 2008:7). To avoid these pitfalls, this study investigates gender relations, rather than merely women's perspectives (cf. chapter 3.2.2), in a displacement context. When examining cases of SGBV, the term 'survivor' instead of 'victim' is used, as the former implies resiliency and is encouraged in psychosocial care (IASC 2005:8; Population Council 2008:5).

4.1 SGBV Worldwide

When studying SGBV in post-conflict Northern Uganda, it is important, as Finnstöm (2008:8) emphasises, not to fall into the trap of many contemporary conflict analyses that reduce 'African realities [...] to little more than the antithesis to the order of Western civilization, which on the other hand is taken for granted as modern and civilized'. It is crucial to bear in mind that SGBV is not a phenomenon limited to Africa or conflict situations, but that it also occurs in the Western world, although perhaps to a lesser degree.

According to the WHO (2002:159), 'sexual violence is found in almost all countries (though with differences in prevalence), in all socioeconomic classes and in all age groups from childhood onwards'. The Council of Europe (CoE) (2006:7) estimates that more than one tenth of European women have experienced forced sex. Women and girls are generally more vulnerable to sexual violence if they are young, under the influence of alcohol or drugs, or if they have had many sexual partners. If they are involved in sex work or if they have been raped or sexually abused in the past, women's vulnerability to sexual violence increases even further (WHO 2002:157).

SGBV is generally acknowledged to be more common in situations of conflict; 'countries with a culture of violence, or where violent conflict is taking place, experience an increase in almost all forms of violence, including sexual violence' (WHO 2002:162). The NRC (2007:4) further states that 'displacement and armed conflict […] exacerbate discrimination and violence against women, including rape, sexual exploitation and other forms of gender-based violence'. In 2000, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) adopted Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, which calls on 'all parties to armed conflict to take special measures to protect women and girls from gender-based violence, particularly rape and other forms of sexual abuse' (UNSC 2000:3). In 2008, the UNSC further adopted Resolution 1820 on Sexual Violence in Conflict, stressing the particular vulnerability of women and girls to sexual violence in conflict and post-conflict settings (UNSC 2008:1). Finally, in 2009, the UNSC adopted Resolution 1888, which called for 'strengthened UN leadership and coordination of global efforts to put an end to rape as a weapon of war' (CARE International 2009:2).

Nevertheless, despite heightened international awareness of the strong prevalence of SGBV towards women in conflict situations, the WHO (2002:173) identifies a need for more research on the 'social context of different forms of sexual violence'. Indeed, SGBV occurs more frequently where social structures such as laws, national policies and norms on gender equality and violence, are conducive towards it (WHO 2002:162). Furthermore, social norms related to gender expectations play a part; 'in societies where the ideology of male superiority is strong – emphasizing dominance, physical strength and male honour – rape is more common' (WHO 2002:162). According to UNICEF (2005:1), SGBV can also exacerbate existing gender inequality, as it 'denies women […] security, the right to enjoy fundamental freedoms and forces them into subordinate positions compared to men.' Thus, SGBV is both a cause and a consequence of gender inequality.

4.2   SGBV in Uganda

As the ideology of male superiority is strong in the Acholi context (Dolan 2009, El-Bushra & Sahl 2005) one would expect sexual violence to be more common there. Interestingly, Uganda's 1995 Constitution 'gives special protection to vulnerable groups such as women, children, and people with disabilities', particularly against sexual abuse. Article 33(3) declares that 'the State shall protect women and their rights, taking into account their unique status and natural maternal functions in society' (ULRC 2000:16). In 1985, Uganda ratified the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women, and in 1991, the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child was ratified, underlining the right of the child to protection from sexual abuse and exploitation (including prostitution), especially during armed conflict (ULRC 2000:17f).

The 1995 Constitution sets the minimum legal age of marriage in Uganda at 18 years (ULRC 2000:xx). Sexual relations with a girl under 18 years of age, known as 'defilement', is illegal and punishable by law, whether or not the sexual union was consensual. Nevertheless, despite national legislation which would seem to protect girls and women from SGBV, sexual violence occurs at an alarming rate in Uganda. In fact, 39 percent of Ugandan girls and women between the ages of 15 and 49 have reported being forced to have sex or perform sexual acts against their will (UBOS 2007:290). The actual number of survivors is likely to be much higher, as many cases of SGBV are never reported (UBOS 2007:285).

The developmental consequences of SGBV are significant, and include:

> 'Unwanted pregnancy, unsafe self-induced abortion, infanticide, and sexually transmitted infections, including HIV/AIDS. Psychological trauma, as well as social stigma and rejection, is also common. Most societies tend to blame the victim in cases of sexual violence, which increases physiological harm' (IASC 2005:4).

The stigmatisation that follows experiences of sexual violence is sensed both in the community and the household setting, where a man may reject his wife who has been raped (ULRC 2000:LIII; CARE International 2009:1). Furthermore, 'girls who are regarded as a source of wealth accruing from bride price are considered worthless once they are defiled' (ULRC 2000:LIV), and children conceived from rape are sometimes rejected from their community (CARE International 2009:1). Girls who become pregnant or who experience rape are also highly likely to drop out of school due to stigmatisation (UNICEF 2005:iv). Thus, SGBV and 'early pregnancies contribute to the mass illiteracy of women in Africa' (ULRC 2000:39). As a consequence of terminating studies and lacking the skills necessary to obtain a job, girls may end up prostituting themselves in order to survive (ULRC 2000:125). Early pregnancies also contribute to increasing the already high fertility rate of Uganda, leading to 'a high population growth rate and a high dependency ratio' (ULRC 2000:39).

In relation to health effects, the World Bank (cited in CARE International 2009:1) estimates that 'gender-based violence accounts for as much death and ill-health in women aged 15–44 years as cancer'. The importance of studying SGBV from an endogenous perspective can therefore not be underestimated.

4.3   SGBV and Displacement in Northern Uganda

'The consequences of disorder and violence have fallen disproportionately upon the women and children of Acholi-land', argue LIGI and GDNGOF (2007:2). SGBV in Northern Uganda has taken a wide variety of forms. Female abductees who have been forced to marry their captors as a reward for the latter's bravery in battle has amounted to little more than 'institutional rape', according to Amnesty International (AI) (2001:133). For the purposes of narrowing down our topic, however, this thesis does not explore sexual violence committed toward female abductees.

The aim of this study is to investigate the socio-cultural factors that have been attributed to causing SGBV among girls and women living in IDP camps in Northern Uganda. While various sources, such as the URLC (2000:LIII) attribute sexual violence to personal factors like 'high libido, lack of confidence, and fear of contracting HIV/AIDS from older women', which 'cause men to look for young girls for sexual gratification', we believe such individual factors cannot be seen separately from the society and the overarching structures in which they occur. SGBV in the camps has been attributed to the many impacts of displacement, including more cases of early marriage, breakdown of social structures, alcohol abuse, and the lack of privacy that camp life engenders. Each of these factors is examined below, in order to shed more light on the socio-cultural causes of SGBV in the region.

In Northern Uganda, many girls experience a 'customary' form of sexual violence as a result of early marriage, to which they are legally unable to give their consent (UNICEF 2005:4). Despite the fact that the law prohibits marriage before 18 years of age, marriage among young

girls is still commonly practiced; it is estimated that more than 50% of Ugandan girls marry before the age of 18 (ULRC 2000:1). Although it is dangerous to romanticise Acholi society before displacement, many parents married off their daughters early during the heights of the war to increase their daughter's economic security, gain economically by obtaining the bride price, and safeguard their daughters against the high prevalence of SGBV found in the IDP camps (Gottschalk 2007:51). Others married off their daughters to avoid them being abducted, as the rebels are known to prefer abducting unmarried girls (Kemirere 2007:195). Early marriage has also been a common way of avoiding the stigma and shame associated with sexual abuse (Hentonnen et al. 2008:127), and it has been 'arranged as a hasty response to sexual relationships' (Gottschalk 2007:52). As a consequence of early marriage, however, many girls have been forced into sex by their husbands (Hentonnen et al. 2008:127).

SGBV in Northern Uganda has also been attributed to the breakdown of social relations which has left women more vulnerable to sexual violence (UNICEF 2005:11; WCRWC and UNFPA 2007:17). According to the UNFPA (2008:3), 'the large number of people forced to live in crowded IDP camps in northern Uganda has disrupted the protection of family networks and cultural norms which help protect women and young people from sexual abuse'. Whereas in the past the clan was responsible for the protection of the individual clan member, displacement has threatened this system as people from diverse backgrounds and clans have been thrown together in one place, as mentioned in chapter 2 (Olaa 2001:101). Thus, the likelihood of SGBV taking place is increased, as there has been a 'breakdown of the policing or judicial system, of the family or of the community, all of which may have provided women some degree of protection or redress before the conflict erupted' (AI 2001:117).

The over-crowding of many camps has also been related to increasing cases of SGBV. Pabbo IDP camp, for example, which covers an area of only 35 kilometers, used to accommodate 63. 000 individuals at the most (UNICEF 2005:11). Due to the lack of privacy this entails, and the fact that parents have been sharing their sleeping arrangements with their children, young children have become aware of adult sexual behaviour early, which has led many children to experiment sexually and copy their parents' behaviour (UNICEF 2005:19; ULRC 2000:LIII). One may therefore assume that children who see their father forcing their mother into sex will be more likely to resort to sexual violence in future relationships. Furthermore, 'being thrown together in proximity with strangers means that young people can easily come into contact with corrupting influences' (El-Bushra and Sahl 2005:25).

Displacement has also caused 'idleness, redundancy and unemployment', which, coupled with the breakdown of social and cultural norms, has 'created fertile ground for exploitation and violence' (UNICEF 2005:11). As a consequence of idleness and unemployment, many IDPs have resorted to high alcohol consumption, which has been linked to the high rate of SGBV in the camps (UBOS 2008:297; WHO 2002:160; WCRWC and UNFPA 2007:7; UNICEF 2005:iii). Thinking that they will not be held accountable for their behaviour when drunk (WHO 2002:160), many drunken men have been guilty of 'promiscuity, infidelity, defilement, rape in and out of marriage' (UNICEF 2005:12), as alcohol can 'impair judgement [and] compromise power relations', particularly during sex (UBOS 2007:220). Nevertheless, one must question whether alcohol is really a cause of SGBV in itself, or whether alcohol merely accentuates inborn desires or aggression that leads to sexual violence.

Some also argue that Western influence is a main cause of SGBV. ULRC (2000:123) writes, for example, that 'the influence of foreign culture [is one] of the social factors that influence the incidence of rape, defilement and other sexual offences'. Among the practices allegedly

arising as a result of foreign influence are 'provocative dressing', night discos which increase alcohol use, drug abuse and hence fornication (UNICEF 2005:11) and pornography, which 'encourage children to engage in early sex' (ULRC 2000:LIII). This resounds well with concomitant discourses of the origins of homosexuality in Ugandan society, in which some attribute the 'problem' to Western influence and thus believe it should be dealt with through capital punishment (Branch 2009:1), to 'eradicate' it from Uganda. However, according to Professor Sylvia Tamale (2007:18f) at Makerere University, 'contrary to popular belief, homosexuality in Uganda predates colonialism and other forms of subjugation', and 'trends in both the present and the past reveal that it is time for Africans to bury the tired myth that homosexuality is 'un-African'. Thus, there is a danger that the reductionist way of explaining phenomena such as SGBV by attributing it to Western influences inherently avoids responsibility by failing to deal with the deeper reasons for such phenomena occurring (cf. chapter 8.4.1). It is therefore important to balance a reading of the literature on the causes of SGBV with the perspectives of displaced men, women and NGO professionals themselves. Such a deep delve into the social drivers of SGBV may be facilitated through undertaking a closer study of rape, forced sex between intimate partners and transactional sex in Acholiland.

4.4 Rape

Rape can be defined as a 'physical invasion of a sexual nature, committed on a person under circumstances which are coercive' (AI 2001:120). Although dealt with in a variety of ways, the consequences of rape can be both individual – 'for the women survivors, rape is the most severe attack on the intimacy and dignity of the body of any human being that lasts a lifetime' (Golstein 2001, cited in Kemirere 2007:43) – and collective; 'attacking women's productivity has a sweeping socio-economic aftermath for nations and their neighbors: women cannot safely collect water, food or firewood; children cannot safely get to school' (Johnson 2009:2).

Rape is committed for a variety of reasons. Firstly, the perpetrator may resort to rape to gain sexual gratification (WHO 2002:14). However, the 'underlying purpose [of rape] is frequently the expression of power and dominance over the person assaulted'. Rape may also be used as punishment for women who have broken social or moral codes (WHO 2002:149). Other factors influencing men who rape are 'those related to attitudes and beliefs, as well as behaviour arising from situations and social conditions that provide opportunities and support for abuse' (WHO 2002:159), such as situations of displacement and conflict.

In conflict situations, rape has been considered a weapon of war intended to subdue and silence the enemy (Solhjell 2009, UNSC 2008, Kemirere 2007). According to UNSCR 1820, rape has been used as a 'tactic of war to humiliate, dominate, instil fear in, disperse and/or forcibly relocate civilian members of a community or ethnic group' (UNSC 2008:1). Rape was internationally recognised as a war crime in June 1996 at the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (Kemirere 2007:25). Kemirere (2007:43) states that 'in 1945 Russian soldiers in Berlin used rape to revenge; in Vietnam American soldiers raped in frustration; and in Bosnia rape was used for ethnic cleansing'. During the Rwandan genocide in 1994, it is estimated that up to 500.000 women were raped during a period of three months (Speed & Vestvik 2009:148; CARE International 2009:1).

Currently, an estimated number of between 30.000 and 60.000 women are being raped every year during the ongoing conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (Speed and Vestvik 2009:146). At the height of the war in 2008, 40 women were raped every day in one province

alone (CARE International 2009:1). In such situations, argues Kemirere (2007:43), the aim of rape has been to 'humiliate enemy males by spoiling their valued property (women).'

AI (2001:9) goes even further in describing the symbolic act of raping women:

> 'Violence against women in armed conflict situations is predicated on the sexualization of women and their role as transmitters of culture and symbols of nation or community: women experience armed conflicts as sexual objects **and** as female members of ethnic, racial, religious, or national groups.'

Consequently, perpetrators of rape in conflict often target categories of people rather than individuals (Jackson 2002b, cited in Finnström 2008:183).

4.4.1   The Body Metaphor

When discussing rape, particularly as a weapon of war, it is interesting to examine the ways in which scholars such as Mary Douglas have linked the body to society in general. Douglas (1966) argued that the body is universally a microcosm of society, and that the body's stability and complexity matches that of society. Following this theory, if the female body is threatened, society as a whole is threatened. In a context of displacement where the boundaries of society become unstable, the female body is also likely to reflect this instability, and its boundaries may become less closed off as a result of SGBV, albeit in a different way for female bodies than male ones. Indeed, the female body is particularly vulnerable to sexualisation, for according to Haug (1983, cited in Charles 2002:140), 'the sexualisation of a woman's body […] represents an inclusion of the female subject in ordering of the sexual'.

Douglas (1966:236) writes that 'in a patrilineal system of descent, wives are the door of entry to the group'. Thus, perpetrators of rape in contexts such as the Rwandan genocide have been known to target women to threaten community identity (AI 2001:12; Finnström 2008:181). In situations of violence, the female body, being the group's door of entry, may become 'a sign through which men communicate[d] with each other' (Das 1995, cited in Finnström 2008:182). This may take the form of rape, through which men – soldiers in particular – fight with each other. Thus, female bodies no longer remain individual and private. The invasion of female bodies by men can therefore be connected to a higher structural level, which makes the act of bodily invasion a systematic weapon of war.

4.4.2   Rape in Northern Uganda

Although frequently not labelled as such, the conflict in Northern Uganda has been referred to as an example of soldiers using rape as a weapon of war (WHO 2002:156). Soldiers on both sides have been perpetrators of rape – there are 'innumerable accounts of rape by soldiers' (Dolan 2009:146), although it has frequently been difficult to ascertain which side the perpetrators belonged to as they all wear similar uniforms (Behrend 1999, cited in Dolan 2009:147). Rape by armed forces has been attributed to the 'weak protective environment' of the IDP camps (UNICEF 2005:iii). Women have been attacked as they walk far distances to collect firewood or water, whether inside the camp or most often in the fields outside the camp (UNICEF 2005:9). Others have been raped 'when using communal water and sanitation facilities' (IASC 2005:47). Thus, many pinpoint the importance of securing good designs of

IDP and refugee camps in order to protect girls and women against SGBV (UNHCR, cited in WHO 2002:171, IASC 2005).

Although, as noted, 'random rape has not been an LRA trait' (Allen 2006:43), rape by the LRA has sometimes been used strategically to 'both instil terror in the civilian population, and exert control over those girls abducted and forced to serve as child soldiers for the LRA' (Leibig 2005:7). Rebels have also been known to offer women safety in return for sex (UNICEF 2005:9). Where UPDF soldiers have been the perpetrators of rape, there is little doubt that they have been guilty of 'failing to provide protection and [been] involved in much of the day-to-day violence themselves', as mentioned in chapter 2. This has led to 'constant tensions between the civilians and military' (Dolan 2009:149). Rape has been a means through which UPDF soldiers have elated their own masculinity while undermining that of civilian men, who have been forced to watch as soldiers rape their daughters, sisters and wives, whom they have been unable to protect (Dolan 2009:212). Thus, a motive for rape by soldiers emerges; 'it is not merely the sexual act which is gratifying, but the capacity to humiliate another man at the same time' (Dolan 2009:215). This exemplifies well Das' assertion that in armed conflict, women's bodies are 'a sign through which men communicate with each other' (Das 1995, cited in Finnström 2008:182).

Dolan pinpoints that the Ugandan state has failed to bring their own UPDF soldiers to justice for their criminal acts. Rather than pursuing a judicial process, the common way of dealing with UPDF rapists has been to transfer them to another place of service (Dolan 2009:147). This has created further suspicion among the Acholi people, who believe the government has genocidal intentions against them (Dolan 2009:153).

Despite the fact that soldiers have been some of the main perpetrators of sexual violence during the war in Acholiland, civilian men have also been guilty of rape. Rape has been considered a consequence of displacement where overcrowded camps, alcohol abuse and a precarious socio-economic situation all contribute to acts of sexual violence (UNICEF 2005; UNFPA 2007). Indeed, the link between displacement and sexual violence committed by civilians has, perhaps, not been adequately researched. Bukuluki et al. (2008) point to the lack of documentation on how conflict and displacement affect gender relations, and this study therefore aims to shed more light on the link between displacement, gender relations and SGBV in the Ugandan context.

4.4.3   The Extent of Rape in Northern Uganda

Tragically, the WCRWC and UNFPA (2007:19) estimate that the first sexual experience of one in three girls in Northern Uganda is as a result of rape. They state that humanitarian workers in the region have also reported an increase in cases of rape as a way to force young girls into marriage (WCRWC & UNFPA 2007:8). Indeed, as in many other societies, some Acholi believe that 'the cultural 'solution' to rape is that the woman should marry the rapist, thereby preserving the integrity of the woman and her family by legitimizing the union' (WHO 2002:161). Thus, although one may doubt whether the raped woman's integrity is really preserved through marrying the rapist, or whether this causes further social stigma, this practice in essence 'decriminalises' rape, which may further increase its spread.

A study conducted by UNICEF in Pabbo IDP camp also reveals that 'at least 60 percent of women in the largest camp for internally displaced persons (IDPs) in war-torn northern Uganda have encountered some form of sexual and domestic violence'. However, the 'actual

incidence of sexually inappropriate behaviour is estimated to be much higher than the cases reported' (IRIN 2005:1). According to UNICEF's study in Pabbo IDP camp, those most vulnerable to sexual violence are girls between 13 and 17 years, followed by women aged between 19 to 36 years, and thereafter by children aged between 4 and 9 years. Due to the high prevalence of sexual violence in Pabbo, rape is 'almost expected' by girls and women in the camp (UNICEF 2005:iii,9).

Of the girls and women who have experienced sexual violence, the perpetrators are most commonly spouses, partners or boyfriends, as in Pabbo where forced sex between intimate partners emerged as the most common form of SGBV (UNICEF 2005:6). The research of the Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS) (2007:292) confirms this as the perpetrators of reported rape cases in Uganda have been current husbands or partners (in 44 percent of the cases), former husbands or partners (22 percent of the cases), former boyfriends (10 percent of the cases), strangers (8 percent of the cases) and friends or acquaintances (7 percent).

These particular statistics from UBOS relate to the whole of Uganda, and studies conducted exclusively in Northern Uganda would probably have revealed that more women on average were raped by soldiers or other strangers. Indeed, although it has been argued that most sexually violent men 'direct their acts at women whom they already know' (WHO 2002:159), this has not necessarily been the case in Northern Uganda, where soldiers have contributed to increasing the rate of SGBV committed by strangers. However, incidences of rape by strangers and armed combatants are perceived to be less frequent now than during the heights of the war (Hentonnen et al. 2008:126). Currently, forced sex between intimate partners appears to be an equally, if not more, common form of sexual violence in the region. Henttonen et al. (2008:122) reinforce this in their criticism of the IASC's *Guidelines for Gender-Based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Setting*, produced in 2005, which, focusing on rape by strangers, fails to take into account the many forms of intimate partner sexual violence that also occur in conflict settings.

4.5   Forced Sex by Intimate Partners

Indeed, when studying SGBV it is imperative to include forced sex between intimate partners as this is globally one of the most common forms of sexual violence against women (UBOS 2007:283). Nevertheless, in their understanding of SGBV, the IASC guidelines do not include forced sex between intimate partners, which 'has greatly influenced the humanitarian action plan for Northern Uganda, and may be causing the exclusion of girls and women affected by gender-based violence that is not directly conflict-related from prevention and care services' (Hentonnen et al. 2008:129). It is therefore apparent that any study of SGBV in Northern Uganda must take into account the most prevailing form of SGBV – forced sex between intimate partners – even though it cannot be said to be explicitly conflict-related. Nevertheless, conflict plays a part as intimate partner violence has been linked to alcohol abuse and the poor living conditions of the IDP camps (Hentonnen et al. 2008:127).

Elaborating on the definition of Saltzman et al. (2003, cited in the Population Council (2008:37), intimate partner sexual violence can be defined as 'actual or threatened […] sexual violence […] directed toward a spouse, ex-spouse, current or former boyfriend or girlfriend, or current or former dating partner'. In many countries, up to one in four women has experienced forced sex by an intimate partner (IASC 2005:3). Many attribute this to gender relations which condone male violence towards women. According to the WHO (2002:149),

'often, men who coerce a spouse into a sexual act believe their actions are legitimate because they are married to the woman'. Indeed, sexual violence committed by men, particularly that related to forced sex between intimate partners is 'to a large extent rooted in ideologies of male sexual entitlement. These belief systems grant women extremely few legitimate options to refuse sexual advances' (WHO 2002:162).

In Uganda, 'the law, custom, and religion all stress the right, particularly of the husband, to sexual intercourse within marriage' (ULRC 2000:xviii). Ironically, although the constitution regards it as an unacceptable violent act (UNICEF 2005:1), there is no law in Uganda that regards marital rape as a crime (Hentonnen et al. 2008:129). Thus, men can force their intimate partners into sex without fearing legal punishment. The traditional practice of widow inheritance, whereby the brother of a deceased man inherits the latter's wife to keep the bride price within the family (UNICEF 2005:7), may also contribute to increasing forced sex between intimate partners.

Statistics indicate that at least '59 percent of ever-married women [in Uganda] have ever experienced physical or sexual violence at the hands of their husband or partner' (UBOS 2007:xxvii). UBOS (2007:250) further emphasises that 'women in Uganda generally accept violence as part of male-female relationships, which is not surprising because traditional norms teach women to accept, tolerate, and even rationalize, battery'. This can be linked to cultural beliefs that a woman's body is not her own, but her husband's property (Butegwa, cited in Kiapi 2009:2), which in turn is linked to women's objectification through the payment of the bride price. In Acholi, it is the right of the husband, 'regardless of the woman's consent,' to decide 'when, where and how sex should be conducted' (UNICEF 2005:15), and it is culturally unacceptable for an Acholi woman to refuse sex within marriage (LIGI & GDNGOF 2007:13). Indeed, culturally 'a husband cannot commit rape on his wife' because consent to sexual relations is 'presumed from the fact of marriage' (ULRC 2000:27). Thus, few Acholi, particularly men, regard intimate partner sexual violence or marital rape as an offence (UNICEF 2005:iii). Furthermore, as intimate partner sexual violence is usually considered a private matter and a normal family affair (Hentonnen et al. 2008:127; UNICEF 2005:1), it remains under-reported.

Nevertheless, despite cultural norms that sanction forced sex between intimate partners, most Ugandan women 'believe they should have the ability to negotiate whether or not to have sex with one's partner' (UBOS 2007:253). 90 percent of women and 95 percent of men in IDP camps in Northern Uganda believe a woman is justified in refusing sexual intercourse with her husband if he has some sexually transmitted disease (STD) (UBOS 2007:213). However, 25 percent of men and 43 percent of women between the ages of 15 and 49 in IDP camps believe the husband is justified in beating his wife if she refuses to have sexual intercourse with him (UBOS 2007:250). This disparity between men's and women's attitudes may indicate that women have internalised a patriarchal view of themselves as inferior to men; however, it could also indicate that men in general are hesitant to portray an image of themselves as wife-beaters. In light of this, the number of men who believe they can justifiably beat their wives in cases of her refusing sex may actually be much higher.

Interestingly, the WHO (2002:158) argues that as women become more educated and more empowered, intimate partner sexual violence increases. This is exemplified by studies from South Africa and Zimbabwe. According to the WHO, 'greater empowerment brings with it more resistance from women to patriarchal norms, so that men may resort to violence in an attempt to regain control'. However, this only happens to a certain point, after which the

education of women beyond secondary school confers protection from SGBV (Jewkes 2002, cited in Population Council 2008:9).

4.5.1 The Crisis of Masculinity

Another explanation attributed to forced sex, whether by intimate partners or strangers, is the emasculation of men that often takes place in conflict areas. According to the WHO (2002:161), 'several authors have argued that the relationship between poverty and perpetration of sexual violence is mediated through forms of crisis of masculine identity'. As argued in chapter 2, Acholi men whose masculine identity has traditionally been expressed through their roles as protectors and providers, experience emasculation through the inherent dependence on others that displacement engenders (Dolan 2009). In the face of this massive emasculation, the objectification of women may be one way of retaining control over something that men can still control (Dolan 2002:12; WHO 2002:161). UNICEF (2005:11) further argues that whereas Acholi men in the past had 'outlets for their sexual aggressions' through 'warfare, long initiation rituals, formal preparations for manhood, arduous hunting trips, [and] regular courting rituals', displacement has made such practices more difficult, if not impossible, to perform. As a result, young men in IDP camps have been propelled to 'seek an out let through sexual violence'.

A further cause of tensions between the sexes that has eventually culminated in acts of SGBV towards women has been the role of NGOs in distributing aid. According to AI (2001:174), 'studies have indicated that relief projects and structures for refugee representation tend to exacerbate existing gender inequality within the affected communities'. Indeed, many relief projects have been biased in favour of men; representation structures, for example, have long been male-dominated, and goods and services have also been distributed unfairly (AI 2001:174). Kemirere (2007:181) attributes this to the fact that 'the emergency state of affairs does not allow agencies or government to reflect deeply on the developmental consequences of their actions'.

While relief projects biased in favour of men may have contributed to worsening women's socio-economic position in society, the recent years' disproportionate focus on women's empowerment has also been problematic (Dolan 2009, Lende 2010). According to Dolan (2009:204), the World Food Programme (WFP) at one point supplied women with cattle, 'heedless of the fact that this was traditionally a masculine area of activity'. This 'almost certainly worsened day-to-day relations between men and women – thus detracting from any positive impact they may have had on the supposed beneficiaries, the women' (Dolan 2009:204). UNICEF (2005:11) further argues that men in Pabbo IDP camp who have been extremely hostile to programs that specifically promote women's development, have expressed their frustration through increased sexual violence towards women. This is in line with what Ronald Kalyango has found in his PhD research on gender and displacement in Northern Uganda. Kalyango argues that sexual violence increases as men start feeling threatened by the disproportionate focus of NGOs on women (Lende 2010:42). According to Kalyango (2010, cited in Lende 2010:42), there is a 'clear correlation between financial assistance directed solely towards women, and the prevalence of gender-based violence in Northern Uganda' [our translation]. This is due to the fact that 'men are cut off from their power bases' (Lende 2010:43). In reaction to what men perceive as losing their control over resources, some resort to controlling women's freedom of movement, others to sexual violence and others again to stigmatising those women who have attained more resources

(Kalyango, cited in Lende 2010:43), as in the case of SGBV increasing where women attain more education (WHO 2002:158).

This emphasises the importance of gender sensitive prevention efforts, as explored earlier. Indeed, any attempt to introduce sustainable relief and development programmes must consider the needs of both men and women in Acholi society, and the impact of displacement on gender relations. Whilst such attempts should avoid prioritising one sex before another, they should consider many men's experience of a 'crisis of masculinity' and the many contributing factors to increased gender tensions and cases of SGBV.

4.6   Transactional Sex

The study of SGBV in a post-conflict situation merits a consideration of other less physically forceful forms of sexual violence, such as prostitution or transactional sex - the 'exchange of sex for money, favours, or gifts' (UBOS 2007:217). It is important to consider 'other forms of structural violence as visited mainly upon women by poverty, […] by women's exclusion and marginalization in the economic and recovery processes in their countries' (NCA 2008:ix). Transactional sex may exemplify such structural violence brought on by economic necessity, and although containing an element of voluntarism, prostitution is acknowledged by the ICC (2000:6) to be forced and an example of sexual violence in such circumstances.

The boundaries between transactional sex and sexual violence are challenged not only by the fact that prostitution carries an inherent risk of rape, as mentioned, but also by the fact that children often engage in the sex trade. The UN classifies sex as exploitation when it is exchanged for services, goods or protection, or when the sexual partner is below 18 years of age (IASC 2005:41). Furthermore, 'it is difficult to draw the boundaries between exploitation and an equal, voluntary relationship where sexual relations occur between poor, traumatised women and military or civilian assistance personnel' (Andersen 2009:32, our translation).

According to section 134 B of the Penal Code, prostitution is prohibited under Ugandan law, (ULRC 2000:77). However, prostitution and sexual favours are said to exist in all camp situations, and 'develop as a result of the shortcomings and inadequacies of relief programmes, including the lack of physical protection provided to women' (AI 2001:174). The IASC (2005) emphasises that lack of shelter and durable solutions for the collection of fuel, wood etc. in emergency settings may force women into transactional sex to obtain these items. UNICEF (2005:19) further argues that 'access to and control of basic necessities especially relief food items emerged as bait frequently used to entice young girls and women into survival sex'. Because parents cannot provide their daughters with basic necessities (ULRC 2000:122), many girls turn to older men to exchange sex for items such as sanitary pads (IASC 2005:61), 'clothes, soap and medical care' (UNICEF 2005:11). Some parents even encourage this practice (Kemirere 2007:177), setting their daughters up with soldiers 'in the mistaken belief that they will be protected and provided for' (El-Bushra & Sahl 2005:20). However, they are often unaware that when engaging in transactional sex, their daughters are exposed to physical and sexual violence, including rape by their 'clients' (WHO 2002:155).

The spread of transactional sex in IDP camps is difficult to determine. In research conducted by UBOS (2007:217), respondents between 15 and 49 years who had been sexually active for the last 12 months were asked about exchanging sex for gifts, favours or money. UBOS found

that those currently married are least likely to engage in transactional sex, whereas women who have never been married or men who are divorced, widowed or separated are most likely to sell or buy sex (UBOS 2007:217). According to UBOS (2007:218), 'the prevalence of transactional sex is very low (1 percent) in IDP camps', with 1.1 percent of women and 0.6 percent of men in the IDP camps admitting to having given or received sex in exchange for goods, money or favours. This is surprisingly low, considering that 11.5 percent of women in Kampala and 17.5 percent in the Central 1 Region (South East Uganda) admit to having engaged in transactional sex. From these findings, it could be deduced that 'men and women with secondary education and those in the highest wealth quinine are most likely to engage in transactional sex' (UBOS 2007:218), which may explain why transactional sex is less common in IDP camps, where people are generally less educated than urban dwellers. Nevertheless, UBOS' report that shows the incredibly low percentage of people engaging in transactional sex in IDP camps cannot be taken at face value, owing to the many reports that see a correlation between displacement and transactional sex (IDMC 2004; El-Bushra & Sahl 2005; Nafula 2008). We believe the actual number of women and girls engaging in transactional in the camps is likely to be much higher, for a variety of reasons. Firstly, it may be that IDPs who do engage in transactional sex do so in the town centres, outside the camps, causing UBOS' statistics to be widely distorted and unrepresentative. Secondly, transactional sex may appear so uncommon in IDP camps due to the severe underreporting of transactional sex that takes place because of fear of stigmatisation or punishment in a context where the police presence is relatively large. Thirdly, IDP women and girls' lack of money to get out of potential court cases may also be a barrier to reporting such cases. UBOS (2007:219) acknowledges such difficulties as 'very few women admitted to receiving money in exchange for sex'. It is therefore difficult, if not impossible, to ascertain the actual prevalence of transactional sex in IDP camps in the North.

4.6.1   Transactional Sex as a Coping Mechanism

Some scholars have linked transactional sex in Northern Uganda with a history of abductions by the LRA; according to Leibig (2005:7), transactional sex is 'presumably a function of women being rejected by their communities after being abducted by the soldiers and having no other means of supporting themselves'. During the heights of the war, many girls who were forced to 'night commute' into town centres to avoid abduction from their villages also traded sex for a safe place to spend the night (Lunde 2006:66).

In post-conflict Acholiland, there have been increased cases of commercial sex work due to the improved security in the region, which has led to increased trade and employment opportunities, as well as more movement of people and trucks on the Kampala-Juba highway (Nafula 2008:1). According to Nafula (2008:1), many women and girls – often 'children from child headed families, women widowed by conflicts and, surprisingly, teachers among others' – take advantage of these opportunities to make ends meet. The heavy presence of soldiers, NGO workers and other persons with regular incomes may also have enlarged the demand and opportunities for sex workers. As the Reproductive Health Response in Conflict Consortium (RHRC) (2009:9) has found,

> 'Sexual exploitation and prostitution, especially child prostitution, increases with the influx of relatively well-off personnel in situations where local economies have been devastated and women do not have options for employment. Displaced women and girls barter sex for basic services when no other economic possibilities exist.'

While few, if any, studies of Northern Uganda have uncovered sexual exploitation in the assistance process by NGO workers, women have admitted to prostituting themselves to soldiers in the camps (Bailey 2008:13). UNICEF (2005:9) underlines that soldiers may 'demand for sex from women and girls in exchange for food, shelter, protection, etc.' There are also claims that soldiers exchange money and goods to women living outside IDP camps, who see the cramped settlements as opportunities to sell sex for money (Odongo 2005:1).

Thus, transactional sex has become a means of generating income – a coping mechanism for survival for many displaced women and girls living in abject poverty in Northern Uganda (Kemirere 2007:177, Allen 2006:54, Olaa 2001:112, UNICEF 2005:iii). According to Kemirere (2007:177), 'women have to risk and choose to sleep with the [soldiers] or die and leave their children to starve'. Indeed, transactional sex reportedly increases as a result of poverty and dependency (El-Bushra & Sahl 2005:20). Findings from Liberia show that many internally displaced girls resort to prostitution as a way of avoiding reliance on external aid. According to the IDMC (2004:1), these girls 'would be extremely vulnerable if they had to depend solely on fluctuating levels of international aid and the presence of international NGOs in the camps'. However, while reliance on government and humanitarian aid has been pinpointed in Northern Uganda (Kemirere 2007:181), few links between reliance on external aid and transactional sex has yet been documented from Uganda.

Interestingly, though, the IDMC (2009:7) claims that women become even more vulnerable to SGBV when food security is low, as mentioned in chapter 2.3.1. The poor rainfall and harvest of 2009 in Acholiland have left 'EVIs' in the camps 'struggling to survive, especially in those camps where the World Food Programme (WFP) has stopped food distributions, due to a lack of funding' (IDMC 2009:7). Under such conditions, girls and women frequently barter sex for food from soldiers or IDP men (UNICEF 2005:12). The problem is further compounded by the fact that many distributors of food are men, and that these men 'use the supplies to befriend girls by giving them extra rations' (Kemirere 2007:182). Thus, NGOs may be said to not only contribute to causing a crisis of masculinity, and hence increased cases of SGBV; they may also be said to encourage transactional sex to some extent. To avoid this, more women should be encouraged to distribute aid (Kemirere 2007:182; AI 2001:175).

What is striking is that some, including Odongo (2005:1), attribute Gulu's large HIV/AIDS prevalence rate to 'such sexual practices now rampant in IDP camps'. The rate of HIV and other STDs have allegedly increased as a result of the 'sugar daddies' and 'sugar mummies' that make it possible to earn a living through sexual relationships (El-Bushra & Sahl 2005:22). UBOS (2007:217) would seem to support these claims, when stating that 'transactional sex is associated with high risk of contracting HIV and other STDs due to compromised power relations and the tendency to have multiple sexual partners as a result'. Nevertheless, few, if any, studies demonstrate the link between Northern Uganda's relatively high HIV/AIDS prevalence rate and transactional sex in an IDP setting. It is, however, interesting to study the discourses used to explain transactional sex and other sexual violence, including views like Odongo's, as these may help shed light on SGBV from an endogenous perspective.

4.6.2   Implications for Gender Relations

As noted, it is important not to solely victimise women in the study of SGBV directed towards women, although it may be helpful to operate with several perspectives simultaneously. As Kemirere (2007:52) puts it, 'seeing women as victims of conflict overshadows the ways in which they gain from it by acquiring new positions, skills and power. It also denies women the possibility of contributing to lasting peace'. Despite the uncertain estimates of the extent of the phenomenon (cf. chapter 3.1.3), El-Bushra and Sahl (2005:20) argue that transactional sex in Northern Uganda has provided women with a source of income, while men lost theirs when their cattle and land was taken away from them. Thus, as so much authority and power in Acholi is bound up with the ownership of resources (UNICEF 2005:15), women, through engaging in transactional sex and thus acquiring money and resources, may have gained disproportionate amounts of authority compared to their male counterparts.

According to Sikoska and Solomon (1999:6);

> 'The consequences of conflict have been contradictory, offering opportunities for rupturing patriarchy through women's self-awareness, empowerment and emancipation, while at the same time, reinforcing patriarchy through greater subordination of women'.

Indeed, women's empowerment may have served to exacerbate men's sense of powerlessness and loss of masculinity, which Dolan (2009) attributes to heightened incidences of violence. An increase in transactional sex may thus have further led to an increase in other forms of sexual violence towards women, like rape and forced sex between intimate partners.

However, there is hope that as people move out of displacement camps back to their original villages where the livelihood opportunities are far better, the need to engage in exploitative sex will be reduced (WCRWC & UNFPA 2007:7). Respondent's hopes and fears about returning home are further explored in chapter 8.7.

4.7   The Problem of Under-Reporting of SGBV

When assessing the extent of SGBV in IDP camps in Uganda, it is tempting to resort to quantitative studies as that of UBOS (2007), mentioned above. However, while such statistics are interesting, they are not necessarily representative or accurate. Quantitative studies may contain several sampling, sampling-related data collection and data analysis errors (Bryman 2008:188), and men and women may have been disposed to answer in a certain way depending on their perceptions of those responsible for the survey.

The IASC (2005:2) argues that 'sexual violence is under-reported even in well-resourced settings worldwide, and it will be difficult if not impossible to obtain an accurate measurement of the magnitude of the problem'. There may be many reasons why women and girls who have been victims of sexual violence do not report their experiences.

Firstly, as a 'culture of silence' exists among the Acholi on matters of rape and defilement, and such cases have traditionally been solved through cleansing ceremonies, many survivors

may prefer to have their case solved traditionally rather than through legal means (UNICEF 2005:iv). Some avoid stigma by consulting witchdoctors or traditional healers instead of the police or LCs (UNICEF 2005:7; Hentonnen et al. 2008:126). Others simply settle the case between the families of the affected parties, whereby the perpetrator pays compensation roughly equivalent to the amount of bride price to the survivor's family. This has caused speculation that poor families use their daughters to seduce and thus 'trap' boys from rich families into paying compensation (ULRC 2000:49,126).

Secondly, a culture of blaming the victim may cause survivors of SGBV to keep quiet to avoid stigmatisation. UNICEF (2005:13) argues that 'survivors are often perceived as being 'losers', are thought somehow to be deserving of the abuse or to have encouraged it somehow'. The current Ugandan law is considered very gender insensitive, as it allows for evidence of earlier sexual intercourse and 'immorality' to be brought in as evidence against the victim of rape during a trial (ULRC 2000:L,106). However, we are unaware of inspections of the abuser's sexual history taking place. Consequently, sexual offences are perceivably more about the morality of the survivor than an act of violence in itself. This inherently 'weakens the prosecution case and gives the impression that it was justifiable for the victim to get raped', which, in turn, discourages women from reporting cases of rape to the authorities (ULRC 2000:L,16). The harsh and long investigations of SGBV, which often lack confidentiality and cause further psychological harm and stigma, also discourage survivors from reporting cases (UNICEF 2005:13; Hentonnen et al. 2008:126). Forced sex between intimate partners is particularly under-reported, as this is usually regarded as a 'trivial family affair', which, if reported, is 'regarded as a disgrace to the family and community' (UNICEF 2005:14f).

Thirdly, lack of confidence in the judicial system may lead to under-reporting (UNICEF 2005:iii). Many of the quantitative reports on SGBV are based, as in the case of UNICEF's study (2005:6), on 'reported incidents of abuse obtained, from police, hospital records, LCs, Camp leaders', and these are not necessarily reliable. UNICEF (2005:13) attributes this to corruption; the Ugandan police are known to 'take bribes from both the accused and the victim' (ULRC 2000:xxxix). Due to police understaffing and lack of logistics and money (ULRC 2000:xxxix), coupled with the costs and resources involved in pursuing a case, police demand a 30 000 shilling fee from the survivor in order to transport the perpetrator from places like Pabbo IDP camp to the Central Police Station in Gulu town. Furthermore, if a woman wants her case to be heard, she has to pay a non-refundable fee of 5000 shillings to the Local Council court (UNICEF 2005:13). This is beyond the financial means of most IDPs, and hence most cases go under-reported (UNICEF 2005:13; ULRC 2000:xlv). When a case does reach court, however, a victim is usually required to give evidence in the presence of the accused, which is 'not victim-friendly especially for the girl child' (ULRC 2000:6).

The problem of under-reporting is further compounded by the fact that, as mentioned, so many levels of authority co-exist in the IDP camps (ULRC 2000:1), making it difficult to know who to report to. In addition to police posts and traditional clan leaders, there are five levels of local councils. These are at the village, parish, sub-county, county and district levels (URLC 2000:1). The below organigram shows the different levels of authority that co-exist in the IDP camps:

Figure 4.1   Levels of Authority in the IDP Camps

Dolan (2009:114)
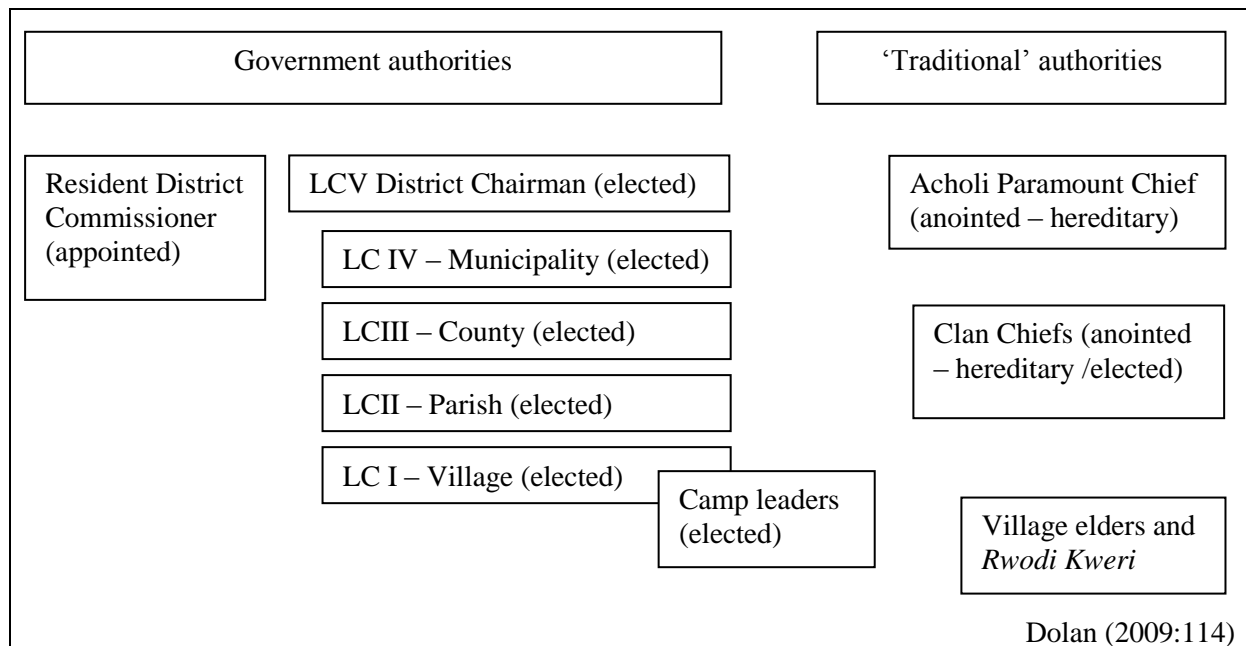
There are few female representatives in the police; this presents another barrier for women reporting their cases to the police, due to the sensitivity of SGBV cases (UNICEF 2005:13). Moreover, as offenders are often released from jail upon payment of a bribe, many women fear revenge and hence refrain from reporting cases of SGBV (UNICEF 2005:14; ULRC 2000:LVI). Married women may also fear reporting rape to anyone at all, as they fear the possible consequences of beating and divorce by their husbands (ULRC 2000:93).

It is important to note that the difficulties of reporting cases of sexual violence may also be a cause of SGBV insofar as it encourages a culture of impunity for perpetrators. Thus, the Population Council (2008:30) argues that 'the legal enforcement and justice sectors play a key role in preventing sexual and gender based violence. At the highest level, national policy and legislative framework influence institutional perceptions of and responses to sexual violence'. Legal and policy responses to sexual violence may also reduce the number of SGBV cases through, for example, 'broadening the definition of rape' and 'reforming the rules on sentencing and on admissibility of evidence' (WHO 2002:169), as well as increasing people's awareness of the consequences of sexual offences (ULRC 2000:LIV).

Another major problem with quantitative studies of SGBV is their inherent presumption that all respondents share a common understanding of the phenomenon under study. Men and women may understand the terms 'rape', 'forced sex between intimate partners' and 'transactional sex' in widely different ways, leading to doubt about whether certain experiences qualify for inclusion in the categories used by surveys. According to the CoE (2006:7), there are at least two groups of definitions of the phenomenon. The narrowest definitions of rape and forced sex which do not include attempted rape identify a four to five percent prevalence of sexual violence in Europe. However, wider definitions of rape, that also include attempted rape, estimate that ten percent of European women have experienced sexual violence. As different studies operate with different definitions of SGBV, some narrow and some very wide, it becomes difficult to make cross-study comparisons of the extent of SGBV. Furthermore, legislation and jurisdiction dealing with sexual violence varies from country to country (CoE 2006:13). It is therefore difficult to generalise findings and preventive measures

across cultures. This is emphasised by the WHO (2002:150), which argues that the definitions of sexual violence have varied considerably across studies, and that 'there are also significant differences across cultures in the willingness to disclose sexual violence to researchers. Caution is therefore needed when making global comparisons of the prevalence of sexual violence'.

Consequently, it is difficult to ascertain the prevalence of SGBV in Uganda in comparison to other countries. It is also difficult to accurately compare the extent of sexual violence in post-conflict Northern Uganda to other peaceful areas of Uganda, making it challenging to determine whether SGBV in fact does occur more often during conflict than during peace. These difficulties do, however, underline the importance of qualitative studies of SGBV that do not focus on the extent of SGBV, but rather on how it is experienced and can be prevented. It is important to investigate people's attitudes to what sexual violence actually is, and examine how people talk about 'rape', 'forced sex between intimate partners' and 'transactional sex'. Indeed, through a qualitative study of men's and women's attitudes towards such acts, the drivers of SGBV and the management strategies that may be employed to prevent these, can be shed more light on.

As this paragraph has demonstrated, the reasons for underreporting are many and include both institutional and social matters. Institutional matters relate to a lack of trust in the judicial system and police, which is believed by many to be corrupt. Social matters relating to underlying patriarchal structures in society are also likely to be important, as those who report SGBV may risk stigmatisation from the community as well as disdain from the family and husband, who may decide to berate or divorce the SGBV survivor.

4.8   Preventing SGBV in Northern Uganda

As the WHO (2002:154) puts it, 'prevention and policy responses to sexual violence […] need to be based on an understanding of the problem, its causes and the circumstances in which it occurs'. The above review of literature and empirical studies has attempted to shed light on this background of SGBV in the Acholi context.

The WCRWC and UNFPA (2007:17) sum it up well when stating that:

> 'High levels of alcohol consumption and other problems such as widespread unemployment, idleness and restricted freedom of movement, as well as a breakdown of traditional social structures and values and a sense of 'emasculation' amongst the male IDP population, contribute to gender-based violence (GBV) in and around the camps' (cf. our data in chapters 6 and 7).

The WHO (2002:157) argues based on quantitative studies that most factors contributing to SGBV 'have an additive effect, so that the more factors present, the greater the likelihood of sexual violence'. Nevertheless, despite international awareness of the many contributing factors to SGBV, the Government of Uganda has not yet implemented an adequate programme to address SGBV thoroughly (UNICEF 2005:iv).

According to the IASC (2005:33), protection measures should 'reduce exposure to risk' and 'address underlying causes and contributing factors, including climate of impunity'. With knowledge of the factors contributing to SGBV, three main prevention strategies emerge.

These include the importance of sensitising the community, involving men in prevention efforts whilst addressing gender relations, and basing policies on local ownership and participation.

4.8.1 Community Sensitisation

As UNICEF (2005:19) found when conducting its study of SGBV in Pabbo IDP camp, 'organized community care services are not only missing but even sensitization and mobilization of people appear to be at rudimentary level'. As effective preventive responses against SGBV are premised upon community members knowing the underlying causes of SGBV, its consequences and ways in which they can help prevent it, community sensitisation about this is vital. The Population Council (2008:3) argues that all efforts to prevent SGBV must work to reduce gender inequality:

> 'The primary prevention of sexual and gender-based violence rests on changing the gender-related beliefs, attitudes and practices of both men and women, at both the individual and societal level. Advocacy, awareness-raising and community mobilisation play important roles in tackling the roots of discrimination and violence.'

The importance of sensitising the community on issues of SGBV is further underlined by the ULRC (2000:134), which argues that 'ignorance of the law is blamed on the lack of legal education, lack of guidance by law enforcement agencies, illiteracy, and lack of sex education'. As shown in chapter 3.4, more education on setting boundaries for oneself and on sexual empowerment is instrumental for promoting development in sexuality related matters. The URLC (2000:LVII) also underlines that in addition to suggesting the enactment of by-laws to regulate night entertainment, alcohol and drug use, and addressing the problem of few resources in the law enforcement system, community sensitisation lies at the core of SGBV prevention. Culturally appropriate prevention campaigns and education on life skills, both in IDP camps and in school settings can provide important tools through which SGBV can be averted (WHO 2002:169). Where appropriate, new information and communication technologies can enable sensitisation (Population Council 2008:36), and NGOs and local government play an important part in increasing capacity (Hentonnen et al. 2008:128).

4.8.2 Involving Men and Addressing Gender Relations

The sensitisation of men in particular has been emphasised as essential to preventing SGBV. While it is important to recognise that men do not comprise a homogenous group, men are usually the main perpetrators of SGBV and should therefore be sensitised about the consequences of their actions and attitudes, and be encouraged to change these to prevent SGBV (Aasheim et al. 2008:3,7). Indeed, as the WHO (2002:170) puts it, 'an important element in preventing sexual and physical violence against women is a collective initiative by men'.

Nevertheless, it is important that prevention efforts do not only concentrate on men, but on the relationship between men and women. Indeed, rather than focus on men alone or on women alone, policies should focus on the relationship between the genders. Considering the many theories related to the link between emasculation and SGBV, it is important to integrate

knowledge of this relationship into any preventive policies (Dolan 2002:15). Indeed, it is important to not only see the challenges, but also identify the opportunities inherent in the changed gender roles that displacement engenders. Policies should be based on 'gender analysis and mainstreaming' in order to make use of these opportunities (Aasheim et al. 2008:6).

4.8.3   Local Ownership and Participation

Furthermore, it is important that local ownership and participation lie at the heart of all preventive efforts (Population Council 2008:29). In addition to involving men, good prevention efforts should actively seek out the 'leadership and participation of women and girls in all activities', without which the sustainability and local capacity is likely to be low (IASC 2005:2). Indeed, prevention efforts should 'tailor messages for different types/groups of stakeholders', whether men or women (IASC 2005:20). As far as possible, organisations should also strive to co-ordinate their community based efforts (IASC 2005:54). The IASC (2005:56) emphasises that 'community-based solutions should always be sought first' in prevention efforts. Indeed, it is important not to ascribe Western culture or values pertaining to gender relations from the 'outside', as this is likely to inspire resistance. When SGBV is reduced to a phenomenon caused by Western influences such as night clubs, pornography and 'indecent dressing', as seen above, it is likely that the imposition of solutions to SGBV from a Western perspective are likely to fail. Thus, it is difficult to propose possible strategies to prevent SGBV without consulting the perspectives of IDP men and women who are living in the context of displacement under study. It will also be important to consult NGOs who have experience with what is effective and not when it comes to fighting SGBV in Northern Uganda. According to the Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) (1995:9), 'the success of a project depends partly on the validity of the assumptions made about its various stakeholders'. In order to make valid assumptions about the stakeholders in projects addressing SGBV, it is important to consult our research subjects personally and, on the basis of fieldwork, try to identify the 'unequal relations of power between stakeholders' that may exist, and the resulting potential for conflict (Cornwall 2000:37). In our data collection, we attempted to do this, and hence consulted a wide range of stakeholders ranging from 'ordinary' internally displaced men and women, to survivors of rape and transactional sex, as well as traditional leaders (clan chiefs), local council leaders, NGOs and representatives from the local government (cf. chapter 5).

As the IASC (2005:31) puts it, 'ultimately **the decision about the best protection option must rest with the threatened person/group**, after a careful, participatory, consultative consideration of the situation' (IASC 2005:31). This will enable preventive efforts to be based on local cultural values and traditions, which is likely to lead to 'more efficient and effective development efforts' (Brennan 2005:1) than if policies were based solely on outside efforts.

Chapter 5:   Methodology

This chapter explores the methodology of our study. In the first half of the chapter, we explain why a qualitative approach is most appropriate to answer our research questions. We also situate ourselves as researchers in the theoretical discourse and explain the context of our fieldwork in Northern Uganda. Thereafter, we discuss our choice of research methods; in-depth individual interviews and focus group discussions, and explain our sampling strategy. In the second half of the chapter, we examine the major bottlenecks and difficulties we encountered during our fieldwork, along with ethical considerations. Finally, we explain the approach we have chosen for the analysis of data.

5.1   Research Approach

As mentioned in the previous chapter, we argue that quantitative research methods are not particularly appropriate to this study for a number of reasons. Firstly, as seen, SGBV remains under-reported; any quantitative study would therefore be unlikely to present representative and generalisable findings, a concern so important to quantitative research. Secondly, as we aim to explore the views of IDPs and organisations on gender relations before and during displacement, and their views on rape, forced sex between intimate partners and transactional sex, we believe a quantitative study that is researcher-led and operates with fixed categories of what these entail would be less appropriate than a data-led qualitative study. Thirdly, as the composition of IDP camps changes almost everyday in Northern Uganda, it would be logistically difficult to distribute surveys or other research material through probability sampling, as the make-up of IDP camps in Gulu and Amuru would look very different upon our arrival and our return. Finally, due to the high level of illiteracy that accompanies the extremely low education level for IDPs in Northern Uganda, respondents would not necessarily even be able to complete surveys. The reasons for choosing a qualitative approach are therefore both practical and epistemological.

A qualitative approach is inductive, in that theory is generated out of data. According to Silverman (2001:25), a concern with exploring people's lives, histories or everyday behaviour may favour the deployment of qualitative methods. As our research questions are concerned with exploring people's lives and histories (particularly of survivors of SGBV) through 'perceptions' and 'how people talk about' gender relations and SGBV, qualitative methods are appropriate. It is important to pursue indigenous meanings and seek out what their experiences and activities 'mean to them' (Emerson et al. 1995:12). The epistemology of qualitative research is interpretivism, which suggests that the social world cannot be studied separately from the intepretations of it by its participants. Rather, the role of qualitative research is to examine the social world 'through an examination of the interpretation of that world by its participants' (Bryman 2008:366). Ontologically, the position of qualitative research is constructionist, suggesting that the social world is not 'out there' or separate from interaction between its participants, but that it is constructed actively between individuals (Bryman 2008:366). As qualitative researchers, it is this interaction in and interpretation of the social world we are interested in studying.

We situate ourselves in the *naturalist* tradition of qualitative research. Naturalism is the most common qualitative research tradition, and, according to Gubrium and Holstein (1997, cited in Silverman 2006:57) it has 'a reluctance to impose meaning and a preference to get out and

observe the field'. It seeks to minimise the impact of the researcher on the respondent, and believes that the 'truth' of the respondent's social world can be uncovered 'as it really is' through interviews (Bryman 2008:367). However, although we are striving to uncover the truth of respondent's social worlds, we will bear in mind perspectives from ethnomethodology, which acknowledges that data is created in the process of interaction between interviewer and interviewee, and that there is not necessarily one 'truthful' representation of a subject matter (Ryen 2002:16), though some are better than others. Instead, any methodological approach can affect the data obtained (Silverman 1993, cited in Ryen 2002:20), and reality and representation may not be synonymous (Gubrium and Holstein 1997, cited in Silverman 2006:58). Indeed, while being more interested in the 'what' of respondents' information than in 'how' they present it, as researchers we acknowledge the reflexivity in all research and the fact that stories are often 'tailored' to different listeners.

Although seeking to minimise our impact as researchers on our data collection to arrive closer at the 'truth', attaining complete researcher objectivity or neutrality is impossible (Ryen 2002:43). According to Denzin and Lincoln (1994, cited in Ryen 2002:26), 'anybody's gaze is always filtered through the lenses of language, gender, social class, race and ethnicity. There are no objective observations, only observations socially situated in the world of the observer and the observed'. As white, female researchers we inevitably carry with us assumptions about the benefits of gender equality, for example, which makes our data our own interpretations of the interpreted world of the interviewee, or interpretations of interpretations (Geertz 1973, cited in Ryen 2002:25). Section 5.5.4 explores our role as researchers in more detail. Indeed, as we carry with us predisposed thoughts, emotions and experiences to the field, we cannot be separated from the context which we study (Ryen 2002:43). This can affect research design, findings and the interpretations thereof. The researcher's presence and behaviour may also influence answers given during interviews, which are further discussed in section 5.4.1 about reactive effects.

Nevertheless, it is, as Blumer (cited in Ryen 2002:41) argued, important for the researcher to visit his or her research subjects through fieldwork, as data collection methods will be more varied, with interviews and group discussions combined with observation (Ryen 2002:41). Furthermore, through fieldwork, it becomes easier to obtain 'thick description' (Geertz 1973) of the phenomenon under study, and obtain the actor's point of view (Ryen 2002:47). This is facilitated through observation of the lived realities in IDP camps, as well as respondents' interaction with each other and with us in focus groups and interviews, which has aided our familiarisation with the context under study.

5.2   The Context of our Fieldwork

To improve our contextual knowledge and collect 'primary' data rather than merely rely on secondary data, we conducted two months of fieldwork in Gulu and Amuru Districts from mid-October to mid-December 2009. Due to advice from the British Office of Foreign Affairs that visits outside of Gulu town should be conducted only in collaboration with organisations or persons with local knowledge of the area, we sought the assistance of one of the largest NGOs present in the region at the time – the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC). Thankfully, we were warmly welcomed by the NRC, who provided us with extensive assistance with regard to logistics, securing the necessary local permits for conducting research, gaining access to relevant informants, and providing information about our subject under study. They also provided us with much-needed local research assistants. Due to the difficulty of obtaining

adequate transport on the long, bumpy roads to the IDP camps, the opportunity of going out to the field with NRC staff several days a week proved invaluable. In total, we visited six camps for internally displaced persons, mostly serviced by the NRC. These were Amuru, Awer, Keyo, Lacor, Unyama and Pabbo camps, and we were able to conduct interviews in each of these camps through 'partial immersion'; we went 'to the field in the morning and return[ed] home in the evening' (Ryen 2008:229). Being 'allied' with the NRC also enhanced our safety, and helped us build closeness to the field (Ryen 2002:119). By returning to Gulu town every afternoon before dusk, we maintained the 'safety zones' that are so crucial for researchers in conflict-ridden environments (Lee 1995:44).

In order to best attain the objectives of this study, we selected two main research methods: one-to-one semi-structured interviews and focus groups, which are explored in depth below.

5.2.1 Semi-Structured Interviews

We conducted in-depth, one-to-one semi-structured interviews with displaced women, girls and men in Gulu and Amuru, as well as with NGO professionals working with SGBV issues. The interviews lasted from 35 minutes to 2 hours 35 minutes. In order to answer our research questions, 'ordinary' camp dwellers were interviewed. We also sought to interview people with authority in the IDP camps, be it local council leaders, traditional clan leaders or elders. As survivors of sexual violence often report their experiences to local council leaders, whether at the village or parish level (see chapter 4.7 for a description of local authority structures), interviewing these people provided some insight into what cases have been common in the community. Interviewing traditional clan leaders and ordinary elders also gave us insight into the cultural practices of the Acholi regarding SGBV, and the way things were before displacement. We also interviewed survivors of rape and people thought to be engaging in transactional sex, in order to elicit the experiences of the women with direct relevance to our research topic. As the issue of intimate partner sexual violence occurs so frequently, interviews with 'ordinary' camp dwellers – both men and women – uncovered this practice, without us having to seek out these survivors specifically.

We chose to conduct qualitative semi-structured interviews as the advantages of such interviewing are well adapted to what we want to find out. According to Bryman (2008:437), structured interviews usually reflect the concerns of the researcher, while qualitative interviews are flexible, want 'rich, detailed answers' and show a 'much greater interest in the interviewee's point of view'. This method is therefore particularly appropriate as we seek to uncover the perspectives of IDPs on gender relations before and after displacement, as well as their attitudes towards rape, forced sex between intimate partners and transactional sex. Interestingly, according to Kelly et al. (1994, cited in Bryman 2008:463), our choice of method could be called the paradigmatic 'feminist method' as qualitative interviews are premised upon a much higher degree of rapport and reciprocity between interviewer and interviewee than in quantitative research. Taking the perspective of the individual being interviewed and implying a 'non-hierarchical relationship' between interviewer and interviewee, the qualitative interview more easily facilitates the voices of women to be heard than a structured interview or survey research would (Bryman 2008:463). This is appropriate particularly in our context, as we seek to uncover what women and girls themselves think of SGBV, and as we seek to elicit the stories of those who have survived rape, forced sex between intimate partners and/or have engaged in transactional sex. Nevertheless, we are not only interested in women's perspectives in this study, but in gender relations as a whole and

how they affect women through SGBV, for example. We have therefore chosen to interview men as well. Thus, we make use of the paradigmatic 'feminist method' first and foremost for the degree of reciprocity that can be established between researcher and respondent, both when interviewing women and men.

Although an interviewee centred approach such as semi-structured interviews have been called a feminist method, it also seems to be the appropriate way to interview Acholi men. As Acholi men are culturally superior to women, it might not be appropriate to put ourselves as female researchers in the superior position that follows structured interviewing or survey research. Furthermore, although we as researchers may be viewed as being in a 'higher' class position than IDP men, by virtue of our being white and comparatively wealthy, it is important to minimise the impact that such a perceived unequal relationship of power might have on the respondent (possible reactive effects are explored in further detail in section 5.4.1.). Therefore, allowing interviewees to express their own opinions in their own terms and to some degree go off on tangents and form the direction of the interview is important, and highlights the many unstructured aspects of semi-structured interviewing.

We facilitated this through designing the interview to consist of mostly open-ended questions. Thus, we ensured a two-way communication process whereby the interviewees could answer in their own words. Since we are two researchers and sometimes conducted interviews individually, a certain structure was needed to ensure a 'modicum of comparability' (Bryman 2008:439f) between interview questions and cases, and unstructured interviews would therefore be inappropriate here. We made our interviews semi-structured by developing interview guides with the same questions for each group of people interviewed; whether women/girls, men, or representatives of an organisation. This structure was also necessary in order to ensure 'cross-case comparability' between what different categories of people said about our topics under study.

In order to optimise interview questions and the research instrument as a whole, we piloted questions in our interview guides through consulting NRC staff working in the region and PhD students we encountered who had conducted fieldwork on similar topics. The sensitivity of our topic made this particularly important, as piloting meant that uncomfortable questions were identified and reformulated at an early stage by people with good contextual knowledge and / or experience of working with the respondents and research issues.

In order to better contextualise people's answers and gain trust from the interviewee at an early stage, we began each interview by asking the respondent about their personal details. In return, we told them a little bit about ourselves and our project, to maintain reciprocity. The complete interview guides we used are located in Appendix 1. Although we used interview guides to guide our questioning, we allowed for flexibility by asking relevant follow-up and probing questions to ensure that as much important information as possible was gleaned from the interviewees, and that they could go off on tangents where necessary.

Most interviews were conducted by the two of us as researchers. To increase accuracy during data analysis, interviews were recorded on a digital voice recorder, and later transcribed. During individually conducted interviews which took place at the same time, only one of us used the voice recorder, while the other one took notes. The benefits of using a digital voice recorder were significant; it ensured that we captured our interviewees' answers just as they phrased them. Although this, in theory, may have enhanced the reliability of our findings, reliability was simultaneously challenged through the use of a translator, which is explored

further in section 5.4.2. The use of a voice recorder also ensured that we could be 'responsive to the interviewees' answers' without being bound by having to take notes' (Bryman 2008:443), which matched well our desire to conduct interviews in a non-hierarchical manner. The fact that we were both present in most interviews was helpful, as one held the tape recorder while observing the interviewee, asking follow-up questions and taking notes where necessary, and the other one took notes directly onto a mini-pc. Thus, more information was elicited than if one person was responsible for the interview alone, and through taking notes directly, time was saved in the transcription phase. Challenges related to using a recorder and a mini-pc during our interviews are further discussed in section 5.4.1.

5.2.2 Focus Groups

In order to elicit more information about our research topic, we used focus group discussions as a data collection method. According to Barbour (2007:18), 'focus groups have proved to be a mainstay of research into sexual behaviour', and can be defined as group discussions where 'the researcher is actively encouraging of, and attentive to, the group interaction' (Kitzinger and Barbour 1999, cited in Barbour 2007:2). Focus groups are often used to explore a specific topic in depth (Bryman 2008:473), and we chose this method to gain insight not only into a wide variety of different views on the same matter, but also into how knowledge is contested and constructed within the group – 'interactions and communications in the making' (Barbour 2007:xii). Indeed, through allowing different people to express their views in the same context, one is given an insight into how people form their attitudes and how these may be changed during the course of the discussion (Barbour 2007:31f). Focus groups are also a good means of 'distinguishing between shared and variable perspectives' (Frey and Fontana 1993, cited in Barbour 2007:104).

Through focus groups, the researcher is given access to the wider community's 'habitus', as Bourdieu (1990) calls the socially acquired lenses through which persons see the world (Callaghan 2005, cited in Barbour 2007:39). Thus, 'focus groups are useful when it comes to investigating *what* participants think, but they excel at uncovering *why* participants think as they do' (Morgan 1988, cited in Barbour 2007:38). As this study aims to investigate *what* IDPs and NGO professionals think about gender relations and SGBV, and is simultaneously concerned with the *why* question in the attempt to answer how SGBV can be prevented, focus groups are particularly relevant.

Again, the importance of situating opinions in the context in which they are expressed emerges. Focus groups may be particularly suitable in the collectivist culture of the Acholi, who construct meaning in groups. Thus, focus groups appear more naturalistic than individual interviews, as the method avoids decontextualisation and 'underpins the lower level of artificiality of the methods, since people are able to discuss in situations that are quite normal for them' (Bryman 2008:487). Nevertheless, the limitations of focus groups must not be ignored. According to Barbour (2007:31), 'researchers are in danger of treating views as if they exist independently of our focus group discussions, when it would be more helpful to regard the research encounter itself as a 'site of performance''. Firstly, the research setting may affect the discussion. We found, for example, that where men walked by or even sat down among women during a women-only focus group discussion, the discussion came to a 'halt' until the man was asked to leave. Furthermore, in focus group discussions some participants may be adhering to peer pressure when expressing certain opinions; others may be withholding opinions due to fear of group disapproval. Thus, 'focus groups can

overemphasize consensus' (Barbour 2007:130). There is also a danger that participants tell researchers simply 'what they think we want to hear' (Barbour 2007:34), just as in the individual interview, although it may be easier to elicit what people really mean about a topic in an individual interview where it is easier to probe the individual respondent.

Nevertheless, focus groups may open up an arena for a wider range of people to participate, as it can make people who would find face-to-face or individual interviews intimidating share their opinions, by providing 'security in numbers' (Barbour 2007:19,21). This also provides an opportunity for those who do not want to speak, to keep silent; thus allowing them 'to decide what they want to share and what they wish to keep private' (Barbour 2007:81). Focus groups also provide a good 'opportunity for people to talk to other people in the same situation as themselves – especially when there are no relevant support groups available' (Barbour 2007:42). As the issue of intimate partner sexual violence is particularly common and few, if any, support groups exist for this in the camps, focus groups might be particularly good avenues for women who have experienced this to talk about it with other women. In order to inspire confidence among women, who are socialised into not raising their voices in public (cf. chapter 2.4.1), we as female researchers used only female translators. Through building confidence, respondent women may have experienced some catharsis in terms of working through their difficulties. Interestingly, focus groups have 'often been selected as especially appropriate for eliciting the perspectives of women, perhaps due to the idea that focus groups more closely resemble 'feminized' patterns of interaction and exchange' (Barbour 2007:21). Due to the fact that Acholi men are generally supposed to be knowledgeable public figures (Dolan 2009:194), we encountered few difficulties as female researchers engaging men in conversation or debate during focus group discussions. However, it remains unknown whether men would have given different answers had there been male research assistants present.

As far as issues of rape by people other than intimate partners were concerned, we chose not to gather rape victims to talk about their experiences in a collective setting, as this would be a particularly sensitive and upsetting topic to discuss collectively. Furthermore, as we were interested in eliciting rich descriptions or 'detailed contextualized histories' from survivors of rape and those engaging in transactional sex, we chose to prioritise conducting individual interviews with these women, as one-to-one interviews usually elicit more detailed descriptions than focus groups (Barbour 2007:42).

In relation to group composition, we made sure that group members shared 'at least one important characteristic', which 'can encourage people to attend and may facilitate discussion on difficult topics, such as those where participants share some stigma' (Barbour 2007:59). Thus, we chose to run women only groups and men only groups, which was useful particularly as our topic is so gender sensitive. As Barbour (2007:59) argues, 'holding two focus groups with groups with similar characteristics may place the researcher on firmer ground in relation to making claims about the patterning of the data'. We therefore conducted three focus group discussions with women / girls, and two discussions with men / boys.

As few people in Gulu and Amuru Districts are fluent in English, we had to make use of translators during focus group sessions, for although some spoke English to some extent, 'using their mother-tongue can encourage more spontaneous and open discussion' (Barbour 2007:99). Thus, one of our research assistants from the NRC acted as moderator for our focus group discussion in Luo, while another research assistant interpreted what was said to us in English. The bottlenecks inherent in using a translator are discussed in section 5.4.2.

Interestingly, although a lot has been written on the ideal size and composition of focus groups, this literature is inherently Western and usually fails to account for dilemmas one may meet in cross-cultural research. While scholars mention over-recruiting as a way to cater for 'no-shows' on the day, it is generally agreed that the ideal number of focus group participants is between six to 12 people (Barbour 2007:60, Morgan 1998a, cited in Bryman 2008:479). However, few scholars reflect on the specific issues pertaining to conducting focus groups in collectivist African cultures such as the Acholi. Although most group discussions we conducted had between 12 and 20 participants, we found that, when mobilising a group of what was supposed to be eight to ten single mothers, other women who were not single mothers came as well, and the number of people present in the discussion varied widely. Indeed, this focus group discussion started with seven women (single mothers), and throughout the discussion, more and more women came and joined the discussion under the mango tree. In the end, the group comprised approximately 34 women, of which 14 were currently married, 15 were widows, and five were divorcees or had been left by their husbands. It was severely difficult to ask some of these women to leave, as order was kept throughout the discussion, only one person spoke at a time, and many participants had to leave the discussion temporarily to tend to their children, breastfeed their infants, and attend to other daily tasks. Although asking people to leave may be straightforward in a 'Western' setting, it would have been culturally inappropriate in the Acholi setting, and might have created suspicion and more problems than solutions. Nevertheless, although a lot of information was elicited from this focus group discussion and it was conducted in an orderly manner, we cannot neglect the fact that the size of this focus group produced 'noise', which Barbour (2007:18) describes as being 'data that it is hard to order and attribute to speakers'. With such large groups, it was difficult to distinguish individual voices. We did, however, avoid the problem that 'focus group samples are usually both unrepresentative and dangerously small' (Morgan and Krueger 1993, cited in Barbour 2007:19). We also continually noted down the dynamics of the group and our impressions during the interviews, which was made easier by virtue of our being two researchers.

5.3   Sampling

Our form of sampling has been purposive, with the selection of units with direct reference to our research questions (Bryman 2008:375). We strategically selected men, women and organisations whom we felt could best answer our research questions. Our translator and research assistants from the NRC were of great help in this process, as they mobilised relevant respondents before each interview, particularly as we sought to interview survivors of rape and transactional sex. With personal knowledge of who the LC leaders and NRC community mobilisers were, our research assistants did an excellent job assembling people for both focus group discussions and individual interviews. Indeed, as Barbour (2007:52) puts it, 'familiarity with cultural or subcultural behaviour patterns can also help with regard to the practicalities involved in organizing focus groups'. A few days ahead of every focus group discussion, our research assistants from the NRC contacted the community mobilisers in a certain camp, and asked them to assemble eight to ten single mothers, for example, or ten to 12 schoolgirls, for focus group discussions at a particular day and time.

For individual interviews with specific 'categories' of people, our NRC research assistants mobilised persons who were known in the community to have experienced rape and engaged in transactional sex. At times during our individual interviews, we were approached by groups of women who came with the LC to be interviewed. Word had spread in the IDP camp that

we were interviewing rape survivors, and these women had all experienced rape and wanted to share their experiences with us. Thus, some interviews were arranged following the initiative of interviewees themselves; others were arranged by the LCs or our research assistants, and others - 'ordinary' camp dwellers, both men and women, boys and girls, were interviewed on convenience as we passed time in the IDP camps.

As we were so dependent on the NRC for transport and often did not know until the actual day which vehicle had space for us, or which camp the vehicle was travelling to, we were unable to arrange follow-up interviews with the most interesting interviewees. This may have weakened our research as trust between interviewer and interviewee could not be built over a long period of time; however, the fact that we travelled with well respected NRC staff helped create confidence in us as interviewers, even in 'new' places.

Generally, we used snowball sampling (Bryman 2008:458) to some extent, as some of the people we interviewed led us to new interviewees who had, allegedly, experienced rape or engaged in transactional sex, or who were leaders in the community. As mentioned, in direct relevance to our research questions we sought to interview many different categories of people who could hold answers to our topic under study. As the scope of our study is relatively large and presupposes interviews with many different categories of people, a large number of interviews were required (Bryman 2008:462). Interestingly, Gerson and Horowitz (2002, cited in Bryman 2008:462) underline that 60 interviews and above can support 'convincing conclusions' in a qualitative study. As a result of the many categories of people we wanted to interview, our sample naturally became quite large. In total, we conducted 56 individual and group interviews, a sample size which would hopefully strengthen our conclusions. An overview of the interviews conducted follows below:

Table 5.1   Research Sample

Category	More specific category	Number of interviews
IDP Women	Individual girls and women	13
	SGBV survivors (rape, transactional sex etc.)	15
	Groups of girls / women (focus group)	3
	Total no. of interviews women:	**31**
IDP Men	Individual men	11
	Traditional leaders / camp authorities	4
	Groups of boys / men (focus group)	2
	Total no. of interviews men:	**17**
Organisations	UNICEF	1
	American Refugee Committee	1
	UNFPA	1
	CARE	1
	The Aids Support Organisation	1
	Norwegian Refugee Council	1
	Warchild Holland	1
	Gender Department, Local Government	1
	Total no. of interviews organisations:	**8**
	Total no. of interviews all:	**56**

5.4   Challenges in the Field

When conducting fieldwork in a foreign environment and in social research in general, a number of theoretical and practical challenges emerge. As noted above, transport from Gulu town and out to the IDP camps was a major bottleneck for us, and we were completely dependent on the NRC for this. Luckily, the NRC was very supportive, so most of the time we were able to conduct all the interviews we had planned for the day. However, we experienced a few cases where we were obliged to either rush an interview session or end an interview abruptly due to transportation difficulties, which may naturally have affected our data. Another hold-up was the difficulties we experienced with regard to accessing relevant reports in some organisations. While organisations such as UNICEF, UNFPA, CARE and Warchild Holland were very helpful, others, such as the International Organisation of Migration, did not allow us to access their material on SGBV due to confidentiality matters.

Nevertheless, the possibly greatest challenge of all is the risk of reactive effects, which refers to the 'response of research participants to the fact that they know they are being studied' (Bryman 2008:698). In our specific context, a range of factors may have caused reactive effects. Furthermore, the use of translators entails certain difficulties. Both issues are explored in greater detail below.

5.4.1   Reactive Effects

Regarding the validity of our data, it is important to take note of the possible influence that we as researchers might have had on our interviewees in terms of reactive effects; our presence might have induced those being interviewed and observed to act and respond in a different way than they normally would (Silverman 2001:58). Furthermore, an interview encounter is in itself an unnatural setting, which may produce reactive effects (Bryman 2008:468). Our being two young, female, Western researchers conducting fieldwork in IDP camps in a war torn region in Uganda clearly carries with it certain assumptions on the part of our interviewees. One specific aspect which might have affected our respondents, and hence our data, is the fact that we received extensive assistance from the NRC. Due to this direct association with the NRC, along with our being Westerners, may possibly have led our interviewees to believe that we were there to provide them with financial or humanitarian assistance. With particular reference to research on gender-based violence, Ntata and Biruk (2009:11) argue that a female GBV survivor who shares her story with a researcher is likely to assume that 'help is on the way when most likely it is not'. Several of our respondents asked us during the interviews whether we could help them in any way. With the assistance of our translators we replied that we were researchers and not able to give them money, but that we hoped our study would shed new light on the issue of SGBV in the region, and that this would hopefully be beneficial to the local community in the long run. We particularly emphasised that our work might prove useful to the NRC and other NGOs working on SGBV in the region. Our research assistants from the NRC sometimes also advised the interviewees on the organisation's activities, and provided them with information regarding possible channels of support.

Another related issue to be aware of is the possibility of interviewees falsely claiming to have experienced SGBV or other hardship in order to gain sympathy or help from us and our research assistants. However, the presence and professional conduct of our Acholi research

assistants may have prevented false testimonies to a great extent. Nevertheless, this may also have had the opposite effect. Since our NRC research assistants may have known people in the respondent's family, for example, there is a possibility that interviewees intentionally withheld important information out of fear of punishment or stigmatisation from the community if the story was made known.

Generally, we aimed to reduce reactive effects by e.g. wearing appropriate clothing such as skirts that covered our knees, t-shirts and blouses that covered shoulders, and we refrained from wearing fancy jewellery and the like. As argued by Ryen (2007:139), clothing and accessories are in fact methodologically important since there are numerous connotations attached to a person's appearance – particularly in cross-cultural settings. Clothing also helped us avoid uncomfortable situations, as 'the potential vulnerability of female researchers interviewing men about intimate matters' is high (McKee and O'Brien 1983, cited in Lee 1995:59). It is however still not possible for us to ascertain the degree to which our interviewees were influenced by our being foreigners, and indeed Westerners – as well as women.

It must also be acknowledged that the use of a voice recorder may have had unwanted effects, as it 'may disconcert respondents, who become self-conscious or alarmed at the prospects of their words being preserved' (Bryman 2008:452). In some cases, it can prompt other responses than those that might have emerged without the voice recorder (Ryen 2002:110). We dealt with this by obtaining permission from every respondent before the interview, and when asked about whether respondents agreed to our taping the interview, every single interviewee accepted. We also did our utmost to place the voice recorder in a discrete place, so as not to constantly remind the interviewee that the interview was being taped. One must also recognise that the use of a new mini-pc to take notes might have been somewhat intrusive in an impoverished IDP camp; more often than not, however, it just served to attract curious glances, especially from children, who gathered in large flocks around the interviewee to see the *wazungus* with the pc. At times, this interrupted the privacy of the interviews conducted out in the open, but the children usually disappeared quickly when asked to do so by the translator and/or the respondent, so the interviews remained largely unaffected by the children's occasional presence.

Moreover, it is vital to be mindful of the communication challenges that exist in all forms of research. One can never anticipate how questions, statements and/or behaviour are interpreted by interviewees, and when conducting research in a foreign environment, the risk of misinterpretation is even greater due to the fact that the researcher and the interviewees have different cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Having to use translators when interviewing respondents, which we did in most of our interviews, further complicated the communication process.

5.4.2   Use of Interpreters

All our focus group sessions were conducted in Luo, as noted in section 5.2.2, and out of the 51 semi-structured individual interviews that we carried out, ten interviews were conducted in English. Out of these ten, eight were interviews with NGO professionals and the other two were interviews with a Catholic priest and a parish chief. Language difficulties and communication challenges were present both when interviews were conducted in Luo with English translation and when the interviews were in English only. In the English only

interviews, the main challenges were differences in terms of intonation, accent and expressions between Ugandan English and British English. Furthermore, in the two interviews that were conducted in English, we experienced some difficulties when asking about sensitive issues such as marital rape due to the fact that we were not familiar with how sexuality issues are discussed in the Luo language and in the Acholi context. Our direct way of asking questions seemed to create some discomfort among the two interviewees. This demonstrates that there is in fact a risk of cross-cultural communication breaking down due to dissimilarities regarding language use and interpretation (Ryen 2002:244). However, our Acholi translator was present in both interviews and whenever there was an obvious misunderstanding she stepped in and formulated the question differently or provided explanations in Luo. It is important to strive towards 'words and concepts be[ing] interpreted in the same ways by interviewers, interpreters, and respondents to avoid violating validity' (Ryen 2001:344), and the fact that our translators were fluent in both English and Luo helped promote this.

As indicated, a translator was used in the majority of our interviews (five focus group sessions and 41 semi-structured interviews). During our two months of fieldwork we used a total of three research assistants, one of which was an NRC employee, another was an NRC volunteer, and the third was a translator we hired after coming into contact with her through acquaintances. All three translators were well-educated Acholi women, our age, with experience from the field. Their professionalism and local knowledge proved invaluable, as they were able to adjust our interview guide to the Acholi context, which was particularly important when asking sensitive questions. When interviewing rape survivors and women or girls engaging in transactional sex, our translators spent a lot of time probing and counselling the interviewees in order for them to be open to us. Our research assistants were sincerely committed to their tasks, and we would not have been able to carry out our interviews without them, let alone mobilise respondents, which underlines the advantages of using local translators. As mentioned above, however, the fact that some of the translators may possibly have known or have been known by some of the respondents' families may have challenged respondents' openness.

Indeed, there are also certain drawbacks with using translators. For example, the use of translators made us unable to obtain the exact phrasing of our respondents' accounts. As mentioned in section 5.2.2, two research assistants were present in our focus group sessions. One research assistant from the NRC acted as a moderator in the discussion and interacted mainly with the respondents, while the other research assistant translated what was being said into English to us directly. It is clearly a weakness that we as researchers did not understand the primary conversation during the focus groups sessions, as this made it difficult for us to keep track of which respondent said what at all times. This in turn made it challenging to observe and analyse how meaning was constructed among the respondents, which is one of the advantages of focus group research (Barbour 2007:136). Moreover, a general challenge when using translators is, according to Barbour (2007:99), that 'not all concepts can be rendered in another language, nor are they necessarily universal. Therefore, not everything is, in effect, translatable'.

In an interview setting where a translator is used, the communication is three-way instead of two-way, which is likely to increase the degree of misinterpretation. Thus, before the information could be interpreted by us as researchers, the translator first had to interpret and translate the response of the interviewee. Nevertheless, even when the communication is two-way, as a researcher you can never be sure that the respondent has fully understood your

question; neither can you be certain that you comprehend what the respondent is communicating. This is especially so in a cross-cultural context like ours; an Acholi and a Norwegian speak differently about issues, and value different aspects of life. Some respondents were in fact contradicting themselves throughout the interview, probably as a result of misunderstandings, which highlights the importance of asking follow-up questions to the respondent when he or she appears to have misunderstood. We also tried to ask as many open-ended questions as possible (cf. section 5.2.1), to give respondents the chance to speak freely. Certain Western categories may in fact be irrelevant in some cultures, such as for example numbers and age (Silverman 1993, cited in Ryen 2002:246), an issue which we came across during our fieldwork. Some interviewees had, for example, difficulties sorting out how old their children were, what year their husband died in and so on, suggesting that age and numbers are not as important in the Acholi context as in a Western context. Thus, our questions concerning such issues might have been confusing for some of our interviewees. Although we tried to ask respondents in various ways about age and numbers where their answers were contradictory, we normally just moved on to other questions as such indicators are not particularly significant to our study.

Despite these drawbacks, we believe that we were, with help from our research assistants, able to build confidence among our respondents and obtain as much valid information from them as possible within our time frame. We will, however, never know whether respondents gave us their actual thoughts and opinions, or if they just told us what they thought we wanted to hear, as discussed above. Still, we tried to continuously reflect upon the information provided by our respondents, as well as on our role as researchers and our influence on the respondents, in order to account for reactive effects and miscommunication.

5.5   Research Ethics

As argued by Ntata and Biruk (2009:11), 'all research in a developing country is complicated and fraught with ethical issues', particularly with regard to dissimilar expectations between researcher and respondent regarding what participation in the research entails. The sensitivity of our topic also presented us with great ethical challenges. We were dependent on our respondents' willingness to share their individual views and experiences with us, and it is difficult to ascertain how this affected our interviewees psychologically. When studying personal issues like sexuality and intimate partner relations, the principles of informed consent and confidentiality are fundamental. Informed consent means that 'research subjects have the right to know that they are being researched, the right to be informed about the nature of the research and the right to withdraw from the research at any time.' (Ryen 2004, cited in Ryen 2007:38). The ethical concern relating to confidentiality entails that 'the identities and records of individuals should be maintained as confidential' (Bryman 2008:118). A third ethical aspect which is important in our case is the right to privacy on the part of the interviewee, an issue which is pertinent when asking questions about sexual activities (Bryman 2008:123). Furthermore, a number of ethical concerns relates to the role of the researcher in the research process, which will be discussed below.

5.5.1   Informed Consent

The indispensable principle of informed consent was kept in mind throughout the fieldwork. Before obtaining the respondents' consent to be interviewed, we made sure that they were

given information regarding the objectives of our research. This was done orally; we did not make use of written consent forms, as this may have caused suspicion and been bewildering in the mainly oral culture of the Acholi, where few would have been unable to understand a written consent form due to the low education and literacy level in the region (Ryen 2007:41). As the principles of informed consent were explained to the interviewees by our research assistants in Luo, it was difficult for us to monitor in detail the information that was being communicated. One must also question how informed such consent ever can be, as uneducated rural dwellers like the Acholi are unlikely to be familiar with what research is, or what the higher educational system entails (Ryen 2007:40). Furthermore, cultural norms that emphasise welcoming visitors may have made it difficult to say no to participate. The problem is compounded even further as researchers and NGO consultants often use the same methods for data collection, which may confuse participants (Ryen 2007:40). Nevertheless, we believe that our competent research assistants were able to sufficiently inform the adult respondents about the research, to allow for them to make an informed decision about their participation.

A greater challenge emerged when we interviewed children under the age of 18. Nine of our 41 semi-structured interviews were conducted with children below the age of 18, the youngest of which was eleven years old. She was among the rape survivors that were mobilised by the local community to participate in our study. When interviewing children it is of great importance to also seek parental permission, which we did in the case of the 11-year-old. Her father agreed to her being interviewed, and so we decided to carry out the interview as she had an appalling rape story to tell us. However, we continuously kept in mind the major ethical issues that are present when interviewing a child rape survivor, as it is extremely hard to forecast the possible psychological side effects of such an interview. But due to our research assistant's great counselling skills, we believe that the interview session was also rewarding for the 11-year-old, even though she had to relive her past traumas. The other children that we interviewed were mainly secondary school pupils, and in their cases we sought informed consent from the school's headmaster, as this was a boarding school and parents had entrusted custody to the school's employees. Another specific case that presented us with significant ethical challenges was a 30-year-old mentally disabled rape survivor who came to see us with her older brother upon hearing we were interested in interviewing rape survivors. They had come from afar to meet us, and the woman had been raped four times. Being an extremely vulnerable individual, we found it important to hear her story even though she was not able to tell it to us herself. Thus, we chose to simply focus on her story, which her brother told us, and leave out other questions.

5.5.2 Confidentiality and Right to Privacy

We also did our utmost to account for the issues of confidentiality and right to privacy. As far as possible, interviews were conducted either in the shade under a mango tree, or inside or in front of a hut, in the absence of other people, although we unavoidably attracted some attention from curious children. In most cases we were able to find private and relatively silent places outside, even in camp centres. However, when interviewing survivors of rape and girls engaging in transactional sex, we sought the privacy of a little hut, or a homestead outside the camps, to conduct interviews. Thus, interviewees were encouraged to open up to us and share their stories without fear that anyone around would hear what they were sharing. It is possible, however, that people in the camps saw us enter into these huts and consequently started wondering why these huts were visited in particular; this may have contributed to

causing our interviewees some amount of stigmatisation, but this was sometimes unavoidable and something we sought to minimise. When rape survivors were interviewed within the IDP camp, interviews were not conducted in the home of the rape survivor, but in the hut of other community members who were not present during the interview. Although we anticipated at the outset that the presence of two researchers might seem intimidating for some SGBV survivors telling their stories, we experienced the opposite to be the case. Six out of ten interviews with rape survivors were thus conducted with both of us present, in addition to the research assistant.

Confidentiality is strongly related to the principle of doing no harm to research participants. As stated by the British Sociological Association (cited in Bryman 2008:118), researchers should 'anticipate, and […] guard against, consequences for research participants which can be predicted to be harmful', and researchers should 'consider carefully the possibility that the research experience may be a disturbing one'. These issues are particularly important when interviewing rape survivors and women engaging in transactional sex due to the trauma and stigmatisation that these women have undergone and may still be experiencing. As stated by the Population Council (2008:11), research on SGBV that is 'ill-conceived or implemented […] may have dangerous consequences for the respondents and/or interviewers'. One such issue is the possibility of repercussions towards respondents from perpetrators, male partners and community members in the form of stigmatisation or further violence (UBOS 2007:285). This aspect is also highlighted by Ntata and Biruk (2009:11), who emphasise the importance of protecting research participants when conducting research on issues like SGBV, due to the fact that they may 'face backlash for talking with outsiders about unsavoury issues'. Ntata and Biruk (2009:11) further argue that since gender is related to social change and considered something 'new' several African countries, research on gender issues 'also has the potential to anger those who stand to lose if injustices in their community are brought into the open'. Moreover, some information on SGBV may be considered sensitive by the government, such as for example accounts of sexual violence carried out by UPDF soldiers. Thus, it is crucial that the identities and records of our research participants are kept confidential, also when findings are being published (Bryman 2008:118).

In order to maintain confidentiality, we never took note of the full names of our research participants, and ensured them that nothing they said could be traced back to them, thus guaranteeing them full anonymity. The notable exceptions are the eight interviews conducted with NGO professionals. In this regard, it should be emphasised that their views do not necessarily reflect those of the organisation that they work in. Apart from these eight NGO professionals, all names of respondents used in this research report are pseudonyms. NGO professionals were not averse to our using their names because, as one of these respondents said, 'you can keep it, there is no harm I've said. I have not critiqued the government, I have just given my opinion'. This may suggest that NGO professionals have refrained from being critical of the government in their responses for fear of repercussions, which may have caused valuable information to be omitted. To further reduce the possibility of our IDP respondents being identified, we have not included the specific location of interviews in the report. Moreover, we protected our respondents' right to privacy by providing them with the possibility of refusing to answer private and sensitive questions, to take breaks whenever they wanted to, and to withdraw from the interview altogether if they wished to. Some interviewees may have felt a bit intimidated by certain questions, but none of our participants chose to withdraw from the interview. When interviewing rape survivors and women engaging in transactional sex, frequent breaks were necessary as interviewees naturally often started crying when talking about their traumatic experiences. Counselling and consolation

from our research assistants, who had previous experience of counselling SGBV survivors, were crucially important in these cases.

5.5.3   Our Role as Researchers

Indeed, conducting fieldwork on a disturbing issue like SGBV presented us with several challenges regarding how to behave and act as researchers. In some situations, for example, it was difficult for us to distance ourselves from the research and remain unbiased, e.g. when hearing provoking statements from men and terrible rape stories from women and girls. Indeed, when dealing with sensitive and traumatic issues it is important to maintain a balance between empathising with interviewees and critically evaluating the information they provide, as stated by Thagaard (1998, cited in Mjaaland 2006:19). This, we experienced, was not always easy.

Interviewing rape survivors was particularly challenging for us personally, but as we were working closely with research assistants who had worked on the topic and with survivors previously, we justify our academic involvement with the topic. Furthermore, we consider it important to shed light on SGBV from different angles; not only from the legal perspective or from the perspective of social workers, but also from a development management perspective. Generally, we found that it was a great advantage to be two researchers, as we could deal with difficult experiences together. The most demanding interviews also made us reflect on how to justify that we made ten rape survivors relive their past traumas in the name of our research, and thus how to defend that we were in fact mainly taking instead of giving. This is a frequent feminist critique levelled at quantitative research (Bryman 2008:463), but may in fact also be directed towards our project. Our research participants may possibly benefit from new light being shed on the issue of SGBV in the community, but this is likely to be indirect at best. Observing our respondents' need for help and support, both to cope with their traumas and in their daily lives, was challenging in view of the fact that we were not there to provide them with direct assistance.

In the majority of our interviews, we did not give our respondents money or goods, but simply expressed our gratitude towards them verbally interview. However, when interviewing rape survivors and women and girls engaging in transactional sex, we chose to show our appreciation by giving them a kilogram of sugar after having conducted the interview, due to the fact that we made them talk about highly traumatic experiences from the past. To avoid women showing up just to obtain the sugar, this was not communicated to them beforehand, with the exception of the two commercial sex workers that we interviewed who we promised to compensate for their time. Since prostitution is illegal in Uganda, and a highly stigmatising activity, it was hard to find women and girls who admitted to selling sex for a living. Eventually we succeeded in mobilising two young girls in one of the IDP camps who had previously been engaged in transactional sex, but as we wanted more information on the matter, we chose to approach commercial sex workers as well – and were finally allowed to interview two sex workers. The process of getting in touch with them was long; we first contacted an acquaintance of us, who in turn got hold of a *boda-boda* (moped taxi) driver who knew some of the commercial sex workers. He approached some of the sex workers, and succeeded in convincing two of them to talk to us, with the promise that we would compensate them for their time. We were told to simply give them a small amount of money, e.g. 3000 UGX (1.44 USD) each and buy them a soda. While the first sex worker was fine with this, the second one wanted something like 10.000 UGX (4.80 USD) from us. However,

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after explaining to her that it was not ethically correct for us to pay for information, that the 3000 UGX was given to her merely to compensate her for her time, she agreed to go through with the interview.

Thus, with the exception of sugar and small amounts of money to the rape survivors and the women engaging in transactional sex, no monetary compensation was given. Nevertheless, emotional support was provided by our research assistants and non-verbally by ourselves as well, which we believe had positive effects in the sense that the interview sessions benefited the respondents psychologically. It is our impression that the respondents, particularly the rape survivors, found it meaningful to share their experiences with people that listened with great interest. As a result, most respondents actually thanked us for talking to them; hence one may argue that our interview sessions served as sensitisation to respondents. Although we believe that the comfort and support that was provided by our research assistants during interviews had a positive function, it was, however, not unproblematic. As argued by Barbour (2007:49), 'respondents may seek advice from [researchers] which can pose ethical questions'. This is particularly the case when researchers are health care professionals or the like, and in our case it was known that two of our research assistants were working with the NRC. One way to handle this is, according to Barbour (2007:49), to give 'participants the opportunity to address specific questions at the end of the session'. In our case, the greatest need for counselling was when rape survivors were revealing the details about their rape story. We normally dealt with this by taking a long break where our research assistant consoled and counselled the respondent. In order to be able to do research on such an upsetting matter as SGBV, we would argue that it is indeed crucial to also provide the interviewees with some sort of emotional support – particularly when conducting research in Northern Uganda where many rape survivors have never been offered any form of therapy or counselling. The interview with Susan (18), a rape survivor, may serve as an example of how appreciation was communicated to us:

> 'I am happy because I came here […], and from today I got another new counselling and education, for me this has been like education, what you have shared with me. I am happy you came, because you have given to me at least new advice and I am happy that I met different people whom I did not meet before.' (04.12.09)

When considering our role as researchers, it is also important to be mindful of some of the criticism levelled at Western gender research, which may be directed towards us and our project as well. Our research may be categorised as 'depressing research'; as argued by Ntata and Biruk (2009:6), 'much research on the African continent has centered on the vulnerability of women and girls to gender based violence, HIV infection, lack of decision-making power, and the general disadvantaged position of (apparently) all women in (apparently) all circumstances'. The tendency of Western researchers to constantly associate Africa with 'evil, disease, and brutality' is also highlighted by Oyewùmí (2003:32). Western gender researchers are also accused of operating in a paradigm characterised by 'safari scholarship' and gender imperialism, in which the desire is to 'demonize African men in the name of saving African women', which is done based on 'one or two brief visits to Africa' (Taiwo 2003:53). Our research project may certainly be characterised as 'safari scholarship', given that our fieldwork only lasted two months. Ideally, a lot more time should have been spent out in the field in order to allow for more confidence to have been created between researcher and respondents, and to allow for more thorough-going analysis. However, a fieldwork period of much longer than two months was not possible within the limitations of this Master's thesis. It is still important to keep this critique in mind, and when conducting gender research it is thus

crucial that we 'look beneath the surface and question our own conditioned ways of seeing' (Ntata & Biruk 2009:10). This is particularly relevant regarding how we portray the women under study, that we are able to employ a dual focus on their vulnerability *and* their agency simultaneously. Although it is difficult to find positive angles to our sombre topic, the aim with this study is to understand the circumstances in which SGBV occurs in Northern Uganda, and hopefully contribute to social change.

5.6 Data Analysis and Presentation

Analysing qualitative data entails reducing the amount of data (Ryen 2002:145). As described by Gibbs (2007:1), 'you start with some (often voluminous) collection of qualitative data and then you process it, through analytic procedures, into a clear, understandable, insightful, trustworthy and even original analysis'. However, analysing qualitative data is not a straightforward, linear process, but rather a circular activity (Ryen 2002:145). According to Gibbs (2007:3), 'analysis can, and should, start in the field'.

As noted in section 5.1, induction is the underlying logic in most qualitative research, and refers to the 'generation and justification of a general explanation based on the accumulation of lots of particular, but similar, circumstances' (Gibbs 2007:4). Reaching general explanations may however be challenging, due to the fact that qualitative research generates large datasets (Bryman 2008:538). Compared to quantitative research, there are also 'few well-established and widely accepted rules for the analysis of qualitative data' (Bryman 2008:538). Nonetheless, *coding* is a key activity in most qualitative data analysis, referring to 'how you define what the data you are analyzing are about' (Gibbs 2007:38). Coding of data is a core feature in our analytical approach, and will be explored further below. In addition to a traditional approach to qualitative data analysis, we have chosen to include some elements from narrative analysis, particularly in relation to two accounts; one of a rape survivor and one of a commercial sex worker. However, the limited framework of a Master's thesis does not allow us to make thorough analyses of narratives when our main methodological framework is content or thematic analysis.

5.6.1 Coding of Data

Coding is used in qualitative data analysis as 'a way of organizing your thinking about the text and your research notes', and entails categorisation of data items based on thematic commonalities among them. Codes may be examples of an 'action, setting, strategy, meaning, emotion' or the like (Gibbs 2007:38f,144). Thus, coding of data allows the researcher to develop a framework of thematic ideas, and a code is 'a shorthand to the thematic idea' (Gibbs 2007:38,54).

Coding may be both concept-driven and data-driven, and in our analysis we have aimed to employ mainly a data-driven approach, which is also called open coding. When conducting data-driven coding, the researcher starts by 'reading the texts and trying to tease out what is happening' (Gibbs 2007:45). Overall, we use thematic analysis as a way of arranging our data into themes or codes. These themes are 'essentially recurring motifs' (Bryman 2008:554) that have emerged from our data, and been arranged into appropriate categories in matrices. Occasionally, sub-themes within each core theme have been identified as well. For simplicity purposes during the process of writing, some categories that relate to one another have been

merged together into larger categories. In the process of selecting quotations to use in our writing, we selected those that exemplified the categories that we found (see appendix 3 for a visualisation of these categories); however, we have not been able to draw in quotations from every category due to the high volume of our data material. Where we have had several quotations in each category to choose between, which occurred in the majority of cases, we selected quotations that expressed the view of several respondents, those that expressed a deviant view or those expressed by respondents with personal or professional experience of rape, forced sex between intimate partners or transactional sex. Due to our naturalistic orientation, statements mostly stand on their own without rich contextual explanations of the process in which these data have been communicated. We have, however, attempted to contextualise our respondents' statements where we perceive this to be relevant with regard to why certain statements were expressed as they were. After each quotation used in the text, the thematic categories they correspond to have been indicated to ease the reader's understanding of our data analysis process. Some quotations may correspond to more than one category; this is because respondents' statements shed light on several different aspects. To gain an insight into the themes or codes we operated with in our matrices, appendix 3 can be consulted.

Although we have attempted to employ a data-driven approach to categorisation, it is obviously impossible for the researcher to be completely objective and start out with no presuppositions. As Bryman (2008:555) puts it, 'themes […] are likely to reflect the analyst's awareness of recurring ideas and topics in the data'. However, according to Gibbs (2007:46), 'the point is that, as far as possible, one should try to pull out from the data what is happening and not impose an interpretation based on pre-existing theory'. Gibbs highlights that the two approaches to coding are not mutually exclusive (Gibbs 2007:47). Therefore, although we employ mainly a data-driven approach we are aware that we may at times inevitably have tended toward a more concept-driven approach, particularly initially in our data analysis process as our three research questions provided the overarching categories used in the coding of data. However, underlying categories have been data-driven to the greatest extent possible. An important issue to be aware of in the coding process is to ensure that codes are 'as analytic and theoretical as possible', and not 'simply descriptive and couched in the respondents' views of the world' (Gibbs 2007:54), which we have sought to be mindful of during our analytical process, particularly when lifting respondents' views of the causes of SGBV to a higher structural level.

Due to the fact that we conducted as many as 56 individual and group interviews, it would not be feasible for us to do in-depth analysis of all our data. Through transcribing all 56 interviews in detail, which resulted in around 700 transcribed pages, we obtained an initial overview of our total data material. Thereafter, for feasibility purposes, a total of 25 interviews were selected to comprise our core data analysis sample, with the rest of the interviews serving as cross-references for this core sample. The 25 interviews were selected to cater for variation in respondent age, gender, category of interviewee and experiences or opinions (see appendix 1 for list of selected interviews); thus both according to particulars and content. In order to ensure quality in our analytic work, both of us scrutinised each of the 25 interviews during the data analysis process. Although we focused on analysing different sections (one of us focused on research question 1, cf. chapter 6, and the other on research question 2, cf. chapter 7), we compared each others' interpretations with our own experiences and readings of the same interviews. We were therefore able to guide each other and reach conclusions on ambiguous data together, increasing internal reliability in the process.

Since the process of coding entails fragmentation of data, it is frequently criticised for resulting in 'a loss of sense of context and of narrative flow' (Coffey & Atkinson 1996, cited in Bryman 2008:549). By including elements of narrative analysis in our approach, we have aimed to cater for some of the inherent weaknesses of coding.

5.6.2 Narrative Analysis

Narration and storytelling are 'one of the fundamental ways that people organize their understanding of the world', and through the telling of stories people share their experiences with others (Gibbs 2007:56). Thus, the analysis of narratives aims to 'reveal people's understandings of the meanings of key events in their lives or their communities and the cultural contexts in which they live' (Gibbs 2007:56). Narrative analysis includes other aspects than merely what the respondent said; it also focuses on how the respondent said it, why, and what he or she felt and experienced. In line with our research approach that seeks to avoid 'patriarchy' in methodology (Oakley 1981, cited in Ryen 2008:238), narratives are useful in that they are examples of 'less dominating and more relational modes of interviewing that reflect and respect participants' ways of organizing meaning in their lives' (Riessman 2004:696). Narratives allows for the researcher to share the meaning of the respondent's experience, and give the respondent a voice (Gibbs 2007:71). They are also useful insofar as they 'provide windows into lives that confront the constraints of circumstances', which is particularly useful for studies of 'life disruptions' or 'macro-level phenomena' (Riessman 2004:707,696) such as our topic under study. Because we find it important to not solely focus on what our respondents say, but also on how, we have chosen to include some elements of narrative analysis. With regard to the framework used, we largely operate within naturalism. As noted above, a thorough analysis of narratives will not be possible in our report, and for feasibility purposes we only present two narratives – one of rape survivor Susan (18) (cf. chapter 7.1.4) and the other of commercial sex worker Doreen (20) (cf. chapter 7.3.3.).

5.6.3 Reliability and Validity

Reliability and *validity* are two key concepts in social research, referring to the assessment of the quality of research. Reliability is 'the degree to which a measure of a concept is stable', while validity is concerned with 'the integrity of the conclusions that are generated from a piece of research' (Bryman 2008: 698,700). Whereas reliability and validity are fundamental criteria for assessing the qualitative of quantitative research, there are various opinions among researchers about how relevant the concepts are for qualitative research (Bryman 2008:376).

Nevertheless, we believe that it is still important to have the two criteria in mind when conducting qualitative research. LeCompte and Goetz (1982, cited in Bryman 2008:376) argue, for example, that it is indeed possible to assess qualitative research based on the criteria of external and internal reliability, and internal and external validity. *External reliability* is 'the degree to which a study can be replicated', and this is highly challenging in qualitative research as it is impossible to 'freeze' a social setting. *Internal reliability* refers to 'whether, when there is more than one observer, members of the research team agree about what they see and hear', a category which is relevant for our study. As argued by Gibbs (2007:99), 'working in teams can be both a threat and a help to quality'. The challenges relate particularly to how to co-ordinate the work load and how to deal with possible disparate ideas

about the analysis (Gibbs 2007:99). We would argue that our being two researchers may in fact render the analysis of data more precise, since this has allowed us to critically assess each other's analytical work, as mentioned above, and the presence of both researchers during interviews may also have increased internal reliability.

The third concept, *internal validity*, refers to 'whether there is a good match between researcher's observations and the theoretical ideas they develop' (Bryman 2008:376). According to LeCompte and Goetz (1982, cited in Bryman 2008:376), internal validity is one of the strong points of qualitative research due to the emphasis on contextual understanding. Our being two researchers may be an advantage when it comes to internal validity as we have aimed to critically evaluate each other's analyses, as well as our theoretical framework. Finally, *external validity* is 'the degree to which findings can be generalized across social settings', which is a weakness of qualitative research (Bryman 2008:377). Due to our small sample, it is not possible to generalise our findings to a wider population, thus from a positivistic perspective the external validity of our study is low, which is the case with most qualitative research. It is important to note that many theorists within qualitative research method are critical towards employing positivistic evaluation criteria, such as external validity in qualitative research, as each social context is potentially unique (Ryen 2002:180). Perhaps the concept of external validity should be replaced with the term *transferability*, as argued by Lincoln and Cuba (cited in Ryen 2002:180). Transferability has been promoted in this study through rich contextual explanations of the setting in which our study takes place (Ryen 2002:180).

Chapter 6: Displacement and Gender Relations

As our first research question states (chapter 1.3), one of the primary aims of this study is to investigate what perceptions IDPs in Gulu and Amuru, as well as NGO professionals have of the impact of displacement on gender relations. This chapter explores the lived experience of gender relations in Acholi society, as communicated by IDP respondents and NGO professionals working on issues of SGBV in these districts. In order to assess respondents' perceptions of how displacement has affected gender relations, it is also necessary to examine their understandings of how gender relations and the roles of men and women were before displacement. This chapter therefore begins by examining people's perceptions of the traditional Acholi 'gender order' before assessing how and why people consider gender relations to have been affected by displacement.

6.1 Gender Relations before Displacement

When examining our respondents' views of gender relations in Acholi society before displacement, it is useful to operate through Connell's understanding of a 'gender order'. As argued in chapter 3.2, Connell (1987, 2001, 2005; cited in Giddens 2009:610), argues that the gender order consists of labour, power and cathexis. Each of these categories – *labour* (what is expected of men and women), *power* (who has the authority and decision-making power in domestic and public life) and *cathexis* ('dynamics within personal relationships, including marriage, sexuality and childrearing') – can be more closely examined in order to determine the gender order in Acholi society. In this analysis, our data-driven categories – formulated based on respondents' statements in the first three figures of appendix 3 – have been incorporated into Connell's three analytical categories of labour, power and cathexis in order to reduce the volume of data and examine what respondents' essentially communicate. Throughout our analysis, respondents' statements are merged into the text itself unless they are longer than three lines, in which case they are indented for purposes of clarity. When citing focus group participants pseudonyms are not used; however, respondents interviewed individually have been given a Ugandan name to aid recognition.

6.1.1 Labour

As Dolan (2009) argues, there are clear gender expectations towards men and women in Acholi society (cf. chapter 2.4). Our findings support this. The majority of respondents, when asked what roles women in Acholi society are traditionally expected to perform, mention work connected to the household or the private sphere; they mention that a woman's traditional roles are producing children (cf. chapter 2.4.3), looking after children, cooking, keeping the homestead clean, 'digging' and doing other agricultural and household work. As John (77) puts it, 'women […] are the owners of the home. And if they are to just come back home from the garden and just sit, that home will die' (11.12.09, category 6.17). The table below sums up the most common roles expected of men and women in Acholi society, according to our respondents:

Table 6.1   Traditional Gender Roles of the Acholi

Role of the Acholi man	Role of the Acholi woman
Building a house	Cooking / providing food
Security / protection of family	Washing clothes
Tending family's animals	Keeping the homestead clean
Educating children in 'traditional' ways	Producing children
Making decisions, resolving disputes	Obeying the husband
Performing traditional rituals	Looking after children
Hunting	Digging, weeding, harvesting
Paying school fees	Operating petty businesses

The table suggests that women are mostly expected to work in the private sphere with 'nature' – through the production and rearing of children, while men are expected not only to provide for and protect their family, but to participate in the public sphere or with 'culture' as well by performing cleansing ceremonies, paying school fees, resolving disputes etc. Thus, the patriarchal tendency to relegate women to the domestic sphere and men to the public sphere, making women dependent on men (Charles 2002:8) emerges. According to Charles (2002:8), this dependence is maintained through male violence towards women, a claim that will be further explored in chapter 7.

Clan leader Moses (48), with four wives and 28 children, expresses the view of many Acholi when arguing that the primary responsibility of women is 'staying home. A responsible woman in Acholi who is married there is supposed to stay at home. Even when she dies, she's supposed to be buried in that home' (01.12.09, category 6.17). Thus, men seem to have more varied roles in society than women, although women are responsible for a lot more of the day-to-day work at home. Despite the fact that women have more work than men in the household, the man remains the head of the household, according to Elsie in CARE (24.11.09) and other respondents, such as Moses (48): 'The head of the family is always the man, but when it comes to looking for food for the children, it's always the woman who does that' (01.12.09, category 6.12). It is difficult to ascertain whether Moses sees this as merely a convenient division of labour, or if he considers women's task to look for food as admirable. When asked what he thinks about whether or not the division of labour between men and women should change, he argues that 'in actual fact, the woman and the man are equal. For me, I think when it comes to looking after the children, feeding, women do more work than men, but it should just be like that'. One may question whether Moses says men and women are equal because he thinks we as Western female researchers want to hear this, or whether he genuinely means it. The fact that he says 'women do more work than men, but it should just be like that' suggests that he sees this as a convenient arrangement and that he does not necessarily wish that men take on more roles to make the division of labour more equal.

Among our respondents, there was common agreement that women overall do more work than men; this was confirmed by men and women, girls and boys. According to Ruth (47), 'women are doubling or tripling the work of men' (10.12.09, category 6.22), and clan leader Francis (54) said, 'women have more work than men. We can go like say in the garden and we dig together, but when we get back home I just sit while my wife has to go and fetch water and bathe the children and so on' (02.12.09, category 6.22).

When asked why women have more work than men, Francis replied: 'I think it is God's creation, that is how God created women. Unless when the night comes that is when she rests. She cannot get tired, while for a man he can just do 3 to 5 things, while women may do 10 to

15 things' (02.12.09, category 6.23). Thus, biology or 'God's creation' is used to explain why women have more work than men. 18-year-old Susan confirms this when saying:

> 'Us girls do a lot more work than my brothers. After the boys have fetched water, swept the compound, digging, they just come and sit, just like that. While for us girls, we don't sit, we are just busy all the time. Even if us girls say that things should be done the same way, or work should be divided, my mum would not accept, because she'd say 'these are boys. They are not like you girls'' (04.12.09, categories 6.22 & 6.23).

This is interesting, as ascribing differences merely by biology risks purporting an impression of the inequalities between men and women as being unchangeable. As Sherry Ortner (1974:73) argues, women – by virtue of their capacity to reproduce – are normally associated with 'nature', while men are associated with 'culture'. This is also Beauvoir's view, as she argued that woman is 'her physical body' or 'her biological capacity to reproduce and to mother' (Beauvoir 1949, cited in Tarrant 2006:171). Consequently, argues Ortner (1974:73), 'since it is always culture's project to subsume and transcend nature, if women were considered part of nature, then culture would find it 'natural' to subordinate, not to say oppress, them' (cf. chapter 3.1.1). Attributing differences in expectations between men and women to biological capacity is therefore dangerous. In a focus group discussion with adolescent boys, one participant attributed the difference in gender roles to the following: 'Women are weak. That is how they were created'. Another said; 'during delivery and during their menstruation period, they lose a lot of blood, that is why they are weak' (Boy focus group participants, 19.11.09, category 6.23). Women are also perceived as being weak with regard to their emotions. As John (77) puts it, 'it is good that I was born a man. Women are so jealous that I would never wish to be a woman' (11.12.09, category 6.24); women are also deemed 'uneducated', 'jealous of men in terms of business', 'shy', 'fearful' (Focus group boys, 19.11.09) and 'stubborn' (Focus group men, 04.11.09, category 6.24). This resonates well with Dolan's observations that Acholi women are known to be naturally quarrelsome, sympathy seekers and generally weak (Dolan 2009:193), as explored in chapter 2. Indeed, it is interesting how these men seem to talk about women with contempt, using adjectives they themselves do not want to be associated with; thus, respect and admirance towards their female counterparts appears to be lacking. Consequently, the Acholi woman is 'the Other', that which is not male and which men do not wish to identify with, suggesting that Beauvoir's (1949, cited in Tarrant 2006:171) theories may apply to the Acholi context.

With regard to equality, the vast majority of respondents said that Acholi men and women are not equal, at least not in terms of opportunities. As one female focus group respondent puts it, 'there are no equal opportunities. Men are saying they have more power than a woman, authority more than a woman' (03.11.09, category 6.9). This is attributed to the fact that men often receive more education than a woman, which is again due to the fact that a woman, upon marriage, goes to her husband's clan, and hence her family 'lose out' on any education she might have (cf. chapter 2 and Dolan 2009:192). In one case, a female respondent, Sharon (28), said she was forced to marry young because her family needed the bride price to pay off her brother's school fees (10.12.09). Another respondent, Martha (17) says her father does not understand why girls needs education; 'he used to abuse me that 'girls, they read only men, they are useless even if they study'' (07.12.09, category 6.20). Thus, it is obvious that boys are prioritised before girls in matters of education, as Dolan (2009) also has demonstrated. This must be understood in a context where marrying off daughters is common; through investing in the bride price, a daughter becomes a potential financial drain for her parents in

the long run; however, she can also be exchanged for money when finances are tight. Thus, an Acholi girl has a financial value, she is a 'commodity for sale' (Turner 2009:1), which naturally differentiates her from boys. Although not many respondents mention this as distressing, several girls and women say that if they could choose, they would choose to be born a boy, as boys stay with their family upon marriage, instead of having to leave their family behind to live with their husband's clan.

Others again attribute Acholi women's subordination to men's fear of giving them authority or letting them participate in public matters: 'Some men think that if a woman goes for political campaigning or knows more than him, they will leave their husbands. Men don't want women to participate' (Female focus group participant, 03.11.09, category 6.21). A male focus group participant also says that men 'think that if women go out to participate in something, she has gone to find another man' (04.11.09, category 6.21).

It thus becomes apparent that many men fear what women may do if they are given more power. Perhaps men prevent women from attaining more power and threatening their own power in society through their attitudes that they are superior to women? As a boy participant said during a focus group discussion, 'men tend to say women don't have much strength to do other things, so they are discouraged, women are being discouraged by their husbands that they cannot perform better things' (19.11.09, category 6.24). In any case, men's 'fear' of what women may do when empowered does, to an extent, paint a picture of a woman who is regarded as potentially strong, even 'stronger' than her husband as she may do things the husband no longer has control over – for instance, leave him, if she participates in too many activities outside the household.

Thus, scholars like Dolan (2009) can be criticised for their failure to disregard Acholi men's appraisal of women's positive contributions to the household and social sphere – both the implicit appraisals of women for their potential strength and determinism, as above, and the more explicit ones. Most men mention the importance of women 'digging', for example. Indeed, as Boserup (1970) asserted, women in sub-Saharan Africa have a vital role to play in the agricultural economy (cf. chapter 3.3.1, category 6.16), and chapter 2 shows that in fact, more than 90 percent of women in IDP camps in Northern Uganda are 'employed' in agriculture (UBOS 2007).

In Acholi society, women traditionally 'dig', weed and harvest, and some respondents even mentioned operating 'petty businesses' as something women are supposed to do. Thus, Acholi women can be viewed as productive members of society, also in the public sphere, which resonates well with Women in Development (WID) advocates who place emphasis on women's empowerment through involvement in the economic sphere (cf. chapter 3). However, it is important to note the difficulties associated with agricultural work in the camps. As highlighted in chapter 2, the access to livelihoods in the camp has been highly limited. While people's land or 'gardens' were traditionally located in close vicinity to their huts, the distances from the camps to these gardens have been substantial (Dolan 2009:119). Nevertheless, as our respondents told us, the often insufficient food contributions of NGOs in the camps have forced many women – sometimes accompanied by their men – to leave the camps to do agricultural work in their home gardens for subsistence, or in the gardens of others for money or payment-in-kind. In the process of leaving the camps, women have risked abduction, rape, and other atrocities by LRA and UPDF soldiers, of which many of our rape survivors testify (cf. chapter 7).

The difficulties of tending to their gardens may be one reason why respondents highlight other tasks as equally important roles for women; respondents are generally in agreement that one of the most important roles of Acholi women is to produce children. Although Beauvoir (1949, cited in Tarrant 2006:171) views this in a negative light, motherhood is regarded as a positive attribute with spin-off effects in Acholi. Indeed, when asked about how women contribute to development in Acholi society, the vast majority of respondents said that women do this through the production of children, who in turn – when educated – can contribute more extensively in society. As more cultural value is accorded to boys obtaining education, it is primarily boys who are viewed as potential development agents, especially in areas outside the household, but the view communicated by our respondents is that the roles of women in producing children are elevated and highly important in Acholi society. Indeed, as Ntata and Biruk (2009:10) found from East Africa, motherhood, family and its accompanying status is highly important to women such as the Acholi. This legitimises the critique by African feminism of Western gender experts such as Beauvoir, that the latter place too little emphasis on the importance of motherhood in their analyses of African women's role in society (cf. chapter 3.6). The importance of motherhood in Acholi society does, therefore, to some extent discredit Mead's opinion that men's work is always considered more important than women's work (cf. chapter 3.1.1). Nevertheless, Mead's suggestion also applies to our data, as our interviewees gave the impression that more status is accorded in Acholi to participating in the public sphere, which men do, and that higher value accrues from performing traditional ceremonies, resolving disputes, protecting the family etc. than working in the domestic sphere with cooking, cleaning etc. Many Acholi men that we spoke to argue, for example, that men cannot cook; it is the 'work of women' (James 30, 11.12.09, category 6.12). It is therefore important to bear in mind that while women's reproductive work is considered especially important in Acholi society, men's work has traditionally been valued to a higher degree.

6.1.2 Power

According to Giddens (2009:610), who cites Connell (1987, 2001, 2005), *power* 'operates through social relations such as authority, violence and ideology in institutions, the state, the military and domestic life'. The dynamics of power between the sexes – especially that upheld by violence – will be studied in more detail in chapter 7. However, some aspects of male-female authority are briefly looked into in this chapter.

As mentioned, Boserup's (1970) emphasis on productivity can be related to the Acholi context. However, it is important to bear in mind the criticisms WID advocates have met for neglecting other social arenas where women may face discrimination (Razavi & Miller 1995:6). Through looking at power relations between men and women, especially in relation to decision-making power in the household sphere, Acholi women appear inferior to men in many ways.

According to James (33) and Dennis (32), one of the key responsibilities of an Acholi woman is to respect her husband and follow the rules which have been decided by her husband (11.12.09; 09.12.09, category 6.18). Judith Adokorach Elsie, SGBV Project Manager in the Gulu office of the organisation CARE, reinforces this when stating that 'men are to make the decisions and the woman is to receive the decisions and implement it' (24.11.09, categories 6.7 & 6.18). Elsie further argues that men and women in Acholi society are not equal, as the society is deeply patriarchal and women are subordinate to their decision-making men. The

Acholi man Rocky, SGBV Prevention Manager in the American Refugee Committee (ARC), takes it even further when saying that culturally:

> 'Men are way above women. Men are in charge, they're in control of everything. They are the ones who marry the women, so women in a way become their property. They are the ones who can have as many wives as they can, the woman can't have many husbands. […] [Men] are the ones who are the heads of the families, they are the ones who are in charge, they are the first in everything. So even our culture literally translated, it's the men's law, it's the men's rules' (20.11.09, category 6.7).

An Acholi woman bears the brunt of these 'men's rules', and the fact that only men can own land is frequently mentioned by community respondents as a factor that made it more attractive to be a man than a woman. Interestingly, both male and female respondents express their feelings that men have more authority and power than a woman. As John (77) puts it:

> 'For the women they are supposed to stay in the husband's home voicelessly. After marriage the woman is supposed to follow the husband's rules, like for example if I say 'wash my trousers', she must do it, 'come and we go to the garden', and she must go. So, they were just to follow' (11.12.09, category 6.18).

These quotes resonate well with El-Bushra and Sahl's (2005:16) comments in chapter 2 that a traditional Acholi woman was meant to be humble, submissive and accepting of 'the position life bestowed on her'. This attitude is justified by the fact that women, upon marriage, are usually paid for through the bride price, and thus become their husband's property (UNFPA 20.11.09), to be dealt with according to the desires of its owner.

However, it is important to note that such quotes about 'submission' by El-Bushra and Sahl (2005), as well as quotes about 'traditional' gender relations such as that put forth by John (77) above, paint a picture of an incredibly passive Acholi woman with no agency who can do nothing else but to passively accept her fate as the subordinate Other. As explored in chapter 3, this criticism can also be extended to many Western feminists, who have long been guilty of portraying African women as vulnerable victims of all-powerful men, with no agency whatsoever (Oyewùmí 2003b:34).

This is problematic, however, as our data show a number of examples where women exercise active agency within the limitations imposed upon them. Agency can be defined as 'an actor's ability to make meaningful choices; that is, the actor is able to envisage options and make a choice' (Alsop & Heinsohn 2005:8). If adhering to Foucaultian theories that power is 'intimately connected with every aspect of social life' (Charles 2002:12), one can assume that resistance to power is possible even on the domestic arena (cf. chapter 3.1.3). Indeed, rather than merely seeing women as victims of power structures, they can, like many Gender and Development scholars see them, be described as 'agents who can be empowered to improve their position in society' (Connelly et al. 2000, cited in Beetham & Demetriades 2007:202) (cf. chapter 3.3.2).

A further study of 'cathexis' or the 'dynamics within personal relationships, including marriage, sexuality and childrearing' (Giddens 2009:610) can help shed further light on this issue.

6.1.3 Cathexis

In our literature review, we saw that an Acholi woman is traditionally not allowed to refuse sex in marriage (LIGI and GDNGOF 2007:13). This was confirmed by many of our respondents. As Walter, an Assistant Counselling Coordinator of The Aids Support Organisation (TASO) in Gulu, puts it:

> 'Culturally in Acholi, a woman, it actually begins right from coming together. It is the man who what, who suggests marriage. It's not the woman who suggests for marriage. You as a woman have to wait till the man comes for you in marriage. And that one continues in marriage sexual issues. So you wait [for sex] from a man. So ideally women are at the receiving end, you receive what comes. If it is not, you also keep quiet' (30.11.09, category 6.18).

If seen through the lenses of Beauvoir, this would clearly amount to the objectification of women by men, characterised by non-reciprocity (Tarrant 2006:172); the woman solely 'receives' sex when, where and how the man wants to (UNICEF 2005:15). This can be linked to the dominant stereotype of women as the 'passive recipients of penetrative male pleasure; sex that is not penetrative does not count as 'real' sex' (Tamale 2007:19). As a result, Acholi women's sexuality is often reduced solely to their ability to reproduce and to perform their mothering role (Tamale 2007:19) (cf. chapters 3.1.1 and 2.4.2). This reproductive role is again controlled by men through their 'monopoly' on deciding when sex should be performed, and whether or not the woman should use contraceptives (cf. chapter 2). The issue of forced sex will be explored in greater detail in chapter 7.2.

Indeed, many of our respondents, some of whom were forced into marriage at a young age, argue that their husbands do not allow them to use family planning (e.g. Ruth 47, 10.12.09). According to Moses (48), who himself has 28 children and is an authority on Acholi culture by virtue of his position as clan leader, 'a traditional man in Acholi is supposed to have as many children as possible. 28 kids is even little'. When asked why a man is traditionally supposed to have so many children, he answers: 'It was for protection, for security reasons. Those children help me in case of any bad thing' (category 6.1.1). With regard to family planning, Moses says:

> 'Those days when we were at home, when we were in our original home, there was no need for family planning. A woman was supposed to have very many children, because you a man are supposed to look after them, there are cows, there are goats, you have plenty of gardens, there is a lot of food. So a woman was supposed to have lots of kids' (01.12.09, category 6.2).

Thus, a man was theoretically not supposed to have more children than he could provide for. Nevertheless, even in the IDP camps where resources are few and provision is difficult, several respondents, both male and female, mention that men have been averse to their wives using family planning because of their wish to have a lot of children. Moreover, according to Mollie Fair in the UNFPA (20.11.09, category 6.1.1), 'many men think if their wives are using family planning, it means they are being unfaithful'. Thus, through withholding consent to use family planning, men are in effect controlling women's bodies. The one type of family planning that men can control, condom use, was not mentioned as an option by any respondents; perhaps because, as traditional leader Michael (54) puts it when questioned about this: 'The condom is not the best, even traditionally. We want that closeness to exist

between a man and a woman. The condom will not create that strong bond, so it is not good' (02.12.09, category 6.1.1). Family planning in a displacement context is further explored in chapter 6.2.2 below.

As explored in chapter 3, radical feminists such as Firestone (1971, cited in Giddens 2009:617) argue that in patriarchal societies where women's sexuality and bodies are appropriated by men, the only way to liberate women is through abolishing the power relations inherent in the family, by abolishing the family institution completely. Interestingly, however, the narrations of displaced women indicate that Acholi women themselves actively exercise their agency within the frames within which they are obliged to operate. During a focus group discussion for women, when women were asked if (and if so, how) gender relations have changed following displacement, participants mentioned men's idleness, drinking habits and many men's tendency to leave their wives and go to another woman as their wives cannot provide good food for them any longer. This is discussed further in section 6.2.1. Following this discussion, one participant said that women 'shouldn't be arrogant to their men. They should try ways of talking to them like children; so that they come back home and they develop their home together'. This was followed by a statement of another woman: 'Give the man water for bathing […] because that is the only way that the man can come and then they look after the children [Laughter from group]. You can even buy alcohol if the man drinks a lot, buy the drink and bring the drink at home and tell him 'you take it from home' instead of drinking in groups' (19.11.09, category 6.26).

Thus, it is obvious that women are concerned with finding ways to keep their husbands home, in order to prevent him from seeing other women and to make him assist her with the household chores. Here, the home or the family institution emerges as an important arena, and by abolishing it, one might be taking away women's primary arena of power; we would therefore criticise Firestone for being reductionist and not seeing the ways in which women can make the most of their important roles in the household. Moreover, by referring to men as 'children', as the first respondent does, it is clear that the female respondent elevates herself and other Acholi women over men, which shows that she refuses to be made passive through culture and tradition. Indeed, although she acknowledges that men have the formal power when stating that women should not be arrogant to their men, she cleverly operates within this framework instead of stepping out of it and leaving herself vulnerable. Thus, it is important to consider the strong, active agency of Acholi women, which exemplifies the 'resilience of women as subjects', as Tripathy (2010:117) states, instead of portraying African women as solely weak and vulnerable, which is a criticism frequently levelled at Western feminists and gender experts within the GAD paradigm (cf. chapter 3.6).

Perspectives from Ntata and Biruk's (2009) work on gender research in Malawi are particularly relevant here. Ntata and Biruk argue that although they were predisposed to thinking men made the decisions in Malawian households, their research confirmed that women consider themselves to be the decision-makers, while pretending that their husbands in fact are. According to Ntata and Biruk (2009:10), their women respondents said about men: 'They think they [make the decisions]. To avoid conflict, you need to do things in a way where they think they have the power, where they think they have made the decision'. This leads the authors to conclude that 'rural women's understated ability to mediate gender imbalance might be more successful than notions of open confrontation, challenge, and revolution' (Ntata & Biruk 2009:10).

Indeed, this seems to hold true also in the Acholi context. Feminist perspectives that argue that the whole family institution must be abolished (Firestone 1971, cited in Giddens 2009:617) or that things must be revolutionised in order for women to assume agency, are therefore challenged further. The active agency of Acholi women in negotiating their own daily lives and even taking control on the sexual arena, is further clear from the narrations of Elsie in CARE and Walter in TASO. Elsie (24.11.09) narrates from her discussion with a group of cultural leaders in the Gulu/Amuru region, who told her they usually know if their wife wants sex. Although several of our respondents confirm that a woman cannot verbally say that she wants to have sex as this would indicate promiscuity and possibly extra-marital affairs, a woman is free to use non-verbal communication to signalise her sexual desire. According to the men with whom Elsie spoke, 'they can read their women if they want sex'. A typical way of signalising that a woman wants sex, particularly in a non-polygamous household, can be through 'distraction':

> 'Like in the night if you hear your wife waking you up and saying 'go and check for something, there seems to be something wrong with either the animals or the chickens', then you know that she is directly waking you out of sleep to maybe have sex with you.' (Elsie, CARE 24.11.09, category 6.26).

Walter from TASO (30.11.09, category 6.26) gives another example when saying that:

> 'If the woman wants [sex], […] the behaviour begins from when the man comes from work or wherever. Nice talking of course, preparing nice food, the woman is the first to go to bed. That is what can indicate, that she goes first, properly dressed, ready to, and when you come and join, those kind of behaviours, she begins touching and all that. Those kinds of behaviours. It is non-verbal.'

Thus, it is obvious that many Acholi women negotiate and exercise their agency within the limitations imposed upon them by their culture. If power or agency has been taken away from them, they reclaim some of this agency through proposing sex to their husbands, albeit in implicit and non-verbal ways. It is therefore problematic to unilaterally portray an image of a submissive, passive Acholi wife, without considering the many ways of resisting established standards of power that takes place in the day-to-day life both inside and outside the IDP camps.

6.2   Effects of Displacement on Gender Relations

The above analysis has attempted to portray people's perceptions of what gender roles and relations were like before displacement. However, it is difficult to say whether or not these are 'truthful' representations of gender relations before displacement. One cannot ignore the likelihood that respondents are unwittingly affected by the lived realities of gender relations in the camp, and that those who have spent most of their lives in the camp simply may not know or remember what gender roles and relations were like before the camp. Others may tend to romanticise the pre-war days through their responses, as they think back to more peaceful times, when everything was 'better' than they may find it today. It is therefore important to avoid essentialising life before the camp versus life during or after the camp, as several factors may affect our respondents' narrations. It is also dangerous to portray gender relations as static, or as solely affected by displacement, for according to Connell (cited in Giddens 2009:610), gender relations are never fixed or static; rather, they are the outcome of

an ongoing process and can therefore be changed or challenged constantly. Thus, while displacement may have contributed to accelerating the change or challenge of gender relations, one cannot necessarily attribute all changes in gender relations to displacement.
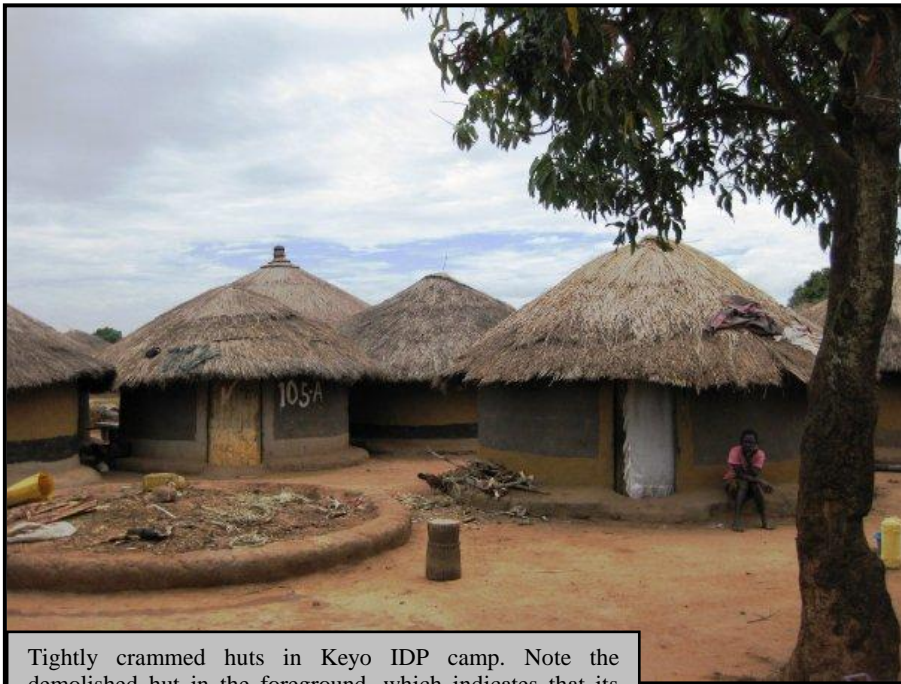
Tightly crammed huts in Keyo IDP camp. Note the demolished hut in the foreground, which indicates that its inhabitants have gone home and been resettled.

Nevertheless, this section examines the perceptions of IDP men, women and NGO professionals on how gender roles and relations have changed since displacement, as put forth by themselves. The reader should bear in mind that although these accounts are constructed by respondents in different ways, inputs from respondents bring us closer to the lived reality of gender relations as affected by changes in everyday life, the most significant of these being displacement and the massive changes this has entailed for IDPs in the region. Through first exploring how displacement has affected women and men more specifically, this section thereafter goes on to describe how these changes have affected the relations between the genders.

6.2.1 Consequence for Women: More Work

Our data suggests that the most commonly mentioned consequences of displacement for women have been two-fold. Firstly, respondents (especially women) argue that women have generally taken on even more work or responsibilities than before. Secondly, women have been empowered to take more control over their own lives and bodies as a result of NGO efforts in the camps. Both these are explored in closer detail below.

Respondents are usually in agreement that women in the camp work even more than they used to traditionally. Many relate this to their experiences that men started drinking in the camp, neglecting their traditional duties. Indeed, this was brought up in every focus group discussion we arranged. According to a female focus group participant, 'women in the camp worked a lot more than in the village. Women could go to the garden, they dig, pick firewood, they look for food to eat, they come back to cook while the man remains in the camp drinking the whole day' (19.11.09, category 6.22). During another focus group session, a woman said:

> 'Because of the camp, men tend to neglect women. They leave women and children at home. The woman feels she should dig to get something for the children to eat. But those days, the women's work was to weed, harvest, and clear the garden after ploughing' (03.11.09, category 6.16 & 6.31).

This is far from the ideal expressed earlier by Moses from 'those days', when a man through his many animals could provide for his family and there was plenty of food. Jane (45) goes even further in describing how she feels women have taken on additional roles that were traditionally performed by men: 'Men could have done their own kind of job, but you find these days the work men are supposed to do, women are now doing it. Those days, there was division of labour, but these days, it's the women who do everything' (26.11.09, category 6.27).

Interestingly, according to our interpreters, the terms 'those days' and 'these days' were frequently used by respondents to distinguish between the time period before and during displacement. Thus, it appears that respondents think of their lives as consisting of two different periods; that which took place before displacement, when people were settled in their original villages, and that during displacement, when people were settled in 'protected villages'. As explored in chapter 2.3.1, 'the 'protected villages' violated all major categories of rights' (Dolan 2009:151) and have been described as 'universally grim' and 'appalling' (Allen 2006:53).

Although it may be tempting to generalise and argue that all women took on more work during displacement, John (77) contributes to nuancing the picture through his statements and life-long experience. While he argues that women who had not attended school or had a formal job had more work after displacement, he also says that 'for those [women] who have studied and are working, they don't do a lot of work' (11.12.09, category 6.1.1). Thus, John, an authority on Acholi culture by virtue of his age, introduces 'class' and education level into the picture too. It is therefore too simplistic to say that all women have more work than men, for as he argues, women who have some education do not necessarily do a lot of work. One can therefore criticise the fact that 'the assumed universal subordination of women ignores ways in which social location is also based on race, ethnicity, class, and color' (Ntata & Biruk 2009:12), as Race/Ethnicity/Imperialism feminists argue (cf. chapter 3.1.2).

However, as explored in chapter 2, village women who have been forced to live in IDP camps generally have a much lower level of education than women living in town centres; only 3.9 percent of women in IDP camps have completed primary school, as opposed to 10.4 percent in Kampala (UBOS 2007:25). This is probably a result of the fact that formal and informal education was virtually non-existent outside district capitals during the heights of the war (cf. Dolan 2009:197). Thus, although there are exceptions as pinpointed by John (77), most women in IDP camps lack education and have experienced higher work loads following displacement. Interestingly, while the above mentioned women had a generally negative attitude towards working more than they did before, men saw this in a positive light: 'Those days men tended to work a lot, building houses. But these days, women participate more than men in building the house. They thatch the house better than men. Nowadays, a woman can build too' (Male focus group participant, 04.11.09, category 6.27). Although the other focus group respondents did not comment on this particular assertion, they generally talk in positive terms about women now performing some of men's roles, like thatching a house, building etc. It is, however, looked upon as strange if men perform women's roles, such as cooking. As another participant in the same focus group discussion said, 'these days men cook and women cook. Even fetching water. Men even fetch water and cook, what if their mother sees them? [Laughter from group]'. The collective laughter in this setting indicates some embarrassment related to men taking up women's work. Many male respondents such as traditional leader Francis (02.12.09) also stress that 'men also cook if the wife is not there, but only then', again suggesting the embarrassment associated with men taking on women's roles in the presence

of their wives. A woman who adopts men's work such as thatching the house is, however, regarded in a positive fashion, although no mention is made about whether or not this is done in the husband's presence. What is striking is that women's building skills are exalted above men's in the above quotation, which is interesting in light of literature explored in chapter 2.4.4 that suggests that the Acholi man is expected to be 'stronger, more capable [than women], knowledgeable and skilled'' (Dolan 2009:194). The above statement would seem to confirm the view of Rocky in ARC that, following displacement, 'the way men view women has changed' (20.11.09, category 6.26). This will be explored in greater detail below.

However, it appears from the above statements that women have taken on more diverse and income generating roles than they did in the village. As seen in chapter 2, El-Bushra and Sahl (2005:22) argue that as women in the displacement camps have become breadwinners, they have also become economically empowered, become more visible in public life, and gained status in society. Thus, 'they are no longer inclined to accept their previous subordinate status' and they no longer conform to 'Acholi ideals of submissive womanhood'. Manyeh in UNICEF (17.11.09, category 6.26) supports this view when saying:

> 'War and displacement really strengthens women and gender roles, whether the men like it or not, they are changing. Because […] most of the women in the camps have lost their husbands, they are stuck with six, eight, five mouths to feed, the safety nets, you know, for the extended family system is eroded, they are also equally overburdened. So you as a woman alone have nobody to look up to, […] you have to strive to survive and be able to take care of your children best. So the women, through that process, become more and more empowered.'

This is interesting, as it indicates that women's position has improved since displacement. This may have had severe consequences for gender relations, as the making of masculine and feminine identities in Acholi society rely on difference being created between men and women (Dolan 2009:194), as chapter 2.4 points out. As women start taking on the roles of men and are able to take control over their lives to a greater extent, thus becoming less dependent on men, the whole patriarchal system – which relies on women depending on men (Charles 2002:8) – may be challenged. Thus, the gender balance is upset and women's vulnerability to violence from men – which Charles (2002:8) argues contributes to upholding the patriarchy – increases, as women are separated from their traditional support bases, including their husbands or families (El-Bushra & Sahl 2005:28). As Sikoska and Solomon (1999:6) put it:

> 'The consequences of conflict have been contradictory, offering opportunities for rupturing patriarchy through women's self-awareness, empowerment and emancipation, while at the same time, reinforcing patriarchy through greater subordination of women' (cf. chapter 4.6.2).

Women's vulnerability increases further as they have been unable to live up to all roles expected of them; instead of always cooking or providing food for their husband and children like they would traditionally, camp life has engendered a dependence on external aid. Consequently, 'men have tended to neglect their women, they go to these women who can give them good food and then they leave you, just because for you, you have failed to provide him the good food. So he leaves you and goes to that woman' (Woman focus group participant, 19.11.09, category 7.32). Thus, structural changes have contributed to hindering women from upholding their positions. This may indicate that transactional sex has increased,

a factor that will, together with women's increased vulnerability to other forms of SGBV, be explored further in chapter 7.

6.2.2   Consequence for Women: Empowerment

According to respondents, displacement has not only made women take on more roles in society; it has also contributed to empowering women through NGO sensitisation on issues such as women's rights. A participant in our focus group discussion for men (04.11.09, category 6.26) states that 'gender balance, the introduction of gender balance and the rights of women, made women to become more active'. Interestingly, this was said during participants' discussion of how women have become rude to their husbands following displacement, so the respondent did not seem to see women's empowerment in a positive fashion (cf. section 6.3.1). As explored in chapter 2.6.2, NGOs working in displacement camps have introduced rights-based terminology to the Acholi, which has disproportionately prioritised women's rights over men's (Dolan 2009:203). Indeed, as El-Bushra (2000:56) argues, and as explored in chapter 3, 'gender work' is in practice still seen as pertaining to women primarily. However, many of the NGO professionals we interviewed saw this in a positive light. According to Rocky in the ARC (20.11.09, category 6.26):

> 'There were many interventions by many actors and a lot of campaigns towards human rights awareness, and while I see now there was pain living in the camps, there was a lot of information and a lot of creation of awareness. And I can say that people are very empowered, they look at things very differently today.'

The higher empowerment of women is evident through our respondent's narratives of how women have started taking control over their own bodies and sexuality. According to rape survivor Ruth (47), for example, displacement has been beneficial in terms of increasing her awareness on her rights:

> 'I have gotten education on forced sex, that these days even if your husband whom you have married forces you to sex, you have the right to show him to court. But those days I could not do it, because the government and women's emancipation was not so common' (10.12.09, category 6.26).

Indeed, although in practice there are still significant barriers to taking your husband to court, at least women like Ruth now know about their different alternatives; they have gained a vocabulary and can thus communicate new knowledge in and about their lives.

A male focus group participant also says that 'those days it [forced sex] used to happen. But now, women have been educated and know their rights. So these days when you [the husband] rape a woman she will definitely go and tell'. Another participant in the same focus group session says; 'if you beat a woman, she will run and report it [uncertain to whom] just because they are given equal rights' (04.11.09, category 6.26). These quotations are interesting, as they would seem to challenge the literature in chapter 4.7 where ULRC (2000) and UBOS (2007) highlight the under-reporting of SGBV as a significant problem. Nevertheless, this discrepancy between the literature and narratives of respondents may merely suggest that sources like ULRC (2000) and UBOS (2007) are already somewhat outdated, considering the rapid change that has taken place in Northern Uganda since stability started returning to the region in 2007. Indeed, the above quotations seem to indicate that

women now take control over their own circumstances to a greater extent than before, and that many have been empowered – through sensitisation – to turn their victimhood into agency. Community sensitisation, through various channels such as drama groups and sports for prevention, methods mentioned by Walter in TASO (30.11.09), can therefore be instrumental in preventing SGBV, which will be further explored in chapter 8.

Further information given by male respondents also highlights how women may to a greater extent have taken control of their own bodies and sexuality following displacement. According to a male focus group participant, 'those days, the women didn't put on a bra and blouses. In the camp women started dressing up in a modern way, and do their hair' (04.11.09, category 6.42). This is striking, as it may be a sign of women falling prey to male objectification of female bodies; through objectifying themselves further, they contribute to upholding the very structures underlying their subordination. Nevertheless, the above quotation might also indicate that some women are claiming agency of their own body and sexuality through taking concrete measures (such as putting on bras and doing their hair) to entice and predate on men, all the time exercising sexual power. Another male focus group participant (04.11.09) seems to confirm that women are claiming control over their own body:

> 'Before the camp there wasn't drinking among women, but in the camp, they drink and leave their children at home during the day. When you, the husband, goes to stop her, she will turn to you in a rude way. These days there are very many disco halls, women tend to go to disco halls to dance, but yet in those days in the village this did not happen. The camp has increased the rate of HIV/AIDS' (category 6.32).

Thus, this respondent links women's going to disco halls with disrespect for the husband and, ultimately, with promiscuity, as respondents seem to unanimously associate discos and bars with prostitution (cf. chapter 7.2). This could indicate that women have liberated themselves from their husbands to some extent, which is likely to inspire some resistance, especially as women neglect their child rearing duties as suggested above. However, through taking control over their own bodies by deciding what to wear and where to go, Acholi women may further be presented as actively exercising agency within the structural framework (male superiority over women) and physical framework (the boundaries of the camp) that restricts them.

This is also evident from women's attitudes to family planning, which have apparently been altered following the contributions of NGOs on the matter. As Mollie Fair in the UNFPA (20.11.09) argues, although family planning was traditionally regarded with apprehension, particularly among men, many women will use the hormonal injection *Depo-Provera* as a means of spacing children without the husband's knowledge. According to Ruth (47),

> 'I am one of the traditional birth attendants, so I have been getting some education on child spacing. I was using the injector plant for three months. I have been using it illegally, without the awareness of my husband, and even up to now I am still using it. My husband would not accept if I was to tell him, because he wants many children, and yet we cannot afford taking care of more. I get it from the health centre, free of charge' (category 6.26).

This shows how Ruth takes control over her own body and exercises agency within the social framework in which she is obliged to operate, suggesting that she may have been empowered in the camp. Indeed, 'a woman's ability to control her fertility and the contraceptive model she chooses are likely to be affected by her status, self-image, and sense of empowerment', as

UBOS (2007:258) puts it (cf. chapter 2.4.2). Ruth's husband does not know about her contraception use, yet she avoids trouble by not explicitly resisting the traditional framework that upholds a man's right to control his wife's body and reproduction. It is important to note that it may be easier for Ruth, at an age of 47, to hide her use of birth control from her husband, than it may be for younger, more fertile women, whose husbands may react angrily when she stops conceiving. Furthermore, Ruth is more likely to be informed about family planning than other women who have not received the same education as she has, as a traditional birth attendant. Thus, the ability of women to exercise agency regarding birth control is likely to depend to some extent on the woman's age, fertility and education level (formal or informal), suggesting that it is important not to homogenise women as a category, as REI and African feminists argue (cf. chapter 3).

Similarly, it is important not to essentialise all men's rejection of family planning, as many male respondents saw the link between having many children and being poor (cf. chapter 2.4.2) and many argued that family planning was good 'these days'. According to Moses (48), who is quoted above stating the traditional view that an Acholi man should have many children for protection, 'these days, family planning is good, because we lack a lot of things'. Francis (54), a traditional leader, also argues that 'family planning is good because if you don't space it will lead to malnutrition, big headed, big stomach etc. It also brings death because if you don't space, you give birth, then again shortly after you have conceived again' (02.12.09, category 6.38). It is uncertain to what extent Moses and Francis are influential in shaping public opinion by virtue of their roles as traditional leaders. Although traditional leaders used to have a lot of authority before the war, displacement may have accorded more authority to Local Council leaders, for example, as shown below. However, what they say above might indicate that attitudes are changing in Acholi society, that community sensitisation has had positive benefits on women's possibility to use family planning, and that women are therefore more empowered than they were before the camp stage.

6.2.3   Consequence for Men: Emasculation

The empowerment of women must, however, be seen in relation to their male counterparts, as gendered effects of displacement do not occur in a vacuum. Before exploring the impact of women's empowerment on gender relations, however, it is useful to study the consequences of displacement for men.

The above Table 6.1 sums up the traditional roles of men in Acholi society. Ranging from building a house to educating children in traditional ways, paying school fees, making decisions and protecting the family, these seem to confirm Dolan's (2002; 2009) suggestion that the hegemonic model of masculinity in Acholi society consists of marriage, provision and protection (cf. chapter 2). Even though marriage was not mentioned by our respondents as a typical expectation towards men, it seemed to be frequently taken for granted by respondents that a man was married when we asked about the traditional roles of Acholi men.

Dolan's model of the Acholi hegemonic masculinity resounds well with Connell's suggestion that hegemonic masculinity is an 'ideal form of masculinity' and entails 'marriage, authority, paid work, strength and physical toughness' (Giddens 2009:611), as explored in chapter 3.2. *Emphasised femininity* can also be related to the Acholi context, as it complements hegemonic masculinity and is 'oriented to accommodating the interests and desires of men and is characterized by compliance, nurturance and empathy' (Connell, cited in Giddens 2009:611), features traditionally associated with Acholi women. As seen above, Acholi women who to a greater extent take control over their own bodies are not complying with their men in the same way as they might have used to or been expected to; as a male focus group participant said, 'when you, the husband, goes to stop her [from going to the disco], she will turn to you in a rude way.' This statement was followed by general agreement in the focus group; another

Keyo IDP camp. Following displacement it became highly challenging for men to maintain their traditional roles as providers and protectors of the family.

participant followed up by saying that women's empowerment has made women 'leave their husbands'. Thus, one might argue that as the ideals of emphasised femininity are to some extent challenged in the Acholi context, it becomes more difficult to uphold the traditional model of hegemonic masculinity too, as the latter is dependent on men having authority over women and women accepting this system.

With regard to masculinity, some male respondents argued that men could still live up to the role of providers in the protected villages. A boy focus group participant (19.11.09) said, for example, that 'in the village, both sexes collected food. In the camp, only men did, as they could meet rebels on the way and had the strength of escaping, while women didn't' (category 6.39). Nevertheless, the majority of respondents painted a picture of a grim situation in which masculinity had become more difficult to achieve and the social structure was gradually eroded. Marriage, for example, declined; according to Walter in TASO (30.11.09):

> 'Because of war people complained there is no money for marriage. And yet they want women. So even the level of marriage has gone down, the official cultural marriage has gone down, because people are in the camp, there is no money, although people are also producing like that, without a clear relationship. So it has affected us in our culture, it has affected us in way of HIV, poverty level and all that' (category 6.30).

With regard to labour, men lost many of their traditional roles. As a male focus group participant (04.11.09) put it, 'men stopped digging when they reached the camp. In the camp,

men don't go to hunt, they don't dig or plant because of distances, lack of money of hiring land, and so on' (category 6.33). Our research assistants confirmed this, arguing that displacement had made it much more difficult to hunt or to engage in the agricultural economy, as people no longer owned land and it was dangerous to leave the displacement camps to go hunting or tend to gardens in the village. Moreover, as a consequence of women taking over many of the traditional roles performed by men, and the provision of food being channelled through women by NGOs (Fair, UNFPA 20.11.09), men also lost their roles as providers. Many also argued that men lost the opportunity to perform their traditional roles in the camp, especially those relating to informally educating their children in traditional ways. According to Michael (54), a traditional leader:

> 'Nowadays things have changed, but if it were those days, I would make the fireplace where I would gather my children and tell them folk stories and things like that. That was a traditional Acholi and happened before people moved into the IDP camps. After people came to the camp and going back, that practice is still not there, but I hope it will come back' (02.12.09, category 6.42).

A female focus group participant (03.11.09) also argues that 'traditional ceremonies are being forgotten, men no longer perform that. Culture is diverting' (category 6.42). This gives credit to Dolan's (2009:198) argument that men lost the ability to perform masculinity through informal education, as the household hearth became difficult, if not impossible, to maintain in tightly crammed IDP camps (cf. chapter 2.5.1). Robert Merton's (cited in Giddens 2009:23f) theories of latent and manifest functions are applicable here; although the 'manifest' or socially obvious function of rituals such as gathering children around the household hearth may be to transmit tribal values to new generations, the 'latent functions' of such activities, of which participants are unaware, may be to promote the cohesion of the Acholi society. Such functionalist theory may also be drawn upon through French sociologist Emile Durkheim's (cited in Coser 1977:129f) suggestion that participation in rituals is likely to draw participants together through common activities. When these rituals are lacking, it could be argued that the community also lacks commonalities or the 'glue' that bind them together; hence increasing the potential for structural disintegration and frustration. The above quotations also indicate that structural collapse or change has given way to major social difficulties, as Durkheim was concerned with shedding light on (Giddens 2009:15); displacement and its accompanying breakdown of social structures have significantly challenged traditional Acholi culture and gender relations. The impact of such massive social change on the individual is assessed further below.

For those men who traditionally had the most authority in village settings, traditional leaders, the loss of authority in the camp has been especially significant. Traditional leader Francis (54) explains that in the camp, authority was delegated to camp leaders, whom women reported to. According to him, when women reported to camp leaders that they had been beaten by their husbands and camp leaders started punishing men for beating women, women became 'bigheaded' (02.12.09). As Francis argues, 'in the camp we [traditional leaders] were voiceless, because women could just rush to the camp leader' (category 6.44). This would seem to confirm El-Bushra and Sahl's (2005:19f) suggestion, examined in chapter 2.5.1, that as the traditional clan system was eroded, there was a 'massive breakdown of social relationships' which also saw men losing some of their traditional authority.

As a consequence of losing power and authority on so many fronts, and as a consequence of women 'taking up those responsibilities that would have actually been done by a man, of

taking care of the family, and providing for the family' (Elsie, CARE 24.11.09, category 6.27), many men became incredibly frustrated, losing self esteem and self respect (Fair, UNFPA 20.11.09). According to Fair (UNFPA 20.11.09) and several respondents, this culminated in alcohol abuse. Elsie in CARE (24.11.09) argues that men's frustration, redundancy and dependence on outside aid led to alcohol consumption, as 'one of the ways to cope is to drink and try to forget'. Indeed, as Dolan (2009:191) argues, explored in chapter 2.5.3, men's lack of self esteem led to them becoming violent towards themselves – through alcohol abuse and suicide – and towards women. Some men also divorced their wives as a consequence of feeling powerless to provide for their children at home. According to a girl focus group participant (09.11.09), men 'used to look for women who have no children, and they used to go to them, that is why they were bringing very many women. They feared responsibility at home, so they went to other women who didn't have children, especially those who worked in the bar' (category 7.32). As women working in bars are locally believed to be prostitutes, this may suggest that transactional sex has increased, which will be explored in chapter 7.

As a consequence of men's failure to provide for their families, some women have also divorced their husbands, as El-Bushra and Sahl (2005:20) suggest (cf. chapter 2.5.1). As a male focus group participant (04.11.09, category 6.37) puts it, 'you are eating unfried food. Why don't you look for a man who can give you better food?' Thus, men have lost authority and power on so many fronts, which seems to have been worsened by many women's possible contribution to upholding the traditional model of masculinity. This has been done through women not altering their perceptions of what an ideal man is; instead, some seem to have sought other men who can perform to the expected standard of masculinity – particularly the aspect of provision – when their own husbands fall short of these expectations. However, although it is important to acknowledge that the individual motivations for women leaving their husbands may vary and sometimes be about mere survival, it contributes to upholding the hegemonic model of masculinity on the structural level.

A female focus group participant (19.11.09) illustrates well how many men seem to have lost their motivation to perform traditional roles and take care of themselves in the camps:

> 'Many bars are in the camp, so today you tell him that I don't want to see you in that bar. Today you find him here, tomorrow on the other side. [Laughter from group] Those days when they were still at home, the man wakes up in the morning and sweeps the compound, when it reaches evening he goes and gathers firewood to make the fireplace, then time for sleeping you all go to bed, you sleep, you wake up in the morning and the man would do the same thing. But in the camp, nothing like that happened, the man would not even hold a broom to sweep the house. Instead in the morning the man just goes to drink. And even sometimes the man can even sleep for two days without bathing; they became dirty from the camp' (category 6.33).

This indicates that the camp set-up is inadequate, which further underlines the appalling conditions that many report from the IDP camps in Northern Uganda (Allen 2006; Dolan 2009). Overall, displacement appears to have been a crisis for many men, as 'defining what it means to be a man in this context of internal displacement was very difficult' (Elsie, CARE 24.11.09, category 6.34). This crisis was made worse due to the widening gap between representation and reality, or men's reduced ability to be masculine amid the hegemonic model of masculinity taking on more significance as 'anchors and points of leverage in the

midst of economic, social and political disorientation created by war' (Dolan 2009:197ff) (cf. chapter 2.5.1).

Indeed, due to displacement, it seems that some aspects of SGBV can be related to men's frustration of not living up to the increasingly important hegemonic model of masculinity, as Dolan (2009) has pinpointed. Overall, one may argue that this model of hegemonic masculinity is particularly narrow, which becomes evident during displacement when the means to get married (cows, bride wealth etc.) are absent, provision becomes difficult as residents are completely dependent on NGOs for food, and protection is taken over by government soldiers (cf. Dolan 2009:199ff). This leaves few, if any, traditional masculine roles for the Acholi man to perform, especially as the traditional hegemonic model takes on so much significance in the midst of the chaos the war brought. Georg Simmel's (1950, cited in Giddens 2009:210) theories on urbanisation are particularly relevant here, as the movement into tightly crammed IDP camps may be somewhat similar to the movement into cities that Simmel claims have led to widespread feelings of loneliness. As Giddens (2009:210) puts it, referring to Simmel: 'city people are not by nature indifferent to others or uncaring. Rather, they are forced to adopt such modes of behaviour in order to preserve their social distance and individual selves in the face of pressures from the densely populated urban environment'. In line with this argument, IDP men may feel compelled to resort to SGBV in order to preserve their own identity as men. However, Simmel's theory may not be fully applicable to the Acholi context, as it is premised upon the movement of individualists into modern, capitalist cities, which the collectivist, poverty-stricken IDP camps certainly are not. His theories are, however, interesting insofar as they provide another explanation for how structural change can impact upon the individual, and of how 'social interactions can be shaped by pressures arising from the wider social environment' (Giddens 2009:211).

One must, however, be critical towards the suggestion that displacement and the accompanying disempowerment of men is the sole reason why many men are unable to live up to the hegemonic model of masculinity, and it is important not to over-idealise the performance of masculinity outside displacement camps. Even in times of peace and outside the camps, many men are unable to meet society's expectations towards them as providers. Generally, redundancy or the lack of structure in everyday life are well-known troublemakers in terms of depression, frustration and loneliness – which, coupled with the use of alcohol – can escalate and cause 'anomie', a condition of relative normlessness in society (Durkheim, cited in Coser 1977:132f). As argued above, it is therefore important not to attribute all changes in gender relations to displacement, although displacement may have made more men unable to live up to the hegemonic ideal of masculinity, and therefore caused high amounts of frustration and 'anomie', expressed for example through alcohol abuse and SGBV. However, in the same way that it is vital not to homogenise women as a category, it is also crucial to avoid portraying all men as villains or victims of structural change. As El-Bushra and Sahl (2005:20) argue, some Acholi men proactively use the conditions of displacement to find alternative livelihood strategies, which suggests that not all men in the camps have been emasculated (cf. chapter 2.6.2).

Overall, it may be important for organisations working with SGBV to explore ways in which the traditional Acholi framework of masculinity can be extended to encompass more men. As Connell (cited in Giddens 2009:611) has pinpointed, it is crucial to be open to more femininities and masculinities which are in opposition to the established ideals. By being open to alternative ways of performing gender and letting men behave differently in social settings without their

masculinity being challenged, the apathy and frustration that leads to sexual violence towards women may be prevented to some extent. This is further explored in chapter 8.

6.3   *Consequences for Gender Relations*

When having examined the consequences of displacement for both women and men in Acholi society, it is useful to draw these findings together in order to investigate how gender relations have been affected by displacement. Women's empowerment, men's loss of roles as providers and failure to live up to the hegemonic model of masculinity has had significant consequences for gender relations. These effects include women's loss of respect towards men, as well as increased rates of SGBV, which are both explored below in headings that 'sum up' categories formed on the basis of respondents' statements (cf. appendix 3).

6.3.1   Women Losing Respect for Men

According to many respondents, several women starting losing respect for their husbands and men in general as a consequence of displacement. This can be attributed to many men's failure to provide for their families, as well as to women's empowerment. As a female focus group participant (03.11.09) put it, 'laziness has increased for men in the camp. For others, it's their nature that prevents them from wanting to dig' (category 6.31). Again, the 'nature' argument is introduced; men are like that, and they simply cannot change. Another focus group participant (19.11.09) said: 'you cannot stop [men from selling your food], if you try to, they will beat you. Men are liars' (category 6.31). Implicitly, these citations indicate that the women concerned have a negative view of men in the camp. Clan leader Moses (48) argues that men's lack of ability to provide food led to disrespect during displacement: 'When we were home, we had plenty of food to eat, and I had no problems with my wives' (category 6.28). This is a classic example of how life before displacement often appears romanticised. Moses continues:

> 'But when we reached the camp, there was no alternative; I had no way of looking for food. So one of my wives left and went to her parents' home and stayed there, blaming me that there is nothing to eat. I had no alternative, because there was nothing I could do. Later, the woman returned. When NRC and others started distributing food, that is when she came back' (01.12.09, category 6.37).

Thus, although perhaps unintentional, NRC and others NGOs are important co-actors in the private life of the household, and can therefore be critiqued for this, as Dolan (2009) has espoused in his argument that NGOs have contributed to upholding the 'social torture' of the Acholi population. Other respondents emphasise that although food was distributed by NGOs through women, men often stole this food to pay off their alcohol debts (James, 30, 11.12.09; UNICEF 17.11.09). Whether this may have been done partly to prevent women or external actors from taking over men's roles as providers, is not known. However, in effect, this led to women disrespecting their husbands, as the above quotations indicate. It is also implicitly evident from the contrasting views of some respondents that men and women have taken on a more antagonistic relationship towards one another in the camp. In the following citations, alcohol consumption is emphasised as something both genders resorted to in the camp, but while Ruth (47) presents this as an impediment to men performing their traditional roles, John

(77) highlights the failures of women, as did a male focus group participant (04.11.09) (cf. 6.2.1.2). According to Ruth (47), both men and women drank a lot in the camp;

> '[The men] could just take off in the morning and drink all day in the bars. […] The men were redundant and they did not have time to go to the garden. Even if women were drunkards at least they would first struggle, like in the morning they go and fetch firewood, they go and work in somebody's garden, and sometimes they will be paid in kind, through beans etc. and sometimes they are given cash. So, they would first come back and cook, and if they are free that is when they would go to the bar drinking' (10.12.09, categories 6.33 & 6.27).

John (77), however, disagrees, arguing that drinking made women neglect their domestic duties while men performed theirs. John is an interesting example in this respect, as he and his wives have already moved away from the camp and resettled in their village; he therefore compares the camp situation ('those days') to 'these days' when he is at home:

> 'The women used to drink a lot in the camp, but these days at least they are settled, they are doing domestic work. These days at least they are planting good crops, and they are even rearing goats from the villages, some are even taking care of cattle at home. Unlike those days where women used to come when they are drunk, they don't cook, a man will come knowing that my wife has cooked, to his surprise he comes and finds that they are all going to sleep without food. At least for the men they used to drink, but at least they used to drink knowing that their wives are at home cooking food. But for the women, some of them were not coming to cook food for them.
> The women drank because they were not weeding, they were not going to the garden, so they were only depending on the government's food, while men were to some extent restricted by the law that said that at least you must have shelter and a latrine. So, men used to concentrate digging the pit latrines, constructing the shelters and other things which are needed in the family' (11.12.09, categories 6.36 & 6.37).

These are interesting accounts, as they present contradictory versions of the 'truth' – Ruth (47) argues that although both genders were drunkards, women were at least able to provide for their families; John (77), on the other hand, argues that both genders drank but at least the men did not neglect their duties, as did women. While it cannot be ascertained and it is not necessarily important whose account is more 'true', their way of talking does indicate some antagonism on the part of both genders towards each other. It is clear that disrespect has largely been a feature of displacement. While the above respondents attribute this to alcohol use, which was sometimes a result of male disempowerment, idleness and redundancy, others attribute the lack of respect to women's empowerment.

Indeed, while female respondents and NGO professionals generally consider women's empowerment a positive consequence of displacement, many men are highly critical of this due to its impact on gender relations and the loss of respect many women had for their husbands. According to a boy focus group participant (19.11.09, category 6.41),

> 'They have been sensitising in the camp that women have rights, about women's emancipation, which has made women big-headed so they could drink and no one could stop them. The sensitisation has gone too far, because they were told that women have rights, they can do whatever they want and no one can stop them.'

32-year old Dennis (09.12.09) also argues that the government's sensitisation that 'women can do whatever they want' (category 6.41) has made women disrespectful as they now disobey their husbands, a view which was confirmed by women, too:

> 'The introduction of women's emancipation has really made some women not to respect their husbands, husbands also complain because when they try to talk to the women the women don't listen to them. […] Women's rights are good, but some women over exercise it' (female focus group participant, 19.11.09, category 6.32).

Thus, it becomes obvious that the contributions of NGOs to displaced men and women are looked upon with some apprehension; 'men blame women's empowerment in a bad sense on NGOs' (Marie Manyeh, UNICEF 17.11.09, category 6.41). This can be linked to Ntata and Biruk's (2009) findings from Malawi where gender is perceived as a foreign concept and something imposed externally, and Oyewumí's (2003b:34) suggestion that in Africa gender is often seen as something Western and therefore irrelevant to the culture concerned (cf. chapter 3.6).

As our respondent in War Child Holland (05.12.09) states, the Acholi word for 'rights' means authority. In a context where NGOs and the government have advocated women's rights, this has been taken to mean that external actors are advocating for women's authority, which has been misinterpreted by many men. In a setting where the population is generally suspicious of external actors waging 'war on the Acholi' whether through external aid or protected villages, a process which Dolan (2009) calls 'social torture' (cf. chapter 2), the empowerment of women may be viewed as another means for the external world to continue their war on the Acholi people. Thus, it becomes important for organisations working with projects related to preventing SGBV to consider local cultural meanings of the terms and phrases they use. Indeed, if NGOs continue to build up their programmes on terminology such as women's 'rights' (which is translated to mean 'authority'), there is a danger that the Acholi people may perceive projects employing these terminologies as essentially Western, which consequently is likely to diminish Acholi ownership and hence reduce effectiveness. It is also important to take a perspective that considers the effects of sensitisation on both women and men, instead of focusing solely on women (cf. chapters 3 and 8).

Indeed, it is crucial to note that projects promoting women's rights are not perceived as solely bad in the Acholi community. However, several precautions must be taken so as not to make projects promoting women's empowerment yet another factor contributing to male disempowerment. As Dennis (32) puts it,

> 'Women's rights it is not bad, but it should also be given where they cannot be rude to their husbands, because there are some women who cannot take for their husbands water for bathing. If you are like, for example, coming from your work, you could ask 'where is the food?' or 'take for me water'. She could start asking 'what have you done for me?' or 'what have you taken to our home?' So if you start talking to her, she will say 'it is my right, it is my right' (09.12.09, category 6.41).

Thus, the importance of culture and gender sensitive prevention efforts emerge. As Elsie in CARE (24.11.09) put it, a lot of NGO programmes that have targeted women have, in effect, disempowered the men as NGOs, including CARE, were 'trying to put a shift in power, but not preparing the men how they can cope with this changing context' (category 6.41). It is

therefore essential to consider the perspective of men as well in prevention efforts, which will be explored in greater detail in chapter 8.

6.3.2   Men Reasserting Themselves as Men Through SGBV

As seen above, and as argued by several scholars in our literature review (Dolan 2009; Kaylango, cited in Lende 2009; El-Bushra and Sahl 2005; Gilbert 2006), the disempowerment of men through displacement has led many to reassert themselves as men through sexual violence.

Indeed, Fair in the UNFPA (20.11.09) and Elsie in CARE (24.11.09), for example, argue that there is a link between frustration on the part of men and sexual violence towards women. As explored in chapter 2, 'fear of ridicule, of being seen as 'less than a man', lies behind much of the violence men inflict on strangers or their wives' (Foreman 1999, cited in Dolan 2009:205). Indeed, as Dolan (2009) and Kalyango (cited in Lende 2010:42) argue, Acholi men reassert themselves as men through domestic violence. This has occurred during times of low food security, as explored above, when men violently take the family's food from women and sell it for alcohol (Woman focus group participant, 19.11.09). It has also occurred as a reaction to women taken on the roles of men; according to a woman focus group participant (03.11.09, category 6.31), 'men are very arrogant and they are rude. If you are a woman and tend to be also like him, he ends up beating you. So women tend to fear them.' Aaron (22) also relates the high rate of domestic violence in the camp to the breakdown of social structures; as women denied their husbands sex as a result of rumours and gossiping between neighbours that the husband was having another wife, the husband retaliates through violence (08.12.09).

As seen earlier, the disproportionate focus of NGOs on women has also led to increasing cases of sexual violence towards women (Kalyango, cited in Lende 2010) as men are cut off from their power bases and reclaim their masculinity through restricting women's freedom of movement or violating them sexually. Thus, there seems to be a 'clear correlation between financial assistance directed solely towards women, and the prevalence of gender-based violence in Northern Uganda' [our translation] (Kalyango, cited in Lende 2010:42).

The explanations attributed to SGBV will be further explored in chapter 7. This chapter has shed light on our first research question; what perceptions IDP men and women, as well as NGO professionals, have on the impact of displacement on gender relations. In a context of altered gender relations where 'women appear to have gained and men to have lost' (El-Bushra & Sahl 2005:22), where women have been empowered and many men have lost their traditional roles as provider and protector of their families, it becomes easier for men to resort to SGBV to reassert their masculinity. The next chapter examines rape, forced sex and transactional sex in more detail, according to the narratives of respondents, in an attempt to shed further light on SGBV from an endogenous perspective.

Chapter 7: Perceptions and Narratives on Rape, Forced Sex between Intimate Partners and Transactional Sex

When studying SGBV it is of great importance to examine men and women's perceptions of the phenomenon. In this chapter we address our second research question (chapter 1.3) on how IDPs in Gulu and Amuru districts talk about rape, forced sex between intimate partners and transactional sex, as well as their lived experiences of SGBV. The chapter is divided into three main sections; firstly, rape by non-intimate partners is examined; secondly, we discuss forced sex between intimate partners, and finally, we enquire into the issue of transactional sex.

7.1 Rape

As discussed in chapter 4.3.3, it is highly challenging to estimate the extent of rape in Northern Uganda due to the difficulty of obtaining reliable data. Nevertheless, studies such as the one conducted by UNICEF (2005) in Pabbo IDP camp indicate that rape has been common in the region, especially during the peak of the conflict. This section explores women and men's perceptions of rape by non-intimate partners such as soldiers, relatives and community members, and begins by looking into how perpetrators of rape are perceived, as well as what causes respondents attribute to rape. Thereafter, perceptions of rape survivors are examined, and finally one rape narrative is discussed in detail; the story of Susan (18) who was raped by two UPDF soldiers. Again, our presentation uses thematic categories derived from respondents' statements (cf. appendix 3). For purposes of presentation, some of our data have been visualised through diagrams.

7.1.1 The Perpetrator

Respondents commonly mention soldiers as perpetrators of rape, which is also highlighted in the literature; Dolan (2009:146) states, for example, that there are 'innumerable accounts of rape by soldiers' (cf. chapter 4.4.2). Although LRA rebels have also been guilty of rape, our literature review and data indicate that UPDF soldiers have represented the greatest threat to female IDPs with regard to sexual violence by strangers, as they have been staying in large numbers near the IDP camps. As Moses (48) states; 'it was very common. It was just because of the soldiers, it was the soldiers who used to do that. Those were the mobile soldiers; they used to take long without meeting women' (01.12.09, category 7.7). Thus, Moses is of the opinion that the rate of rape by soldiers has decreased in recent years, which is in line with the observations of Hentonnen et al. (2008:126).

We interviewed altogether 11 rape survivors, some of whom were raped several times by non-intimate partners. Our data therefore identifies 16 instances of this category of rape occurring, committed by 18 different perpetrators. As the figure below shows, 14 out of these 18 perpetrators were soldiers of some kind. The issue of soldiers raping women and girls is discussed further in chapter 7.1.4.

Figure 7.1 Category of Perpetrator in 16 Rapes with 18 Offenders
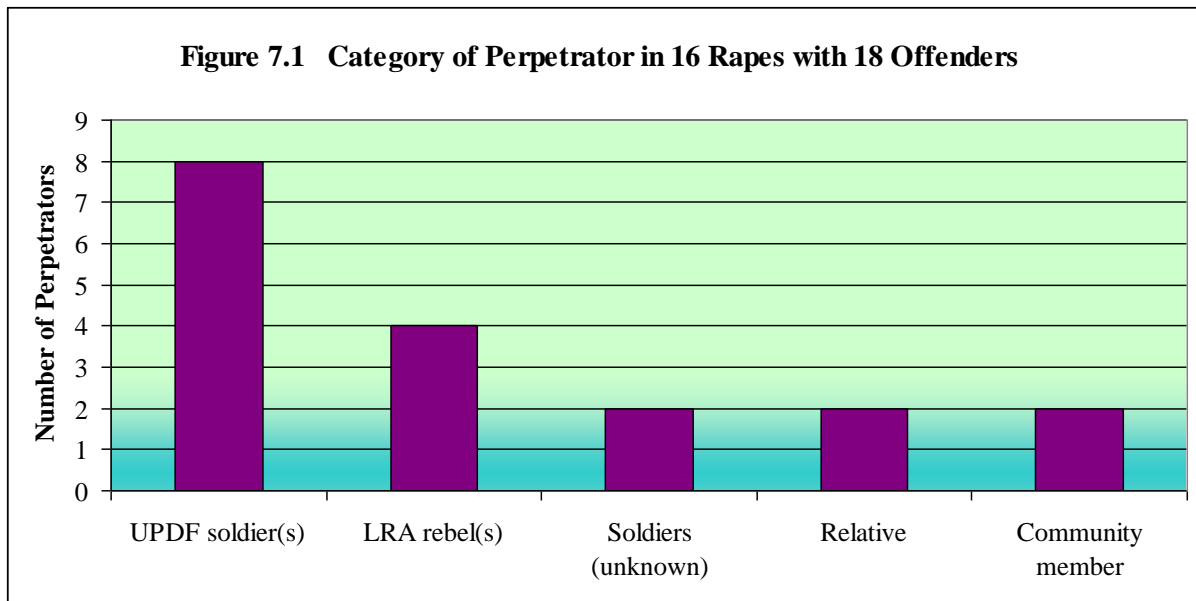
From the accounts of respondents it is clear, however, that not only soldiers are to blame for these offences. Several respondents claim that some men in the IDP camps rape women because they seek sexual gratification and find the dating process too demanding. Francis (54) states for example that; '[rape] can happen because […] you have said love words to a woman then she might not be willing to accept it, while you, you still admire her. And then you rape her' (02.12.09, category 7.2). This is considered to be more rampant in the congested IDP camps where people from different clans stay together, according to some respondents. Paul (50) argues that 'people are packed in one place. Getting the person you really love is easier in the camp. If you con the person and the person refuses, you rape. There are more people around in the camp with different characters and different backgrounds' (04.11.09, category 7.2). That a woman has been 'eating a man's money', but failed to have sex with the man, is also commonly referred to as a cause of rape among respondents, as argued by a participant in our focus group discussion with boys; 'when she has eaten your money […], and the girl does not want […], the only solution is to rape her' (19.11.09, category 7.2). Thus, it appears that when a man buys a woman food or material things, the woman is expected to have sex with him in return; as one participant in our focus group for boys states, 'the idea of give me and I give you. Like something for something, nothing for nothing' (19.11.09, category 7.36). This suggests that it may in some cases be challenging to clearly distinguish between transactional sexual relationships and romantic relationships. Indeed as Thomas (2007:54), argues, it is important to avoid 'the analytical pitfalls of branding all sexual relations that involve the exchange of material things as prostitution' in an African context (cf. chapter 3.5.2). The issue of transactional sex is explored further below.

The perpetrator's desire for sexual satisfaction is hence highlighted by a number of respondents as a cause of rape, but as stated in chapter 4.4, the 'underlying purpose [of rape] is frequently the expression of power and dominance over the person assaulted' and rape may also be used as a punishment for women who have broken social or moral codes (WHO 2002:149). This is particularly so in a setting of displacement such as Northern Uganda, where camp life has made many men feel redundant and powerless (Dolan 2009:206), as argued earlier. Thus, both individual and social factors may be drivers of sexual violence. As seen in chapter 6.3.2, the fear of being perceived as 'less than a man' is an underlying cause of male violence towards women, according to Foreman (1999, cited in Dolan 2009:205),

suggesting that the rape of women and girls committed by male IDPs may be directly linked to the emasculation of men in the camps. If a woman is raped after 'eating a man's money', the act may serve as punishment for breaking social codes. John (77) expresses the view of several respondents when stating; 'they [men] first give money to the women, then after the women have eaten their money, these women are nowhere to be seen. So, the moment they come across the women they have to rape' (11.12.09, category 7.2). Rape in such a context may also be an expression of power on the part of the perpetrator in the sense that by raping the woman, he is not losing face in the community, which is communicated by both old and young male respondents. As stated by John (77), for example, 'people would be saying that 'at last he has succeeded and raped her'' (11.12.09, category 7.2). This may be related to the sexual objectification of women in patriarchal societies, which is emphasised by Beauvoir and other feminists (cf. chapter 3.1.1). In its most extreme form, this entails that women's main role in society is to please men, and when a woman refuses to do so, the man may punish or force her. Radical feminists see male violence towards women as a way of maintaining patriarchy, as noted in chapter 6 – violence is thus viewed as an important part of the systematic oppression of women (Giddens 2009:617).

Several male respondents talk about perpetrators of rape mainly in a descriptive and 'Othering' way, without mentioning normative aspects. John (77), for example, states that 'there are […] men who are drunkards, they feel sexually high, so the moment they are drunk, they rush into women' (11.12.09, category 7.2). John brings up the issue of alcohol, which is frequently referred to as a driver of SGBV among respondents. Although important, the significance of alcohol abuse must be scrutinised in relation to other factors, such as redundancy and emasculation. As discussed in chapter 6, alcohol abuse has emerged as a coping mechanism for redundant men in the camps (Dolan 2009:206), and during our focus group session with men it was argued that alcohol abuse is closely linked to the rape of children under the age of 18, known as 'defilement'. One focus group participant stated that: 'the drunkards [...] they will never have time to go and date a woman, so the only way to get a woman is to get a young child. Long duration without meeting a woman, he feels he should go for the nearest child, because deceiving children is easier than old women' (04.11.09, category 7.6). The hassle of dating women is once again highlighted; men who do not bother engaging in the dating game resort to raping women and girls because they find it easier, especially drunk men, according to several respondents. In one focus group session with women, a participant categorically said that 'if one could stop the drinking of alcohol in the whole of Uganda, one could also stop rape' (19.11.09, category 8.3). Although this may be seen as an over-simplification of reality, it must be acknowledged that the high rate of alcohol abuse is likely to have contributed to increasing rates of rape in and around the IDP camps.

Furthermore, when talking about perpetrators of rape, many respondents claim that men who are HIV positive tend to rape women and children. As Dennis (32) puts it:

> 'Others, beside sexual satisfaction, are HIV positive and they want to spread it. Some are of the saying that 'even if I die, at least I have to […] spread it to others'. Not because they're angry, but after testing they become frustrated and stranded, so they just think of spreading it to other people. And others also want to spoil somebody's future, like […] the daughter of the relative' (09.12.09, categories 7.7 & 7.9).

A large number of respondents emphasise this issue, as well as several NGO professionals. Traditional healers in Gulu also attribute the increasing HIV rate to 'infected people deliberately setting out to infect others' (Dolan 2009:180). Thus, the wish to spread HIV may

be one motivation for rape, but due to the complexity involved it is extremely difficult to ascertain to what degree this is a leading cause, or merely one factor among others. The issue of people purposely spreading HIV is discussed further in chapter 7.3 about transactional sex.

As far as punishing the perpetrator is concerned, most respondents argue that rape cases should be reported either to the LCs or to the police. However, reporting is unfortunately often not enough as the offender still remains unpunished in many cases, as shown in the figure below.

Figure 7.2   Form of Punishment for 18 Perpetrators of Rape
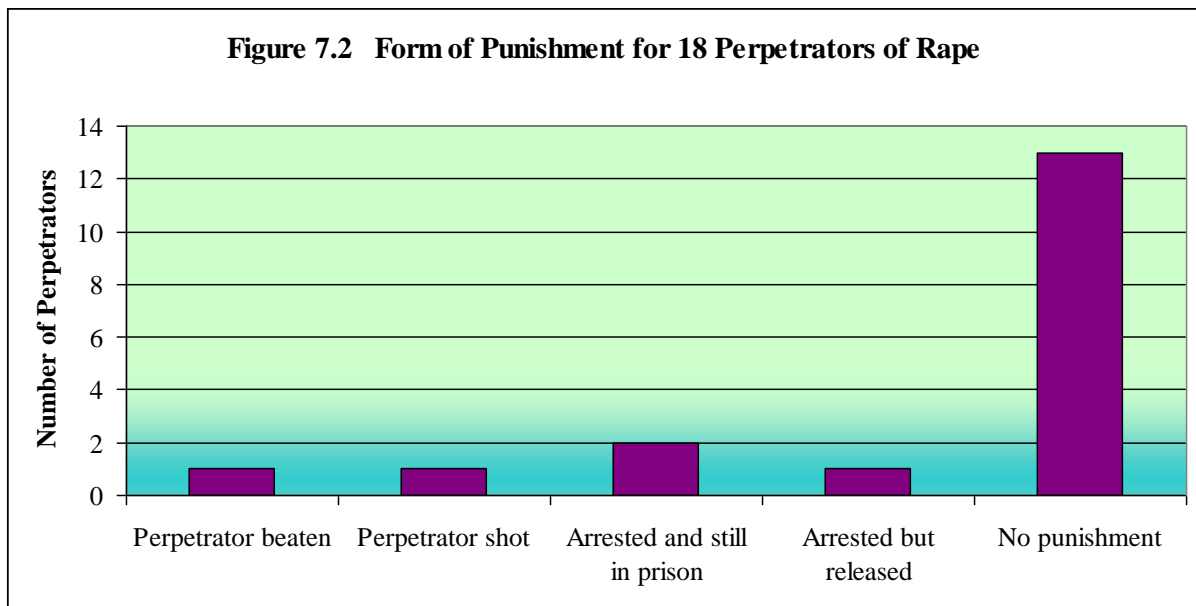
To summarise, when talking about perpetrators of rape, respondents often refer to the following as reasons why men rape: sexual starvation, difficulties with regard to dating women, punishment for women 'eating men's money', alcohol abuse and a wish to spread HIV. Many see the congested IDP camps as exacerbating the situation because people from many clans stay together. Back home in the villages, people mostly stayed with their own clan, and as argued by Paul (50); 'how can you go and rape a girl of your own relatives?' (04.11.09, category 7.2). Although this might appear to be a contrasting view from that expressed by Dennis (32) above, it is not necessarily so as Dennis and Paul are talking about defilement in two different contexts. While Dennis talks about it in relation to HIV positive men who are considered to be so incessant on spreading HIV that they would even consider raping a relative's daughter, Paul discusses the issue in relation to the tightly crammed, mixed clan IDP camps. Thus, knowledge of context emerges as vital for understanding and interpreting respondents' statements.

As discussed in chapter 2.4, sexual relationships between people of the same clan are considered incest in the Acholi context. Thus, as Paul's statement above indicates, it is viewed as 'easier' to rape a woman from another clan, although camp life and displacement have also led to an increase in incest cases, as found in our literature review (cf. chapter 2.4) and affirmed by Gender Officer Christine Akumu Okot in the Local Government in Gulu (09.12.09).

7.1.2   The Rape Survivor

There are various opinions among respondents regarding the role of the survivor during an act of rape. In the most extreme cases, the notion of rape is rejected entirely. These attitudes are, however, solely communicated by male respondents. During our focus group session with men, the issue of rape sparked a heated debate among the participants. One elderly man stood up and declared, while gesticulating intensely, that:

> 'There is no rape, if the woman has accepted, there's nothing like rape. Because when you try to rape a woman, if the man is ready, if you pull his private parts, the man will fall down and becomes useless. But if you accept the man to go in, then definitely that is not rape. I don't believe that someone could rape a woman' (04.11.09, category 7.8).

As we do not understand Luo, it was difficult to ascertain whether or not the other respondents were in agreement with this, but the collective laughter that followed this man's statement may indicate that he was showing off in front of the others. Furthermore, his intense gesticulation, which purported an expression of anger, may have discouraged dissent by other participants. However, one participant proposed a modest differing opinion stating that 'if it was a soldier [raping], I would just know it was forced, but if it was an ordinary person, I would know that the woman accepted, she consented to the man' (04.11.09, category 7.8). Interestingly, such extreme opinions as the one above that denies the existence of rape completely, were expressed to a lesser degree in our individual interviews with men as compared to our focus group sessions. The reasons for this may be twofold. Firstly, the presence of friends and acquaintances may offer a higher degree of support since a focus group session is more akin to the natural interaction that takes place in the collectivist culture of the Acholi, compared to an interview session where only two foreign researchers and an interpreter are present. Secondly, as seen above, some may wish to show off in front of the other participants by expressing extreme opinions.

The above quotations are in line with statements from the IASC (2005:4; cf. chapter 4.2), which argues that many societies blame the survivors of sexual violence. Whereas only a few male respondents reject the idea of rape completely, a great number of men place emphasis on whether or not the survivor made an alarm during the act. As Michael (54) states:

> 'Men usually perceive that the woman wanted, it was her fault that she was raped. You should have resisted the rape. If you didn't want to be raped, why didn't you make an alarm, so you allowed people to come for your rescue? […] The woman is also to blame, because she did not resist it, she did not cause alarm, or she did not even run away from the rapist. Both are to blame' (02.12.09, category 7.8).

22-year-old Aaron believes that women who are raped inside the IDP camps can make an alarm and acquire help if they want to, hence for these women the rape is somehow engaged in voluntarily. For women who are raped outside the camps it is however more difficult to make an alarm, and Aaron thinks that in these cases the women are not to blame. He also adds that when 'rapists […] come with things like a panga [machete], it is always hard to make alarm, because they will say 'the moment you shout, I am going to kill you'. Then that one I can term it as not the woman's intention' (08.12.09, category 7.8).

Thus, women who are raped are often considered by men to have engaged in the act voluntarily, or they are accused of encouraging sexual violence through their behaviour. As stated by the Uganda Law Reform Commission (ULRC) (2000:16), 'sexual offences are viewed as issues involving the morality of the victim rather than acts of violence against the victim' (cf. chapter 4.7). Connell's theory on the gender order, as discussed in chapters 3.2 and 6.1, may prove valuable when seeking to explore why such perceptions are dominant. Violence is a key component of what Connell (cited in Giddens 2009:609) terms the *power* realm in society, one of three spheres constituting the gender order. As noted above, the expression of power and dominance frequently underlie causes of rape, and as argued by radical feminists, male violence towards women is 'central to male supremacy' (Giddens 2009:617). Although we are critical towards the patriarchal essentialism promoted by radical feminists, we recognise that male violence towards women may indeed be a means for men to uphold their domination over women and a way for them to express their superiority. This is again closely linked to the objectification of women, whereby women are considered sexual objects for men. The fact that several respondents argue that 'provocative dressing' is a cause of rape supports this notion, as it implies that the woman wanted it herself since she was dressing 'seductively'. Both male and female respondents put emphasis on women's dressing style. A participant in our focus group session for school girls sums up the view of many when stating that 'indecent dressing can […] attract men to rape you' (09.11.09, category 7.2), and Dennis (32) states that:

> 'It depends on the woman's style of dressing, and how she has been living in the community […]. To those who dress decently, like long skirts, they can be respected in the community, and they say 'this is a responsible woman'. But for those who put like a long slit skirt, short skirts […] and small tops...' (09.12.09, category 7.8).

Thus, Dennis believes that a woman's morality can be determined by her dressing style. However, he stresses that although a woman dresses 'indecently', men should 'give respect, they should not be tempted to go and rape her'. The notion that 'indecent dressing' is taken to mean that a woman wants to be raped may imply that there is a strong wish among Acholi men to control women's sexuality, e.g. through clothing; men are to decide what women should wear and what is 'decent' and not. It is our impression that comparably strict dress codes do not apply to men. Blaming the survivor for encouraging the act through indecent dressing may thus be viewed as a strong expression of male dominance, since much of the guilt is transferred from the male offender to the female survivor, giving the impression that 'it was justifiable for the victim to get raped' (ULRC 2000:L,16; cf. chapter 4.7).

Apart from possibly being blamed for the rape, the rape survivor also often experiences stigmatisation in the community. As Francis (54) puts it; 'the women are stigmatised and they are isolated. The moment they are in the public among men they are always looked down on. [Men] do not want to marry them. If someone who has been raped talks in public, they do not even pay much attention to [her]' (02.12.09, category 7.8). Young rape survivors may also experience disapproval from their parents. As stated by one of the participants in our focus group discussion for girls; '[A rape survivor's] parents will tend to say you are now used to this, even if they continue paying you [in school], there is nothing developmental you are going to do' (09.11.09, category 7.10). One reason why rape survivors are stigmatised may be the perception that they engaged in it voluntarily, hence they may in fact experience similar stigmatisation to women involved in transactional sex. Francis (54), for example, states that 'we term them prostitutes […]. The drunkard women invite the men to rape them' (02.12.09, category 7.8). This may in turn be related to prostitution theory (cf. chapter 3.5), which

highlights the inherent contradiction in patriarchal societies; men seek to 'ensure promiscuity for themselves, but chastity for women' (Jolin 1994:70). In light of the rape survivor being equally blamed for the offence in many cases, she may also be accused of being promiscuous, particularly if she was 'indecently dressed' and drinking alcohol, which in turn may lower her chances of finding a husband, as stated by Francis. Thus, the stigmatisation of rape survivors may be directly linked to the promiscuity/chastity contradiction in many male-dominated societies. Interestingly, respondents seem to accord little difference with regard to how much the rape survivor is to blame for the act; the morality of young, middle-aged and old rape survivors alike appears to be equally questioned. However, for women considered to be 'indecently dressed' and 'drunkards' there seems to be an even higher degree of guilt attributed to the survivor, and for particularly young children the blame is often reduced, as seen below.

In line with the above discussion, there are dissimilar views among male respondents regarding how they would react if their wife was raped and whether or not they would leave her. One male focus group participant states that: 'If someone sleeps with my wife, I will feel disgusted with the woman. I don't believe that a woman can be raped, even though the man is strong' (04.11.09, category 7.11). Not all respondents are as categorical as this man, however; many put emphasis on whether or not their wife is infected with HIV as a result of the rape. As Dennis (32) puts it: 'I would first pick […] the wife and take her to the hospital for tests […]. If I find that she is HIV positive, I would divorce her. If not, we would come back and stay together' (09.12.09, categories 7.9 & 7.11). Michael (54) is of the opinion that if his wife is raped by an HIV positive man, it would mean that she was forced due to the rapist's desire to spread the virus, but if the rapist does not have HIV he would blame the wife, because as he states; 'I would think it was my wife's fault if she was raped by a man who was not HIV positive […], because for us men, we fear to go and start negotiating to somebody's wife […]. So, it means there has been that courtship' (02.12.09, categories 7.9 & 7.11). As seen above, many male respondents also determine their wives' guilt according to whether or not she made an alarm before or during the act of rape. Some men also highlight that a woman is less to blame if she is raped by a soldier, as he might threaten her with a weapon. When talking about how they would react if their wife was raped, one male focus group participant said; 'if it was a soldier, I would just know it was forced, but if it was an ordinary person, I would know that the woman accepted, she consented to the man' (04.11.09, category 7.9).

However, as discussed in chapter 6, it is crucial to not solely victimise Acholi women, including female rape survivors. One should also consider the possibility that Acholi men actually perceive of Acholi women as strong and thus able to fight a potential rapist, and that rape survivors hence are believed to not sufficiently have resisted rape, an issue that was highlighted in the focus group discussion with men (04.11.09). Jane (45), who was raped by a UPDF soldier while six months pregnant, accentuates her own agency as an Acholi woman when stating that:

> 'That incidence couldn't have happened to me if I wasn't pregnant. Because I really resisted the man, we fought, to the extent that I even grabbed the gun and threw it away. So, later the man went and picked the gun, came and pointed with it at me, […] he really struggled to force me. But if I wasn't pregnant, this man couldn't have raped me' (26.11.09, category 7.1 & 7.4).

Jane's story is interesting as it may be a way of communicating to us as researchers, and possibly also to others in the community, that she was indeed raped; any doubt on the part of

the community dissipates as she emphasises her level of resistance and her pregnancy. Thus, she cleverly operates within the male discourse, defined by traditional leaders such as Michael (54), mentioned in section 7.1.2 for saying that rape survivors are to blame when they have not sufficiently resisted the rape. Thus, Jane portrays herself as a strong-willed agent, which suggests that it is important to have the agent/victim dichotomy in mind when studying the accounts of rape survivors. They frequently shift between viewing themselves as agents and victims as they narrate their story, an issue that will be explored further below.

To summarise, female rape survivors are in many situations equally blamed for the act as the male perpetrator, particularly by men. However, there are certain exceptions, particularly when it comes to the rape of young children. In these cases most respondents hold the male perpetrator responsible, and shift from talking about the offence of rape in a mainly descriptive manner to bringing in normative aspects. As Francis (54) states, expressing the view of many respondents, 'those who rape children, we term them witches' (02.12.09, category 7.6), a categorisation that has negative connotations and suggests that defilers are abnormal. Nevertheless, even a child who is raped by two soldiers may experience stigmatisation in the community, as demonstrated by Susan's story below.

7.1.3 Rape by Soldiers – The Story of Susan (18)

When enquiring into how IDPs in Gulu and Amuru talk about their lived experience of rape, it is valuable to include narratives of rape survivors. This allows for a more thorough analysis of how these women and girls perceive of themselves. As stated by Gibbs (2007:57), 'through narration people tell us what kind of person they think they are or would like us to think they are'. The victim/agent dichotomy is highly relevant in this regard, and will be explored throughout Susan's story. Interestingly, Susan shifts from portraying herself as a victim to portraying herself as an agent depending on the situation she describes. A conventional narrative structure consisting of a beginning, a middle and an end has been identified. This is Susan's story:

Beginning: 'I think I was 13 at the time, when it happened […]. I, my sister and my mother were on our way from weeding sim sim in the garden. We met the [two UPDF] soldiers on the way, at around 10 in the morning. We were residing in the camp, but we used to dig […] some distance outside the camp. So, we were on our way from the village, coming to the camp. The soldiers got us, asking us where we came from. We said; 'we are from the garden, weeding the sim sim'. The soldiers said 'let us go and get some chicken from that home', and pointed to a home. They told my mum to stay and wait a distance away while we looked for chicken. My sister, the soldiers and I reached that home where it was bushy and no one was there. They started levelling the area around that home, and pushed the standing grass down by stepping on it […]. They first told us to sit down, we sat down, and as they were laying the place, they said; 'you should all remove your clothes'. My sister started removing her clothes, while I just sat there. They picked me, they moved with me a few steps […]. As my sister was removing her clothes, one of them said to me; 'for you, you are still joking. Why are you delaying?' He started removing my clothes by himself, and he raped me. After that one had completed with me, the other one who was with my sister came to me. They exchanged, that one came to me, and the other one went to my sister, and we were raped again. Afterwards, one of them said in Kiswahili; 'you fire the gun', and the other one said; 'wait, wait!' One of them was saying 'we kill all of them', but the other one said; 'no, let's leave them'.

Middle: After we were raped, they again said 'let us go and get the chickens'. They started walking, they got my mum, started beating and kicking her, and they led her there, while for us, we went for the chickens. From there, we went in search for chicken, but we didn't get [any]. The soldiers disappeared at this point. Our mother was running and followed us […] as the soldiers were moving with us. She followed us to look for the chickens, but as she did so I could not even walk or move. But I was helped by my mother. I was carried by some man, a community member, who met us. He brought me on his bicycle to the detach, the barracks of the UPDF. The detach commander said that the men who had raped us were not his soldiers. When the commander denied, those

soldiers boarded from where they left us […], came to the centre, bought some alcohol and locked themselves inside. They were drinking. While we were reporting the case to the barracks, some of the community members were aware of what had happened. They reported to the commander, who again denied that those ones were his soldiers. From where they locked themselves, the commanders agreed that they should go and check for real whether the soldiers belonged to his detach. Where they locked themselves, the bar maid […] heard that the commanders were looking for the soldiers, and reported to the soldiers that someone was coming for them, to arrest them. Upon hearing this, the two soldiers opened the door and started firing their guns at those coming for them. One soldier fell down, the other one escaped. Only one was caught. The commander said that the soldier's salary should be deducted and given to me, so that I could be taken to surgery. I was bleeding and was injured so I could not walk. The soldier was beaten and forced to give 20.000 shillings to me, so I was taken to the clinic. When we came back, we found that the soldier and the whole detach had been transferred to Laloge, one of the sub-counties in Gulu district.

We were first taken to the police station, then afterwards to Human Rights Focus Uganda. The police gave a letter for us to go to their office, and they helped us get the case into court […]. We are appealing against UPDF and the case is still there in the police. The court ended in 2007, and we won the case. The court said the government should pay us. Because both of us are HIV positive, they said that the government should compensate 30.2 million shillings for my sister, and 50 million shillings for me, because I was younger and because my sister had had children before she was raped. We have not yet been given the money, and I am not sure that we will be given it. The hospital tested me, and found out that I was HIV positive.

[*At this point Susan needs a break and goes outside. She comes back shortly afterwards.*]

One of the soldiers who raped us was 40, and the other one 35 years old. One of them was a West Niler […], the other one was a Bantu. They spoke Kiswahili to us. I keep thinking I am going to die, that AIDS does not cure. Those are my thoughts all the time. After the incident, having tested and found out I was HIV positive, I left my studies. Some people were counselling me, advising me to go back to school and study, saying HIV is not the end of my life. That is why I went back to school in 2006 to Primary 6, and I repeated the class. Then I sat last year, but found that the grade was not good, so for me I was in third grade, then I had to rebound and sit this year, P7. So, I have just sat my primary level examinations. It was my own decision to drop out of school, because I thought that even though I study, it will be useless for me, because I will die.

TASO [The Aids Support Organisation] came to the camp, and they said my father and I should go to this. I went, and was counselled from there. It helped me and I made up my mind to go back to school, because my mind was upset and I couldn't think about the future. My mind was all the time in that experience that I had. TASO talked to me, advising me to go back to school, because there are many who are still living positively, studying. They even came with evidence, brought a girl who was in Senior 4, whom I talked to […], and even some boys […]. They said 'look at us, we are even [HIV] positive and still at school […]'.

I was only counselled about HIV/AIDS, they never touched upon the rape case. No one has helped me deal with this, because those days I would be isolated and only stay at one place. I was always confined in one place, I didn't move, I stayed alone. I decided to isolate myself as a result of the incident. I thought that if I was to be moving, people would talk about me and would be saying that 'she is going to die, look at that one, she is going to die'.

My sister was tested, but she said she was not going to take any tablets, she just said she wanted to die instead of taking the medication […]. I talked to my sister and [said] 'let us go and join at least we can improve the years of living in the world', but my sister [refused]. But I will continue, I will start taking ARV [Antiretroviral drugs] now […]. I was just taken to hospital for my injuries, to some clinic, not for medical examination like the PEP [post-exposure prophylaxis], or for pregnancy. I didn't get pregnant […], because I hadn't started menstruating yet. Besides HIV, I also have chest pain whereby the back can swell, and even the bones are just rising. Sometimes when I am given local herbs, it will reduce […]. I don't think of it all the time but I used to before. However, it cannot be forgotten in my mind.

In the community, I am not freely living, because there are some these days who say I should not stay with their daughters or their children […]. They are worried that HIV can be transferred to their daughters. So I isolate myself, and still stay alone. I don't want to spread the disease […], and whenever I am talking to a man, they will say 'you want to spread the disease'. So I am ever alone. It is true that some people do spread the disease. […], but for me, now that all are aware of me being positive, I am all the time isolated, I will just study and in any case get a job and work […].

[Cleansing] rituals were performed. Two goats were taken, since we were two, the goats were taken where the incident happened, and they were slaughtered. My sister and I, relatives, friends, were present. They cooked the food, and we were asked to eat […]. We were asked to eat, but for me I did not want to eat, but my sister ate.

End: I feel so painful, because I never wanted it [HIV]. If I had got it from myself, like from the community men, I would to some extent say that 'ah, I wanted it'. But now that I was given it, I feel bad about it. I don't have anyone whom I can share my experiences with. My mother feels also bad about it […], because she was there where the incident was happening, and to some extent she witnessed it. So she doesn't blame us. But […] sometimes community members could come and talk ill about us, which gives pains to my mother.

For […] rapists, it's hard to tell […], I don't know what's wrong with them, and […] for those who gave it to me, they were [both] married, they were [both] having wives. They should be taken to court, so that each of them would say in […] court reasons […] why they do rape.

I have a boyfriend […], both of us are HIV positive. We met at the hospital […]. We haven't had sex yet […]. We are always sharing ideas as pertains our living. He told me that for him he got his from a certain girl in 2004. So we are sharing ideas between ourselves. I want to have children sometime. And get married' (04.12.09).

As can be seen throughout Susan's narrative, she shifts between the roles of agent and victim in her own life. Interestingly, when talking about the rape and the fact that she was nearly killed, she does not reveal a lot of feelings, but rather describes the incident in an inexpressive and factual manner. Not until later in the story does she expose her fear by stating that 'I keep thinking I am going to die, that AIDS does not cure', and just after talking about her being HIV positive she is overwhelmed by feelings and has to take a break from the interview.

The fear of dying made Susan leave school, thus she felt victimised in her own situation – and she found her life to be hopeless. As she states; 'I thought that even though I study, it will be useless for me, because I will die'. However, as time has passed she has been gradually empowered to become an agent in her own situation, partly due to counselling from TASO on how to live with HIV, an example of how NGOs have contributed to empowering displaced women and girls (cf. chapter 6). Susan decided to go back to school, and is also planning to start with ARV treatment soon. Nevertheless, even though she has taken these measures, she also perceives herself as a victim as she feels stigmatised in the community and responds to this through isolation. Some elements of bitterness can be found in her narrative, albeit to a limited degree. She states, for example, that 'I feel so painful, because I never wanted it [HIV]. If I had got it from myself, like from the community men, I would to some extent say that 'ah, I wanted it''. It is interesting to note that she does not talk about her boyfriend until the end of the story. He appears, however, to be an important person in her life, and at the end she again demonstrates her agency by talking about her future in positive terms.

Susan's story is an example of how the victim/agent dichotomy may manifest itself in the life of a female rape survivor in Acholi society. It must, however, be acknowledged that her being infected with HIV adds another dimension to her story as this clearly presents her with increased challenges in terms of hopelessness and added stigmatisation. Nevertheless, it is clear from Susan's narrative that it is crucial to avoid the pitfall of portraying her exclusively as a victim, which is a criticism frequently levelled at Western feminists and gender researchers when studying African women (Oyewùmí 2003b; cf. chapter 3.6). We would therefore argue that it is particularly important to avoid denying women their agency when exploring and working with the issue of SGBV in an African context such as the Acholi.

The above narrative may also serve as an example of how rape has been used as a weapon of war in Northern Uganda. As stated in chapter 4.4.2, soldiers have frequently attacked women

as they have gone to the garden or walked far distances to collect firewood and water – which was also the case for Susan and her sister. The rapes committed by the two UPDF soldiers in the above story may certainly be perceived as part of a 'tactic of war' in order to humiliate, dominate and instil fear in the local population (UNSC 2008:1), a characteristic of rape during war. Susan's injuries were so severe that she was not able to walk, not to mention that she and her sister were infected with HIV. Her mother was also forced to watch while her two daughters were being raped. It is interesting to note that Susan's mother was beaten, but not raped, hence the soldiers chose to rape a 13-year-old over a mature woman. One possible reason may be that it is more humiliating for the community when a girl child is defiled than when a woman is raped, particularly since an Acholi woman is expected to be a virgin until she marries (cf. chapter 3.5). The fact that the compensation price was set much higher for Susan than for her sister, who herself had children, also indicates that raping a virgin is seen as more severe than raping a woman who has already had sex.

According to Das (1995, cited in Finnström 2008:182), in armed conflict women's bodies are 'a sign through which men communicate with each other' (cf. chapter 4.4.2). By raping two girls, and infecting them with HIV, the soldiers communicate to the society that civilian men are unable to prevent the rapes from happening, which elevates the masculinity of the soldiers while undermining that of civilian men (Dolan 2009:215). Consequently, rape by soldiers may possibly cause further sexual violence towards women by civilian perpetrators, as the failure of Acholi men to live up to the hegemonic model of masculinity, including protection, may be viewed as a driving factor behind SGBV (cf. chapter 6.2.3). As Dolan (2009:215) puts it; 'violence becomes a last resort of those who are unable to achieve 'masculinity''. The link between violence and masculinity is naturally also strong among soldiers, because as argued by Dolan (2009:215), 'within the military, the institutional framework, and the removal of soldiers from more general social networks, to an extent promotes the use of violence as an easy route to masculinity'. Rapes committed by UPDF soldiers may also be viewed as fuel to the fire for those who believe that the government has genocidal intentions against the Acholi people (Dolan 2009:153; cf. chapter 4). Indeed, the bodies of women, such as Susan and her sister, become symbols for more than their own selves. In fact, through UPDF soldiers targeting these girls, the bodies of the girls become 'lived metaphor[s] that reveals and realises the unity of […] self and the wider world' (Jackson 1989, cited in Finnström 2008:181). They become representatives of the Acholi society as a whole, suggesting that rape by government soldiers may contribute to upholding discourses of 'social torture' (Dolan 2009), and that perpetrators of rape, particularly soldiers, may intentionally target categories of people rather than individuals (Jackson 2002b, cited in Finnström 2008:183). Since Susan and her sister were infected with HIV, Acholi rumours that government soldiers are intentionally spreading the virus may be upheld. As 36-year-old Sabina, one of Finnström's respondents, puts it: 'It is the government which is intentionally spreading the HIV virus when raping women when they go for firewood. Is raping one of the government's weapons to fight the women? All these sufferings are being inflicted upon us because of our children's [rebels'] misbehaviour' (Finnström 2008:182). Certainly, the Ugandan government has been criticised for failing to bring UPDF soldiers to justice for their criminal acts, and according to Dolan (2009:147) the common way of dealing with UPDF rapists has been to transfer them to another place of service. The Acholi may view this as further proof of the government's dark objectives against them.

Susan's story appears exceptional in terms of the way the case was followed up, and there is reason to believe that Human Rights Focus Uganda played a crucial role in bringing the case to court. However, apart from one of the soldiers being beaten and having to pay 20.000

UGX, it appears that the two perpetrators went unpunished and were simply transferred to another sub-county, in line with Dolan's argument. It also remains to be seen whether Susan and her sister will receive the compensation promised by the government.

Although it has been common for UPDF soldiers to rape Acholi women, LRA rebels have also carried out acts of sexual violence. The principle of communicating with other men through women's bodies has to some extent been prevalent among LRA rebels as well, in addition to using rape as a method of instilling fear (Leibig 2005:7; cf. chapter 4.4.2). Patricia (22) was raped by two LRA rebels in 2005 when going to a funeral with her husband:

> 'On our way we met with the LRA […]. They raped me when my husband was there; they said that my husband should not run away […]. He was forced to watch […]. Up to now my husband has not come back […]. They left me by the roadside' (26.11.09, category 7.1).

While space limitations disallow a fuller exploration of her story, Patricia's story exemplifies how rape may have been used as a way to humiliate enemy males, also by the LRA. Patricia's husband was first humiliated and forced to watch the rebels raping his wife, before being abducted. Her father reported the case, but the rebels were never punished. Interestingly, although the rape of women and girls has been used as a means to humiliate Acholi men and the community at large, some male respondents recognise soldiers' inclination to acquire sexual satisfaction through rape. As James (30) puts it:

> 'For the case of soldiers who rape, those days they were raping women here, even in the presence of their husbands, because they could be having guns, knives and all those things. For you the man, you have no right over it […]. Because those days they could […] stay for even one year or some good months, like eight, without meeting their wife sexually […]. That is why they were raping. And that is why I think it's [a] situation where it's ok for a man to rape other women, because he has stayed for long. It's not good, but it was because of the insurgency' (11.12.09, category 7.2).

Thus, although a number of male respondents are of the opinion that when a woman is raped by a soldier, it is likely that the encounter was forced, they can to some degree understand the soldiers' actions, due to the perceived natural need for men to have sexual intercourse with women at regular intervals (cf. section 7.2.1). It is also interesting to note that not a single respondent, whether male or female, emphasised the possibly collective motive behind rape committed by soldiers, such as humiliation. It is likely, however, that seeing the connections between individual actions and higher structural motives or forces is challenging within the lived reality of the IDP camps, where reality is that which is concrete and can be grasped. This emphasises the importance of lifting respondents' attributions of individual causes of sexual violence up to a higher structural level (cf. chapter 8.2).

7.2   *Forced Sex between Intimate Partners*

Whereas incidences of rape committed by soldiers and strangers are perceived by respondents to be currently decreasing in Northern Uganda, forced sex between intimate partners continues to be a challenge, according to NGO professionals. Indeed, as discussed in our literature review, forced sex between intimate partners is one of the most common forms of sexual violence towards women in Uganda (UBOS 2007:283). It is, however, even more

difficult to develop precise prevalence estimates of this form of sexual violence in Acholiland, as it is usually considered a private matter and a family affair, and hence remains under-reported (Hentonnen et al. 2008:127; UNICEF 2005:1; cf. chapter 4.7).

In this section, we enquire further into the issue of intimate partner sexual violence by bringing in the views and lived experiences of respondents. Firstly, respondents' perceptions of the forcing partner and male sexuality are explored; secondly we discuss how respondents perceive of female sexuality and the refusing wife or girlfriend. Finally, we examine respondents' views on how to solve a sex-related conflict between two intimate partners.

7.2.1   The Forcing Husband/Boyfriend and Male Sexuality

Both female and male respondents have diverse opinions about why men force their partners into sex. One issue frequently mentioned is that for married couples, the husband has paid bride price for his wife and hence has the right to have sex with her whenever he feels like it – even if the wife does not want to – since she is considered to be his property (cf. chapters 2.4.3 and 4.5). This is in line with the findings of the ULRC (2000:26). As John (77) puts it; 'men force their wives because of the mentality that they have bought the woman, or the wife, like paying the bride price, taking the cattle, goats. So, they do force their women into sex, as a way of […] satisfying themselves. Even if the woman does not want, they have to make it' (11.12.09, category 7.19).

It is important to note that although men's control of women is often linked to the bride price, men's ability to purchase a wife through bride price has declined considerably as a result of displacement (cf. chapter 2.5.1). In the camps, it has been difficult to obtain cattle and accumulate alternative sources of bride wealth through cash cropping or hunting animals (Dolan 2009:199). Consequently, marriage has declined, according to Walter in TASO (30.11.09, category 7.23), and more couples are merely cohabiting with one another. As Finnström (2008:34) argues, 'the symbolic significance of this cultural loss should not be underestimated', for, indeed, through failing to provide the means to get married, men have been emasculated even further, which has been linked to increased cases of SGBV (Dolan 2009; El-Bushra & Sahl 2005). Although this might indicate that unmarried men who have been unable to obtain the bride price are more frustrated and hence more likely to force their intimate partners into sex, our data indicates that forced sex is also a significant problem in marital relationships, precisely because the husband by virtue of the paid bride price 'owns' the wife and is thus entitled to have sex with her whenever he wants to. Indeed, sexual intercourse is considered to be a married man's right, which is also highlighted by Ugandan law, custom and religion (ULRC 2000:xviii), as noted in chapter 4.5. Several respondents, men in particular, justify a husband's right to sex by referring to 'God's creation' or nature. Thus, biology is used to explain why men force women into sex, in a similar manner as when explaining why women have more work than men (cf. chapter 6.1.1). James (30), a married man with one wife and three children, is an interesting example in this regard. When asked about his personal experiences with forced sex he begins by saying:

> 'To have sex with your wife, at least there must be compromise. You should bring the wife in that mood of having sex. If you are to force her, then it would be as if she is not your wife. I have not heard of forced sex, but even to me, if my wife does not want, I can also act and force her' (11.12.09, category 7.16).

Interestingly, he appears to contradict himself during the statement, by first stating that he has not heard of forced sex and thereafter saying that he has, in fact, forced his wife into sex himself. This may be viewed as an indication of how normalised marital rape is among the Acholi and of how the concept of forced sex is less common in the Acholi context than is the phenomenon itself. When asked whether his wife has ever complained that he forces her into sex, James answers: 'It has happened to me, some time back, those days I could feel like even if the wife complained that 'I'm still for my menstrual cycle', I could, when I was in the mood, decide to force her […]' (11.12.09, category 7.16). Having sex with one's wife during her menstrual cycle is mentioned by traditional leaders as culturally unacceptable, both now and in the past; hence there was consensus among male respondents that such sex is generally refused by women. James proceeds by saying:

> 'You can first tell her verbally, and if she still denies, that is automatically that you have to force her. It could be that you had a misunderstanding and you, the man, you have forgiven, but the woman can still be angry. So if you, the man, you are interested, obviously you have to force her. That is how God created men, when you are in the mood of having sex, at least you have to satisfy and you feel released' (11.12.09, category 7.16 & 7.19).

In line with what was argued in chapter 6.1 concerning gender differences, attributing forced sex merely to men's biology risks conveying an impression of forced sex as being inevitable due to men's natural drives; when a man is sexually aroused nothing can stop him. Implicitly it is then stated that intimate partner sexual violence is not really the man's fault, hence once again the responsibility is channelled away from the male perpetrator – similar to what occurs when a female rape survivor is blamed for an offence of rape. In the case of forced sex, however, the blame may be directed either at the refusing female partner or in fact at nature itself. This may be strongly linked to what Beauvoir terms women's 'Otherness', which is premised upon the sexual objectification of women by men and non-reciprocity in male and female relations (Tarrant 2006:172; cf. chapter 3.1.1), where male sexual entitlement is emphasised (WHO 2002:162) and women's main role is to satisfy men (Giddens 2009:617). As expressed by a participant in our focus group session with boys between 14 and 18 years old; 'sex doesn't have a time table, so anytime you feel like it as a man, anytime you can have it' (19.11.09, category 7.23). Interestingly, although they may not necessarily have been sexually active themselves, they echo the dominant discourse of male sexuality, which they are likely to have been socialised into by their fathers. Thus, despite the many changes in gender relations that have taken place in the context of displacement, patriarchal structures remain strong, perhaps due to the influence of parents and traditional leaders who pass on the traditional Acholi values to their children in the camps. This suggests that patriarchal structures are likely to persist even when people from the IDP camps return home, which further underlines the need to lift endogenous analyses of SGBV to a higher analytical level than to those communicated by respondents (cf. chapter 8.2).

The supremacy of the Acholi man within sexual relationships is further highlighted when traditional leader John (77) reflects on how often an Acholi man should have sex:

> 'Traditionally, a man is not supposed to stay for one full week or two weeks without having sex […]. It should not be more than three days. If a woman has gone to some place to visit, she must come back, the maximum should be three days for her to stay there. If not […], it will contribute for the man to go for another woman or these

young girls, even sometimes they could go as far as buying these women' (11.12.09, category 7.23).

Thus, it is in fact argued that because of the sexual needs of her husband, an Acholi wife should not leave the home for more than three days in a row – otherwise the husband might find himself other women that can satisfy him sexually. This may also be linked to the fact that an Acholi woman is expected to remain chaste, thus she should not leave the home for too long, lest the husband think she is being unfaithful to him. Similar expectations towards wives exist in many other male-dominated societies; when studying sexual relations in Bangladesh, Shireen Huq (2006, cited in Cornwall & Jolly 2006:2) found that 'restrictions on women's mobility related to preserving their honour and chastity have a huge impact not only on women's physical wellbeing but also their sense of self-worth, personal freedom and happiness'. Furthermore, the fact that an Acholi man is expected to be highly sexually active suggests that sexuality is considered to be crucial to an Acholi man's masculinity. In light of many Acholi men's apparent emasculation through the inherent dependence on others that camp life has engendered (Dolan 2009; cf. chapter 4.5.1), intimate partner sexual violence may have emerged as a means for men to retain control over their increasingly empowered wives and reinforce their own masculinity (cf. chapter 6.2.3). Moreover, as with the rape of women by non-intimate partners, alcohol abuse is frequently mentioned by respondents as contributing to higher rates of intimate partner sexual violence, as highlighted in chapter 4.3.2. Grace (29) was, for example, sometimes forced into sex by her now deceased husband when he was drunk.

> 'When [my husband] got that other woman, sometimes he used to come back while he was drunk and just come to me and force me into sex. Because of drunkenness, that is why my husband used to force me […]. I didn't feel happy because sometimes I [was] injured. You can also sometimes get unwanted pregnancy' (03.12.09, categories 7.16 & 7.19).

Interestingly, some male respondents state that if their partner refuses to have sex, they may become suspicious or doubtful about her feelings towards him. Aaron (22) is not married, but has a girlfriend and puts it this way; 'if a woman […] does not tell you why she is denying, you have to force her. If she has not told the reason, I could have thoughts in my mind that [maybe] she is cheating with another man' (08.12.09, category 7.19). Similarly, one male focus group participant states that 'sometimes you force her so that you really know if the woman loves you' (04.11.09, category 7.19). This may suggest that some men force their partners into sex due to their own insecurity, as a way of confirming their partner's feelings towards them.

Moreover, some men actually rape potential partners as a way of forcing them into marriage (WC & UNFPA 2007:8; cf. chapter 4.4.3). As seen in chapter 4, it is estimated that the first sexual experience of one in three girls in Northern Uganda is as a result of rape, and one way of handling a rape case is for the rapist to pay the bride price and marry the survivor (WHO 2002:161). Christine (22), who is now a widow, was forced into sex and subsequently into marriage by the man she was dating at the age of 17:

> 'My interest was not to get married to him at that time, but he forced me to move in with him. I went, because in Acholi now you go and sleep in the man's place, coming back home is a problem. […]. Forced sex happens a lot […], my man forced me to do

that. […] I was forced into marriage by the man, and now the man has left me with two children to look after […]' (01.12.09, category 7.16).

Generally, women and girls are more vulnerable to sexual violence when they are young, (WHO 2002:157). Out of our 16 individual female respondents who had undergone some form of sexual violence, at least 11 (68 percent) of them were 19 years or younger when they first experienced rape or forced sex, as the figure below shows:

Figure 7.3 Age at First Experience of Sexual Violence among 16 Survivors

Do not know*
13 %

9-14 years
31 %

30 years and above
6 %

20-29 years
13 %

15-19 years
37 %

* 'Do not know' includes respondents who report having experienced forced sex by partner, but whose sexual initiation was voluntary – and whose age at first experience is hence not known.
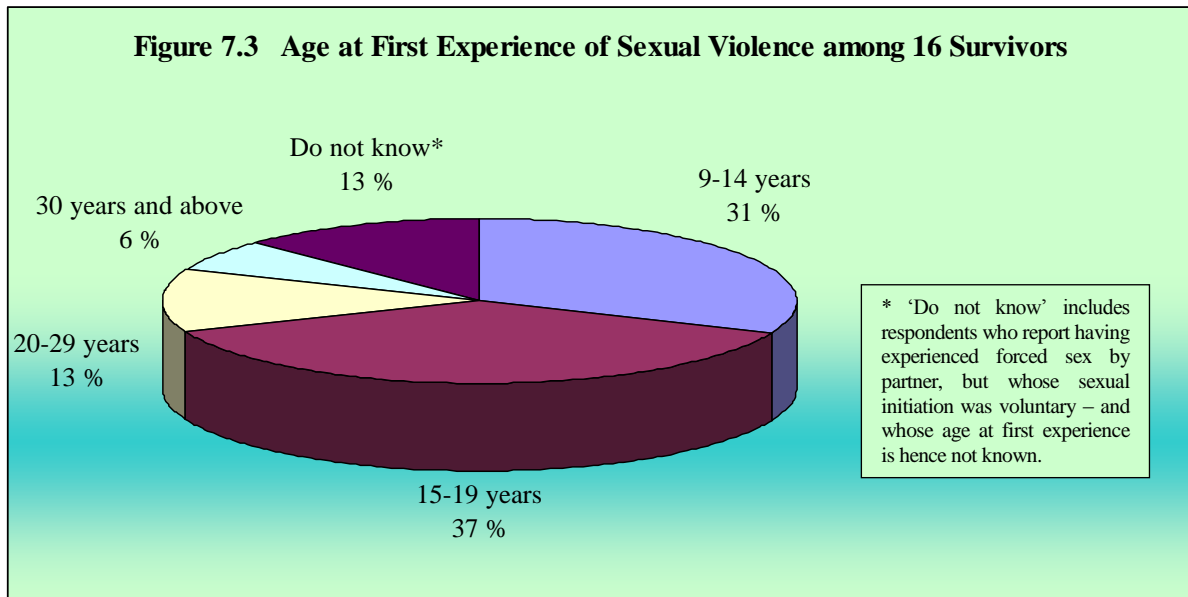
Thus, when talking about intimate partner sexual violence, a range of issues are mentioned by respondents as reasons why men force their partners, such as men's natural drives, alcohol abuse, doubtfulness of the woman's feelings and as a way of forcing a girl into marriage. These aspects may be closely linked to the patriarchal structure of the Acholi society, as well as the emasculation of men that many (Dolan 2009; El-Bushra & Sahl 2005) argue have been brought on by displacement and camp life.

7.2.2   The Wife/Girlfriend and Female Sexuality

As discussed in the literature review and in chapter 6.1.3, it is culturally unacceptable for an Acholi woman to refuse sex within marriage (LIGI & GDNGOF 2007:13), and as noted, it is considered a man's right to have sex with his wife whenever he wants to. Nevertheless, many Acholi women still refuse to have sex with their partners, married or not, with the possible result that their men resort to violence in order to have sex with them. Out of the 17 individual female respondents who had ever had a sexual relationship with a man, nine – over 50 percent – confessed to having been forced into sex by their intimate partner once or more.

As discussed in chapter 6.1.3 about *cathexis* in Acholi society, an Acholi woman is never supposed to initiate sex with a man, regardless of whether she is married to him or not. An Acholi woman initiating sex is considered to be extremely promiscuous. As Michael (54), a traditional leader, puts it; 'if a woman has sexual feelings, in Acholi tradition, she will not tell the husband. If she tells you, it means she is a prostitute. […] It is you [the man] who have to get the feelings, and then you approach her' (02.12.09, category 7.20). This reflects the

dominant sexual stereotype of women in patriarchal societies, where women are supposed to be solely submissive receivers of 'penetrative male pleasure'. Consequently, in Uganda, female sexuality centres merely on reproduction, according to the Ugandan Professor Sylvia Tamale (2007:19; cf. chapter 3.4). In light of this, Tamale (2007:19) introduces the issue of homosexuality in Uganda, stating that 'what is therefore particularly threatening to patriarchy is the idea of intimate same-sex relationships where a dominant male is absent and where women's sexuality can be defined without reference to reproduction'. Similarly, among the Acholi, a sexually empowered woman who initiates sex may also be considered as a threat to masculine power. As a result, sexually empowered women are looked upon as prostitutes, which can be linked to the contradiction between male promiscuity and female chastity that patriarchal societies promote, as discussed above and in chapter 3.5.

Indeed, Ugandan women, including the Acholi, are actually expected to say 'no' to sex even when they mean 'yes'. As stated by a male focus group participant; 'a woman has never told the man that today I want sex. A no from a woman is a yes, because they are shy. And in the long run they are the ones who will enjoy it. That is why, when a man feels he wants, definitely he will go and tell the woman he wants sex' (04.11.09, category 7.20). This may imply that it can be difficult for an Acholi man to understand whether his female partner wants to have sex or not, as argued by the ULRC (2000:121), 'taking the girls 'no' to mean 'yes'' may contribute to increased incidences of forced sex. However, as seen in chapter 6.1.3, women tend to communicate their sexual desires in a non-verbal fashion. Thus, although Acholi women are supposed to play a highly passive role within sexual relationships, the possibility to use non-verbal communication to initiate sex provides an opportunity for women to exercise agency within the limitations imposed upon them, as argued in chapter 6. Once again it is vital to be mindful of Acholi women's agency because, as argued by Cornwall and Jolly (2006:2) there is a 'need to go beyond taken-for-granted assumptions about women's powerlessness to understanding how they themselves make sense of their own sexual realities' (cf. chapter 3.4). Nevertheless, it is simultaneously important to recognise the 'silences, taboos and societal expectations that surround sex', according to Cornwall and Jolly (2006:3), as these mechanisms 'reinforce unhelpful gender stereotypes' in society. Although intimate partner sexual violence is increasingly being recognised as a problem among the Acholi, the phenomenon may indeed still be considered as one such 'sexual silence' deserving more attention – as demonstrated by the lived experiences of our female respondents. Promise (38), a married woman with eight children, has been forced into sex by her husband several times, and says this about her experiences:

> 'Sometimes our husbands force us into sex. When he does that, I am unpleased and unhappy towards the man […]. There should first be understanding between the husband and the wife before having intercourse […]. If your husband fails to understand, there is nothing you can do. […] There is no one who comes openly saying 'my husband has forced me into sex'. It is not discussed. […] This thing of the man coming when he wants sex, sometimes I am not in the mood, or I tell him that 'you know what, we give birth at a faster rate. Why can't we maybe stop?' The man refuses, and that is what has led me to have kids without proper spacing' (25.11.09, category 7.16).

The case of Promise sheds further light on how many Acholi men control their wives' bodies and reproduction (cf. chapters 2.4.2 and 6.1.3) by forcing them into sex and denying them the use of contraceptives, a cause of great developmental concern. As stated by Cornwall and Jolly (2006:4; cf. chapter 3.4); 'if we lack the possibility to prevent our bodies from being

violated by others, and if we are denied the opportunity to protect ourselves from pregnancy or disease, then how can we take part in or claim any of the other benefits of development?' Indeed, Promise's experiences demonstrate how women may be trapped by their own bodies, as highlighted by Beauvoir, and Promise's life may in fact possibly be classified as 'maternity slavery', to use Beauvoir's term (Tarrant 2006:178,183). Promise's husband is in the military and the childrearing responsibilities are therefore left with her. As she states: 'Family planning? I am fearing. The man does not want to. […] Looking after the children has become difficult, because I look at the number I have. Feeding all of them and myself has really become a problem for me' (25.11.09, category 7.16). Promise's case is typical of that of many Acholi women, particularly widows or female respondents with absent husbands, who consistently struggle to feed their large families alone. Indeed, although motherhood is highly valued in an African context, an issue which Western feminists are criticised for failing to take account of (Oyewùmí 2003a:13), it is still clear that many Acholi women wish to use contraceptives in order to space their children to a greater extent. Thus, it may be argued that the ideas of Beauvoir and other Western feminists about the importance of reproductive rights for women are also highly applicable in an African context such as the Acholi. Oyewùmí and other African feminists may therefore be criticised for overly romanticising African motherhood. Although motherhood is traditionally the highest status obtainable for Acholi women (Girling 1960:21), it has its limitations and does, particularly in the poverty-stricken context of displacement, often make women's lives more difficult, as seen in the case of Promise. This suggests once again that local context is crucial for theorising about gender and women's situation in society, and that African feminists such as Oyewùmí appear reductionist when generalising about African women, in the same way that they criticise their Western counterparts (such as Beauvoir) for generalising about 'maternity slavery' (Tarrant 2006:178).

The fear of unwanted pregnancies is hence likely to be one of the main reasons why Acholi women refuse to have sex with their partners. Another issue that is mentioned is that women find their partners unattractive when they are drunk and dirty. The following sequence is extracted from one of our focus group discussions with women:

Participant 1: The bad smell of the man can make the woman not to have interest in sex, so it makes the man force her to have sex.

Moderator: *How does it make you feel when your husband forces you to have sex with him?*

Participant 2: The man will definitely force you, you will have some arguments with him, but later he will force you until you accept. When you have accepted and he has finished his feelings, how do you a woman feel? There is nothing you can do. Because to some extent he will say it is his right to have you. He has rights over you because he brought you from their home to your home. [Laughter from group] Sometimes he pinches you when you refuse, so you have to accept.

Participant 3: The man will chase you if you refuse. If you refuse, he will tell you to go to the man with whom you want to play sex with. He will think that you are cheating. [Laughter from group]

Participant 4: The bad smell, the bad odour, you have to persevere and have sex. The odour of the male body and the alcohol. Some men do not bathe (19.11.09).

The above sequence may suggest that increased levels of alcohol abuse and poorer hygiene may have led to a higher prevalence of intimate partner sexual violence in the camps. Indeed, if women resist the sexual advances of their intimate partners due to the latter's unattractiveness, many men may see no other option than to force their partners into sex. Interestingly, the laughter in the above sequence also shows how women ridicule their men when coming together, which may be seen as a demonstration of how they exercise collective

agency and of how women thus contribute to upholding the discourses of difference between themselves and men.

Another situation in which Acholi women have been known to refuse sex with their husbands is during periods of famine. As Moses (48) states in continuation of his statement in section 6.3.1 about one wife leaving him because he could no longer provide food: 'My [four] wives have complained to me that I force them into sex. […] It was during the time when there was too much famine in the area, so my women felt like they should not have any sex with me' (01.12.09, category 7.19). Thus, the low food security that has accompanied displacement in Acholiland (cf. chapters 2.3.1 and 4.6.1) has possibly increased women's vulnerability to SGBV.

Interestingly, when refusing to have sex with their partners in situations when they do not want to, Acholi women demonstrate yet again that they exercise agency within the limitations imposed upon them as women, even though this may result in their husbands becoming violent towards them.. As one male focus group participant said when discussing forced sex:

> 'If you ask her to lay bed and she refuses, you just know that she does not want. […] Then later you just have to force her because you as a man, already you have the interest. Then she tells you, 'you do now what you want, because you have forced me, so I will never satisfy you according to what you want' (04.11.09, category 7.22).

This is an interesting example of how women may exercise agency even in situations when they are forced to have sex against their own will. Indeed, as a continuation of the argument espoused in chapter 6, by saying 'no' to that which they do not desire and refusing to indulge the man, Acholi women are confronting the sexual power structures in society, as argued by Cornwall and Jolly (2006:8). This is directly relevant to Foucault's theories of power whereby it is argued that 'wherever power exists there also is resistance' (Charles 2002:12; cf. chapters 3.1.3 and 6.1.2), including on the domestic arena and within sexual relationships. However, it is important to be mindful of the feminist criticism levelled at Foucault's work, whereby it is argued that 'systematic power relations ultimately vanish' (Hartsock 1990, cited in Charles 2002:12). In other words, patriarchal power relations which systematically oppress women are not necessarily as easily identifiable when employing Foucaultian theories of power because of the inbuilt 'denial of any extra-discursive, material reality in which power is based' (Charles 2002:12). Nevertheless, it may also be argued that patriarchal power relations are indeed inherently present within Foucault's micro-power structures, in such a way that it becomes 'taken-for-granted' that men are superior to women. Although the main purpose of this paper is not to discuss theories of power, it is – regardless of which perspective one may hold – interesting to observe the many ways in which Acholi women exercise their agency in a male-dominated society. As argued continuously, they should indeed not be perceived solely as victims within the patriarchal power structures that constrain them. Still, it must be recognised that Acholi women's negotiating possibilities with regard to sex with their male partners very much depend on the attitudes of their husbands and his relatives, suggesting that marital rape is not an entirely private matter, as seen below.

7.2.3 How to Solve a Conflict about Sex

The majority of respondents emphasise that there should be 'understanding' between two intimate partners about sex, so that forced sex does not occur. Moses (48), married with four

wives, spends two consecutive nights with each wife before he moves on to the next one. He puts it like this:

> 'For the married people, […] I think forced sex shouldn't be there. Because the day you and the woman were dating each other, there was understanding between you […]. And the woman knew what she was really coming to do at the man's place. Then why should I just force you into sex? We should understand each other, and you shouldn't always say that 'I don't want, I don't want' when you're a woman, sometimes understand your husband, and then your husband should also understand you. Because the day he was paying your bride price, it was through understanding between your people and his people. That is why you people became one' (01.12.09, category 7.23).

Thus, once again the bride price is highlighted for the implicit sexual assumptions it carries with it; when the bride price has been paid, the woman (or her parents who have forced her into marriage) has consented to be sexually available to her husband. Although he sometimes forces his wife into sex, James (30) also highlights the importance of understanding one's wife, because as he states; 'now that you've forced your wife and she wasn't willing, and you penetrated her and she just sat like a dead person or a dead woman, obviously you as a man you will not enjoy it' (11.12.09, categories 7.20 & 7.23). This may suggest that men do not necessarily find the sexual act very gratifying when forcing their female partners, since the women do not derive pleasure from it. Consequently, it may be argued that although an Acholi woman is supposed to be extremely passive sexually, her sexual satisfaction is still valued to some degree, which in turn suggests that her sexuality may actually be perceived as more than merely her capacity to reproduce. Professor Sylvia Tamale (2007) may thus be criticised for overly victimising Ugandan women and not taking account of their ability to exercise agency within their sexual relationships.

While most respondents emphasise that conflicts about sex should be solved between the two parties involved, several respondents state that if this does not succeed, the man's parents or other relatives should be consulted. However, seeking advice from relatives was not a solution for Promise (38) and her husband, because as she states; 'even though you report the man to his parents, they will not do anything. They will tell you that you are his wife, that you should accept whatever he calls you to' (25.11.09, category 7.26). If consulting relatives does not improve the situation, some respondents argue that the case should be taken to the Local Council. In view of the fact that there is no law in Uganda that regards marital rape as a crime (Hentonnen et al. 2008:129; cf. chapter 4.5), cases of forced sex may not be taken to legal authorities. Thus, as of today, Acholi women have few reporting possibilities when experiencing intimate partner sexual violence. Although cases may be reported to NGOs working on SGBV, few women dare to report cases of forced sex for fear of repercussions (Elsie, CARE, 24.11.09). Child Protection Officer Marie Manyeh in UNICEF expressed it well when talking about the current situation regarding intimate partner sexual violence in Acholiland:

> 'The way [these women] put it, at the end of the day when you know you are the first to wake up and you have to take care of the children, make sure they go to school, make sure you are in the garden before the sun comes up, you just lie down there and let the man do it, so that you can have some rest. The issue is where would they go? There is no court, there is no law. In the end, it's the better of two evils, because either you just lie down there, or you are beaten up and they would do it anyway' (17.11.09).

This is an example of how Acholi women in some situations may resign with regard to resisting their husbands' sexual advances as a strategy for coping with the sometimes brutal reality of everyday life.

7.3   *Transactional Sex*

As argued previously in this chapter, it is extremely difficult to ascertain the prevalence of rape by non-intimate partners and forced sex by intimate partners among IDPs in Northern Uganda, partly because the issues are under-reported due to fear of repercussions and stigmatisation (cf. chapter 4.7). Based on our data, the stigma attached to engaging in transactional sex appears to be even greater than for survivors of other forms of SGBV, and as prostitution is prohibited under Ugandan law (ULRC 2000:77), it is even more challenging, if not impossible, to determine the actual prevalence of transactional sex among IDPs in Acholiland. According to UBOS (2007:218; cf. chapter 4.6), 'the prevalence of transactional sex is very low (1 percent) in IDP camps'. However, our data, although not representative, suggest that the phenomenon is likely to be a lot more common than what is estimated by UBOS. The absolute majority of respondents know of people engaging in transactional sex, or have heard about it from others, and their level of knowledge about the topic appears generally high. Due to the stigma that prostitutes (termed 'sex workers' from now onwards) face, the activity often appears to be hidden, which is probably why so few openly admit to ever having engaged in transactional sex. Thus, it is particularly challenging to conduct quantitative research on the matter, which emphasises the relevance of qualitative studies such as ours of the phenomenon. It is also important to note that our data suggests that sex workers who are IDPs tend to be highly mobile and often go to nearby trading centres or to town to prostitute themselves. Thus, a lot of the activity appears to happen outside of the IDP camps, an issue that is not taken account of in UBOS' figures that merely focus on transactional sex that occurs within the camp itself. Moreover, UBOS (2007:219) themselves concede that 'very few women admitted to receiving money in exchange for sex' in the previous survey of 2004-2005, which led them in the 2006 survey to not sufficiently solicit women for information regarding transactional sex. Thus, the validity of UBOS' estimates may be questioned, which contributes to justifying our inclusion of transactional sex in this thesis, particularly as the ULRC (2000:77) emphasise the importance of studying prostitution in Uganda to a greater extent than what has hitherto been done.

The high stigma also made it challenging for us as qualitative researchers to mobilise sex workers; it was significantly easier to get in touch with rape survivors. For example, when having interviewed traditional leader Moses (48), he pointed out bar worker Christine (22) as an example of a woman engaging in transactional sex. Christine did, however, not give the impression of an Acholi sex worker (according to our research assistants), which suggests that women working in bars do not necessarily prostitute themselves, even though they are socially associated with this kind of work by virtue of their status as bar maids. The stigma associated with sex work is further exemplified through Christine's (22) reaction when asked whether she knows any sex workers personally; 'due to fear, I cannot show you, because I will become an enemy to them' (01.12.09, category 7.33). This demonstrates well the level of secrecy and stigma surrounding transactional sex among IDPs in Northern Uganda. Although we were told by community mobilisers that at least eight of our respondents were most certainly engaging in transactional sex, only four of our 26 female respondents openly

admitted to having been engaged in transactional sex, of which two are commercial sex workers within Gulu town. The two IDPs who did admit to engaging in transactional sex did so only after our research assistants spent a long time probing them – initially they both denied it. We suspect that a few other female respondents have also been engaged in such activity, due to their detailed knowledge about the phenomenon, but this will naturally remain speculation as long as it was not openly admitted.

This section explores how sex workers are perceived in the community, as well as respondents' views on why displaced women engage in transactional sex. The term 'sex worker' is used here to describe a person who offers sexual services for money, gifts or favours, in line with UBOS' (2007:217) definition of 'prostitution'. The section also briefly examines how the male client is regarded, and why some men give money, gifts and favours to displaced women in exchange for sex. Finally, the narrative of Doreen (20), a commercial sex worker, is presented and discussed.

7.3.1   The Female Sex Worker

The victim/agent dichotomy, which has been referred to throughout this chapter, is also important to consider when exploring perceptions of female sex workers. Among respondents, the female sex worker is typically perceived as being both victim and agent, which directly corresponds to prostitution theory (cf. chapter 3.5). Indeed, respondents shift between attributing transactional sex to poverty and other factors within the sex worker's control. As seen in chapter 4.6.1, a number of observers, such as Kemirere (2007:177), emphasise that transactional sex has emerged as a coping mechanism for internally displaced women and girls in Northern Uganda. As one female focus group participant highlights; 'the women who do it don't wish to do it, but they do it out of desperation. Most of them are widows who just have to do it to get money to feed the children' (03.11.09, category 7.31). This is in line with the argumentation of the so-called Sexual Equality First (SEF) proponents (cf. chapter 3.5) who claim that in patriarchal societies, vulnerable women are economically and structurally forced into prostitution (Pateman 1988, cited in Sullivan 1995:5). Indeed, many respondents state that single mothers, widows, women abandoned by soldiers, and young girls are those who typically engage in transactional sex – i.e. women and girls who do not have a male partner. Interestingly, when NRC's community representative in one of the IDP camps was asked to mobilise sex workers for our study, four widows came to be interviewed. Even though neither of them openly admitted to engaging in transactional sex, two of them provided us with intricate details on transactional sex and turned away from the other waiting respondents while lowering their voices when talking about this, suggesting that they may possibly be engaged in the practice. The other two, however, seemed to have little knowledge of the topic and thus appeared to not be involved in sex work, an impression shared by our research assistants who know the social codes and who were also probing these women incessantly about their possible involvement in transactional sex. The fact that the community mobiliser gathered only widows underlines the importance of marriage in the Acholi culture; women living without a man are inevitably suspected of being forced to engage in immoral activities such as transactional sex in order to provide for themselves. Thus, a woman without a man is nothing. Ironically, while widows and other women who, due to displacement, have been forced to take on the role as providers for their families appear to have increased their independence, they have simultaneously become more vulnerable to transactional sex, as noted in chapter 2.5.2. However, some respondents also state that even married women may decide to engage in transactional sex out of necessity. Thus, it appears

difficult to establish a common profile for women and girls engaging in transactional sex, aside from the majority resorting to this due to poverty.

As noted in section 2.3.1 and 4.6.1, several NGOs and scholars claim that there is a close link between low food security and transactional sex. According to UNICEF (2005:12), when food security is low 'girls and women frequently barter sex for food from soldiers or IDP men'. As the current camp populations comprise of mostly 'Extremely Vulnerable Individuals' (EVIs) such as widows, divorcees and young girls, these may be particularly vulnerable to forced prostitution either inside or outside the camps. According to commercial sex worker Gladys (29), female IDPs who are engaged in transactional sex frequently come to town to prostitute themselves. She puts it this way:

> 'The number of girls is increasing, because more young girls are still learning. Because of poverty they come to town to look for money. Most of the Acholis are young. […] For the young girls, they can accept any amount of money, because they came footing, of course they want money for transport to take them back [to the camp]' (12.12.09, 7.42).

However, although poverty is mentioned as a driving factor, many respondents are of the opinion that sex workers do this voluntarily, or because they are not willing to do other kinds of work. This echoes the arguments of Free Choice First (FCF) proponents within prostitution theory, who argue that prostitution is mainly an economic choice (Jolin 1994:79; cf. chapter 3.5). Interestingly, some respondents, such as Aaron (22), talk about sex workers both as victims and as agents: 'they are engaged [in transactional sex] because of hard life from home, the women, these women they are also lazy to do domestic work and garden work' (08.12.09, category 7.31). Thus, defining sex workers as victims or agents is extremely complex, as shown in our literature review. As discussed above, it is important to shed light on the oppressive mechanisms that subdue women in Acholi society, while at the same time not overly victimising Acholi women, including sex workers. In many situations, Acholi women exercise agency in clever ways within the limitations imposed upon them by the patriarchal structures in society, as discussed throughout this chapter and the previous one. Thus, although it may be argued that the majority of Acholi sex workers in Northern Uganda are structurally enforced to engage in transactional sex, one should not deny them their agency. Commercial sex worker Gladys (29), mother of three, is a striking example in this regard. She was forced into marriage at the age of 13, and her husband also forced her into sex. At the age of 22 she decided to leave her husband and started selling sex for survival. When asked whether she prefers prostituting herself over staying with her husband, she says:

> 'It is better than staying with my husband, or staying with a man. To the husband, you have to plead for any small amount of money that you have to use, while here you sweat and you work for your own money, but you have the right to use it for anything you want. So, no one is restricting you from using your own money' (12.12.09, category 7.42).

Thus, Gladys would rather sell her body and earn her own money instead of being dependent on her husband. However, she stresses that she would prefer to do something else for a living if she could; 'what I am engaging in, it is not because I wanted, but because of poverty' (12.12.09, category 7.31 & 7.42). Gladys hence views commercial sex as the better of two evils; as a sex worker she is able to exercise greater agency than she would as a wife. She may therefore be viewed as both an agent and as a victim; in line with the FCF approach she

exercises agency by choosing to be involved in sex work, while simultaneously being structurally enforced to prostitute herself in order to survive. Indeed, as argued by SEF proponents, prostitution is a direct consequence of patriarchy due to its inherent male sexual oppression of women. From a SEF point of view, Gladys' 'free choice' to engage in sex work therefore remains illusory so long as Acholi women are not socially equal to their male counterparts (Jolin 1994:76; cf. chapter 3.5).

As seen above and in chapter 6, some respondents refer to biological characteristics when explaining social issues such as gender differences and forced sex. Similarly, some respondents attribute transactional sex to biology. One male focus group participant states that; 'some prostitutes are born prostitutes, they are born like that. It depends on the blood that you come from' (04.11.09, category 7.31). Others refer to sex workers' 'natural drives' as a reason why they prostitute themselves. As a female focus group participant puts it; 'for some, it's their nature, they do it for personal pleasure, they want to test every kind of man' (03.11.09, category 7.31). This suggests that some respondents believe women also have natural sex drives, which was only barely implied in discussions about forced sex. This may be linked to the promiscuity/chastity contradiction in patriarchal societies, as previously discussed (cf. chapter 3.5 and 7.1.3). Generally, chastity is highly valued and expected of Acholi women, and sex workers clearly break with this stereotype. As previously noted, in patriarchal societies, male sexuality is defined to include promiscuity, whereas female sexuality is not. According to Jolin (1994:70), 'men want sex with different women and they want women who have sex with only one man, a theoretical impossibility to which men have found a practical, albeit controversial, solution'; prostitution. By 'setting aside' some women to serve as prostitutes, men can have their sexual needs met without 'reducing the availability of chaste women or threatening the chastity of their wives'. Thus, unsurprisingly, sex workers are looked upon with a high degree of suspicion by respondents; one may argue that they are actually considered not to be 'real' women due to their promiscuity. Many respondents highlight that sex workers can be identified through their immoral behaviour and appearance. As a male focus group participant, who sounds like he is a regular bar visitor, describes:

> 'If you go to a bar […] you will recognise that this is a prostitute. The way the person walks, the style of walking, and the poor dressing; short skirts, they show their knees and leave their breasts partly out […]. They engage in seductive behaviour, it's the way of smiling. And also the area where the person stays. The way they welcome you is different from the normal welcoming. The lady also tends to come and even buys you booze. You know the aim. When you have taken enough, she asks you about your plans. And yet she wants money from you' (04.11.09, category 7.33).

This indicates that sex workers behave in ways that are considered unsuitable for Acholi women, which stigmatises them to a great extent. Aaron (22) states, for example, that 'people talk about [sex workers] that those are useless, they serve themselves, and there is nothing else that they can do in their home. People term them as not being responsible women' (08.12.09, category 7.33). Thus, the immorality of the female sex worker is once again highlighted. Martha (17) is a pertinent example in this regard. She was engaged in transactional sex in and around the IDP camps for a period of eight months at the age of 15, together with a group of friends. While she was a sex worker, she was stigmatised in the community, particularly after her friends went to stay elsewhere:

> 'The community used to stigmatise me those days, but now I have returned to the village and I am fine. Whenever I was passing, people would say 'you see, she is the

only one remaining, they have spoiled her and they have left her. Those people have gotten married and she is still here, she is the only one left in the sport [transactional sex]'. So, they used to talk about me like that' (17.12.09, categories 7.33 & 7.42).

Moreover, sex workers are frequently mentioned as being HIV positive and engaging in transactional sex in order to purposely infect others with HIV – in line with what is argued for male rapists. As one participant in our focus group for girls states; 'the ones who are HIV positive, they feel they didn't intend to go and get HIV/AIDS, but by bad luck they got it during intercourse. So they feel they should go and spread it to other people' (09.11.09, category 7.37). Although NGO professionals and other observers confirm that some people, including sex workers, set out to deliberately spread HIV (cf. chapter 7.1.1), there is a possibility that this issue is over-exaggerated due to gossiping in the community. As Gladys (29) states; 'most of the Acholis do talk about us that for us we are HIV positive, because they just think that we are HIV positive, and yet not all of us are. And they think that we have gone there just to spread HIV' (12.12.09, category 7.33 & 7.37). This may suggest that there is actually a triple stigma towards sex workers. Firstly, they are looked upon with contempt due to the fact that they are not settled with a man, as is deemed so important for Acholi women. Secondly, they are perceived as being highly immoral – as Walter in TASO states; 'in this place [men] would like to have a woman who is pure, and if possible even a virgin. Those virgins have a high chance of getting married. But if you have been a prostitute, it's not there' (30.11.09, category 7.33). This may indeed be directly related to the promiscuity/chastity contradiction discussed above. Thirdly, sex workers are thought to be infected with HIV and deliberately setting out to infect others with the disease, making them even more licentious and evil. Gender Officer Christine Akumu Okot in the Local Government in Gulu mentions a striking example in this regard:

> 'In one of the sub-counties they had to put a by-law; if you are a woman and you don't have a husband, you have to leave that sub-county, because a number of them were infecting young boys with HIV. They just sleep with this one, sleep with the other one, you know, lure them' (09.12.09, category 7.37).

This clearly demonstrates that there is greater stigma attached to being a prostitute than a rape survivor, as sex workers are discriminated against at several levels. What is striking is that the wish to deliberately spread HIV is emphasised both for rapists and sex workers, suggesting that respondents automatically link immoral behaviour to HIV. However, as argued by Mollie Fair in the UNFPA, there are still many HIV myths in Northern Uganda, and one may question the extent to which sex workers and others actually set out to purposely infect others with HIV, or whether such statements are mainly a way of stigmatising HIV infected people or sex workers at yet another level (20.11.09). Nevertheless, it is of course important to acknowledge that sex workers are at great risk of HIV infection, particularly the newcomers, according to sex worker Gladys (29), because 'the Acholis, culturally they like live sex [sex without a condom]' (12.12.09, category 7.42). Generally, 'live sex' also earns more money. It is, however, crucial to differentiate between becoming infected with HIV as a result of sex work and engaging in transactional sex with the ultimate aim of infecting others.

Finally, it is important to be mindful of the link between different forms of SGBV, such as rape and transactional sex. As stated by the ULRC (2000:125; cf. chapter 4.2), due to pregnancy or the rejection from husband and/or family that rape may engender, rape survivors may resort to transactional sex to survive. This is also mentioned by a few respondents, such as traditional leader Francis (54): 'In most cases those who were raped are the ones engaging

in transactional sex' (02.12.09, category 7.33). The link between different forms of SGBV may be exemplified by the story of sex worker Gladys (29); she was raped by a policeman as a child, forced to marry at the age of 13, forced into sex by her husband before becoming a commercial sex worker at the age of 22, and has also experienced rape by clients.

7.3.2   The Male Client

As with female sex workers, it is difficult to develop a common profile for male clients. However, the categories of men mentioned most frequently include soldiers, business men, shop owners, widowers, *boda-boda* drivers, single boys/men and teachers. Interestingly, as with rapists and sex workers, several respondents mention that the overall aim of some male clients is to spread HIV. Furthermore, many respondents highlight that also married men buy sex, which is confirmed by the four sex workers interviewed. Sex worker Gladys (29) says this about the clients in town: 'Almost every type of man and every working class have ever gone there. Even those big, big people whom you can see around in the daytime, they go there. The oldest are about 50 years, and the youngest 12 to 15' (12.12.09. categories 7.34 & 7.42). There is reason to believe that other categories of men buy sex in Gulu town, compared to those who do so within and in close proximity to the IDP camps, as the formal employment opportunities are greater in urban areas. Martha (17), who used to be engaged in transactional sex within and near the camps, states that clients were usually '*boda-boda* drivers, farmers and soldiers' (07.12.09, categories 7.34 & 7.42). Thus, ordinary male camp dwellers also buy sex, suggesting that it is not only merely soldiers and others with high incomes who do so. However, men with regular incomes are naturally able to afford paying for sex to a greater extent than men relying mainly on external aid. Furthermore, as noted in section 4.6.1, 'sexual exploitation and prostitution, especially child prostitution, increases with the influx of relatively well-off personnel in situations where local economies have been devastated and women do not have options for employment' (RHRC 2009:9). The relative stability in the region has resulted in an influx of NGOs and business firms into Gulu town, possibly also increasing the income possibilities for sex workers. It may therefore not be surprising that sex worker Gladys (29) has the impression that a growing number of young girls move back and forth between the camps and town to prostitute themselves, as seen above.

Thus, displaced women and girls engage in sex work both in Gulu town and within and near the camps. As stated above, food insecurity is likely to have led more female IDPs to engage in transactional sex, and our data suggests that food insecurity may also have resulted in more male IDPs buying sex from sex workers. Interestingly, several respondents emphasise that some sex workers are in fact able to live a good life also within the camps, and buy material things and food that ordinary women cannot afford. Indeed, many respondents assert that sex workers – some as young as ten years old – are given both necessities and luxury items in exchange for sex; for child sex workers, the goods mentioned include soap and school materials, while for adults goods also include cooking utensils, lotions, perfumes etc. As one female focus group participant states; 'because the [sex worker] puts on nice clothes, eats well, gives good things to the man, the man goes to the other one, because she will be welcoming. The man tends to look at his wife at home as someone very dirty' (03.11.09, category 7.34). Indeed, married community men engaging in transactional sex are frequently termed men who fear responsibility. The aspect of male camp dwellers buying sex from sex workers who are more 'well-off' may also be linked to the failure of ordinary women to live up to all roles expected of them, such as providing food for their husband and children (cf. chapter 6.2.1). This may, however, possibly also be related to the emasculation of men which

has been highlighted continuously in our analysis. As seen above, sexuality is deemed vital for an Acholi man's masculinity, and promiscuity is valued – indeed, an Acholi man may traditionally take as many as 11 wives (Moses, 48, 01.12.09, category 7.23). Unsurprisingly, respondents emphasise that men buy sex from prostitutes in order to obtain sexual gratification. However, it may also be argued that because so few men have been able to afford the bride price for a wife (cf. chapter 2.5.1), let alone for several wives, sex workers may possibly have taken on some of the roles that co-wives traditionally have. Sex workers may thus contribute to rebuilding the masculinity of displaced Acholi men, not merely through sexual intercourse, but also by cooking food for them and adopting other traditional roles of an Acholi wife.

7.3.3 Selling Sex for Survival – The Story of Doreen (20)

In order to shed light on the issue of transactional sex, it is highly valuable to give voice to a woman who has first-hand experience with the phenomenon. This is Doreen's story:

Beginning: 'I am happy to be a woman, because we women or girls can be loved by so many men who can give us money. But there are no women who can give money to the husbands. I first had sex when I was 15. It was my teacher, in primary 5. The teacher was giving me scholastic materials like books and pens. It was the very teacher who came to approach me. I thought he was going to help me. My teacher was a sport master, like athletics, the leader. While for me I was an athlete. After training […], the teacher would call me to go to his place. That is how he approached me. I could go there every sport day […]. It was for one year. He was married. He was in love with many pupils, so he was doing the same with [others]. Some of my friends were also involved in this; there were two other girls involved in this with the same teacher. And other teachers were also in love with some of the girls. The teachers used to lure girls with things like books, pens and other things.

It was because my parents couldn't afford, that is why I had to do this. I was only in love with him so that he could provide me with scholastic materials. The teacher was 28 years old. I broke up with him after he had stopped giving me equipments. He stopped because his wife knew about it and used to quarrel on me. She used to say that the husband wasn't providing her with home equipment, instead I was the one spoiling her husband. She said he was wasting money on me, instead of buying food to her and the children. The wife of that teacher came to the school and the senior woman teacher reported to the head teacher. Then, I was told by the head teacher to stop loving my teacher. I stopped because of the wife, and she was telling me that 'if you continue, you will see, I will bewitch you'. The man also stopped giving me things […]. I later went to an arts and crafts school, but the people who were sponsoring me stopped sponsoring me. World Vision was sponsoring me. It wasn't only me who was stopped, but they stopped sponsoring many people. That is how I started my life, I just went back home and stayed home in the camp. I wasn't engaged in transactional sex in the camp, I started from town. I have just started this year, in February.

Middle: In the camp, there are few customers as compared to town. This is how I get money, to buy food, pay for rent, and I take some home to my parents. There are few working classes; there are no clear jobs in the camp. Most of them are farmers, so at least in town there are different working classes. I was told by my friend that 'let us go to town', and we came. I stayed with my friend, we were renting, and we joined The Pub [pseudonym], and she was telling me to do this, teaching me. There was nothing else I could do, because this friend of mine used to have a lot of money, come back with make up things, and she would show it to me. That is how I got into it. My mother could not afford anything, and she's just moving all the day in the town, just on the street.

[*Doreen starts crying. It turns out that her mother is mentally disabled. Our research assistant talks to her for a long time in Luo.*]

This year, my eldest brother started P7. The lastborn is three years, staying with my grandmother. My father was abducted, and my mother got that lastborn child with another man. […] I would choose to do any other things apart from engaging in this. At night, we come in a group and stand in front of The Pub. Then the men can just come and pick us from there. In my group, [we] work as one. […] Coming in a group, it is for protection. When

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it is time, we just move one-by-one. We have a fixed amount, it is starting from 5000 shillings [2.30 USD]. We are cheap, and it is only 5000, that is the fixed price. Nothing more, nothing less. 5000 shillings is for one round.

Some protect themselves, others don't. Those who are HIV positive, they do not accept to use a condom because they want to spread. I protect myself. Some men come with their own condoms. The men who are HIV positive deny using a condom. If you are HIV positive, you accept. If you know your status, that you are HIV free, you cannot accept. There is no difference between live sex and not, it's the same price. The women are like 18 years and above, there are some who are in their 40s and they're still going there. They comprise of many tribes.

The clients are mainly the Dinkas from Sudan, but also within here there are soldiers, teachers and *boda-boda* riders. So if the Dinkas are to come, they will pick us from outside, and they will pay for the room and for the sex. If you don't have money, that is when you will come. In a week, I can come like four times. Because there are many, in a night you can either get one [customer] or sometimes you can even be disappointed, you don't get any, because there are many girls. There are more women than men. Mondays are the day you can go and not be disappointed. Monday is always ladies' night, women enter free and the men pay. When we are supposed to pay, we stay outside. When we don't pay, we enter. If a man is to pay you, it will just be the cost of drinks, then hiring a room, and also for other things like snacks. It is strictly money we get from them.

The clients are all kinds of men […] and even [high ranking politicians] sometimes they go there. The age range is from 17 to 50s. Some are married, others are not. Sometimes the clients come back and ask for us, sometimes they just go with whoever they come across. Your contact number you have to give. I don't feel ashamed, because what I always do is at night. I am not afraid at night. There are some men you can like, and there are others you just do it because you want money. The men don't mistreat us, they just take everything slowly […].

Me, I will continue with this until I get money for capital, which can start for me a business. We, the three of us, have a plan to go to Western Uganda […] to get matoke [plantain] and avocado, to come back and start selling it from here. I don't feel well engaging in transactional sex, it is because of poverty, that is why I am doing it. My boyfriend is not aware that I am engaging in transactional sex. My boyfriend can know that I am cheating on him, especially when we're having sex. I feel better with the other men, my customers, than my boyfriend. Because the boyfriend will just be having sex with me constantly, while these men they don't really. I would like to get married in the future.

My family doesn't know. If they knew, they would not be happy. They talk about me that I'm spoiled. And when I've gone back home, maybe when I'm sick, they don't help me, others don't even feel like talking to me, in other words they don't like me, because I don't stay at home. The people we [friends/colleagues] are renting from stigmatise me, because we are renting, and we are three, and in most cases they say that once you are two or three in a room, they will say you are a prostitute. But we don't feel bad, because it did not start with us […].

At work, in most cases, we put on trousers and pedalled trousers or pedals. With the money I earn from transactional sex, I buy food, I also buy good clothes. There are some men who are not married, and then there are some that are married but could be that their wives are pregnant, and they could not play sex with them. There are also others who don't have time and they don't know how to approach girls.

End: My dream for the future is to stop engaging in transactional sex. […] One of my dreams is to go back to my village, not in the camp, and start doing garden's work which could bring income for me […]. The Acholi women from the camps, they don't engage in one place, they move from town to town, in trading centres also.

We don't have someone whom we respect more than the others, but there is an overall leader. She is 28. If she has been called by say six men, and she's tired, she can decide to give [some men to] other women. […] I have never been in trouble with the police, but we settled a case one time with the local leaders, the LCs. I have not tested myself, but have at times had sex without a condom' (12.12.09).

Similar to what was seen in Susan's narrative above, Doreen shifts between portraying herself as a victim and as an agent. In the very beginning she states that 'I am happy to be a woman, because we women or girls can be loved by so many men who can give us money'. Thus, she gives the impression of being an agent, of actually wanting to engage in transactional sex, and that she is satisfied with her life as a sex worker. Indeed, she may be viewed as an active entrepreneur or 'business woman' resisting male power, as argued by FCF proponents, since

she is 'cleverly seeking to maximise [her] conditions and opportunities in a problematic environment' (Sullivan 1995:5; cf. chapter 3.5.1). This does, however, change drastically throughout her narrative. The element of structural enforcement becomes apparent already when she talks about her first sexual relationship with her sports' teacher at the age of 15. As she states; 'it was because my parents couldn't afford, that is why I had to do this. I was only in love with him so that he could provide me with scholastic materials'. 'In love with' would in this case mean 'having sexual intercourse with'. Doreen's sexual relationship with her teacher exemplifies well how male authority figures abuse their power in order to obtain sexual access to young girls, an issue which is common throughout Uganda, according to the ULRC (2000). As stated by the ULRC (2000:43), 'many children are defiled by persons who have authority over them', including teachers. According to Ugandan law, Doreen's teacher was indeed committing an offence of defilement. Such exploitation by teachers is rarely reported, however, and 'once discovered, the teacher runs away and joins another school' (ULRC 2000:43). Sexual relationships of this kind may have severe consequences for young girls, particularly if they become pregnant. As stated by UNICEF (2005:iv), pregnant girls are 'highly likely to drop out of school due to stigmatisation'; indeed, several respondents state that pregnant school girls are actually obliged to quit school (e.g. Rocky, ARC, 20.11.09). Lynn M. Thomas (2007:54) has studied schoolgirl pregnancies in Kenya, and argues that 'widespread stories of 'sugar daddies' who provide schoolgirls with gifts of cash, food, and clothing in exchange for sex suggest how the taint of prostitution still clings to the figure of the schoolgirl'. This may be another reason why the education of girls is not as highly valued among the Acholi as the education of boys (cf. section 2.4.1 and 6.1.1). As Thomas (2007:54) states, parents worry that 'by leaving home and attending schools, girls become open to wealthy men's predations and vulnerable to being bought'. Another interesting aspect regarding Doreen's sexual relationship to her teacher is that the latter's wife and the head teacher seem to blame Doreen for the relationship, instead of blaming the teacher. As Doreen states, the teacher's wife told her that 'if you continue, you will see, I will bewitch you'. The blame is thus directed towards the girl child instead of the male authority figure, similar to what regularly happens in cases of rape and forced sex.

Doreen proceeds by stating that the lack of education and work possibilities, as well as her difficult family situation, initiated her engagement in transactional sex. As she puts it, 'there was nothing else I could do' and 'my mother could not afford anything, and she's just moving all the day in the town, just on the street.' When talking about this she starts crying, and it becomes apparent that she is not happy with selling her body, and that she sees herself as a victim with no choice. As she states; 'I don't feel well engaging in transactional sex, it is because of poverty, that is why I am doing it'. Here she perceives herself as a victim within the patriarchal society, and this assertion contrasts highly with her initial statement about her being happy to be a woman because of all the men that could 'love' her. The way she talks about her boyfriend may suggest that she has difficulties with emotional and sexual intimacy in her personal life – possibly as a result of her work. As she states; 'I feel better with the other men, my customers, than my boyfriend'. Thus, once again she indirectly victimises herself. The issue of structural enforcement is directly relevant to the SEF approach that argues that prostitution institutionalises women's dependence on men, and that it is therefore essentially exploitative (Jolin 1994:76). In the view of SEF proponents, through engaging in transactional sex, Doreen is indeed selling her own self (Pateman 1988, cited in Sullivan 1995:5).

The story of Doreen demonstrates well how young Acholi women may be structurally enforced to engage in transactional sex. Indeed, as highlighted by Jolin (1994:70; cf. chapter

3.5), in a patriarchal society where promiscuity is valued for men and chastity for women, of which the Acholi society is a pertinent example, 'voluntary entrance of women into prostitution seems highly unlikely' as this significantly lowers their chances of marriage, and hence economic survival. Structural enforcement is, however, often not recognised as 'real force' among community members, according to Judith Adokorach Elsie in CARE. As she puts it: 'For sex workers, the kind of force there is many times not physical, it's many times more of an emotional and verbal force, or that driving economical force. So, there, you are going to be held, 'that one you wanted it, you wanted it, you really wanted it'' (24.11.09).

Nevertheless, even though Doreen is structurally enforced to engage in transactional sex and perceives herself as a victim in many regards, she does not solely view herself as a victim. Towards the end of her narrative, she states that 'my dream for the future is to stop engaging in transactional sex. […] One of my dreams is to go back to my village, not in the camp, and start doing garden's work which could bring income for me'. She also talks about another dream that she and her friends have; to start selling *matoke* (plantain) and avocado. However, although Doreen may genuinely want to stop prostituting herself, such statements should also be seen in light of the context in which it was said. Due to the collective stories that exist about transactional sex in the community, in which sex work is condemned as dishonourable and immoral, Doreen may choose to portray herself as an inherently moral person who engages in sex work because she has no choice. She may also be expressing the opinion that she believes we as researchers want to hear (cf. reactive effects in our Methodology chapter). Nevertheless, when she talks about her dreams for the future, the victim/agent dichotomy becomes apparent yet again, emphasising the importance of not solely victimising Acholi women. As demonstrated in this analysis, Acholi women, including rape survivors and sex workers, exercise agency in numerous ways within the limitations imposed on them by the patriarchal structures in society. Although Doreen and other sex workers may in some regards be viewed as empowered women resisting male power, in line with the FCF approach, O'Leary (1992, cited in Sullivan 1995:7) and other SEF proponents importantly argue that sex workers can be empowered 'only within pre-existing patriarchal confines', meaning that 'they cannot do what is necessary, which is to mount an overall challenge to patriarchy'. Thus, even though one might question whether transactional sex may be defined as a form of SGBV due to its possibilities for economic empowerment for women, it emerges as sexual exploitation in the Acholi context due to the underlying forceful structures.

This chapter has addressed our second research question. Through the accounts of IDPs in Gulu and Amuru on rape, forced sex between intimate partners and transactional sex, the underlying patriarchal structures in the Acholi society come to the fore, both implicitly and explicitly. Respondents talk about SGBV in a descriptive and a normative fashion, and structural aspects are noticeable within both categories of accounts. Generally, although respondents shift between portraying the male perpetrator from a descriptive and a normative angle, aspects of immorality are particularly drawn attention to when talking about the female rape survivor and the sex worker, which implicitly refers to the promiscuity/chastity contradiction in patriarchal societies. Indeed, in cases of rape, the blame is frequently channelled away from the male perpetrator to the female survivor, especially if the survivor was behaving 'promiscuously' through dressing 'indecently' or drinking alcohol prior to being raped. When talking about the sex worker the issue of immorality is emphasised even further; indeed, sex workers are not considered to be 'real' women. A woman refusing the sexual advances of her husband is also blamed for forced sex since she is not living up to society's expectations of her as a wife, owing to the bride price tradition. In this case an explicitly structural perspective is introduced, whereas in offences of rape mainly 'individual'

factors such as drunkenness, HIV infection and sexual starvation are mentioned as causes of SGBV. An explicit structural perspective is also touched upon by several respondents with regard to transactional sex, as poverty is mentioned as a driving factor, in line with the SEF approach. In light of these observations, it is evident that although many of the causes and circumstances that respondents attribute to SGBV may initially be considered 'individual', most of these perceptions can be related to the underlying structural causes of SGBV on two levels. Firstly, respondents' perceptions may be directly linked to the overarching patriarchal structures in Acholi society; secondly, they may be related to altered gender relations as a result of displacement. These levels are visualised in figure 8.1.

Chapter 8: Preventing Sexual Gender-Based Violence (SGBV)

The previous two chapters have shed light on the context in which SGBV occurs in Northern Uganda, and this final chapter of analysis aims to take our findings further, in order to pinpoint ways in which SGBV may be prevented.

8.1 Reflections on the Validity of Findings

In order to propose possible prevention strategies in light of the findings in our previous chapters, a brief reflection on the validity of our findings is appropriate in order to strengthen conclusions. We have constantly strived towards ensuring that our study be *reliable and valid* through aiming to 'demonstrate clearly how [findings are] grounded in the data collected and interpreted' (Gibbs 2007:97). The use of quotations to illustrate commonalities and specificities in the data has been important in order to *contextualise* our findings; contextualisation has been further ensured through the use of *narratives*, which has re-contextualised statements that have sometimes stood on their own. Through allowing the reader to match statements from respondents with the categories we grouped them into (appendix 3), the analytical process has been *described*. However, we are aware that had we phrased questions in a different way, we might have obtained different answers. Furthermore, through our being *two researchers* and working with the same data sample, we have been able to increase reliability by critically assessing each other's analytical work and reaching conclusions collectively (cf. chapter 5.6.3). Another advantage of being two researchers is that we have been able to conduct more interviews than we would have been able to single-handedly, thus increasing data variation. Although we selected a sample of 26 interviews to analyse in depth, the other 30 interviews that we conducted were used as cross-references in order to verify our findings, hence increasing validity further. We would argue that the reliability and validity of our study has been high, which provides the backdrop for our quest to lift conclusions to a higher analytical level in this chapter.

8.2 Preventing SGBV to Promote Development

This final chapter of analysis addresses our third research question: How can the knowledge acquired in chapters 6 (on displacement and gender relations) and chapters 7 (on perceptions of SGBV) shed light on management strategies that can be employed to prevent SGBV towards women and girls in Gulu and Amuru districts? Management strategies are here understood as approaches that address key strategic issues and that may be suitable, feasible and acceptable (Johnson and Scholes, cited in Wu 2010) in the Acholi context. As seen in chapter 4, 'prevention and policy responses to sexual violence […] need to be based on an understanding of the problem, its causes and the circumstances in which it occurs' (WHO 2002:154). When having examined the perceptions of respondents on how gender relations have been affected by displacement, as well as their views on rape, forced sex and transactional sex, some of the causes of SGBV have been shed light upon. These include men's feelings of emasculation due to failing to live up to the hegemonic model of masculinity, in a setting where women have gained disproportionately more power. On the whole, even though a few male respondents disagree, most respondents perceive of rape, forced sex and transactional sex in unfavourable terms, as something that should be eradicated

in order for development to be promoted. Looking at how SGBV can be prevented, the focus of this chapter, is therefore justifiable based on respondents' disregard for the phenomenon. The below figure summarises the views of respondents, theorists and us as researchers on the different causes attributed to SGBV. These causes can be grouped into three levels, as seen in chapter 7: the *individual level,* the contextual level of *displacement* and the overarching structural level of *patriarchy.*

Although IDP respondents primarily attribute causes of SGBV to the individual level (sexual starvation, alcohol use, immorality etc.), their lay explanations are not taken to be the external and complete truth about the SGBV phenomenon as overarching causes are latent and hence difficult to conceptualise in an everyday setting. We have therefore attempted to lift respondents' views to a higher analytical level, as mere descriptions are insufficient for in-depth analysis of SGBV; rather, a refinement of data and of lay explanations can attribute meaning to respondents' quotations (Ryen 2002:170). The contextual level of displacement and the overarching structural level of patriarchy are therefore brought in as extra 'levels' to which we have aimed to lift the analysis, as conceptualised in the figure below. Although level 1 (patriarchy) and level 2 (displacement) are both structural in essence, level 1 is at a higher structural level and is likely to be present also outside the context of displacement. Level 2 refers to the contextual setting – the IDP camps – where the structural factors are played out and, ultimately, affect individual behaviour.

Figure 8.1   Analysis of Factors Attributed to Causing SGBV in Gulu and Amuru
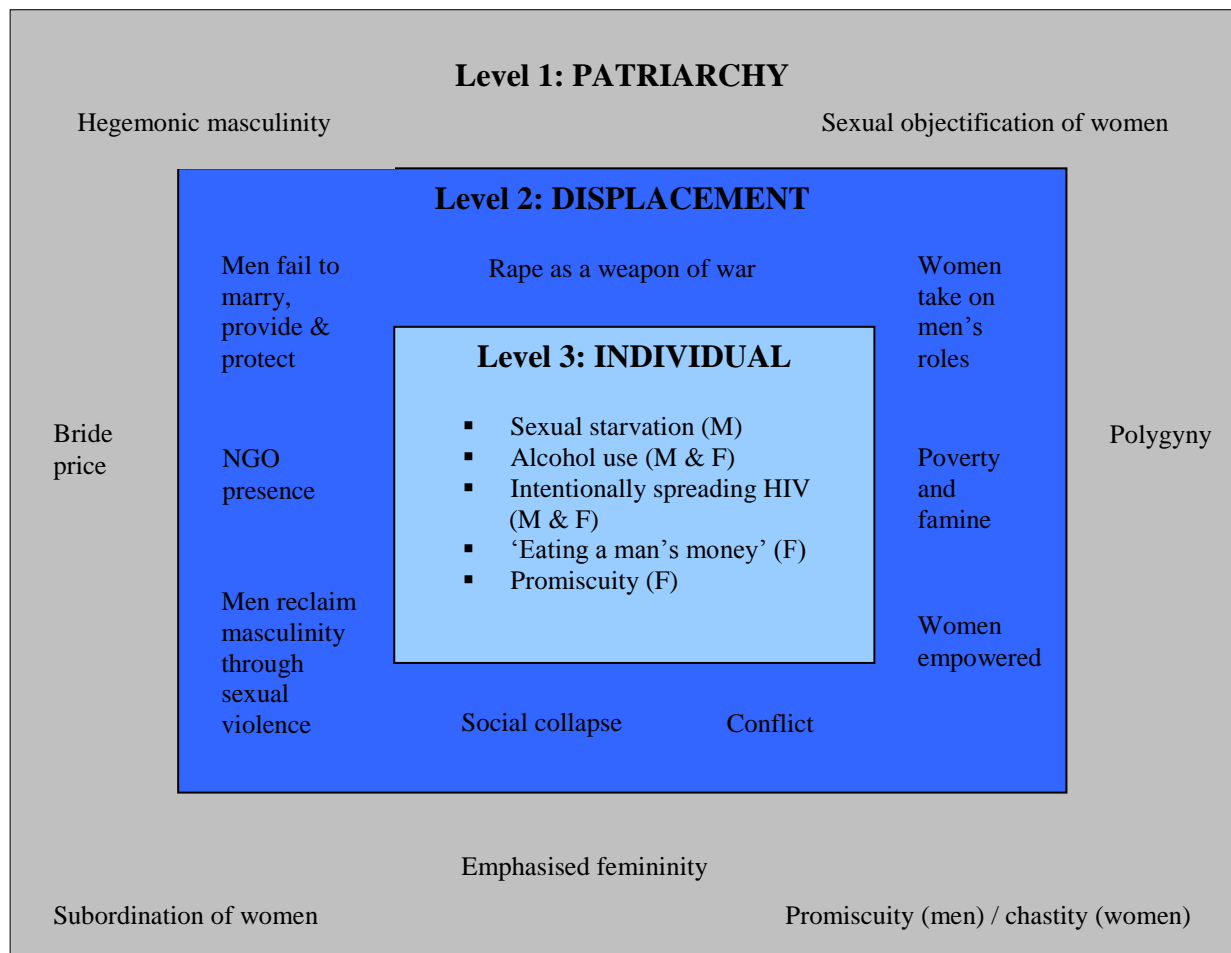
Overall, the prevention of SGBV can, in many ways, be equated to the promotion of development in Northern Uganda. Former Tanzanian president, Julius Nyerere, defined development as 'a process which enables human beings to realize their potential, build self confidence, and lead lives of dignity and fulfilment. It [...] frees people from the fear of want and exploitation. It is a movement away from political, economic or social oppression' (UNDP 1991, cited in Rist 1997:8). Through SGBV prevention efforts Acholi women may possibly be empowered to 'realize their potential' and challenge the patriarchal power structures in society, suggesting that successful SGBV prevention programmes may be highly important to the overall development process in the region.

This chapter examines the importance of looking at prevention rather than merely treating symptoms of SGBV, of basing policies on local ownership and cultural values, whilst including all stakeholders and sensitising the community. Finally, we explore respondents' hopes and fears about returning home from the displacement camps.

8.3   *Best Prevention Strategy: Treating Causes or Consequences?*

According to the United States Institute of Peace (2010:1), 'responses to the needs of survivors of sexual and gender based violence (SGBV) in conflicts and post-conflict settings have often focused on the law enforcement and security sectors', whilst ignoring other equally important sectors. Experts propose a number of concrete solutions to reducing the rate of SGBV in conflict and post-conflict settings such as Northern Uganda. The IASC (2005), for example, stresses the importance of *logistical decisions about camp set-up* being made in favour of vulnerable women. Others, such as the United States Institute of Peace (2010:1), place emphasis on the *health sector* which has 'the potential to play a central role in providing support and interventions for women'. The number of proposed solutions to dealing with SGBV is as diverse as the actors and organisations supplying them; our analysis therefore focuses on managerial strategies that have emerged as important through our study. Indeed, we prioritise examining underlying prerequisites for successful SGBV prevention programmes to take place (the strategic level), over detailed measures that the government or NGOs can take to reduce the SGBV prevalence (the logistics level).

In order to examine appropriate prevention strategies based on our knowledge of the circumstances in which SGBV occurs and on how gender relations have been affected by displacement, it is imperative to explore the views of respondents themselves.

8.3.1   Point of Departure: IDP Respondents' Perceptions on SGBV Prevention

When reflecting over how SGBV can be prevented, most respondents mention reacting to SGBV after it has occurred, rather than dealing with its underlying causes. Although community sensitisation and the provision of economic opportunities are mentioned by many respondents as important, several respondents also mention *excommunication* and *punishment* as common ways of preventing or dealing with SGBV.

Even though *excommunication* of perpetrators is mentioned as a way to eradicate sexual violence from the community, it is particularly referred to in relation to transactional sex. Many respondents, such as participants in our focus group for boys (19.11.09) and Jane (45, 26.11.09) argue that sex workers should be isolated in one place. As a participant in our focus

group for men puts it, those engaging in transactional sex 'should be shifted to another area. If the government could manage, they should find a place where they can stay. They should be excommunicated, because today they are five, tomorrow there are ten, if they stay in the community' (04.11.09, category 8.6). A participant in one of our focus groups for women states that 'they should destroy the disco halls' (19.11.09, categories 8.3 & 8.6), which again underlines the close association between sex workers and disco halls. A respondent in another focus group session argues that the huts of those who sell sex 'should all be destroyed, houses should be reduced, so that there are few houses that cannot accommodate all of them' (04.11.09, category 8.6); another participant says that 'if you are a girl within here they will beat you and then chase you away from this area' (04.11.09, category 8.6). During our interviews, this was also emphasised by many respondents who pointed to destroyed or burned huts that had allegedly been burned down to chase sex workers away.

Following suggestions of excommunication, another male focus group participant says, however: 'I am not buying the idea of destroying all the huts, people should have eyes to see who is in the wrong. If you see someone who is doing wrong, you should call the person and give him advice' (04.11.09, category 8.1). The issue of community sensitisation is further explored in section 8.6.

Aside from suggesting that those engaging in SGBV should be excommunicated, a number of participants mention physical *punishment* as a strategy for preventing SGBV. Traditional leaders emphasise the importance of cleansing ceremonies in order to restore the perpetrator's and victim's relationship to the community, following sexual violence. However, few respondents argue that rituals should be viewed as a substitution for a legal trial of the case, and the majority of respondents are supportive of reporting rape cases either to the LCs or to the police, regardless of whether cleansing rituals are performed.

'Ordinary' camp dwellers place emphasis on the different forms of punishment perpetrators of sexual violence should face. According to participants in our focus group discussion for boys (19.11.09), rapists should be 'given advice' (category 8.1), 'beaten' or 'hanged' (category 8.4). Other suggested forms of punishment also reflect the culture of violence that the Acholi have grown accustomed to through decades of civil war. Indeed, as Elsie, Project Manager on SGBV in CARE (24.11.09) argues, physical force is typically the only type of force that the Acholi people emphasise with regard to SGBV (cf. chapter 7.3.3). Participants in our focus group discussion for men argue, for example, that men who defile should be injected with something that could make them impotent so that 'they should not function'; alternatively, they should be 'killed' or 'they should do mob justice, and pour on them paraffin and burn them' (04.11.09, category 8.4). In relation to women participating in transactional sex, one male focus group participant states, followed by laughter from the crowd: 'If there is any drug that could kill them, they should all be injected with that drug, so that they die, the women…' (04.11.09, category 8.4). Another participant says: 'All those people who sell themselves should all be taken and thrown into the water, Karuma river' (category 8.4), which is again followed by laughter. Similar opinions emerged in our focus group for girls (09.11.09). Interestingly, few respondents argue that men who buy sexual services should be killed or thrown in the lake; thus, women engaging in transactional sex are considered more to blame for the practice than those who contribute to giving these women business. Indeed, as seen in chapter 7, Acholi men typically channel the blame both for transactional sex, rape and forced sex between intimate partners to the female survivor, away from the male perpetrator. As for preventing rape, respondents argue that 'rapists should be killed if caught in the act' (Esther, 16, 08.12.09, category 8.4) or that rapists should be 'caught and imprisoned, so that they get

experiences from prison, and they forget to come back home and rape again' (Sharon, 28, 10.12.09, category 8.5). Thus, IDPs argue that SGBV can be prevented from two major approaches; through excommunication and punishment of the perpetrator, either through mob justice or through legal means.

8.3.2   Inadequacy of the Judicial System

It is interesting to note that most of the abovementioned 'preventive' measures are more oriented toward dealing with consequences of SGBV than treating the causes of the phenomenon. Indeed, while punishing perpetrators in line with respondents' wishes could be preventive in the sense that potential perpetrators are deterred from committing similar acts, such views appear generally less proactive than those expressed by NGO professionals, who encourage sensitisation and preventive measures before SGBV occurs.

What is striking is that when prevention is reduced to excommunication or killing the perpetrator, as suggested by many respondents, respondents seem to push away the problem and fail to deal with the structural factors behind transactional sex and sexual violence. Indeed, when respondents convey the view that excommunication is a good solution to preventing SGBV, it appears that they assume no responsibility for the phenomenon occurring; neither do they perceive their community to be responsible. Instead, they channel the responsibility for dealing with SGBV perpetrators *away* from the community in which it occurs, to external actors – whether the government, NGOs or other communities. This parallels the homosexuality discourse in Uganda, mentioned in chapter 4, whereby homosexuality is seen as an inherently Western phenomenon and the only solution to dealing with the problem is perceived to be capital punishment (Branch 2009:1), so as to eradicate the 'problem' completely from Uganda. Thus, the community neglects the deeper reasons for these phenomena occurring. In order for the community to accept responsibility for SGBV and understand the social structures that cause them, it appears important to promote local ownership and responsibility for SGBV taking place, by seeking local instead of external solutions to the problem. This is explored further in section 8.4.

Considering respondents' views on punishing the perpetrators, whether through beating, killing or imprisoning them, it is however evident that they attribute high preventive potential to the legal system. Indeed, although respondents typically suggest physical forms of punishment as prevention, many respondents also emphasise the importance of the government and the community introducing by-laws against rape and transactional sex. 50-year-old Paul (04.11.09, category 8.5), for example, expresses the view of many when stating that: 'Strict laws, unless strict laws are not there, it cannot be prevented. Unless they enforce strict laws it cannot be stopped'. Francis (54) also states; 'those perpetrators should be imprisoned, so that it shows to other community members that intend to do something like that that it is bad' (02.12.09, category 8.5). However, although many respondents emphasise the importance of the judicial system, both our literature review and data indicate that legal mechanisms are currently inadequate for addressing SGBV in Northern Uganda.

Indeed, as discussed in chapter 4 and stated by the ULRC (2000) and several of our NGO professional respondents, SGBV survivors in the region face many barriers with regard to justice being done, including a corrupt police system, the survivor having to pay bills for prosecution, fuel for the police to catch the perpetrator, transportation for herself to the local police station, etc. (Okot, Local Government 09.12.09, category 8.5). In addition, those who

experience forced sex by their intimate partners face additional difficulties with regard to added stigmatisation and ridicule. Although the Domestic Violence Bill was assented to on 17 March 2010, and 'penalises a partner in a domestic relationship who injures or endangers the health of the other' (Tebajjukira 2010:1), no mention is made of marital rape. Thus, there is still a long way to go before intimate partner sexual violence is recognised as an offence in Uganda. As Christine Akumu Okot from the Local Government (09.12.09, category 8.5) puts it: 'But now if you take it to the police, they say 'are you very stupid?' The police will even ask you, 'but you say the man is your husband', yes, 'but how do you expect your husband to rape you?''

Thus, it seems that the current judicial system encourages a culture of impunity, and it is therefore important, as the Population Council (2008:30) argues, to build the capacity of the 'legal enforcement and justice sectors, [which] play a key role in preventing sexual and gender based violence'. As Walter in TASO (30.11.09) puts it:

> 'We need to work very closely with the legal systems that we have, and the security, like the police, because they keep law and order. So if the culprits are caught and are prosecuted, I think that will also give some fear to the general population not to engage in those. But if they leave those culprits free and not persecuted, it will encourage it' (category 8.5).

Great potential therefore lies in strengthening the judicial system, the inadequacy of which is further underlined through respondents' lack of confidence in it. Strengthening the judicial system does, however, require significant financial and human resources, which underlines even further the importance of preventing SGBV through community sensitisation (cf. section 8.6) and other proactive, rather than mostly reactive, strategies. As seen throughout this study, it is also apparent that although laws exist against rape and prostitution in Uganda, these laws are seldom known to the common person. Furthermore, the existence of legal pluralism in Uganda is confusing to most people, including our NGO respondents. According to Turner (2009), 'common law, statutory law, religious and customary law all coexist'. Paul (50) puts it well when saying: 'The laws are there, but they are not enforced. If they were followed it would be better. Ugandan laws keep on changing, every time these laws change. Which law will you follow?' (category 8.5).

Moreover, even though there are laws against sexual violence and transactional sex, people are not necessarily prevented from engaging in these activities, not solely because of inadequate legal mechanisms, but also due to existing attitudes and underlying structural causes that may promote such behaviour. In 2006, Dolan and Hovil (2006:6) found that the NRC – through their Information Counselling and Legal Assistance (ICLA) programme – was the only NGO providing legal aid to IDPs in Northern Uganda. They assert that 'legal approaches to SGBV [in Northern Uganda] fail to deal with some of the underlying issues, in particular the changing relationship between patriarchal systems and the empowerment of women'. Thus, contextual explanations demonstrate that preventing SGBV solely through the legal system is likely to be somewhat inadequate and superficial, if underlying systems of power are not addressed.

8.3.3   Looking Critically at the Role of NGOs & Western Scholarship: Social Torture?

Perhaps an examination of the role of external actors in the Acholi context can shed more light on the complexity surrounding prevention strategies of SGBV. This section looks critically at the role of NGOs and Western scholarship in contributing to upholding the dire conditions of the IDP camps. Interestingly, the tendency of many camp dwelling respondents to prioritise dealing with consequences rather than causes of SGBV is similar to Finnström's (2008) criticism of a lot of humanitarian aid, which he claims focuses on treating symptoms rather than understanding underlying political crises. As seen in chapter 2, humanitarian agencies working in Northern Uganda have been accused of prolonging the suffering of the Acholi people through 'institutional confusion and weak leadership', which is believed to have increased women's vulnerability to SGBV (Oxfam 2008, cited in IDMC 2009:9). In order to reflect on management strategies that can be employed to prevent SGBV in the region, it is necessary to critically look at the role of NGOs and the Ugandan government. According to Paul Streeten (cited in Goulet 1996:4), '[i]t is development itself that interferes with human development.' Indeed, as demonstrated, NGOs – with governmental support – are argued to have disproportionately focused on empowering women, which may have contributed to increasing sexual violence towards women, as men react to their apparent emasculation through violence (Dolan 2009; Kalyango, cited in Lende 2010). Consequently, argues Fair in the UNFPA, 'when you provide livelihood support, it provokes more violence' (20.11.09, category 6.41).

Dolan (2009) argues that NGOs and the Ugandan government, along with multilateral organisations and churches, are engaging in a type of 'political mass-persecution' (Finnström 2008:135) against the Acholi: 'Like doctors in a torture situation, they appear to be there to ease the suffering of victims, but in reality they enable the process to be prolonged by keeping the victims alive for further abuse' (Dolan 2009:1f; cf. chapter 2). Finnström (2008:135) supports this argument when arguing that the long assistance of humanitarian actors, premised upon a state of emergency, has contributed to upholding this state of emergency and making it chronic rather than temporary. Indeed, one must question in whose interests the prevention of SGBV and other development policies are staged, and what external development actors wish to achieve with their engagement in the region. This highlights the need for partnership between the poor and those who provide funds or services to prevent SGBV. It is important to be aware of the fact that a non-consultative process is likely to result 'in a neo-colonial mode of governance, indeed an unjust new world order' (Finnström 2008:240) whereby the suffering of the Acholi may be prolonged even further. As Finnström (2008:132f) argues, 'the domination that people experience is so forceful that there will be little the displaced people can do to escape their sufferings or steer their way in life'. He proceeds by stating that 'cultural and social agency diminish as the logic of domination and violence enter the most private spheres of everyday life. Such a displacement regime undermines the agency and individual subjectivities of the displaced people'. Indeed, by calling most of the remaining camp dwellers for 'Extremely Vulnerable Individuals (EVIs)', NGOs may be said to further victimise the Acholi people.

Interestingly, in line with Foucault's theories of power, Malkki (1995, cited in Finnström 2008:132), who studied Hutu refugees living in Tanzania, has called the refugee camp a 'technology of power' that 'constitute[s] 'the refugees' as an object of knowledge and control''. However, even in refugee camps resistance to the established order is possible,

according to Malkki, but Finnström (2008:132) questions the extent to which this really takes place in displacement camps in Northern Uganda.

What is striking is that our data challenge Finnström's (2008:133) simplistic portrayal of the voiceless Acholi people, who allegedly 'exercise little or no control over their surroundings or even over their lives. Agency is experienced as being in the hands of others'. As chapter 7 shows, particularly through the narratives of rape survivor Susan and sex worker Doreen, Acholi women do choose to exercise their agency in several ways, even though they may be discriminated against and heavily stigmatised by virtue of having experienced rape and transactional sex, respectively. Furthermore, the perspective that the Acholi are being consistently marginalised and that they are, in fact, experiencing 'social torture' by complicit bystanders who wish them harm (Dolan 2009), appears somewhat simplistic. Indeed, apart from some respondents who argue that women's emancipation 'has gone too far' (Dennis 32, 09.12.09; Boy focus group participants 19.11.09, category 6.41), respondents generally seem to have a positive view of the potential for both the government and NGOs to ease their situation.

Thus, although arguments about 'social torture' are interesting and provide a welcome critique of the role of NGOs and the government in upholding the suffering of the Acholi people, they are not entirely helpful as they remove the latter's agency to a great extent. In fact, through contributing to upholding discourses of weak Acholi people, scholars like Finnström and Dolan can themselves be criticised for prolonging the 'social torture' of the Acholi. Furthermore, in attributing all evil to colonial powers, NGOs or the Ugandan government, they convey an impression that it is only external actors who can 'save' the Acholi from total destruction. This can be related to the concern of Branch (2008), who critiques a lot of Western scholarship for portraying an image of African societies as pure and wholly 'innocent' prior to Western and external involvement in such regions (cf. chapter 2.1). Indeed, such scholarship may risk purporting an impression that all the suffering of the Acholi, including the sexual violence that girls and women have become prone to, is an externally-imposed construct with no other solutions than those proposed – and implemented – by the external actors who are accused of introducing the problem to Acholiland in the first place. Indeed, as this section has shown, NGOs, the Government of Uganda and other external actors, such as Western theorists, may be criticised for prolonging the suffering of the Acholi by denying them their agency. Such a perspective must be borne in mind when considering local solutions that can be sought to prevent SGBV. As the above analyses have shown, there is also a tendency to focus on tackling SGBV after it occurs, rather than dealing with its causes in a genuine prevention perspective. It is our opinion that SGBV cannot be prevented effectively unless underlying structures that promote it remain unaddressed. The next section explores the importance of grounding SGBV prevention policies in local ownership, instead of attributing all problems and solutions to external actors.

8.4   *The Importance of Local Ownership*

Whether SGBV is regarded as a local or a foreign phenomenon carries great significance with regard to prevention strategies. Within the development discourse it is increasingly being recognised that approaches to development challenges such as SGBV must be adapted to the local realities in which they occur. Interestingly, although the importance of sensitising the community to prevent SGBV is frequently mentioned by respondents (cf. section 8.6), several respondents seem to be of the opinion that SGBV is a non-Acholi phenomenon, and that the

prevention of it therefore to some degree falls outside the community's jurisdiction. These opinions are explored below.

8.4.1   SGBV as an External (Western) Phenomenon?

Many respondents attribute what they see as the causes of SGBV to 'Western' phenomena such as indecent dressing, pornography and so on (cf. chapter 7.1.2). As seen in chapter 4, the esteemed Uganda Law Reform Commission (2000:123) states that 'the influence of foreign culture [is one] of the social factors that influence the incidence of rape, defilement and other sexual offences'. Our respondents confirm this view in a number of ways. A female focus group participant (19.11.09, category 8.3) says, for example: 'Video shows and pornography have influenced most of the girls, which is why they engage in transactional sex'. Another respondent, Walter from TASO, an Acholi himself, is also of the opinion that the West is partly to blame for SGBV in Acholi society. He states: '[Transactional sex] used to not be with us here, but because of this influence from alcohol, influence of the Western world, influence of the war, that is why people are engaging in these activities.' Walter also attributes other forms of SGBV, such as rape, to Western influence:

> 'It is unfortunate that people here are copying the Western world […] in their dressing, miniskirts and I would actually say indecent dressing, and most of the walking awkward places, then what do you expect? Because people here are used to long dresses […] they'll get attracted, and they can rape you or defile you. So if the female can also check on themselves and dress moderately, I think it would also help reduce on those kind of what, practices' (30.11.09, category 8.3).

The impression that SGBV is a Western phenomenon is compounded by the ways in which many respondents view rape, forced sex between intimate partners and transactional sex as recent, modern phenomena in Acholi society, concomitant with Western involvement in the region. Walter in TASO states that transactional sex is 'not something culturally acceptable' (30.11.09, category 8.3), which purports the impression that the phenomenon may be culturally acceptable in other, Western cultures. Furthermore, as traditional leader Francis (54) states, 'traditionally, rape was not heard of those days' and 'those days [forced sex] was not there, but these days it is there' (02.12.09, category 6.42). Although romanticising the Acholi culture before displacement in this way may be a coping strategy for many respondents, it might also indicate that through recent NGO sensitisation on SGBV and women's rights, women now report these incidences whereas before the problem was 'hidden' due to under-reporting. If so, this may explain why some scholars, such as Allen (2006:58), question the assertion that SGBV is more common in situations of conflict. Nevertheless, reality is complex, and there may also be some element of truth in Francis' statement, as the mixture of clans during displacement has made it easier to commit rape without it being culturally banned as incest (cf. chapters 2.4 and 7.1.3). However, such statements essentially give the impression that respondents such as Francis and Walter from TASO are linking the prevalence of SGBV to Western practices and external involvement during displacement.

This view of SGBV as something traditionally foreign to Acholi culture makes it difficult for the Ugandan government, NGOs and other actors to ensure local ownership of SGBV prevention policies. As Goulet (1996:3) argues, development cannot be obtained through external actors, but must be obtained from within in order for it to be successful. By

perceiving of SGBV as a foreign phenomenon, it is likely that respondents will be less prepared to assume societal responsibility for the phenomenon occurring. Thus, the issue of SGBV – particularly with regard to its causes – may be ignored by the common Acholi man and woman, and prevention efforts are likely to be less effective (cf. chapter 4.3). This follows from Goulet's (1996:4) argument that:

> 'Today's developing countries in growing numbers value the preservation of national cultural identity, in the face of imported values and practices, and the pursuit of development in a self-reliant endogenous manner. […] Self-reliance means that basic decisions about the speed and direction of change must come from within poor nations and in accord with their traditions—not in blind imitation of practices and policies in Western industrial nations.'

Thus, it is important that the Acholi are sensitised on the underlying structures of SGBV, on the local mechanisms that contribute to increasing the phenomena, and on local solutions that can be employed to prevent it. Operating with efforts based on a Western understanding of gender may therefore prove futile in an African context, as Ntata and Biruk (2009) found; rather, it is important to operate with local understandings of gender relations, explored to a greater extent in section 8.5 below. This is also confirmed by our respondents from War Child Holland (05.12.09) and the ARC (20.11.09), who argue, respectively, that the NGO 'women's rights' discourse in Acholi has been taken to mean 'women's authority', and that GBV and gender 'is taken to be Western, […] the word gender alone is very foreign, and there is no direct law translation, so to come to say, you know, I mean to talk about gender-based violence, they are like all 'oh, so you are the ones promoting women?'' (categories 6.41 & 8.3). As seen in chapter 3.6, many African feminists argue for the importance of adapting the concept of gender to the local context; gender should be viewed 'as a product of location' both by development practitioners and academics alike, argues Boris (2007:191). If gender remains a foreign construct, or is perceived as such by the Acholi people, Western scholarship and the development agenda may become yet another 'tool of domination' (Oyewùmí 2003b:40). Indeed, as Spivak (cited in Beasley 2005:81) argues, the lack of critical reflection over Western gender categories upholds the 'Othering' of much Western gender scholarship; these Western dichotomies need to be deconstructed in order to overcome imperialist tendencies in development and academia. It is therefore important for NGOs and others working with the prevention of SGBV to consider how gender categories of 'male' and 'female' are deconstructed and reconstructed in the process of displacement, as shed light upon in chapter 6.

As Rocky in the ARC (20.11.09) argues, SGBV prevention efforts premised upon a foreign understanding of gender has inspired unnecessary resistance rather than collaboration from displaced men. While this may not necessarily be called 'social torture', it does contribute to increasing the friction between Acholi men and women. NGOs may thus, although they do not intend to, become 'complicit bystanders' (Dolan 2009) in people's private lives and hence contribute to causing more SGBV when prevention policies are not grounded in the local context.

8.4.2 SGBV as a Local (Acholi) Phenomenon?

Viewing SGBV as a local instead of a foreign phenomenon may have great developmental potential as far as preventive efforts are concerned. According to Nyerere (cited in Rist

1997:8), development essentially springs 'from within the society that is developing', and Brennan (2005:1) argues that development efforts are more sustainable where policies are based on local cultural values, as this increases ownership and hence commitment to such policies.

One could argue that the traditional Acholi cleansing ceremonies for victims of rape, forced sex and defilement mentioned by traditional leaders and many respondents indicate that the Acholi have already attempted to develop culturally appropriate ways to deal with both perpetrators and survivors of SGBV. As such, SGBV cannot be seen as a 'new' phenomenon in Acholi society, as cleansing rituals existed long before the camp stage (Olaa 2001:109). There are specific rules when performing cleansing rituals for rape survivors, as explained amongst others by Francis (54), a traditional leader:

> 'When there is a rape incident we need to slaughter a goat so that the woman will be able to give birth in the future. If we don't do that she will not be able to. It is different with a stranger from a relative. The stranger it is with a goat where the incident happened. If it was a relative, like an uncle, a sheep will be brought and slaughtered. We remove the liver and divide it in two and you have to eat the liver raw. We do this in order to still maintain the relationship in the family, if we don't do that they will say that they are not related' (02.12.09, category 6.1.1).

Other traditional leaders like Moses (48) confirm this, adding that, in the case of a relative raping a girl or a woman, the slaughtering of a sheep will cause either the perpetrator or the victim to die (01.12.09, category 6.1.1). Thus, the cosmological balance that has been upset by sexual violence can again be restored in Acholi society, for as Olaa (2001:109) argues, rape is believed to dehumanise the victim, who can only be restored through cleansing ceremonies (cf. chapter 2.4). Such traditional ceremonies are interesting insofar as they provide a cultural view of the possible consequences of rape, and as they hold within them the potential to deter perpetrators from committing additional sexual violence (lest they have to buy a goat, or lest they die following the sheep cleansing ceremony). Thus, perhaps a consultation of traditional leaders with knowledge of traditional ceremonies and the 'traditional' Acholi views on sexual violence could be useful to develop culturally appropriate prevention mechanisms and concepts of SGBV, although it is important not to romanticise the Acholi culture. The importance of using existing authority structures will be explored further in section 8.6.3.

In light of what many respondents say, it also appears more realistic to find prevention mechanisms inherent in the Acholi culture than to challenge cultural institutions completely. While it is important to view culture not as a static, unchangeable institution, but acknowledge its dynamism (Tripathy 2010), it is interesting to see the many references respondents make to Acholi culture. Interestingly, although Rocky in the ARC (20.11.09) puts forth a view of SGBV as being brought on by Western influence, he also argues that changing cultural values in Acholi society is important in a prevention perspective. This view is, however, contrasted by many respondents who argue that it is better to work within the established cultural framework, so as not to create too much resistance from those who feel their culture is being radically altered, such as elders or cultural leaders who are the 'gatekeepers' to society (Elsie, CARE 24.11.09, categories 8.7). As our respondent in War Child Holland (05.12.09) states, men in Gulu and Amuru are starting to perceive of NGOs as trying to change their culture, which is inspiring resistance. This parallels Kalyango's (cited

in Lende 2010) argument that sexual violence is a way for men to resist the male disempowerment brought on by NGO efforts that disproportionately target women. As chapter 6 has demonstrated, Acholi women claim agency within their own cultural framework, not outside it, lest they leave themselves vulnerable by challenging the culture explicitly. It therefore appears more tenable to operate within the existing cultural framework and turn it into something positive (Fair, UNFPA 20.11.09, category 8.7), than try and reform the culture completely. Examples of this have already been touched upon. As seen in chapter 7, the implicit admittance of men that women can also enjoy sex provides an opportunity to capitalise on this fact, in order to expand the traditional understanding of sex from being only about reproduction to being more concerned with women's needs and experience of sexual encounters. This will be assessed further in section 8.6.

Both Fair from the UNFPA (20.11.09) and Manyeh from UNICEF (17.11.09) emphasise ways in which one can find prevention mechanisms inherent in the Acholi culture. As Fair in the UNFPA (20.11.09, category 8.7) reflects:

> 'Gender-based violence is a human rights violation. Human rights are universal. So how within your culture, as cultural leaders, how can you, with whatever is acceptable, raise this issue and start to be the agents of change? We're not telling you what needs to happen, but just trying to raise that awareness. You know, in every culture you're supposed to love your wife and […] you want a harmonious family. So how do we encourage the local people, the local leaders, and cultural religious leaders, to see that and to transit, and not use their culture as an excuse, but use it as a positive to protect people's human rights?'

Similarly, Manyeh from UNICEF (17.11.09, category 8.7) argues that because much of the inequality between men and women in Acholi society is based on Biblical argumentation, which Dolan (2009:192) also states (cf. chapter 2.4.1), Biblical argumentation can also be used to justify the opposite perspective. According to Manyeh, the Biblical verse stating 'women, obey your husbands, and men, love your wives', which 'is mostly said during marriage ceremonies', is the justification for female subordination:

> 'Yes, and they will quote the Bible. But I will also quote the Bible that woman was taken from his ribs. The rib is on the side, so it means the man and the woman should be side by side, not at the back. Because God did not take it from the bone at the back, or the bone under the feet, but at the side.'

It therefore becomes evident that the seeds for change may lie within the Acholi culture itself, or within the very assets considered by people in that culture to be sacred and which are used to legitimise male domination. Indeed, it is clear that when aiming to prevent SGBV, 'interventions should be developed to address the local context and needs' (United States Institute of Peace 2010:3); and not only so, but also to base policies on local culture to increase sustainability. This will be explored to a greater extent in the following section.

8.5   *Preventing SGBV through Targeting Gender*

In order to further explore how respondents conceptualise of basing policies on local cultural values, it is interesting to observe their views on whether to target primarily women or men in SGBV prevention strategies, in light of our theoretical framework.

8.5.1   Targeting Primarily Women

Interestingly, although WID advocates have long been criticised for doing so (cf. chapter 3.3), few of our respondents argue that SGBV prevention policies should primarily focus on women. Although some mention the importance of sensitising girls and women on self esteem, setting boundaries for themselves and dressing decently to avoid SGBV, our data and literature review both indicate that the attempts of NGOs to communicate primarily to women in a displacement setting may have caused more SGBV than it has alleviated. Fair in the UNFPA (20.11.09) sums it up well when stating that:

> 'When you start empowering women, giving them resources, it can actually cause within the household more violence. […] Then control of the resources becomes a huge issue. So that's why again we always want to make sure that to whatever extent possible, we are also engaging the men and really looking at the family unit. As important as it is to empower women, if the men in the family or the men in the culture don't understand what's going on, and why the women are being targeted, then it's likely to cause more violence' (category 8.8).

Again, this has been demonstrated in Kalyango's research from Northern Uganda, whereby men reassert themselves as men through domestic and sexual violence as a reaction to NGOs giving women more resources and hence more power (Lende 2010). Indeed, as Fair (UNFPA 20.11.09) puts it, it is important to target gender relations and 'empower women while at the same time communicating to men' (category 8.8).

8.5.2   Targeting Primarily Men

Elsie in CARE (24.11.09) presents the view of most of our NGO professionals when saying that it is important to 'increase men's participation in women's empowerment and gender equality'. According to Fair in the UNFPA (20.11.09):

'Behaviour change is probably the most important part for prevention. Targeting those main groups; men, boys, cultural leaders, religious leaders, and also women, obviously. We don't want to leave them out, but to some degree they are really victims in that there's little they can do. So to prevent, it's really the perpetrators you need to focus on' (category 8.8).

Indeed, in order to not limit SGBV efforts to merely reacting to the consequences, but to emphasise prevention as an effective way of curbing SGBV, targeting men 'who are the main perpetrators of violence' is important, as also Rocky in the ARC (20.11.09) argues. He argues that it is crucial to teach boys to respect girls, and use men to influence other men (category 8.8). This reinforces Aasheim et al.'s (2008:7) view that men, through being sensitised about the

consequences of their attitudes and actions, should be encouraged to change their attitudes towards women and sexuality to prevent SGBV (cf. chapters 4.8.2 and 8.4). Our respondents underline this; Elsie in CARE (24.11.09) argues that 'behaviour change is very important', and changing cultural norms is also considered crucial by Fair in the UNFPA (20.11.09, category 8.1).

Thus, in striving to prevent SGBV, there seems to be a tension between the need to reform cultural norms and behaviour, and the need to make use of the existing Acholi culture in a positive way, so as not to inspire too much resistance. One possible prevention strategy may be to strive towards widening the traditional Acholi framework of masculinity, so that more men can be considered men without having to resort to violence to assert their manhood (cf. chapter 6.2.3). Being open to alternative ways of performing gender (Giddens 2009:611) is therefore important. Through our fieldwork we encountered several interesting ways in which governmental and non-governmental organisations have tried to use the existing culture to expand traditional understandings of masculinity. They seem to have particularly highlighted the male ability and potential to protect their wives from themselves as the social structure breaks down and men become idle, which is likely to lead to frustration, alcohol abuse, and ultimately SGBV.

Acholi men front a parade against SGBV 31 November 2009 in Gulu town, during the annual 16 Days of Activism organised by UNFPA, CARE, War Child International, the Local Government and others.

As seen in the below image from a billboard in Kampala, it is stated that 'it is within your power to remain faithful'. Although this may extend to women as well, we believe the campaign is more geared toward men due to the dominant sexual discourse in patriarchal societies such as Uganda, which values chastity for women and promiscuity for men (Jolin 1994). In the below image, it is acknowledged that men – whose power and authority over their intimate partners is acknowledged – can use their power to prevent SGBV through a change of attitude. As Elsie from CARE (24.11.09) puts it, 'the power they have as men in society can be used for promoting women's empowerment. And they can also use that power to fight the inequality that exists between men and women' (category 8.8).

In line with the above train of thought, men were used to front the parade against gender-based violence that took place in Gulu town in November 2009, during the annual '16 Days of Activism' against GBV arranged by CARE, UNFPA, War Child Holland, the local government and others (see picture above). By walking with a flag that says 'Dare to be different. Prevent Gender-Based Violence', it is communicated that men who decide to be different are brave – they must 'dare' to prevent GBV; it takes a real man to stand out of the crowd.

Thus, it seems that the seeds for change lie within the Acholi culture itself; cultural understandings of men as powerful and brave can be used to expand traditional understandings of masculinity to encompass protection not only of their families from outsiders, but also from their own potential violence. The apparent tension between reforming cultural norms and using the existing culture for something positive is thereby reduced, and these do actually appear to be two sides of the same coin.

Elsie in CARE (24.11.09) puts it this way when arguing that efforts to prevent SGBV should work with men as 'clients', 'partners' and 'agents of change'; 'we have to look at them not as opposition, but as people we can partner with to achieve what we want to get' (category 8.8). Rocky from the ARC (20.11.09) also underlines this, saying one should: 'not push too hard women to begin looking at men as enemies […] because they are still in charge anyway, the men are still in control of the districts, of the health centres, they are the most educated, they are the most number of doctors, they are the lawyers, and so if you're going to talk to them like they are the enemies, they're the ones in parliament, and so if you don't look at them as allies, […] then those laws won't get passed' (category 8.8).

Billboard from Kampala, where men and women are encouraged to 'be reliable, exceptional and dependable', and to use their power to remain faithful.

Although perhaps oversimplified, this emphasises the importance of men being seen as partners instead of enemies in prevention efforts of SGBV. However, there is still limited political will due to the patriarchal structures in Acholi society (Elsie, CARE 24.11.09; Rocky, ARC 20.11.09), which indicates that aiming to reduce SGBV is a long process.

8.5.3   Targeting Women and Men Simultaneously

Based on the above, the most feasible approaches to preventing SGBV appear to be those that target women and men simultaneously, in line with the argumentation of Gender and Development (GAD) advocates (cf. chapter 3.3.2). Targeting both women and men may indeed facilitate the empowerment of women so that they become agents in the development process, as argued by Connelly et al. (2000, cited in Beetham & Demetriades 2007:202). Furthermore, through widening the framework of masculinity in society, as mentioned, men can 'be offered to empower themselves to change', and as Cornwall (1997:12) argues, confirming the above view of Rocky in the ARC, the men who welcome change should be looked upon as allies rather than enemies.

Interestingly, however, most of the interviewed NGO professionals mainly emphasise the importance of targeting men and developing male-based prevention mechanisms, as they often perceive of women mostly as victims. This may be exemplified by Fair's statement above, saying that 'there's little they [women] can do' (UNFPA, 20.11.09, category 8.8). Some of the NGO professionals may thus be criticised for failing to take account of the importance of focusing on women and men simultaneously. As argued continuously in our analysis, it is crucial to not overly victimise Acholi women, and throughout chapters 6 and 7 we have drawn attention to the many ways in which Acholi women exercise agency within the framework constraining them as women. As emphasised in chapter 3.6 about the transferability of the gender concept to an African context, Western feminists and scholars are frequently critiqued by African feminists for portraying African women solely as victims (Oyewùmí 2003b). Furthermore, development practitioners are accused of viewing African women as weak and not able to challenge their culture, hence African women 'remain 'objects' of development packages', which exacerbates the tendency of victimisation (Tripathy 2010:116f). This criticism may to a certain extent be levelled at some of the NGO professionals interviewed in this study, of which six out of eight are Acholi themselves. (Again, it is important to note that the perspectives of the NGO professionals interviewed do not necessarily reflect those of their respective organisations.) As seen in chapters 3 and 6, Tripathy (2010:117) argues that by seeing culture as a 'trap' for women, their agency and ability to challenge the structures that constrain them is underestimated.

Based on our data and literature review, it therefore becomes apparent that SGBV prevention programmes should ideally not over focus on men, as many NGOs now tend to do, nor should they over focus on women, as WID and GAD advocates have been criticised for doing. Instead, women, men, and the relations between them should be targeted on equal terms (El-Bushra 2000).

8.6   Community Sensitisation and Stakeholder Participation

Both community respondents and NGO professionals place great emphasis on the importance of community sensitisation as a means to prevent SGBV, an issue which is also highlighted in our literature review. From a development management perspective, stakeholder participation is increasingly being recognised as vital for development interventions to succeed, suggesting that it is crucial to consult a wide range of stakeholders in order to design suitable SGBV prevention programmes. As argued by Cornwall (2000:76), 'with the shift from beneficiary to consumer, the voices and choices of those on the receiving end of development assistance have gained more attention. And with a shift from consumer to citizen, the obligations of those who work with and for the poor come under closer scrutiny'. Thus, stakeholder involvement may not only contribute to improving the quality of development programmes, but may possibly also increase the accountability level of donor agencies and NGOs. The importance of involving stakeholders is also highlighted by NGO professionals such as Fair in the UNFPA. As she states, one should 'try to engage at risk populations with consultations to understand their problems, and their challenges, and what […] would appeal to them. How do they best want to be engaged? What role do they think they can play?' (20.11.09, category 8.2). Community sensitisation may be one way of incorporating the views of stakeholders while at the same time raising people's awareness on SGBV. Below, we examine some ways in which SGBV sensitisation may be conducted; firstly, through improving sex education in schools, secondly, by targeting core groups of people and thirdly, by working in line with the culturally established authority structures in society.

8.6.1 Sex and Power Education in Schools

Several NGO professionals and some community respondents see a great potential in preventing SGBV through sex education in schools. As one male focus group participant states, 'education on sex should be introduced' (04.11.09, category 8.1). The importance of sex education is also highlighted in our literature review. Cornwall and Jolly (2006:3) argue that it is crucial for development actors, including within the education system, to not solely focus on negative issues related to sexuality, but to widen the sexual framework to also include positive aspects of sexuality such as pleasure, intimacy and mutual respect (cf. chapter 3.4). As seen earlier, the implicit recognition of some male respondents (e.g. James (30), 11.12.09) that sex with a non-responsive female partner is ungratifying provides an entry point to talking about female sexuality in positive terms, which is not only linked to reproduction (cf. chapter 7.2.3). It is also crucial to teach young girls sexual negotiating skills, according to Cornwall and Jolly (2006:3), especially as young schoolgirls are particularly vulnerable to sexual coercion and transactional sex (WHO 2002:155), as seen in chapter 7. Gender Officer Okot in the Local Government also draws attention to sex education for children as a way to prevent SGBV and puts it this way:

> 'We need more sex education to children when they are still very young, [so] they know [...] what is right and what is wrong and what will result from any of the things that they do. Because there are certain children who learn these things very early [...], so there is a need for parents to be encouraged to educate their children' (09.12.09, category 8.1).

This is important particularly in the context of displacement, where tightly crammed huts have made children aware of their parents' sexual behaviour at a young age, resulting in early sexual experimentation (UNICEF 2005:19; cf. chapter 4.3). However, sex education for children is a controversial topic in Uganda, and the ULRC (2000:123) categorically declares that 'the education system introduces studies related to sexual aspects at a very early stage and this incites children to experiment with what they have learnt', which contrasts against Okot's perceptions above, as well as with UNICEF's SGBV prevention strategy. UNICEF considers sex education for children to be highly important, but Child Protection Officer Manyeh confirms that many parents in Northern Uganda disapprove of the fact that issues relating to sexuality are discussed in school: 'You cannot say you are teaching sex education in schools, because the parents will say their understanding of that is you're teaching the children to have sex. So we call it 'life skills', avoid the word 'sex' completely' (17.11.09, category 8.7). Thus, some of the controversies surrounding sex education may be reduced simply by naming such learning 'life skills', a culturally more appropriate term (cf. section 8.4).

Indeed, as Tamale (2007:18) argues, it is important to increase openness on sexuality in Uganda, as it is so intricately related to the patriarchal power structures in society. As she puts it, 'one of the most efficient ways that patriarchy uses sexuality as a tool to create and sustain gender hierarchy in African society is by enshrouding it in secrecy and taboos'. This suggests that the essentially unequal gender relations that exist in Acholi society can be challenged to a great extent through sex education. We would also argue that explicit power education is equally important; by becoming aware of the existing power structures in society, as well as on how female subordination is maintained, Acholi girls and boys can to a larger extent reflect on the adverse consequences of these structures.

Educating girls in general may also be a way of preventing SGBV, at least in the long run. Although women are 'at increased risk of sexual violence […] when they become more educated and thus more empowered' (WHO 2002:158), this only happens up to a certain level, after which education confers protection from SGBV (Jewkes 2002, cited in Population Council 2008:9). As seen in chapter 4.3.2, the likely explanation for this is that 'greater empowerment brings with it more resistance from women to patriarchal norms, so that men may resort to violence in an attempt to regain control' (WHO 2002:158) – an issue which has been highlighted in the two previous chapters. Thus, educated women generally dare to exercise agency and confront patriarchy to a greater extent than women who do not have education, and although this may initially increase their vulnerability to sexual violence, it is likely to have positive effects on gender relations and the rate of SGBV in the long term.

8.6.2   Sensitisation of Core Groups in the Community

Another prevention strategy that is frequently mentioned by both NGO professionals and community respondents is sensitisation of core stakeholders in the community, such as men in general, women in general, elders, parents, children, and female sex workers. Indeed, as mentioned in chapter 5, most respondents appreciated our interviewing them, and urged more sensitisation on gender issues, sexuality and SGBV. As one male focus group participant says:

> 'You should continuously come here and sensitise us, it's like an education to us. So, next time if such a session is there, we should be informed so that we come in big numbers. Thank you, people! Because when you try to come like this and educate us, we can also go and educate other people who are not here, so that people are aware of what happens between a man and a woman in the house, and we'll be able to correct. You should not stop on men only, next time you should also call women who are around here, so that they also get the knowledge' (04.11.09, category 8.1).

Although it is questionable to what degree sensitisation sessions result in actual behaviour change, it is nonetheless interesting to note that there was an almost unanimous wish among respondents to have more awareness raising on the topic. As with school children, there appears to be a high general need for sensitisation, discussion and awareness raising among adult IDPs on issues relating to sexuality and intimate relationships between women and men, as well as underlying causes of SGBV, which may prove important in order to prevent SGBV. Indeed, Sullivan (1995:9) argues that sexual violence towards women may be prevented by challenging the dominant discourse about male and female sexuality, and thus the sexual power structures in society. This is in line with the Population Council's (2008:3) argument that all efforts to prevent SGBV must aim to reduce gender inequality. The Population Council also states that 'advocacy, awareness-raising and community mobilisation play important roles in tackling the roots of discrimination and violence' (cf. chapter 4.8). As previously noted, the main focus of the Ugandan sexuality discourse lies on 'penetrative male pleasure' (Tamale 2007); 'women's bodies are said to be 'entered' or 'penetrated' by men's bodies' (Sullivan 1995:9). In patriarchal societies such as the Acholi, sexual difference between men and women is thus merely talked about in terms of '(men's) bodily integrity and (women's) bodily submission. Women's bodies are marked out as vulnerable, violable and possessable' (Sullivan 1995:9), as seen throughout our analysis. Women are thus incessantly perceived as victims, while men are agents.

Consequently, 'men are invited to position themselves as legitimately violent and entitled to women's sexual services', according to Marcus (1992:390, cited in Sullivan 1995:9), which particularly applies to intimate partner sexual violence in the Acholi context. Such a patriarchal sexuality discourse therefore defines women as 'inherently rapable'. By disrupting and challenging the dominant sexuality discourse in society, and emphasising women's agency, sexual violence towards women may therefore be prevented, argues Sullivan (1995:9). As she states; 'the idea is to transform dominant ways of talking about women, female sexuality and rape as a way of both preventing rape and transforming the destructive experience of rape for women'. The arguments of Sullivan and Marcus may be directly linked to Cornwall and Jolly's discussion of sexuality and development referred to in chapter 3.4 and above. Indeed, Cornwall and Jolly (2006) argue that in order to confront sexual power structures in society, a more comprehensive approach to sexuality should be promoted within the development agenda, focusing on sexual empowerment and pleasurable aspects of sexuality, including for women.

Thus, based on our literature review and data, it appears highly important to increase the openness on sexuality and intimate relationships in the Acholi society and challenge the hegemonic sexuality discourse, as ways of preventing SGBV. Grace (29), who has experienced forced sex herself (cf. chapter 7.2.1) says this about prevention of intimate partner sexual violence:

> 'Men should be taught so that they'll be aware that 'if I'm doing this to my wife, this is not my wife' […]. Men should be taught about marriage issues, forced sex, so that they are aware that if I do this to my wife, it means I am forcing her and she is not my wife. Because the way I look at men forcing their wives is that the wife does not really belong to him. A husband should not force his wife' (03.12.09, category 8.1).

Grace draws attention to the importance of sensitising men as a group, which Dennis (32) also does. He states that 'men should be advised, and they should know that if they are raping the young girls, those are their daughters and sisters, and if they are raping women who are drunkards, they should know that those are their mothers. They should be gathered in one place and counselled' (09.12.09, category 8.1). Others argue that more specific groups of people should be targeted, for example women and girls engaging in transactional sex. As one participant in our focus group for girls states, 'they should sensitise them [sex workers] through workshops, about alternative sources of income' (09.11.09, category 8.1). Thus, strategies on a structural level also emerge through the accounts of IDPs on prevention issues, although perspectives seen above about individual physical or judicial punishment appear more common (cf. section 8.3.1).

Elsie in CARE also places emphasis on sensitising the wider community on the driving factors behind transactional sex to diminish the level of stigmatisation of sex workers. As she states, people should 'appreciate why sometimes people engage in commercial sex', so that it may be recognised that in many cases the sex workers 'never wanted it, they didn't want to be in it' (24.11.09, category 8.1). Furthermore, Elsie believes that the community collectively plays a major role in inducing behavioural change and respect for one another:

> 'We have to do a lot of community mobilisation, so that somehow the community in which we live does not harbour [SGBV]. We need to build community mechanisms so that they can strongly respond and strongly oppose and not tolerate it. They should be

able to not tolerate it, but take up action without any agency [NGO] having to come' (24.11.09, category 8.7).

However, although respondents greatly emphasise the importance of community sensitisation and mobilisation on gender issues, sexuality and SGBV, this is highly challenging in practice due to the level of secrecy that surrounds some of these matters in Acholi society. As Gender Officer Okot in the Local Government puts it, 'GBV is almost like a private thing, and people think that people should keep it, people should not talk it out' (09.12.09). According to Okot, the secrecy involved represents one of the greatest management challenges related to violence against women, including SGBV:

> 'Sometimes where it does not affect the person directly […], you find that organisations like ARC get a lot of problems, because [for example] a friend of the LC3 was the perpetrator, and the LC3 is not happy with that. […] I always tell them that whenever we are dealing with this we need to treat it with care, because they will actually distort the very good things that we are doing, and make it look like we are trying to destroy people's families' (09.12.09).

Consequently, awareness raising on sensitive issues like sexuality and SGBV may not necessarily be welcomed in the community. One way of increasing the likelihood for success of such efforts is through making use of existing authority structures in Acholi society, and involving traditional leaders and elders both in the planning and implementation stages.

8.6.3   Using Culturally Established Authority Structures

As seen above, involving stakeholders and adapting SGBV prevention programmes to the local culture is deemed vital for the promotion of local ownership, and ultimately for the success of development programmes. In view of the fact that elders and traditional leaders are well-respected and have great authority in Acholi society, it is crucial to include them in SGBV prevention strategies, an issue that several respondents draw attention to. As Michael (54), a traditional leader, states: 'The traditional leaders have to play a role, because traditionally those things [sexual violence] do not happen. So, if it does happen, we have to tell people that this is very bad, and that that is very deviant' (02.12.09, categories 8.2 & 8.7).

When conducting community sensitisation it is important to target core groups of people, as discussed above. According to the IASC (2005:20), SGBV prevention efforts should 'tailor messages for different types/groups of stakeholders'. When attempting to develop and implement 'tailor-made' sensitisation programmes, elders and traditional leaders may play a great role. Indeed, resistance from traditional leaders may threaten both SGBV prevention and response efforts. This is exemplified by the history of the Marriage and Divorce Bill, formerly known as the Domestic Relations Bill, which 'seeks to protect women's rights in marriage in relation to property, custody, divorce and succession'. However, owing to its controversy particularly among traditional leaders, the Bill has been in parliament for over 20 years (Turner 2009) and has not yet been approved. Elsie in CARE (24.11.09) expresses this clash between common and customary law when saying:

> '[SGBV interventions] challenge some of the traditional positions and cultural positions, so you get, the cultural leaders seem to be in resistance, saying that 'are you trying to transform the culture, or the whole society?' And yet they are the

gatekeepers. In the Domestic Relations Bill, there are quite a number of places […] that really works to the better of women. One time I had a discussion with the cultural leaders, and I wanted to find out what they think about this Domestic Relations Bill. There was complete resistance, and they told me that 'even if the law is passed, let the government use it, but for us as cultural leaders it will not apply'. […] It is frustrating, because it has a lot to do with behaviour change, you want to see change, but you don't see it as soon as you want' (category 8.5 & 8.7).

This underlines the importance of working with the traditional authority structures in society when designing and implementing SGBV prevention programmes, which is in line with IASC's (2005:56) argument that 'community-based solutions should always be sought first' in prevention efforts in order to avoid resistance (cf. chapter 4.8.3). Elsie also stresses this:

> 'Coupled with behaviour change, [one should] work with some of the community systems, some of them are really traditional, [but] not all the traditional systems are really bad, some of them are good. And then also […] the formal system should be strengthened so that we have effective legal response' (24.11.09, category 8.5 & 8.7).

Thus, Elsie promotes a triple approach to SGBV prevention; firstly, sensitising and mobilising the community in order to induce behaviour change, secondly, building the capacity of the traditional authority system, and thirdly, strengthening the already existing formal structures (cf. section 8.3.2).

8.7   Returning Home

In this final section, we explore how community respondents and NGO professionals perceive of the future. While some are primarily optimistic with regard to IDPs returning home, hoping that gender relations will become more equal and that SGBV prevalence will decline, others are more pessimistic and worry that the rates of SGBV may actually increase. Interestingly, the vast majority of community respondents are optimistic about the future, while NGO professionals do not share their unconditional enthusiasm.

8.7.1   The Hope

Among respondents who have returned home, several emphasise that the co-operation between men and women has improved and that the rate of drinking has gone down. Ruth (47), for example, who complained earlier that her husband was drinking so heavily in the camp (cf. chapter 6.3.1) and has now returned home, states that:

> 'The way my husband used to drink like he did in the camp has reduced. Those days [in the camp] they, the men, could just take off in the morning and drink all day in the bars. But these days [in the village] at least he does some work at home like sweep the compound, slashing and he spends at least some good time at home. He was having many friends in the camp that could go and buy for him, they could come and pick him and go and buy for him alcohol. The men were redundant and they did not have time to go to the garden' (10.12.09, category 8.9).

This statement is interesting, as it not only shows an example of how drinking is reduced upon returning home, but also suggests that men in the camps established drinking clubs or networks, perhaps as a coping mechanism in the midst of social change. In the same way as our focus groups for women may suggest that collective spaces for women exist where they talk about their experiences as women and sometimes ridicule their men (cf. chapter 7.2.2), the above statement suggests that men, too, create spaces where they can perform their masculine identities together through drinking. Thus, *collective gendered spaces* emerge as a way in which female and male identities are created and maintained in the camp.

Fair in the UNFPA argues that the changed gender roles brought on by displacement may possibly have a positive impact with regard to SGBV as people return home. As she puts it; 'If we are smart now, we could really use the return. It's a real chance, because gender roles are changing. […] It's such an interesting time, because people's lives are changing completely, so if we play on it the right way it could be positive' (20.11.09, category 8.9). Both Fair and Elsie in CARE doubt that gender roles will change back to what they were before displacement. As Elsie states:

> 'The society is going back a transformed society, because these people have lived about 22 years in IDP camps. That period is long enough. People have adopted different ways of living, women have acquired so many skills, they have been engaged in so many programmes, so definitely they are going back not the women who came 20 years ago, they are going back as people who have changed, people who have different perceptions towards families and roles and responsibilities, people who are a little bit also enlightened on their rights' (24.11.09, category 8.9).

Among our respondents, people have lived in displacement camps for varying amounts of time; while some have only lived in camps for a few years, the overall majority have spent at least 10 years in the camps. As we interviewed mostly adults, our respondents can therefore generally remember the period before displacement and how gender relations used to be. However, the degree to which they are going back as 'changed people' may vary according to the age of the respondent and the amount of time spent in the camps. While clan leaders like Francis (54), Moses (48) and Michael (54) may contribute to upholding traditional norms and gender relations upon returning home, as they by virtue of their positions as clan leaders are expected to do so, other, younger male and female respondents may possibly adopt the attitudes they have learned in the camp, as argued by Fair. It is therefore important not to homogenise the categories of men and women, as age and time spent in the camps may carry more significance in terms of how the return process is experienced than may gender.

However, as seen in chapter 6 through the eyes of respondents, women have generally been empowered in the camp in many ways that may benefit them later. Walter in TASO is convinced that the rate of rape, forced sex between intimate partners and transactional sex will decrease when people return home, and several community respondents agree with him. As Paul (50) states, perhaps romanticising life before the camp: 'The situation will improve when we return home. […] In the village everyone knows everyone. […] I think it is the camp that has caused all these things, because those days it was very rare to hear that so and so has been raped' (04.11.09, category 8.9). Walter also believes the rate of SGBV will be lower in the future due to improved livelihood possibilities outside the camps; thus he attributes significance to structural solutions as well as individual ones such as women correcting their indecent dressing, mentioned above. He puts it this way:

'Before the war there were actually very few cases of rape, I would say, and even defilement. But when people were displaced from their home […], you find it shot up. So, if people go back to their places, I am very certain that the rate will go down. […] If I go back home, we are able to dig from our garden, we are able to harvest our crops, we can eat without lacking anything, there is no need for the daughter to go with a man or whatever until she is ready. And then, if peace is there and people are at home […], even the level of legal matters with, people will access justice, because those LCs and parish chiefs, those structures will be in place' (30.11.09, category 8.5).

Thus, Walter believes that some of the underlying factors leading to SGBV, such as poverty and idleness, will be less widespread when people return home. Following from Walter's argument, men in the return areas will have something to do, therefore SGBV in its various forms will be reduced as men to a greater extent will be able to live up to the roles of provider and protector, such integral parts of hegemonic masculinity. Walter is also of the perception that the response system outside of the camps will actually be better than in the camps. Some of the NGO professionals interviewed do, however, hold the opposite view, and argue that the SGBV reporting and response systems will be weaker outside of the camps, an issue that in turn may actually lead to increased rates of SGBV, as explored below.

8.7.2   The Fear

Indeed, while many are optimistic about the future, Gender Officer Okot in the Local Government, for example, is concerned that service-delivery is significantly poorer in the return sites than in the IDP camps. She emphasises the numerous challenges ahead for NGOs working in the area:

'Many organisations have failed to adjust to the life outside camps […], they are trying to, but, you know, they don't know how to do it, because they are used to this situation where people are gathered in one place, and you have your service here and all that. Now after camp people are very far away from each other, so where do we put this self-service here? So, it's actually a very big problem […]. In areas where people have gone to their villages and there are no response services, we still have so many cases of domestic violence' (09.12.09, category 8.9).

SGBV Project Manager Elsie in CARE confirms this, stating that as the current IDP population becomes more dispersed, 'access to services remains still difficult, whether medical or legal, because service delivery was not well established to catch up with the pace at which some of these people were getting back to their sites' (24.11.09). Indeed, as seen in chapter 2.3.2, because NGOs have started to leave Gulu and Amuru districts due to more urgent needs in Karamoja and other regions, 'in the short and medium terms, there is a risk that people in return areas may end up worse off than they were in the camps, with obvious implications for peace and stability in the region' (IDMC 2009:8). Okot in the Local Government underlines this, particularly in relation to the sustainability of development efforts. She argues that NGOs are not focusing enough on the sustainability of projects and on local capacity building: 'It's not sustainable. When they go, that program will go' (09.12.09). Okot calls for strengthening the already existing structures in the community: 'try to ensure that when you are leaving things are there set and as you go, you leave something behind that people can, you know, continue, people can continue with the service' (category 8.10). As seen above, community ownership is therefore vital to sustainability.

When examining people's thoughts about returning to their home areas, it is also important not to take IDP respondents' belief in a decline in SGBV cases at face value. Elsie in CARE argues, for example, that SGBV may appear to decrease as people are reluctant to report it in return areas, although the rate is not necessarily declining. As she puts it:

> 'Now, in the return sites, still it [SGBV] is really there. I would say it is there, although maybe now one of the things is people are also getting back into their traditional settings, and many times now they would not want to so much come and talk about especially those domestic issues, their cultural systems are also getting back to work, elders are getting back to resume their positions. So, probably now they do not come out to us, and we do not record probably so many, not because it is not happening, but maybe because they are getting now back to their initial systems that were broken down' (24.11.09, category 8.9).

This suggests that it is extremely difficult to foresee whether or not SGBV prevalence rates are likely to decline following people's return to their original villages. It is, however, possible to explore some of the factors which may contribute to upholding the prevalence of SGBV in the region. Manyeh in UNICEF, for example, is worried that children will become more vulnerable to sexual abuse in the return sites:

> '[People] are leaving the children in the return areas and going to the gardens, so they are exposing the children. There are reports from ARC and others, saying more and more children below 10 years are being defiled or raped as a result of this, in return areas' (17.11.09, category 8.9).

Some NGO professional are also pessimistic with regard to gender relations in the return sites. As Okot in the Local Government states:

> 'Many of the [men] were like, when you go and talk to them, they say; 'now that we are going back home, these women will see' […]. 'In the camp, the government gave women so many rights, but now we are going back to our villages where there are no police posts very near, they will see'. And that's why of recently I've been having so many women being killed, hacked to death by their husbands, yeah in our sub counties. […] They think that now they have gone back, and they are also very far away from the police, they can do whatever they want' (09.12.09, category 8.9).

Thus, some men may possibly use the return process as an opportunity to regain power over their women through violence. It is also important to acknowledge the many adverse mental health effects likely to have been generated through years of war, abductions and displacement. While such mental health effects are rarely highlighted in the literature and were rarely mentioned by respondents, it is likely that this may also lead to increased cases of SGBV and that it has led to cases of sexual violence in the camps.

Furthermore, Okot (09.12.09) thinks that the fact that so many men were redundant in the camps may severely affect people's livelihood possibilities also outside of the camps – and in turn possibly lead to more SGBV:

> 'Most of our men have land, the land in our culture is inherited by men in the family. So, the time people were in the camp, they didn't have access to the land. And many of them did not think that they could do any other thing to survive. So, they would sit

and drink from morning until sunset, waiting for World Food to bring food. And that is why many of them up to now have become very lazy, after 20 years of just sitting […], they don't even want to go back and dig in their gardens. It's their wives digging. […] So, you find the women want now at least to be independent, go to the garden […]. And then there are some men who believe that, you know, they need to steal whatever [economic produce from their wives], they go and rape these women, sometimes kill them in the process, because they are far away from where help can come' (category 8.9).

Thus, one of Okot's reasons for pessimism regarding the prevalence of SGBV in return areas is connected to the patrilineal system in which men own land and women depend on men to access it. According to Turner (2009), Executive Director of MIFUMI, a women's rights organisation in Uganda, the most central tenet in the subordination of women in Uganda is the bride price, which gives the purchasing husband the mandate to use violence against her. Indeed, as Turner puts it, 'because they are seen as the man's or clans' property, women cannot own any property or land'. As an interesting continuation of this argument, Okio (2008) claims that the struggle over land may result in higher rates of SGBV, since 'widows, single women, orphans and other vulnerable children are being denied access to land'.

The men whom Okot refers to as 'lazy, after 20 years of just sitting' may be an important target group for SGBV prevention policies, as they are significant stakeholders and their lack of co-operation may hinder women's empowerment and thus prevention efforts. Indeed, as seen continuously in this study, the patriarchal system that constrains women is constantly referred back to in endogenous studies of SGBV. It is therefore crucial that government and non-governmental organisations working to prevent SGBV tackle the underlying causes of the phenomenon. Ultimately, it seems that reducing the SGBV rate in Gulu and Amuru should be addressed on two levels:

- Firstly, it is important to be aware of and address the factors contributing to causing SGBV in times of displacement, such as the emasculation of men that has taken place in the camps amid redundancy, alcohol abuse and what men perceive as women's increasing power. It is important to focus on relations between men and women, rather than on one gender in particular.

- Secondly, it is crucial to look at the underlying factors, such as the patriarchal power relations in society, that contribute to causing sexual violence towards women, as well as transactional sex, in the first place, as figure 8.1 has shown. Grounding policies in local culture is also vital in order to promote ownership and the likelihood for success of SGBV prevention policies.

Chapter 9: Conclusion

Sexual gender-based violence is a great obstacle to the development of societies such as that of the Acholi in Northern Uganda. As the UNFPA (2008:1) argues, 'it is obvious that we cannot end poverty unless we also end violence against women'. Such violence is often attributed to gender inequality and women's lack of opportunities in deeply patriarchal societies (WHO 2002:174). Development actors are currently placing gender equality at the heart of efforts to obtain the Millennium Development Goals; the UNDP (2010b) argues that 'achieving the goals will be impossible without closing the gaps between women and men in terms of capacities, access to resources and opportunities, and vulnerability to violence and conflict'.

This thesis has shed light on some of the structures that contribute to constraining women in the post-conflict districts of Gulu and Amuru, with the overall focus being on SGBV, as there is a need for more research on the 'social context of different forms of sexual violence' (WHO 2002:173). Through a study of how *gender relations* have been affected by displacement (RQ1), coupled with *respondents' perceptions* of rape, forced sex between intimate partners and transactional sex (RQ2), we have explored the issue of SGBV from an endogenous perspective. This has enabled us to reflect on *management strategies* through which SGBV can be prevented in order to promote development in the Acholi sub-region (RQ3).

A qualitative research approach, comprising interviews and focus groups, has provided the methodological framework for addressing our three research questions. Internal validity and reliability have been promoted by virtue of our being two researchers collecting and analysing the same data material, and through the contextual understanding obtained during two months of fieldwork in the region.

9.1   *Men Emasculated, Women Empowered – More SGBV?*

Although it is difficult to ascertain whether SGBV is more common in conflict situations, scholars and NGOs generally link high rates of SGBV to conflict-related social change such as displacement (NRC 2007:4; UNSC 2008:1). However, it is important not to attribute SGBV merely to displacement, as the underlying patriarchal structures of the Acholi society are likely to be a contributing factor in itself. As the Population Council (2008:8) puts it, 'sexual and gender-based violence both contributes to, and is exacerbated by, the economic and socio-political discrimination experienced by women in many countries'.

Such discrimination based on patriarchal structures may, however, become more visible in a context of displacement, as shown in the context of the Acholi. As our study demonstrates, the structural collapse engendered by displacement has significantly effected relations between Acholi men and women. Men have lost many of the opportunities they once had to live up to the hegemonic model of masculinity that centres on three facets; marriage, provision and protection (Dolan 2009). Firstly, marriage has been more difficult to achieve due to the absence of cattle or alternative means to purchase a wife through the bride price. Secondly, economic opportunities have been extremely limited within the IDP camps and have prompted a reliance on external aid, making provision highly challenging. Finally, due to the war situation and the fact that IDP camps have only been protected to a limited degree

(Dolan 2009:151), men have been unable to protect their families. In some instances, they have even been forced to watch as soldiers rape their wives, daughters or sisters, as the case of Patricia (22) exemplifies (cf. chapter 7.1.3). Through testimonies such as that of Susan (18) who was raped by two soldiers and infected with HIV, rape emerges as a weapon of war used to humiliate civilians. As a consequence of many men's failure to live up to their traditional roles as husband, provider and protector, they have lost authority and been emasculated, as our data and literature review indicate. Men, particularly traditional leaders, have lost authority even further due to the co-existence of various authority structures in the camps. To cope with these changes, many men have resorted to alcohol (ab)use and have reasserted themselves as men through violence towards women (Kalyango, cited in Lende 2010), which has been closely linked to women taking on men's roles to an increasing extent.

Indeed, while men may have been emasculated through displacement, many women have gained position and increased their independence. Through taking on more work, including the work of men – where men are absent or drinking – women have gained independence and have to a greater extent challenged their subordinate positions in society (El-Bushra and Sahl 2005:22). This has also been facilitated through NGOs' contributions to empowering women by raising awareness of their rights, providing birth control, etc. As many respondents argue, NGOs may be criticised for having focused disproportionately on women in the past, to the detriment of men who have for long felt left out. Through being empowered, women are more likely to resist the patriarchal structures that constrain them (WHO 2002:158). This can be exemplified by the case of Ruth (47), who says that she has been made aware of her rights as a woman and dares to use birth control without her husband's knowledge (cf. chapter 6.2.2). It can also be exemplified by the many ways in which Acholi women exercise agency in their lives and thereby challenge patriarchal norms, though not always explicitly in order to cleverly avoid confrontation by men, as shown continually throughout our analysis. However, women's empowerment may simultaneously lead to more SGBV, since 'men may resort to violence in an attempt to regain control' (WHO 2002:158). Thus, the empowerment of women carries a great paradox with regard to sexual violence: Although many women are more likely to challenge their subordinate position in society, which in the long term confers protection from SGBV (WHO 2002:158), they simultaneously become more vulnerable to SGBV in the short term as they challenge men's traditional power bases. Indeed, it is likely that confrontation has occurred to a greater degree in the IDP camps as men have been emasculated at the same time as women have become more empowered, thus creating an imbalance in the power structures that uphold the Acholi patriarchy. As women no longer depend on men to the same extent as they did in the past, men may use sexual violence as a means to re-establish their traditional superiority. Thus, the structural causes of SGBV may be found on two levels; first, on the overarching level of patriarchy, and second, in the context of displacement, where patriarchal structures come to the fore, as demonstrated (cf. figure 8.1).

9.2   *Expressing Patriarchy – IDP Perceptions of SGBV*

However, when respondents express themselves about rape, forced sex between intimate partners and transactional sex, they mostly point to individual factors behind SGBV, whether from a descriptive or a normative perspective. These individual factors can, nonetheless, be related to the higher structural levels of displacement and patriarchy in which they occur. Indeed, through shedding light on respondents' accounts on SGBV and the structures these relate to, the contextual understanding of SGBV can be promoted. According to Giddens

(2009:945) 'we must discover why some people come to be tagged with a 'deviant' label if we are to understand the nature of deviance itself'. It has been interesting to observe that the ways in which respondents talk about perpetrators, survivors and sex workers may express and uphold the patriarchal structures of Acholi society. For the male perpetrator, 'individual' factors such as alcohol use, desire to transmit HIV and issues of 'sexual starvation' are highlighted, particularly when talking about rape. These can in turn be related to the context of displacement where alcohol use has been a consequence of social collapse. It can also be related to the social expectation for men to be highly sexually active, which reflects the overarching patriarchal structures in the polygynous Acholi society where promiscuity is valued for men (Jolin 1994). With regard to forced sex between intimate partners, structural explanations are highlighted by respondents themselves; because of the bride price that a man pays to his wife's family upon marriage, the woman becomes his property and must be constantly sexually available for him. When a woman resists the sexual advances of her husband, she is believed to be cheating on him, hence breaking with the social expectation that she be a faithful wife. The promiscuity/chastity contradiction in patriarchal societies highlighted by Jolin (1994) thus comes to the fore.

Similarly, in cases of transactional sex or rape, the blame is channelled away from the male customer to the female sex worker, or from the male perpetrator to the female rape survivor. In the case of transactional sex, women are considered extremely promiscuous because they break with social expectations of them as chaste; hence they are not seen as 'real' women. In the case of rape, the survivor's immorality is frequently questioned, expressed through assertions that she may have been 'indecently' dressed, walking awkward places or being drunk, thereby 'inviting the men to rape her' (Francis, 02.12.09). Thus, 'sexual offences are viewed as issues involving the morality of the victim rather than acts of violence against the victim' (ULRC 2000:16). Women are hence objectified through being equated to their clothing or their morality, and it becomes clear that women's bodies are not private and that men, through such perceptions, wish to control women's sexuality and reproduction, which is further exemplified through many men's desire to control or restrict their wives' use of contraception. As Giddens (2009:945) puts it, 'by and large, the rules in terms of which deviance is defined are framed by the wealthy for the poor, by men for women, by older people for younger people, and by ethnic majorities for minority groups'. Statements such as those of Francis, an elderly man (in the Acholi context) therefore exemplify how men define the collective stories about SGBV and the expected sexual role and behaviour of women. Within these collective stories, there are certain exceptions wherein the blame for rape pertains mainly to the perpetrator; for example if women resist by making an alarm, if they are raped by a soldier or an HIV positive man, or if the rape survivor is a young child.

It has been interesting to observe how rape survivors like Jane (45) cleverly make use of these collective stories in order to portray themselves in socially acceptable terms and avoid being assigned blame by the community for the rape (cf. chapter 7.1.2). Indeed, as demonstrated by several female respondents throughout this study, Acholi women claim agency within the confines imposed upon them by men, perhaps aided by a greater awareness of their rights through sensitisation in the camps. This is particularly exemplified by female respondents who exercise agency within their sexual relationships and reclaim control over their own bodies through using contraception behind their husbands' backs. Such examples of agency break with narrow approaches to sexuality within the development discourse, in which women are portrayed as 'powerless victims, men as voracious sexual predators, and children as innocents' (Cornwall & Jolly 2006:2). This suggests that it is important to have a dual perspective when addressing the issue of SGBV; women should not be seen as mere victims

or as mere agents, as they often shift between these positions in their lives, as illustrated by Susan and Doreen's narratives. Indeed, the lived experience of sex workers such as Doreen exemplifies well the agent/victim dichotomy. On one hand, Doreen may appear to be an active entrepreneur through 'cleverly seeking to maximise [her] conditions and opportunities in a problematic environment' (Sullivan 1995:5). On the other hand, she can be regarded as a victim of patriarchal structures that institutionalise women's dependence on men through prostitution, a trade that is inherently exploitative (Jolin 1994:76), particularly in the Acholi context of extreme poverty (cf. chapter 7.3.3). We would therefore argue that transactional sex should be included in approaches to SGBV in poverty-stricken environments such as Northern Uganda – where structural enforcement is likely to be high – in order to address the sexual exploitation of women from a broad perspective.

9.3   The Way Forward: Preventing SGBV in Northern Uganda

In the same way that Acholi women can be viewed as both agents and victims, it is important to avoid essentialising all men as 'voracious sexual predators' (Cornwall & Jolly 2006:2) without acknowledging the many structural forces that may exist behind their individual acts of sexual violence. The interplay between individual and structural factors is therefore crucial to bear in mind when striving to develop appropriate SGBV prevention mechanisms, as figure 8.1 shows. Because SGBV takes place in the context of altered gender relations and within a patriarchal society that relies on women's subordination to men, it is crucial that prevention strategies target men, women and gender relations on equal terms, instead of prioritising one gender at the expense of the other. In the past, NGOs in the Acholi sub-region have been criticised for over-focusing on women in development efforts (Dolan 2009), as noted, which may paradoxically have increased SGBV levels as men reclaim their lost authority from women through sexual violence (UNICEF 2005:11; Kalyango, cited in Lende 2010:42). Indeed, 'studies have indicated that relief projects and structures for refugee representation tend to exacerbate existing gender inequality within the affected communities' (AI 2001:174). Our NGO respondents indicate that currently, men take precedence in SGBV prevention efforts. Thus, it seems that the pendulum has swung from an over-focus on women to an over-focus on men, which in the long run risks purporting the continued suppression of women through denying them their agency, a frequent critique levelled at development practitioners and Western scholars by African feminists (Oyewùmí 2010:116). It therefore seems crucial to view men and women as allies in the prevention of SGBV in Northern Uganda, and adopt a gender perspective that considers both the needs of women and of men.

In order to increase community ownership and the likelihood for success, such a gender perspective should be based on local understandings of gender, instead of uncritically adopting foreign terminologies that the Acholi are unfamiliar with. As Ntata and Biruk (2009:7) have found, and as echoed by our NGO respondents, the perceivably 'Western' nature of the gender concept is often rejected by local African communities, as it is considered a threat to local life. In order to adapt the gender concept in the best manner possible to an Acholi context, we would argue that a holistic perspective that combines views from both Western and African gender discourses should be employed to understand the overarching structures leading to SGBV. Although we agree with African feminists that African women as a category should not be homogenised and victimised – as Western feminists are criticised for doing – perspectives from Western feminism such as Beauvoir's theory on Otherness and the sexual objectification of women may still be relevant to the male-dominated Acholi context, as shown throughout our analysis.

Nevertheless, although the overarching theoretical framework from which to understand the underlying structures of gender inequality in Acholi society may benefit from incorporating perspectives from both Western and African gender theories, tangible strategies to prevent SGBV must be adapted to the local context. If the lived realities of displaced Acholi men and women are taken into account, traditional notions of masculinity, femininity and sexuality may be expanded, which is likely to increase the social acceptance of different ways of performing gender (Cornwall 1997:12). The importance of adapting policies to local realities is further highlighted by NGO respondents; however, many respondents continue to talk about SGBV in a non-Acholi way. Many attribute 'Western' causes to SGBV, such as indecent dressing, pornography and alcohol, and argue that SGBV can be eradicated from the community through the excommunication or punishment of the perpetrator or sex worker – either through mob justice or through legal means. Although this may have a certain preventive effect, these methods inherently avoid responsibility and fail to adequately address the underlying structures that contribute to causing SGBV. In order to promote knowledge about these structures, it is important that stakeholders – including different groups of men, women and children – be sensitised about sexuality and existing power structures in locally appropriate ways, using locally acceptable terms such as 'life skills' for sex education in schools. In order not to inspire resistance for explicitly challenging power relations, traditional authority systems, including clan leaders, may be used to sensitise the community.

Thus, ultimately, causes rather than consequences may be addressed, and factors within the three levels that contribute to causing SGBV – the *individual* level, the *contextual* level of displacement and the *structural* level of patriarchy – can be dealt with to a greater extent.

9.4   Taking the Study Further

To take the study further, it would be interesting to explore how gender relations and the prevalence of rape, forced sex between intimate partners and transactional sex have been affected by changed surroundings in return areas. As IDPs return to their home villages after spending several years in displacement camps, clan-based structures and local regulatory mechanisms may be restored to a greater extent, and the relative stability and improved livelihood opportunities may lead to fewer cases of SGBV, as many respondents envision. Simultaneously, however, service delivery may be severely challenged as the IDP population becomes more dispersed. Some backlash may also occur in this context, as men reclaim their lost authority as men through sexually violating women who return from the camps more empowered. A study of gender relations and SGBV in return areas would also enable more light to be shed on the link between SGBV and displacement, from a reverse time perspective. It would also be interesting to explore other identity categories than 'men' and 'women' in greater depth. As this study has largely concentrated on uneducated IDPs, it has been most feasible to operate with two gender categories; however, we acknowledge the heterogeneity of these categories and of identity in general. Other studies might therefore obtain interesting findings through looking at categories such as age, class, clan and cohort in relation to SGBV.

Through shedding light on SGBV from an endogenous perspective within the context of displacement in Northern Uganda, this study has hopefully contributed to the international development discourse concerned with exploring the circumstances in which SGBV occurs. Indeed, knowledge of the underlying social structures leading to SGBV is crucial in a prevention perspective and, in turn, invaluable for women's empowerment and the development of their communities.

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Appendix 1: Interview Guides

Interview Guide - Women and Girls (Individual)

Personal Background

1. Age
2. Marital status/boyfriend
3. Number of children
4. Religious background
5. Occupation / source of income
6. Who is the main breadwinner of the family?
7. Average daily income of household/you (before expenditure)?

IDP Background

8. Have you ever had to flee from your own home? If so, when and why?
9. Where and for how long have you lived in an IDP camp?
10. Where and with whom do you live now?

Gender Relations

11. What is your responsibility as a woman in your household?
12. What is the responsibility of your husband or an Acholi man in the household?
13. Would you prefer things to be different with regards to the division of labour in your household, or are you happy with things the way they are? Why/why not?
14. Are/were the relations between you and your husband different in the IDP camp from what they were before (at home) or after? If so, how?
15. Are you happy that you were born a woman? Why/why not?

Sexual Violence

16. Have you ever had sexual relations with a man? (If no, go to question 5)
17. If so, how old were you when you first had sex?
18. Was it forced or voluntary sex?
19. Who was your first sexual encounter with (boyfriend, older man, teacher, soldier etc.)?
20. Do you know of anyone who has experienced forced sex? Have you ever experienced forced sex?
21. If so, how did the man approach you/your friend? Who did this to you/your friend?
22. Did you/your friend report it? If so, to whom?
23. Has anyone helped you/your friend deal with your/her experiences? If so, how did they help you/her?
24. How has this affected you or your friend who has experienced it, afterwards?

a) Health
b) Finances
c) Emotions/psychology
d) Social Relations
e) Education

25. What do you think of husbands forcing their wives to have sex with them, even when the wife does not want to?
26. What do you think should be done in the community to avoid men forcing women to have sex with them?
27. Do you have any other comments regarding this topic?

Transactional Sex

28. Do you know of anyone who has had sex with someone in order to get money, things, education, work, protection etc.? Have you ever done it yourself?
29. If so, how often? With whom? With how many?
30. Why do you/your friend engage in transactional sex?
31. Where do you/your friend engage in transactional sex?
32. How do the men know you/your friend offer sex in exchange for something? How do the men approach you/your friend?
33. How does engaging in transactional sex make you/your friend feel?
34. Do the people around you/your friend know that you engage in transactional sex?
    a) If no, why do they not know? How would they perceive of you if they knew?
    b) If yes, how do people who know you/your friend perceive of the fact that you/your friend engage in transactional sex?
35. Would you/your friend prefer to make a living/acquire goods in another way than selling sex? If so, how?
36. How do you/your friend spend the money you earn from transactional sex?
37. Do you/your friend usually take any precautions when engaging in transactional sex? If so, what precautions and why? (Ask about HIV if not mentioned)
38. What are your thoughts about transactional sex?
    a) If it should stop, what do you think should be done in the community to prevent it?
39. For how long do you/your friend intend to continue with transactional sex?
40. What are your dreams for the future?
41. Do you have any other comments regarding this topic?

Interview Guide – Men (Individual)

Personal Background

1. Age
2. Marital status/girlfriend
3. Number of children
4. Religious background
5. Occupation / source of income
6. Who is the main breadwinner of the family?
7. Average daily income of household/you (before expenditure)?

IDP Background

8. Have you ever had to flee from your own home? If so, when and why?
9. Where and for how long have you lived in an IDP camp?
10. Where and with whom do you live now?

Gender Relations

11. What is your responsibility as a man in your household?
12. What is the responsibility of your wife or an Acholi woman in the household?
13. Would you prefer things to be different with regards to the division of labour in your household, or are you happy with things the way they are? Why/why not?
14. Are/were the relations between you and your wife different in the IDP camp from what they were before (at home) or after? If so, how?
15. Are you happy that you were born a man? Why/why not?

Sexual Violence

16. Do you know of any IDP women who have been forced to have sex with a man against their will?
17. How common is forced sex in the IDP camp? Why do you think it happens?
18. Has your wife ever complained that you force her to have sex with you, even when she doesn't want to?
19. Are there any situations when it is not ok for a husband to have sex with his wife?
20. Are there any circumstances where it is ok for a man to force a woman to have sex with him?
21. If your wife was raped by another man, what would your reaction towards your wife be?
22. How do men generally perceive of women who have been raped?
23. What do you think of men who force women or girls to have sex with them?
24. What do you think about defilement?

a) Ok – why?
b) Not ok – why not?
25. How do you think sexual violence can be prevented?
26. Any other comments about this?

Transactional Sex

27. Have you heard of any men who give IDP women things or money in exchange for sex?
a) If so, how are the women approached?
28. How common is transactional sex among IDPs?
29. Why do women and men engage in transactional sex?
30. If your wife or someone you know engaged in transactional sex, what would you think of them?
31. What do you think about transactional sex? Should it continue/should it stop? Why? If it should stop, how can it be prevented?
32. Any other comments?

Interview Guide – Focus Group for Women and Girls

Gender Relations

1. What is expected of a woman in Acholi society?
2. What is expected of a man in Acholi society?
3. How equal are the opportunities for women and men in Amuru/Gulu?
4. Are the roles of men/women different in the IDP camp than before? If so, how and why?
5. How do women in Amuru/Gulu contribute to development?
6. What, if anything, hinders Acholi women's participation in development efforts?

Sexual Violence

7. Have you heard about women who have been forced to have sex with men in and around the IDP camp? (eg. husbands, soldiers, teachers, NGO workers, etc.).
8. Why do you think forced sex happens in the IDP camp?
9. What are the consequences for the women who have been victims of forced sex?
10. How can forced sex be prevented in the IDP camp?

Transactional Sex

11. How common is transactional sex among women in the IDP camp?
12. If common, why do women engage in transactional sex?
13. Where and with whom does transactional sex usually take place?
14. Would you consider engaging in transactional sex in order to feed your children?
15. How are women who engage in transactional sex perceived in the Acholi society?
16. What do you think of transactional sex? Should it continue, or should it stop?
    a) If it should stop, how should it be prevented?
17. Any other comments?

Interview Guide – Focus Group for Men and Boys

Gender Relations

1. What is expected of a woman in Acholi society?
2. What is expected of a man in Acholi society?
3. How equal are the opportunities for women and men in Amuru/Gulu?
4. Are the roles of men/women different in the IDP camp than before? If so, how and why?
5. How do women in Amuru/Gulu contribute to development?
6. What, if anything, hinders Acholi women's participation in development efforts?

Sexual Violence

7. How common is forced sex among IDPs in Gulu/Amuru? (eg. husbands, soldiers, teachers, NGO workers, etc.)
8. Why do you think some men force women to have sex with them in and around the IDP camp?
9. When would you consider a sexual encounter as 'forced sex'?
10. Are there any circumstances under which 'forced sex' would be acceptable?
11. What are the consequences for the women who have been victims of forced sex?
12. How can forced sex be prevented in the IDP camp?

Transactional Sex

13. How common is transactional sex among IDPs in Gulu/Amuru?
14. If common, why do men engage in transactional sex?
15. Why do women engage in transactional sex?
15. Where and with whom does transactional sex usually take place?
16. What do you think of women who engage in transactional sex?
17. What do you think of men who engage in transactional sex?
18. What do you think of transactional sex? Should it continue, or should it stop?
    a) If it should stop, how should it be prevented?)
19. Any other comments?

Interview Guide – NGO Professionals Working With SGBV

Organisational Background

1. What is your position in the organisation?
2. How long have you worked in the organisation?
3. What did you do before you started working in the organisation?
4. What does your organisation do concerning SGBV and other gendered aspects of displacement?

Gender Relations

5. How equal are men and women in Acholi culture and society?
6. Have conflict and displacement contributed to changing gender relations and/or gender roles in Gulu/Amuru in any way? If so, how?

Forced Sex

4. How common is forced sex among former and current Internally Displaced Persons in Gulu and Amuru districts?
5. What are the causes of forced sex among former and current IDPs?
6. What are the consequences of forced sex for the female victims? (Health, finances, psychology, social relations, education)
7. How do you think being victims of forced sex affects women's participation in development processes in Gulu and Amuru districts?
8. What does your organisation do to help women who have been victims of sexual gender-based violence?
9. How do you think forced sex among former and current IDPs in Gulu and Amuru can best be prevented?

Transactional Sex

10. How common is transactional sex among former and current Internally Displaced Persons?
11. What are the causes of transactional sex?
12. What are the consequences of transactional sex for women and for gender relations?
13. How can IDP women who engage in transactional sex be empowered to find other sources of income?
14. How do you think women who have experienced SGBV can be encouraged to participate to a larger extent in development processes?
15. What would you say are the greatest challenges on the managerial level for organisations working with issues of SGBV?
16. Any other comments?

Appendix 2:   Overview of Interviews Conducted

ID	Date	Category	Age	Name
1	03.11.2009	Focus Group Women	-	
2	04.11.2009	Focus Group Men	-	
3	04.11.2009	Individual Men	40	
4	04.11.2009	Individual Men	50	Paul
5	09.11.2009	Focus Group Girls	-	
6	09.11.2009	Individual Girls	16	
7	09.11.2009	Individual Girls	16	
8	09.11.2009	Individual Girls	16	Charity
9	09.11.2009	Individual Girls	16	
10	09.11.2009	Individual Men	18	
11	17.11.2009	Organisation	-	Marie Manyeh, UNICEF
12	18.11.2009	Individual Women	30	
13	18.11.2009	Individual Women	35	
14	19.11.2009	Focus Group Boys	-	
15	19.11.2009	Focus Group Women	-	
16	20.11.2009	Organisation	-	Rocky, ARC
17	20.11.2009	Organisation	-	Mollie Fair, UNFPA
18	24.11.2009	Organisation	-	Judith Adokorach Elsie, CARE
19	25.11.2009	Individual Women	38	
20	25.11.2009	Individual Men	58	
21	25.11.2009	Individual Men	46	
22	25.11.2009	Local Council Leader (Parish)	42	
23	26.11.2009	Rape Survivor	45	Jane
24	26.11.2009	Rape Survivor	22	Patricia
25	26.11.2009	Rape Survivor	38	Cathy
26	26.11.2009	Rape Survivor	30	Blessing
27	26.11.2009	Defilement Case	20	
29	30.11.2009	Organisation	-	Walter, TASO
30	01.12.2009	Organisation	-	Norwegian Refugee Council
31	01.12.2009	Tradtional Leader	48	Moses
32	01.12.2009	Individual Women	22	Christine
33	01.12.2009	Individual Girls	17	
34	02.12.2009	Traditional Leader	54	Michael
35	02.12.2009	Traditional Leader	54	Francis
36	03.12.2009	Individual Women	29	Grace
37	03.12.2009	Individual Women	48	
38	03.12.2009	Individual Women	42	
39	03.12.2009	Individual Women	44	
40	04.12.2009	Rape Survivor	11	Alice
41	04.12.2009	Rape Survivor	18	Susan
42	05.12.2009	Organisation	-	War Child Holland
43	07.12.2009	Transactional Sex	16	Caroline

44	07.12.2009	Transactional Sex	17	Martha
45	08.12.2009	Individual Men	22	Aaron
46	08.12.2009	Rape Survivor	16	Esther
47	09.12.2009	Organisation	-	Christine Akumu Okot, Local Gov't
48	09.12.2009	Individual Men	32	Dennis
49	09.12.2009	Individual Men	18	
50	10.12.2009	Rape Survivor	47	Ruth
51	10.12.2009	Rape Survivor	28	Sharon
52	10.12.2009	Rape Survivor	52	
53	11.12.2009	Individual Men	30	James
54	11.12.2009	Individual Men	25	
55	11.12.2009	Individual Men	77	John
56	12.12.2009	Transactional Sex	20	Doreen
57	12.12.2009	Transactional Sex	29	Gladys

Selected sample for analysis

180

Appendix 3:   Thematic Categories

Chapter 6: Traditional Acholi Gender Roles

Traditional Male Roles

- 6.1 Building a house
- 6.2 Taking care of animals
- 6.3 Security / protection
- 6.4 Paying school fees
- 6.5 Hunting
- 6.6 Educating children in traditional ways
- 6.7 Decision-makers / resolving disputes
- 6.8 Performing traditional rituals / ceremonies
- 6.9 More authority than women

Traditional Female Roles

- 6.10 Producing children
- 6.11 Looking after children
- 6.12 Providing / preparing food
- 6.14 Keeping homestead clean (sweeping, smearing house)
- 6.15 Washing clothes
- 6.16 Agricultural work (digging, weeding, harvesting)
- 6.17 Staying home / keeping the home
- 6.18 Respecting / obeying the husband

6.1.1 General information about Acholi culture

6.19
Marriage customs

6.25
Other

6.20
Education

Perceptions of How/ Why
Gender Relations are
Equal / Unequal

6.24
Adjectives attributed to women

6.21
Men feel threatened by
women's authority /
public participation

6.23
Inborn (biological) differences

6.22
Women do more work

How Gender Roles have Changed since Displacement

6.26
Women more empowered /
claim agency

6.35
No change

6.27
Women have more work /
take on men's roles

6.34
Men lose
masculine role

6.28
Romanticising life
before camp

**Effect of Displacement
on Gender Roles /
Relations**

6.33
Men become
redundant / drunkards

6.29
More equal gender relations

6.32
Women lack respect for
husbands

6.30
Marital patterns
have changed

6.31
Men more lazy / other
attributes attributed to men

Why Gender Roles have changed During Displacement
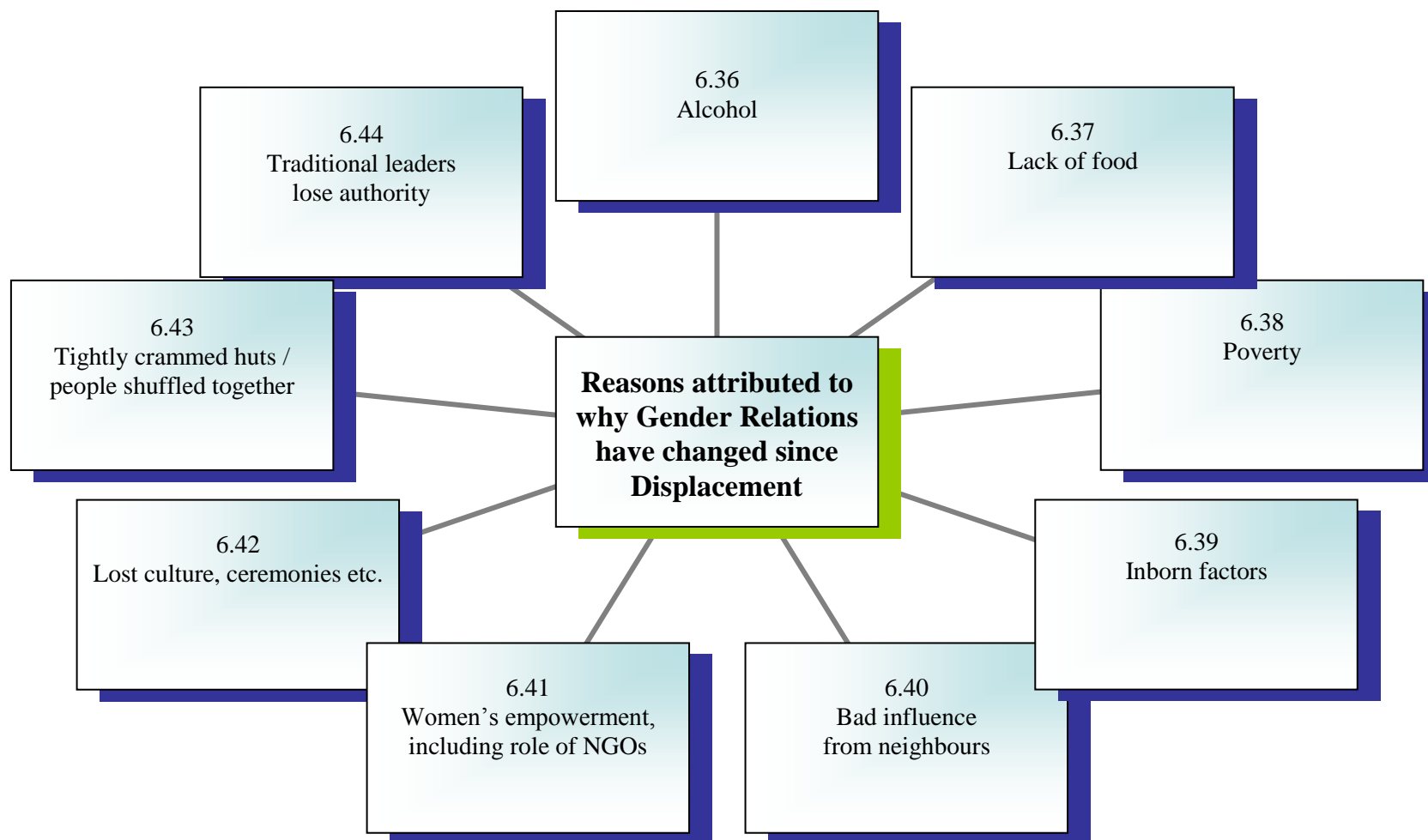
Chapter 7: Rape, Forced Sex between Intimate Partners and Transactional Sex

7.16
Personal experiences

7.15
Stories of forced sex

7.17
Circumstances where
forced sex is accepted

7.27
Views on punishment

7.18
Circumstances where
forced sex is not
accepted

7.26
Views on how to solve
conflicts about sex

**Forced Sex
between
Intimate
Partners**

7.19
Why men force their
partners

7.25
Views on reporting

7.20
Women's sexuality

7.24
Consequences for wife
being forced into sex

7.21
Perceptions about men
who force their
partners

7.23
Views on sex and
marriage

7.22
Perceptions about
women refusing sex

7.29
Stories of
transactional sex

7.28
Perceptions about
prevalence

7.30
Where it takes
place

7.42
Personal
experiences with
sex work

7.31
Why women
sell sex

7.41
Views on
punishment of
women

7.32
Why men buy sex

**Transactional
Sex**

7.40
Views on
punishment of
men

7.33
Perceptions about
sex workers

7.39
Reactions if wife
or relative was
involved

7.34
Perceptions about
men buying sex

7.38
Thoughts about
personal
engagement

7.35
Views on
defilement

7.37
Views on
transactional sex
and HIV

7.36
Views on
transactional sex
as a phenomenon

Chapter 8: How to Prevent SGBV