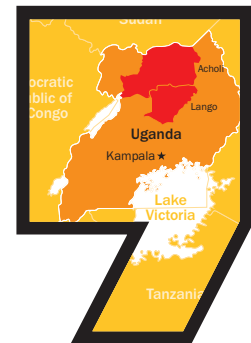Researching livelihoods and
services affected by conflict

Gender, youth and urban labour market participation: evidence from the catering sector in Lira, Northern Uganda

Working Paper 27

Richard Mallett and Teddy Atim

December 2014

Feinstein
International Center

ODI

About us

Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium (SLRC) aims to generate a stronger evidence base on how people make a living, educate their children, deal with illness and access other basic services in conflict-affected situations (CAS). Providing better access to basic services, social protection and support to livelihoods matters for the human welfare of people affected by conflict, the achievement of development targets such as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and international efforts at peace- and state-building.

At the centre of SLRC's research are three core themes, developed over the course of an intensive one-year inception phase:

- State legitimacy: experiences, perceptions and expectations of the state and local governance in conflict-affected situations
- State capacity: building effective states that deliver services and social protection in conflict-affected situations
- Livelihood trajectories and economic activity under conflict

The Overseas Development Institute (ODI) is the lead organisation. SLRC partners include the Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit (AREU), the Centre for Poverty Analysis (CEPA) in Sri Lanka, Feinstein International Center (FIC, Tufts University), Focus1000 in Sierra Leone, Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), Humanitarian Aid and Reconstruction of Wageningen University (WUR) in the Netherlands, the Nepal Centre for Contemporary Research (NCCR), and the Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) in Pakistan.

Contents

Figures

Boxes

Acknowledgements

Abbreviations and acronyms

AAU	ActionAid Uganda
GNI	Gross National Income
GoU	Government of Uganda
ILO	International Labour Organization
LC	Local Council
LRA	Lord's Resistance Army
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
NUSAF	Northern Uganda Social Action Fund
OHCHR	Office of the High Commission for Human Rights
PRDP	Peace, Recovery and Development Plan
SLRC	Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium
UBoS	Uganda Bureau of Statistics
UHRC	Uganda Human Rights Commission
UN	United Nations
UNFPA	UN Population Fund
UNHS	Uganda National Household Survey
USH	Ugandan Shilling
YOP	Youth Opportunities Program

Executive summary

What is this study about?

The creation of good jobs and decent work in conflict-affected places is widely seen to generate not just wealthier economies, but also safer societies and more legitimate states. However, so much of the thinking in this area is dominated by technical approaches more concerned with balancing out supply and demand than with serious analysis of the role of institutions, identity and power in mediating access to opportunities. This study is about understanding how labour markets actually work in insecure and dynamic contexts, with a particular focus on: 1) how young women and men acquire skills and enter the urban labour market in the first place, particularly in light of the highly gendered nature of boundaries between public and private space; 2) what the nature, terms and limits of their labour market participation look like; and 3) whether participation in that urban labour market is working for or against them (in terms of its effects on various dimensions of their wellbeing). More specifically, it looks at young women's and men's experiences in the catering sector (a major employer of both genders) of Lira town (one of Uganda's largest urban areas). The study – together with wider comparative work being implemented by SLRC, including a closely connected sister project in Kabul, Afghanistan – ultimately sets out to help us understand what a 'good jobs agenda' for fragile states might actually look like.

What did we do?

Data collection was carried out in Lira town, northern Uganda by researchers from the Overseas Development Institute (ODI) and Tuft University's Feinstein International Center (FIC) in April/May 2014. Researchers employed qualitative methods (mainly semi-structured interviews, some focus group work) to generate information on processes, experiences, meanings and effects of employment in the town's catering sector. The majority of these were with young people working in various roles and in various tiers of the sector. We used daily stocktakes to get a sense of how close we were to saturation in some areas and where gaps remained in others, and more generally to ensure that we were achieving a balanced sample (by gender and tier). In addition, we chose not to home in on a particular sub-sector of the industry (e.g. bars), but instead sought to talk to people working in a range of catering establishments, from restaurants to hotels to drinking places. We also carried out a number of interviews with older individuals – typically the owners or managers of establishments – in order to better understand the factors and preferences driving recruitment processes and to widen our understanding of working conditions in the sector. Finally, in order to get a sense of how particular or general the nature of youth participation in the tailoring labour market is, interviews were also carried out with young male carpenters and young female beauticians. In total, the research team carried out 43 semi-structured interviews and four focus groups.

What did we find?

While jobs in the upper tier of Lira's catering sector – comprising a low number of quality establishments geared towards a relatively wealthy clientele – are considered by the town's youth to constitute decent work, life for the majority of workers in the sector is tough. Participation for most is characterised by chronic job insecurity, an absence of workers' rights, long hours, demeaning attitudes from others in the community, and – especially for young women in the mid- and lower tiers of the sector – exposure to different forms of sexual and physical vulnerability. The nature of young people's participation in the catering sector is indicative of economic life in the

urban labour market more generally, typified as it is by high levels of horizontal mobility (workers move on quickly from one place to the next, and are often unable to build a career in a constant and identifiable profession) and very low levels of upward mobility (opportunities for progression and accumulation are limited).

The theme of trade-offs also emerges as important. Because access to economic opportunities in the urban labour market is shaped by the strength and nature of one's social ties, young people who take up 'deviant occupations' in low-end bars and restaurants, whether out of necessity or otherwise, risk undermining their prospects of securing decent, better paid and more dignified work further down the line. Likewise, this social stigmatisation of (certain) catering work is understood to make it much harder for young people to achieve non-material life goals: a young woman working in a bar, for example, may struggle to acquire a 'good husband' or may eventually find herself cut off from rural kinship networks. In short, earning an income is important, but, from a social perspective, so too are the means through which that income is earned.

The urban economy is a cash-based economy where, for most, simply getting by is difficult. High rents, the recent effects of inflation on market prices, and the potency of obligations to support one's family, wherever they might be, all combine to suffocate a young urbanite's capacity to accumulate. And the urban labour market does little to support them in this. Work in the catering sector provides the basis for a precarious form of economic survival, but little beyond that: workers might bring in just about enough to get by in the short term, but the informal and unreliable nature of the sector forces individuals to look for additional economic activity on the side (especially those that produce food or small but regular incomes). Indeed, catering workers need something to fall back on when they are not paid on time, when they are fired abruptly or when their employer's costs and losses come out of their personal salary. The paradox is that the straining, laborious, time-intensive nature of catering work prohibits people from pursuing something else. In other words, the labour market is pushing people towards participation in other economic activities at the same time as limiting their capacity to actually do so.

What does it mean?

With some exceptions, Lira's catering sector – and the urban labour market more generally – falls short of providing young people with what they feel they need. Of course, a decent income is essential, but Lira's youth are looking for more than that: dignity, meaning and the potential for progression. Currently, the labour market is a long way off delivering any of this.

Many of those in the catering sector, for example, feel that the economic relationships and arrangements they have found themselves in are unfair and exploitative. As a result, young people end up aspiring towards self-employment: the risks may be greater (in some respects), but at least it offers the chance to be one's 'own boss'. For these young people, then, self-employment is less about letting an entrepreneurial instinct take over – and arguably less about economic security – but more about a basic desire to engage in (what is seen to constitute) a non-exploitative form of economic activity.

In light of this evidence, investing so many resources in programmes like microfinance appears to miss the point, addressing a symptom and consequence of poorly functioning labour markets and weak workers' rights, rather than getting to grips with the reasons why a young man or woman in northern Uganda might perceive self-employment as their most viable option. We ultimately conclude that looking at why people reject certain kinds of jobs – and how that might be changed for the better – is just as important as understanding what people want in the first place.

1   Introduction

Uganda is the world's youngest country – proportionally, it contains more people below the age of 30 than anywhere else. According to official statistics, 32% of Uganda's youth population is unemployed (Young Leaders Think Tank for Policy Alternatives, 2011), which places youth employment right at the top of the country's development agenda. A great deal of effort is going in to figuring out how more of Uganda's youth can secure decent work: the government's National Youth Policy promotes youth inclusion in the labour market; the Youth Venture Capital Fund aims to support the growth of youth-run enterprises; and the Youth Opportunities Program (YOP) features as a central element of the much discussed Northern Uganda Social Action Fund (NUSAF). These are but a few examples.

Reducing youth unemployment is seen by the international donor community as good for various reasons: it boosts asset accumulation at the individual level, it contributes to greater economic productivity at the aggregate level, and it creates safer societies – or so goes the dominant logic. That last claim is of particular relevance to the northern Ugandan context. For twenty years, a war between the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) and the Government of Uganda (GoU) produced brutal and wide-ranging effects on the north's civilian population. Chronic insecurity, fear and displacement marked the lives of millions. Today, recovery is happening – but it is taking time (Mazurana et al., 2014). Violent conflicts of such intensity and duration not only disrupt economic activity on a massive scale, but they also tear at the social fabric of communities, leaving invisible legacies including less cohesive networks of social relationships and high levels of post-traumatic stress disorder (Pfeiffer and Elbert, 2011; Vinck et al., 2007).

Job creation is normatively framed as a means for post-conflict recovery and rehabilitation in troubled places such as northern Uganda. Some of the logics underpinning this kind of framing are perhaps more convincing than others. For example, it is far from clear that giving a young person a job is sufficient to deter their future participation in violence simply because they have something else to do. There is, in fact, very little empirical evidence on the wider relationship between unemployment and violence (Cramer, 2010), and one of the key messages to emerge from our work here is that we should be paying much closer attention to the problem of youth underemployment (or, more specifically, inadequate employment – see Greenwood, 1999). On the other hand, it is not unreasonable to assume that employment in certain kinds of jobs might have various transformative effects. One recent review, for example, concluded that 'jobs emerge as important correlates of a range of outcomes typically associated with social cohesion, such as wellbeing, social associations or personal levels of social and political activism' (Wietzke, 2014: 25). Thus, while we are concerned here with the question of how young people access jobs in the first place – a key question in a region characterised by poverty and historical marginality – we are also interested in what employment does for young people once they have secured it.

In working towards a 'good jobs agenda' for fragile states – a priority of the international community – a good deal of analytical work must first be done to unpick exactly how and why different employment dynamics shape outcomes beyond the material (although the question of economic returns, and how these are distributed, of course remains critical). This study can be considered one small part of this broader effort. In the more immediate sense, it contributes to the wider work of the Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium (SLRC) on livelihoods and economic activity in conflict-affected places. A chunk of that research is concerned with how people living in difficult environments make a living, so labour market access and participation are core issues. This particular case study is accompanied by a separate yet closely connected case study from Afghanistan on the experiences of young men and women in Kabul's tailoring sector (see Pain and Mallett, 2014). The two studies share a similar

methodological approach and are guided by the same overarching research questions. In this study's case:

- What is the nature and household structure of women's and men's economic activity in Lira?[1]
- What are the mechanisms through which shifts in the nature and household structure of economic activity occur?
- How do labour markets function in Lira?
- What are the formal and informal mediating young women's and men's access to, and participation in, labour markets in Lira?[2]

Together, the Lira and Kabul case studies will form the basis of a forthcoming synthesis report which will investigate more deeply the theoretical aspects of labour market participation, the key themes to emerge from the empirical work, and the policy implications of our findings.

The paper unfolds as follows. In the next section, we talk through the methodology. In the third section, we provide some background notes to the case study, introducing the economy of northern Uganda, Lira's recent history, and the structure of this study's chosen labour market – the catering industry of Lira town. Section 4 constitutes the analytical core of the paper. We cover in turn: (1) how young people access the urban labour market in general and the catering sector in particular; (2) the terms of young people's participation in the sector; and (3) the effects and meanings of this participation. In section 5, we compare access to and participation in the catering sector with two other popular sectors in Lira town – carpentry and hairdressing. Section 6 concludes.

---

[1] The phrase 'household structure' refers to the division of labour between women and men at the household level vis-à-vis participation in both the productive and reproductive economic spaces (see Elson, 1999).
[2] As will be seen in this paper, our research has rather less to say on the first and second research questions compared to the third and fourth. This should be considered a limitation of the study.

2   Methodology

This study is concerned with the realistic assessment of economic activity and labour markets (see Nordstrom, 2010). More specifically, we are interested in addressing broader questions of post-conflict youth employment and access to jobs through a focused investigation of the experiences of young women and men in a specific sector, place and point in time. Our geographical focus is Lira town, the administrative and commercial centre of Lira District in northern Uganda (see Section 3.2). Although smaller than Gulu – the largest urban area in northern Uganda – according to 2014 estimates Lira is still the third largest city in Uganda, with a population just shy of 120,000 (World Population Review, 2014). Yet, it remains relatively under-researched, with most studies of the region focusing either on Gulu or the Karamoja region to the north-east.

The primary sectoral focus of this study is catering – which we understand to include all forms of work in the hotel, restaurant and bar industry (which itself is complex and highly stratified, see section 3.3) – although we also take a comparative look at the carpentry and hairdressing/beauty parlour sectors. Including an analysis of these two additional sectors enables us to say more confidently whether the kinds of patterns and dynamics observed in the catering sector seem to be more general features of the urban labour market at large.

Why catering? Results from a recent labour force survey tell us that 85% of the working population in urban Uganda are employed in the service sector (UBoS, 2010a). Within the broad service industry, catering emerges as an employer of both men and women – an essential criterion for case selection given this study's emphasis on gendered labour market dynamics and conditions. As Figure 1 below shows, work in hotels and restaurants constitutes the second largest occupational industry for women, while also employing a considerable number of men. (It should also be pointed out that these figures probably underestimate the number of people working in very informal and low level establishments)

Figure 1: Labour market participation of 14-64 year olds in Uganda, by sector (% of working population)
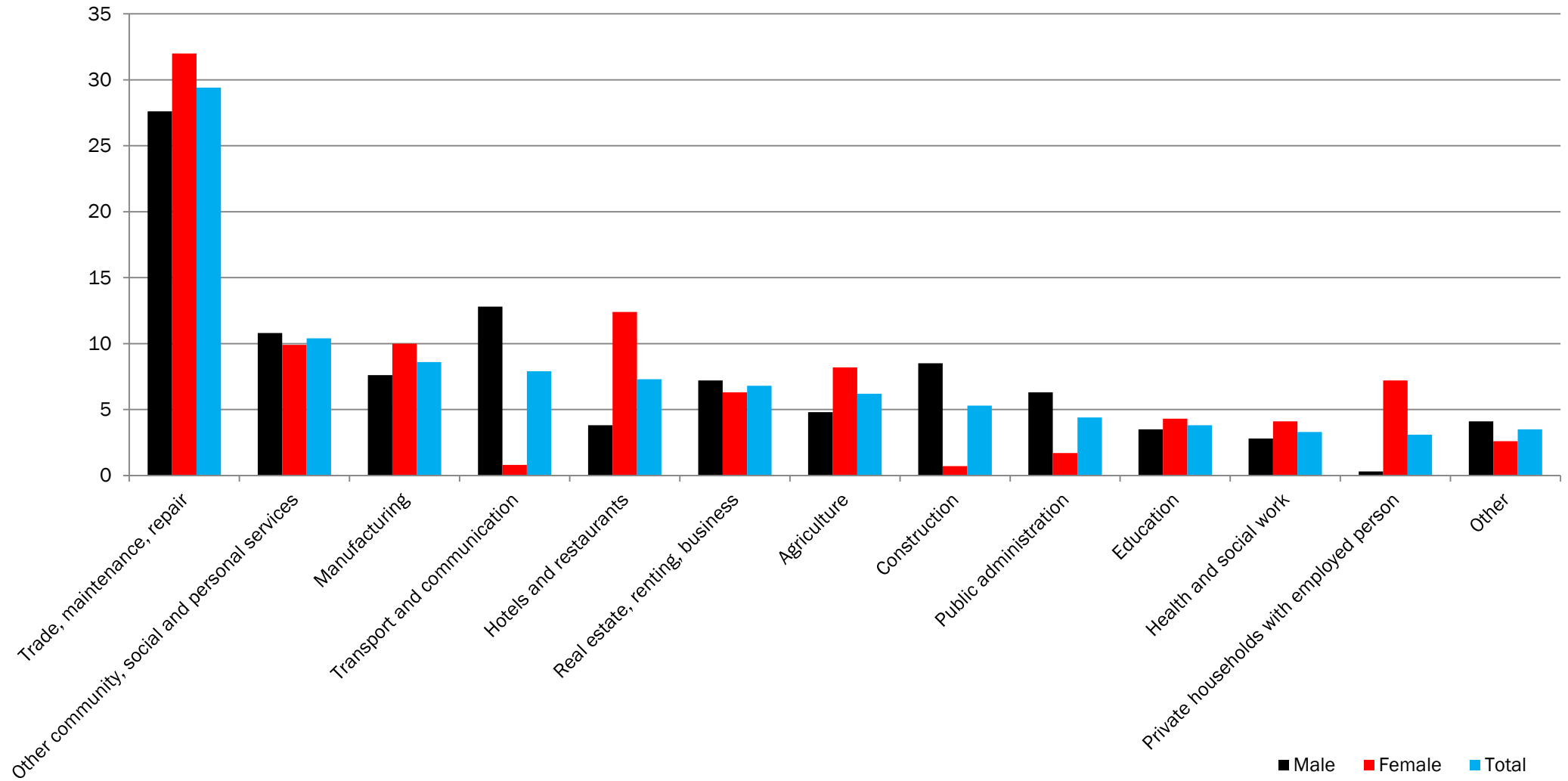
Source: UBoS, 2010 (data from 2009)

Rather than go purely by labour survey estimates, though, we felt it appropriate to get a better and more contextual sense of Lira's urban labour market by first talking to some of the town's inhabitants. In two focus group discussions held on our first day in Lira with young people working in a variety of sectors, catering emerged as viable object of study. While not typically seen as the kind of high profile employment many young people would necessarily aspire to – such as office-based jobs for an NGO or bank – discussants felt that the catering sector (at least certain parts of it) offered the prospect of decent work for young people. It was also a sector that people actually felt they had a chance of accessing (unlike NGO jobs, for example). Finally, these discussions confirmed that catering was a popular option in Lira, with many young people already employed in the industry.

2.1   Research design and methods

The design of this research draws heavily on sociological approaches to the study of economic activity and labour markets. Existing work in this field highlights how important it is to pay close attention to the role of social ties, norms and expectations in shaping what people do, why they do it, and how they do it. An analysis of power and identity then becomes a necessary part of the enquiry. As Naila Kabeer (2012: 50) tells us:

> **Labour markets are not impersonal arenas for the purchase and sale of labour along economic textbook lines, but stratified by power relations along class, gender, racial and ethnic lines.**

So labour markets both reflect and reinforce wider patterns of social inequality already present in society (Elson, 1999). These forms of inequality are typically highly gendered, as was clearly demonstrated by the Kabul labour markets case study (see Pain and Mallett, 2014). Examining these issues requires careful, close, contextual analysis of the kind generally poorly handled by quantitative research methods. From the outset, this project was less concerned with the numbers of people employed in a particular sector or in representative data on wages and incomes, and more concerned with life experiences in relation to the *nature* of labour market participation. As such, an in-depth investigation of individual histories, attitudes and feelings was required.

Between May and June 2014, we carried out 43 semi-structured interviews and four focus group discussions with people in Lira.[3] The majority were with young people employed in the town's catering sector. We used daily stocktakes to ensure that we were achieving a balanced sample (by gender and by tier of the sector). We chose not to home in on a particular sub-sector of the industry (e.g. bars), but instead to talk to people working in a range of catering establishments. We also carried out a number of interviews with older individuals – typically the owners or managers of establishments – in order to better understand the factors and preferences driving recruitment processes and to widen our understanding of working conditions in the sector. A full list of those interviewed, together with a more detailed breakdown of the sample, is included as Annex 1 of this paper.

---

[3] The researchers involved in this study include: Teddy Atim (Feinstein International Centre), Richard Mallett (Overseas Development Institute) and Jimmy Opio (independent).

3 The Case

This section provides background on our case study. We begin by outlining what the economic circumstances of post-conflict northern Uganda look like. We then look more specifically at the characteristics of Lira district and town. Finally, we introduce Lira town's catering sector – the urban labour market under study here.

3.1 The post-conflict economy of northern Uganda

Northern Uganda is emerging from over two decades of armed conflict between the Government of Uganda (GoU) and the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA).[4] This conflict caused significant suffering among the north's civilian population. People were subjected to multiple forms of oppression and violence (UHRC and OHCHR, 2011), and economic life by and large collapsed (Ahikire et al., 2011). At the height of the conflict, in 2005, nearly 2 million people were internally displaced (UHRC and OHCHR, 2011). This included approximately 90-95% of the population of Acholiland and one-third of the population of the Lango sub-region (ibid.)

Figure 2: The Acholi and Lango sub-regions of northern Uganda

Land and livestock have long been important assets in northern Uganda's largely agriculture-based economy. Both serve roles beyond the purely economic. Livestock, for example, assists in non-mechanised cultivation practices, in meeting social obligations vis-à-vis marriage and dowry, and constitutes a significant source of 'cultural wealth'. The protracted experience of conflict and displacement placed enormous pressures on many people's ability to access and retain these assets. Even today, some ten years on from war's peak, northern Ugandans are struggling to secure ownership of land and livestock. The first round of the SLRC survey in northern Uganda found that households that rely primarily on livestock for their livelihoods are likely to own more assets and be more food secure.[5] However, only a minority (4%) of households were found to possess livestock, and findings from other research suggest that the region's youth population has especially limited access to key assets

---

[4] Prior to this conflict, which many observers view to have started in 1986, the northern region was still characterised by pockets of insecurity. These included Alice Lakwena's Holy Spirit Movement and cattle raiding typically associated with the Karamoja region (which still continues in some parts).

[5] An original panel survey in northern Uganda conducted in 2012, generating representative data for the entire Acholi and Lango sub-regions (Mazurana et al., 2014).

(Saferworld, 2012). These patterns of land and livestock loss have been accompanied by a process of urbanisation. We will return to this below.

From a comparative perspective, years of war and socio-economic marginalisation combined to make northern Uganda much worse off than the rest of the country. Figure 2 illustrates this using data from 2005/06, just as the war was ending.[6]

Figure 3: Percentage of poverty estimates by region, 2005/06
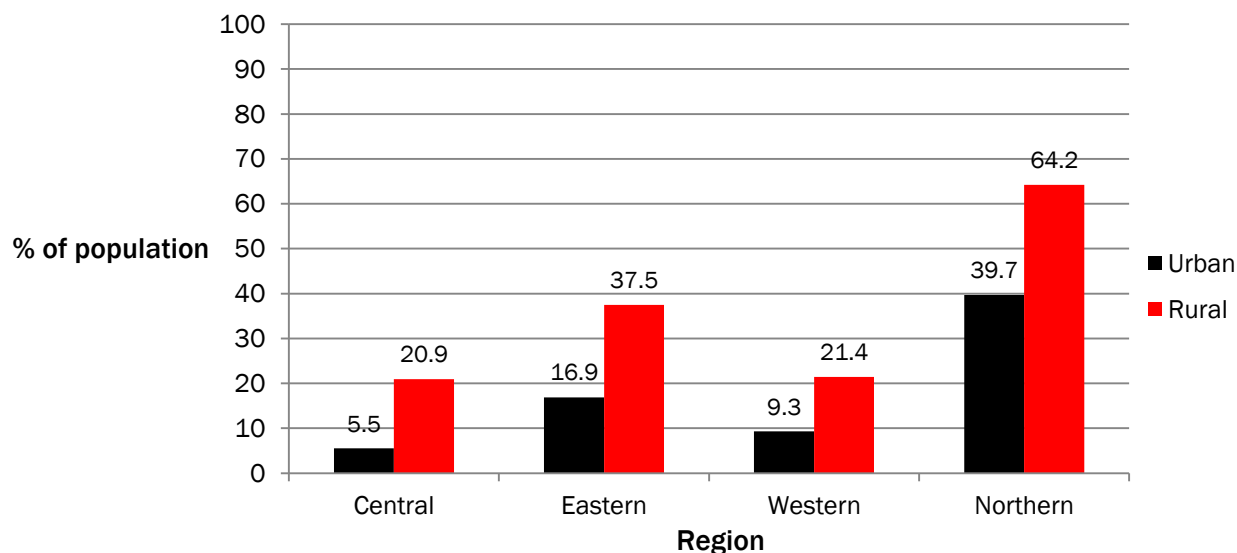
Source: Data in Ahikire et al. (2012: 10)

Following the Juba Peace Talks and the subsequent movement of the LRA into CAR, DRC and parts of South Sudan, relative calm returned to the region and conflict-related violence has been largely absent since 2006-2007. The IDP camps, where thousands of young people were born and brought up, have been dismantled. It was expected that the large-scale return of displaced persons from camps, towns and wherever else would generate opportunities for the population to rebuild their lives and the economy. In order to try and support this recovery process, the GoU, together with development partners, established the Peace, Recovery and Development Plan (PRDP) as national policy framework for the reconstruction of war-affected regions of northern and north-eastern Uganda. The plan provides a framework within which all development actors – both government and non-government – are expected to align their interventions for recovery, rehabilitation and development in the Greater North region.[7] There are four strategic objectives: (1) consolidation of state authority; (2) rebuilding and empowering communities; (3) revitalisation of the economy; and (4) peacebuilding and reconciliation. A major component of the PRDP is the Northern Ugandan Social Action Fund (NUSAF), a large development intervention originally costing in excess of $130 million, designed to improve livelihoods and access to basic services in the region. A core element of NUSAF, in turn, is the Youth Opportunities Program (YOP), which was introduced in 2006. That programme offers young adults the opportunity to apply for large, mostly unconditional cash grants, the idea being that this forms the financial capital needed – and otherwise lacking – to kickstart youth enterprise. Evaluation evidence suggests that YOP has been able to generate substantial increases in business assets, work hours and earnings (Blattman et al., 2014a).

---

[6] "Northern" includes Karamoja and while not directly affected by the LRA war, Karamoja faced similar processes of socio-economic marginalisation and underdevelopment.
[7] As of 2008, the PRDP targets 55 districts and 9 municipalities in the Greater North.

Despite this policy focus, the process of recovery has been painfully slow. There have been no significant improvements in the living conditions of many (if not most) northern Ugandans (Mazurana et al., 2014). Five years on from war's (formal) end, the economy of northern Uganda still lags. According to 2009/10 National Household Survey data, 46% of the northern Ugandan population was living below the poverty line, compared with 11% in the central region, 24% in the east, and 22% in western Uganda (UBoS, 2010).[8] The region has among the lowest literacy rates in the country, the worst access to any education facilities, and the highest rates of teacher absenteeism (ibid).

Linked to this, youth unemployment and inadequate employment – a term which covers precarious occupations and forms of employment that fail to meet workers' expectations vis-à-vis incomes, hours and productivity (Greenwood, 1999; Dooley and Prause, 2009) – are huge problems (although the latter is often overlooked). The dominant ideological, political and policy approach for dealing with northern Uganda's recent economic challenges has been one of inclusive liberalism, 'whereby a preference for market-based solutions remains paramount but is joined by…strategies of government that can help prepare individuals to cope with economic globalisation, improving their capacities and inclinations as economic citizens' (Golooba-Mutebi and Hickey, 2009: 5). In line with this, much has been made of the role of qualifications, vocational training and credit; interventions designed to transfer skills to young people have become a fixture of the economic landscape.

However, while it is true that conflict and mass displacement placed considerable constraints on people's ability to accumulate human capital, it is not clear whether targeted education and skills policies are the appropriate vehicle for social and economic transformation on any great scale. Some have, for example, pointed out some of the specific problems and limitations associated with vocational training programmes, from the poor quality of many courses to the idea that they tend to push young people into already crowded, intensely competitive economic marketplaces (Bidwell et al., 2008; GoU and UNFPA, 2013).

Meanwhile, although the kinds of microenterprise support programmes available in northern Uganda have been shown to generate good economic returns, these impacts have to be put into perspective. Blattman et al. (2014b) recently studied the effects of one such programme in Kitgum and Gulu districts, which provided beneficiaries with both training and cash. They found that participation led to a 92% increase in monthly cash earnings for women (from USH 13,980 to USH 26,900) and a 74% increase for men (from USH 22,170 to USH 38,590). The percentage point increases are impressive, but the actual amounts are still relatively small: female participants, for example, made less than $5 extra per month. When placed against a backdrop of high and rising living costs (ActionAid International Uganda, 2012), cash gains of this magnitude are unlikely to result in the kinds of transformative change we would like to see.[9]

Finally, others have brought attention to the depoliticised nature of the formal development frameworks vis-à-vis northern recovery, suggesting that the entire region continues to be cut off from a social contract with the current political regime (Golooba-Mutebi and Hickey, 2011; see also Dolan, 2008). Some would argue that, far from being a historical artefact, the social, economic and political marginalisation of the north is alive and well.

---

[8] Again, the inclusion of Karamoja in these statistics partly explains the disparity.
[9] To place these gains in context, one kilogram of beans from an average market stall in Lira costs the consumer around USH 1,700 or around US 60 cents (authors' observations). This amount of beans can be used to provide roughly two meals for a family of three to four. If we conservatively assume that a family of four eats a bean meal just once a day, they would still need to spend in excess of USH 25,000 per month on beans.

3.2   Lira

Lira District is situated in central northern Uganda. Its location makes it easily accessible across the region, and as such is considered a major trade and business hub, serving most of its neighbouring districts. Fully, 85% of the district's population live in rural areas while 15% live in urban areas (UBoS, 2010b). Through clan-based systems, the close kin ties among the district's most populous ethnic group, the Langi, have typically contributed to more rural-oriented settlement patterns, where people tend to live among their kin. However, the years during and after the conflict have seen considerable movement of people to urban areas – most notably Lira town. According to Potts (2013: 32), the two northern towns of Gulu and Lira experienced an annual growth rate of 10% between 1991 and 2002 – faster than Kampala and several of Uganda's other major towns. Lira town came to host several thousand displaced people, some of whom have not returned to their original homes following the end of the conflict. Some young people affected by war, especially young women who returned with children from the LRA, prefer to live 'anonymously' in Lira's urban periphery (Mazurana et al., 2013). Whether many of these people call legitimately still be referred to as migrants is deeply questionable.

While the widespread conflict-related violence of the 1990s and 2000s certainly contributed to the rapid urbanisation of the region's major towns, the idea of the town as a site of economic opportunity continues to encourage thousands into urban settlements each year: it is estimated that in the next five years, annual urban growth in Lira town will rise from 6% to 10% (UBoS, 2012). But despite remarkable rates of urban growth, agriculture remains the district's dominant livelihood option, and there remains a strong connection between rural and urban spaces and residents (Stites et al., 2014). Many urban-based households continue to own land and other resources in rural areas, and findings from the SLRC survey show that the majority of surveyed households based in urban areas continue to farm (Mazurana et al., 2014). Social obligations and expectations are there too: young urban dwellers, for example, are additionally expected to care for rural-based kin members, such as ageing parents.

At the same time as having to maintain these connections and fulfil social obligations, Lira's residents must also deal with the challenges the city throws at them. Urban living is expensive, especially in comparison to village life (Aggrey, 2013). The urban economy is essentially capitalistic, with a majority of the household relying on the market to meet their demands and daily needs. This makes urban residents particularly vulnerable to macroeconomic shocks, such as 2011's dramatic rise in inflation and depreciation of the shilling (driven partly by rising food and fuel prices) (Liebowitz and Sentamu, 2012). In addition, basic services such as housing, water, education and health are both costly and at times limited. Most of the young people we spoke to for this study, for example, lived in the urban slums of Lira town where sanitation is poor.

3.3   An introduction to Lira's catering sector

Very little has been written about the catering sector in Lira town. As such, our aim in this short introduction to the sector is to show, in illustrative and quite general terms, how it is structured. The first thing to clarify is what we take to mean by catering. We approached the sector broadly, and were interested in talking to people working in different occupations and types of establishment, including bars, restaurants and hotels. There is obviously some fuzziness in the definition of a bar or restaurant. In terms of food selling, we drew the line at street vendors selling pre-made items such as popcorn or doughnuts and those trading unprepared goods in the markets, such as fruit and vegetables. Similarly, we chose not to include brewing as catering work. This is not to say that economic activities such as these did not come into the study; in a number of cases, we found that young people working in bars or restaurants pursued these kinds of things on the side (usually out of necessity). But a common characteristic of those we talked to was working in some kind of relatively permanent or semi-

permanent structure: selling snacks from a mobile cart was not, therefore, considered eligible for our purposes.

While there are few concrete figures to go by, Lira's catering sector has apparently expanded quite significantly over the last decade. Older respondents who had been working in the business for a number of years described how the marketplace has become considerably more crowded, a likely consequence of Lira's positioning as a site of regional commerce, the (now declining) presence of the humanitarian and post-conflict aid industry, and processes of urban growth more generally. Indeed, before the conflict, the town was home to just a few well-known hotels. Today, the number of hotels in the urban and peri-urban area is remarkable.

A large supply of cheap labour has supported the growth of Lira's catering sector. And while it is not always necessary to have formal training or qualifications to access the labour market (as will be explored in later sections), the emergence of catering schools, in Lira as in other parts of the country, both reflects and partly accounts for the growth of the sector. For decades, the only catering schools were based outside of northern Uganda, the most renowned in Jinja offering diploma courses in catering. Today, Lira boasts one fully fledged catering school and several other vocational centres. Small hotels also offer catering courses but not at a professional level.

In terms of the structure of the catering sector, there is a fairly distinct stratification of establishments. In particular, there are three major levels or tiers that the research established, which we will describe in this report as high, middle and low tier. An establishment's place in this stratification is determined by a range of characteristics, including size, clientele, and the type and quality of services and facilities provided. The top tier is made up of a limited number (fewer than 15) of large established hotels and restaurants with fairly organised management systems, often providing all the major catering and hotel services. They are typically geared towards tourists, aid workers and government officials, rendering them much more expensive than the mid-level and lower tier hotels and restaurants. The working conditions and terms of service for staff are expected to be better – more secure, regular and with clear opportunities for career development – because most staff members possess relatively good training in catering and hotel management. This is not always the case in practice, however.

Considerably more populous than the top tier, the middle tier is made up of a relatively large number of mid-level hotels and restaurants. These establishments are typically smaller than the top tier hotels and restaurants. While some might provide a wide range of services, the majority tend to specialise in something particular, such as lodging or food. Their staff tend to include a mixture of trained and untrained employees, although this is partly determined by the specific role taken by an individual: a few senior staff might be trained, but the majority may not necessarily possess any formal catering training.

At the lowest tier is a very high number of basic lodges, bars and eating places, some of which may serve only breakfast or lunch. The number of establishments in this tier is very hard to specify, particularly given that many are entirely informal in nature. Certainly, there are at least as many – and probably more – than in the middle tier. Establishments in the lower tier tend to be located in busy areas in order to serve a specific population – near a garage to serve mechanics, by the roadside near a *boda-boda* stage or in the bus park to serve travellers. These places are often informal, small and very basic, operating in makeshift structures. Many of the establishments in the lower tier are run by women, who may bring in ad hoc help as and when it is required. Wages are often paid on a daily basis and are usually determined by how well the establishment has done on that particular day. Some of the low-tier hotels are close to the homes of the owners, which enables owners (again, typically women) to perform both their productive and reproductive roles (watching over their children and taking care of their family).

In general, most of the high and mid-level hotels are owned and operated by men while the more informal, low-level hotels are run and owned by women. The sector as a whole, however, is predominantly filled with young female employees, which reflects wider social norms regarding gendered roles and responsibilities (the traditional role of women in Uganda, as in many other parts of the world, includes a range of domestic responsibilities).

4 How does Lira's catering labour market work? A gendered analysis of access, participation and effects

Lira's catering sector is both large in size and stratified in nature. In this section – the analytical core of the paper – we examine the nature, terms and limits of young people's access to, and participation in, this particular labour market. Our focus is on the following questions (which also inform the structure of the section).

- How do young people gain entrance to the urban labour market in general, and the catering sector in particular?

- What do the terms of participation for young people look like once they are in the catering labour market? In what ways might these vary?

- What do young people get out of the catering labour market beyond an income? How does participation in the sector shape material, subjective and relational dimensions of personal wellbeing?

In addition to these core questions, there is a strong emphasis on recognising how things may or may not work differently for young women and men. This is important: a 'good jobs agenda' that fails to recognise the deeply gendered dynamics of livelihoods and employment is an agenda that won't work for hundreds of millions of people.

4.1 On urban labour market entry

Among the many drivers of urban expansion in sub-Saharan Africa are the (perceived or actual) differences in economic opportunities between rural and urban places. This is an important part of the explanation for Lira's considerable growth over the last two decades, in addition to the effects of conflict and displacement (Potts, 2013). The urban labour market is seen to offer a wider range of livelihood options, which is appealing to a young northern Ugandan who holds little desire for a life on the farm. Recent research suggests that many young Ugandans do not see much of a future in agriculture, partly because a lack of access to land and financial capital (needed for the purchase of seeds and fertilisers, for example) and a lack of structural investment (needed to improve roads, markets and post-harvest technologies more generally) (AAU et al., 2012: 30-32). (This is not to say that participation in urban livelihoods means rural detachment: see Section 4.3.) However, preferences for urban employment cannot simply be accounted for by cultural and aspirational shifts over time among young people – although evidence from Kampala does suggest that displacement to cities can affect the ways in which a young person aspires to earn an income (Mallett, 2010). State policy also plays a role: as a recent report by the International Youth Foundation (2011: 4) notes, 'Ugandan law and custom regarding land rights prevent young people from participating fully in [the agricultural] sector'.

While many northern Ugandan youths aspire to participate in the urban labour market, our interview data strongly suggest that finding decent work in a town like Lira is a struggle. A number of challenges or barriers came up frequently in our interviews and focus groups:

- **A lack of basic skills**. Many young people have an idea of what they would like to do but lack the basic skills to make it happen. One male focus group discussant, for example, observed that 'If you don't have the skills, such as book-keeping, then your business will crumble [...] even if you

have the vision and the capital'.[10] Moreover, interviewees noted that the skills provided by formal training programmes are often not sufficient to get them properly going after completion. Most skills training programmes were said to be too short: normally lasting 3–6 months. This was seen as too little time to properly prepare learners, rendering them uncompetitive in the job market.

- **A lack of relevant experience for desirable work**. For 'higher level' jobs, such as those in the civil service, gaining the requisite amount of experience is seen as a major barrier. These jobs demand that candidates have a minimum of two years' relevant experience. But as one respondent put it: 'Where do we get that experience from?'[11]

- **Language**. Several interviewees talked about the importance of knowing how to communicate in English. This was seen as particularly important in an urban setting where people from different backgrounds congregate, including Ugandans from other parts of the country as well as foreigners ('when dealing with an Indian businessman, one needs good English').[12] English language skills are considered essential in Lira's catering sector, even at the lowest tiers. For many this is not a problem, but for those whose education was disrupted due to poverty or war it can be a major stumbling block.

- **A lack of social connections**. It is generally accepted among the youth of Lira that access to certain jobs depends on knowing the right person. This is perhaps most pronounced within the industries considered to contain the 'good jobs'. Many of those we spoke with complained that office jobs, including those with NGOs, were nearly impossible to get without knowing someone already inside the organisation, or having a family member who knew the manager well. Social connections were also significant in less direct ways: for example, many interviewees working in the catering sector stated that they would not have considered it an option had it not been for a friend who showed them an advert or floated the suggestion in the first place. We also heard of numerous cases where connections were needed to access vocational training programmes or to secure loans (for example, one interviewee explained that his friend was letting him use his motorbike as collateral).[13] It is clear from our evidence that without social connections, access to training, finances and jobs is limited.

- **The prevalence of transactional sex in the urban labour market**. We heard many complaints from young people about demands from (potential) employers for sexual favours in return for jobs. As one interviewee put it, in many cases 'the interview is in bed'.[14] This practice is apparently not reserved for young women looking for work. We were told by one interviewee that well-to-do businesswomen who need a driver will employ men by saying, 'I will employ you, and you will be my boyfriend'. According to this young man, 'a lack of options drives people to do this'.[15] A number of interviewees working in the catering sector confirmed that sexual favours were often part of the recruitment process in that industry.[16] While it would be inaccurate to class this as exploitation in a direct or straightforward sense, there are certainly aspects of exploitation to transactional relationships such as these. We also know them to be quite common: recent research suggests that the phenomenon of 'sugar daddies' – and, to a lesser extent, of 'sugar mummies' – is prevalent throughout Ugandan society (Walker et al., 2014). Cross-generational sex of this nature is part of a much broader trend vis-à-vis the way in which access to opportunities and resources is secured.

What makes these barriers particularly acute in the context of Lira's economy is that good jobs – those which pay relatively well on a regular basis and which are characterised by decent working conditions (see Box 1) – are extremely hard to come by. Demand far outstrips supply, which puts employers, the majority of whom are men, in a particularly advantageous position. This, combined with the informal

---

[10] Interview 01 [male focus group discussion]
[11] Interview 01 [male focus group discussion]
[12] Interview 01 [male focus group discussion]
[13] Interview 09 [female, 24, cook and general service, low tier establishment]
[14] Interview 01 [male focus group discussion]
[15] Interview 01 [male focus group discussion]
[16] Interviews 13 [female, 25, waitress, high tier establishment], 22 [female, 26, cashier, mid-tier establishment], 25 [male, 60, owner, mid-tier establishment]

nature of many people's labour market participation, means that employers can get away with behaviours such as discriminating against candidates on the grounds that they lack the right social connections or refuse to perform sexual favours.

Box 1: What is considered a good job in Lira town?

The following quotes from focus group discussants and interviewees encapsulate what young men and women in Lira town view to be 'decent work' in the labour market.

> **'One which is not exploitative; where the pay is commensurate with the amount of work put in'**

> **'Apart from the salary – a job which you do in a very good working condition; where you are not exploited; where rights are expected'**

> **'Where you are respected, not coerced, not sexually exploited, that gives you time to do other stuff'**

> **'I consider this job to be a good job and like it. I get paid regularly, able to meet all my basic needs, not overworked and treated well, part of the management so have a say on how the business is managed on a daily basis'**

> **'To sit in a swivel chair'**

> **'Other people think only working in an office is work'**

It is worth drawing attention to the last two quotes. Many youth in Lira believe office-based jobs – which include NGO work or employment in banks – to constitute the 'gold standard' of urban labour market participation. Yet these jobs are considered extremely difficult to access. As one interviewee explained, 'Who get the good jobs? Those with friends and relatives, or those with money to buy their way in'.

There are also considerable challenges associated with becoming successfully self-employed. In theory, multiple occupations are open to Lira's youth, from petty trading on the roadside or in the marketplace to becoming a *boda-boda* (motorbike taxi) driver. But although many of these occupations do not pay well, entrance into them is still guarded. Even for those with access to start-up capital, access to certain economic spaces or occupations often appears to be contingent upon inclusion in particular social networks. The operation of these networks serves to cordon off markets, barring new entrants in an attempt to control levels of competition (and therefore prices and margins). Although frequently enforced through more coercive and violent methods, similar forms of informal market regulation have been observed elsewhere in the region (Geenen, 2011; Raeymaekers, 2011; Titeca and Herdt, 2010). In Lira, interview data suggest numerous specific marketplaces are governed in this way, from the timber trade...

> **'Dealers [in the timber business] will not allow you to get space. They complicate the process. You need a licence from the municipality, and permission from the group in order to place your timber.'**[17]

...to the transport sector...

---

[17] Interview 01 [male focus group discussion]

> **'If you go to a stage [a waiting area where motorbike taxis congregate], they [the other riders] will tell you "we have enough", that there is no access to the stage. Without this, you are not allowed to do business. It is necessary to join the association. If you break this rule by going near the stage with a customer, your bike will be impounded.'**[18]

...to petty trade:

> **'Sometimes you go to a market...to sell stuff, but can't penetrate the market. Others may decide to offer lower price in order to drive customers away from newcomers. There is lots of networking between friends.'**[19]

Labour market entrance is also circumscribed by gender. One broom seller explained how the capacity to seize an income-generating opportunity can be hampered by other responsibilities: 'You must be quick [in order to make a sale]. If you have a baby and no one will look after it, then you will miss the opportunity to sell'.[20] A female roadside hotel owner described this challenge in similar terms: 'When you have a child at the hotel, people do not like to come to your hotel. So you should leave the child at home'.[21] Shouldering the burden of domestic responsibilities, such as caring for young children, makes it extra difficult to hold down a job, let alone do well in it compared to others without those additional burdens. We return to this issue in section 4.3.

4.1.1　Why and how do young people enter the catering sector?

Entrance into Lira's urban labour market, then, is mediated by a range of factors. But how do young people access jobs specifically in the catering sector, why do they go for these in the first place, and what does this tell us about young people's relationship with the urban labour market more generally?

Our evidence shows that entrance into the catering sector varies by market tier. For many of the higher level positions, formal training is required: a number of those we interviewed held either a certificate from a catering school (there are two in Lira town) or a college diploma in hospitality or catering (which demands a minimum of two years of study). The general feeling among managers of lower level hotels appears to be that 'those ones [with a diploma] can get a job anywhere',[22] and that 'the kind of employment you get is determined partly by your level of education: high level of education, better paying jobs and lower level of education, low paying jobs'.[23]

However, access to formal training programmes is not open to all: students are required to have completed a number of years of schooling before they can apply for diplomas, and the courses themselves are often expensive. Eric, now a manager at a mid-to-top tier lodge just outside the town centre, explained that entrance onto his hotel management course in Kampala cost 1.2 million Ugandan Shillings (c. $460), and USH 520,000 (c. $200) for each semester thereafter. It would not have been possible for him without financial assistance from his parents.[24] Even the shorter courses at specialised catering schools are not cheap: Dan, a chef at a restaurant nearer the centre of town, paid USH 300,000 (c. $115) for just three months of training in hotel management in Kampala. His family's farming income made it possible.

---

[18] Interview 02 [female focus group discussion]
[19] Interview 02 [female focus group discussion]
[20] Interview 02 [female focus group discussion]
[21] Interview 08 [female, 27, owner and general service, low tier establishment]
[22] Interview 20 [male, 32, manager, mid-tier establishment]
[23] Interview 12 [female, 30, supervisor, low tier establishment]
[24] Interview 26 [male, 31, manager, mid-tier establishment]

These sums of money are simply not manageable for the hundreds of thousands of northern Ugandan families struggling simply to stay afloat – and they are only one cost out of many for those wishing to find work at the top tier establishments. An entrant first needs the right education (not always possible for the poorest households or those badly affected by displacement), the ability to leave the family and dedicate time to study (domestic responsibilities and social expectations can constrain this), and exposure to the industry (sometimes dependent on social connections).

At the mid- and lower tiers of the catering labour market, formal qualifications such as these are not necessary. As a manager at a lodge noted: 'The salary here means that those with a qualification do not look here. This is a small hotel, so it is not a requirement. For us here, we just give a job to anyone who is willing to do it'.[25] Eric, the young manager quoted above, similarly noted: 'Most people here are not qualified – we employ dropouts'. Other managers – i.e. those in charge of recruiting new staff – often talked about the catering industry as providing jobs that really anyone could do so long as they possess some very basic communication and calculation skills. In this sense, the mid- and lower tiers of the catering sector are accessible to a wide spectrum of Lira's urban youth: little in the way of skills are needed – compared to, say, carpentry, hairdressing and tailoring – and basic knowledge can be developed through on-the-job training. Many of those we spoke with did not have catering or hospitality qualifications, but had taken an informal route, building up their skills over time by working in different establishments.

Moreover, high mobility in and out of the sector – as well as between lower tier establishments ('horizontal mobility') – means that new positions open up quite frequently. As we will see in the following sub-section, a great deal of young people's participation in Lira's catering sector is insecure, casual and transitory. This may be related, in part, to the derogatory attitudes directed towards those who work in bars and hotels. This kind of work, particularly in the lower tiers of the labour market, is typically seen by both urban and rural dwellers as immoral: barmaids especially are widely thought to engage in sexual activity with customers. As one female interviewee put it, working in a bar means 'others always say you are a prostitute or that you have nowhere to go ... that you are useless'.[26] These negative attitudes make participation in the middle and lower tiers of the catering sector undesirable to many, hence rendering this kind of employment a last resort. Jobs in the higher tiers of the sector, by contrast, are more likely to be seen as constituting decent work, seen as they are to not only pay better but also to offer more dignified forms of employment.[27]

What kinds of employees are managers in the catering sector looking for? Our evidence suggests that gender is a key factor behind recruitment decisions. Many of those we spoke to felt that men are harder workers, more trustworthy and 'more serious'. At the same time, however, managers often complained that it is very difficult to find men for different positions within a hotel or bar – possibly a consequence of the narrative of immorality surrounding employment in the lower tiers of the sector.[28] These managers saw women as more problematic than men: 'When women are employed like in hotel, they will often have complaints – family issues which interfere with their work, sick child, husband – so most often, employers are reluctant to employ women'.[29] Some managers also perceived women staff to be more interested in flirting with customers than doing their work. Peter, a hotel manager, expressed his thoughts on this matter:

> **'Young men are better for waiters because they don't give you much trouble, but there are very few who come for that kind of work so we end up with young ladies. But they do not**

[25] Interview 23 [male, 64, manager, mid-tier establishment]
[26] Interview 21 [female, 33, housekeeper, mid-tier establishment]
[27] Interviews 01 [male focus group discussion], 02 [female focus group discussion]
[28] Interview 10 [male, >30, principle at catering school]
[29] Interview 06 [female, 28, general waitress, top tier establishment]

concentrate. They are looking for other things. For example, they might be drinking with the customers.'[30]

On the other hand, evidence suggests that many managers actively seek to recruit women as waitresses or bartenders, because they are believed to pull in more male customers. In other words, their recruitment is viewed as a business strategy, particularly in the lower tiers of the sector. One woman working in a local restaurant explained how this informal recruitment practice has limited her access to work: 'Some restaurants only demand you wear minis [mini-dresses] to keep their business afloat, but as a Muslim, I cannot do that. I need to wear long clothing and on Fridays cover my head'.[31] Recruitment practices of this nature feed into the sexualisation of work in the middle and lower tiers of Lira's catering labour market. As we will see in the following sub-section, it is these kinds of practices and processes that expose young women to various forms of sexual abuse and physical vulnerability.

Recruitment processes vary significantly within the sector. At the lower end of the spectrum, walking into a bar and lodge and asking for work will sometimes suffice. The manager may ask a couple of questions before taking that person on, sometimes on a probationary basis in order to gauge their ability ('I give them a probation of three weeks – that is enough to know about someone'[32]). Our evidence suggests that wages are lower during the probationary period than they are in 'full' employment: one interviewee, for example, made USH 50,000 less than a full wage each month.

In mid-tier establishments, candidates are often asked to fill out a written application – which is where having a literate friend to help comes in handy if the candidate is illiterate[33] – and provide some kind of documentation showing educational attainment. Higher tier establishments tend to ask for a longer list of documents. A supervisor at one of Lira's largest and most prestigious hotels, for example, explained that applicants for basic positions must provide the following:

- An O-level education certificate
- A hand-written application
- A CV
- A diploma certificate and recommendation
- A letter from the LC1 confirming local residency[34]
- Contacts / references.[35]

Increasingly, bars, restaurants and hotels in Lira are asking for the aforementioned LC1 letters when recruiting. Some supervisors thought that the letter, more than simply proving residency, demonstrated good behaviour and conduct on the part of the applicant; a kind of guarantee of character from the government. In order to obtain one of these letters, an individual must go to the LC1 office and explain that they are applying for a job. In theory, getting the letter should be straightforward and should cost nothing. Some people, however, said that they were asked for money for the letter ('this world is not cheap'), and if a person had a bad relationship with local government officials for whatever reason it would be much harder to obtain.

What is interesting about the recruitment process at this top-tier hotel is that, despite the very bureaucratic nature of the application procedure, having connections is still important. One of the main ways positions are advertised is through word-of-mouth: 'the adverts go through the staff'. When this happens, knowledge about opportunities is contained in a limited number of networks. More generally,

---

[30] Interview 25 [male, 60, owner, mid-tier establishment]
[31] Interview 09 [female, 24, cook and general service, low tier establishment]
[32] Interview 25 [male, 60, owner, mid-tier establishment]
[33] Interview 11 [female, 20, waitress, mid-tier establishment]
[34] LC1 refers to a 'Local Council 1', the most local form of decentralised government in Uganda
[35] Interview 15 [male, >50, supervisor, top tier establishment]

our evidence suggests that knowing people does affect a person's chances of securing employment in the top tier of the sector. This is less about nepotism or corruption per se, but rather about how people learn of new openings (which may not always be widely advertised). We heard of many cases where restaurant or hotel workers had found their job through existing connections within the industry, meaning that once you are in, it is potentially easier to find other, better work.[36]

As we have discussed, work at the lower tiers of the sector is relatively straightforward to access. As such, waitressing or working behind the bar in a roadside restaurant is an ever-present option; it is work that can be taken up when alternatives are exhausted. But there is also a strategic dimension to working in the catering sector's lowest tiers, particularly for women shouldering multiple domestic responsibilities with limited support networks. Lucy, for example, a cashier at a mid-range lodge not too far from the town centre, lost her mother in the conflict and does not have enough disposable income to afford childcare. Lacking an immediate network of care around her, Lucy needs a job that enables her to look after her two children: a four-year-old and a newborn baby. The lodge is rarely busy throughout the day and there is lots of downtime, so Lucy can bring her baby to the workplace and provide care throughout the day, as and when it is needed. That is not to say she feels pleased about her situation: 'Bringing my child here is not good. It is only my condition that has forced me to do that'.[37] Meanwhile, Adimo – manager of a small restaurant owned by her husband – explained that one of the reasons her job works well is because of what it means for her domestic responsibilities and household expenditure: 'In a way it is good, because my family can eat here. I do not need to buy food separately'.[38] Her children are also with her during the day when they are not at school, meaning she does not have to look for alternative care. These particular cases provide evidence of the many connections between productive and reproductive economic activity, and demonstrate that the labour market is the site at which these two spaces meet (see Elson, 1999).

4.2 Terms of participation

Most work in Lira's catering sector is laborious, poorly paid, vulnerable and highly insecure. There are elements of gendered structural violence evident in the middle and lower tiers of the sector, and, by engaging in certain forms of work, young people may be damaging their own reputation within the local community. It is actually possible, then, that participation in the labour market on bad terms in the present may mean that workers find themselves being adversely incorporated into the catering sector later (see Hickey and du Toit, 2007). The situation for women is especially harsh: bar work in particular is viewed as a 'deviant' occupation, and participation in that segment of the sector is seen to make it harder to find a respectable husband. It is trade-offs such as these that characterise social and economic life for Lira's youth population.

This sub-section is split into three parts. The first talks about payment. The second looks at working conditions in the sector, which include working hours, intensity of work and structural violence. The third part explores the question of job security and workers' rights.

4.2.1 Payment

Payments differ quite substantially within the catering sector. It is perhaps of little surprise that the starkest differences exist between workers in the low-end establishments and those at the top-end. Some interviewees working in unlicensed roadside bars and canteens earned as little as USH 30,000 per month (just over $10),[39] while those working as waiters in top-end hotels could expect to earn

---

[36] Interview 16 [female, 30, waitress, top tier establishment]
[37] Interview 22 [female, 26, cashier, mid-tier establishment]
[38] Interview 14 [female, late 20s, chef and manager, low tier establishment]
[39] Interview 08 [female, 27, owner, low tier establishment]

between USH 200,000 and 250,000 per month (roughly $75 to 95). However, there does not appear to be much variation between the mid and top tiers, with workers in these two categories tending to earn a similar amount.

Some young people working in Lira's catering sector are doing quite well by national standards; as of 2013, Uganda's gross national income (GNI) per capita was just $510 (World Bank, 2014). But the headline numbers of the previous paragraph obscure some major caveats. First, for most young people, USH 200,000 to 250,000 is probably very close to the upper limit of what they can hope to earn in the sector unless they transition into senior management, and prospects for promotion are fairly bleak in many establishments. Indeed, a major feature of life in the catering sector is a clear absence of upward mobility.

Second, the way in which wages are typically paid works against accumulation. Although some of those we talked to described receiving a single sum at, say, the end of each month, payment to most of our interviewees was split: a lump sum at the end of the month would be supplemented by a daily allowance of a few thousand shillings. David, a cashier in a mid-range guesthouse, explained that the monthly income from his job is USH 150,000. He receives half of this (USH 75,000) at the end of each month, while the other half is broken down into regular daily allowances of USH 2,500. This is very common in the sector. As explained by a number of interviewees, the daily allowance is for buying meals and for getting to and from work (in a few cases, restaurant staff are given food free of charge). Thus, while the daily allowances still constitute a form of income, they primarily exist to ensure employees can get to work and sustain themselves throughout the day.

Third, although not a universal issue across the sector, we found several cases of late or highly irregular payments from employers to employees. This can create huge problems. Dan, a chef at a mid-level restaurant, talked about how payments at his current place of work are constantly delayed, citing a particular instance where this resulted in him losing money. He had been trying to set up a poultry farm, and after some time he accumulated USH 600,000 to buy a small plot of land and some livestock. But there was a major delay in his monthly payment from the restaurant. The poor timing meant that Dan had no reserves to fall back on – and no money to buy chicken feed. Unable to feed his newly purchased livestock, he was forced to sell the farm quickly for just USH 400,000. Dan saw participation in the catering sector as a means to accumulate assets and capital, but his story shows how the nature of his participation in this labour market – economically vulnerable and without workers' rights – had the opposite result.

Fourth, losses incurred by the establishment sometimes come out of employees' wages – a phenomenon that has also been observed in other parts of the country's catering industry (Walakira, 2009). When a customer steals or breaks a bottle of beer, it is common for staff to lose some of their wage – a case of financial risk being transferred from a business to its employees. One interviewee introduced above, Lucy, explained that she left her previous job because of the extent to which bar losses were affecting her take-home pay. There was one occasion, she recalled, in which her manager charged her with losses of USH 72,000 in a single month.[40] It is not hard to see how losses of this size pose a serious threat to a worker's capacity to survive, let alone accumulate.

Finally, these payments must be considered within the context of the household budget more generally. What comes in each month is only one part of the equation. Most young people have social ties which, while constituting a resource on the one hand, also form an extractive burden. There is often pressure to provide financial support to family members, particularly those living away from the urban centre, and unmarried mothers may have very few additional sources of household income to help them meet the

---

[40] Interview 22 [female, 26, cashier, mid-tier establishment]

basic costs of subsistence (food, rent, clothing, health care). What's more, the higher living costs of urban areas means that monthly incomes stretch do not stretch quite as far as they would in rural areas.

4.2.2   Working conditions

While the higher tiers of the sector may have cleaner working environments and possibly less predatory clients, there are similarities in working conditions across all tiers in some respects. Almost all our interviewees, for example, described their work as tough, requiring long hours for what they thought was inadequate pay. With the exception of perhaps one or two respondents, all felt that their wages did not fairly reflect the hours worked – a reflection of the fact that there is, for all intents and purposes, no minimum wage currently in Uganda (DRT, 2013). Justus, now working in a high-level café, described how his first job as a cook in one of Lira's guesthouses was so draining he was able to stand it for only two weeks: 'The job was from 7am until about 11pm in the evening. The working condition, having to work for long hours, was poor. I got USH 60,000 a month for 15 hours of work a day. Because of this, I only worked for two weeks and quit the job'.[41] There are many similar stories.

Nationally representative data confirm the long hours associated with catering work. In 2002/03, Ugandan labour force survey data showed that work in the hotel and catering sector typically involved a 60 hour working week – the longest of all sectors for women (59.8 hours) and the second longest for men (57.7 hours, narrowly second only to transport, storage and communication) (Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development, 2006).[42] By 2009, this had turned into a 70-hour working week (UBoS, 2010) – and still typically longer for women than for men.

The impacts of long hours should not be underestimated. It is not just that workers find the labour physically demanding, but also that it eats away at time for doing other things. This might mean a young mother failing to provide adequate care for her child or an ambitious employee struggling to get other economic activities going. In many cases, participation in the catering sector therefore works against the development of other livelihood options, containing the resources of young people within a single economic space.

In addition to the long hours and perceived unfairness of the pay, there are very few perks of working in the catering sector. While some respondents described getting free meals or overnight accommodation if they work late, these are not universal. Apart from in a minority of cases, paid holiday is non-existent. Even securing unpaid time off is sometimes a challenge.

But the most concerning aspect of working conditions exist at the lower tiers of the labour market. Here, employees – particularly women – are exposed to sexual harassment on a regular basis. This can range from flirting and general drunkenness to outright gender-based violence. Somewhere in between exists transactional sex, which although not necessarily the result of coercive behaviour on the part of male customers or colleagues, is not unconnected to sexual violence; as Luke and Kurz (2002, in Walker et al., 2014: 2) show, many forms of transactional sex might be considered consensual but 'may lead to rape or physical violence if girls [and young women] are seen to not keep their side of the bargain (by withholding sex...for example)'. Much of the catering sector in Lira – and no doubt elsewhere – is tarred by the fairly widespread social attitude that the industry is linked to sex work; that young women who work behind the bars are sleeping with their customers in exchange for cash. While most female employees we talked to completely rejected the possibility of engaging in transactional, it is

---

[41] Interview 03 [male, 25, supervisor, top tier establishment]
[42] This is despite the relatively low economic returns. For example, the median monthly wage in the catering sector in 2002/03 was USH 33,000 compared to USH 60,000 in manufacturing, USH 75,000 in construction, and USH 100,000 in health work (Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development, 2006).

nevertheless possible that this is part of the decision to participate in this labour market for some (Walker et al., 2014). Because bars (and especially low-end ones) are widely considered as sites of transactional sex, young people may take that option when alternatives run out, knowing that money can be made through this route. Thus, there are links between participation in this kind of work – work that exposes young women to a range of risks, including those relating to personal health as Ntozi et al. (2003) have previously noted in Lira – and an inability to secure regular income.

4.2.3   Job (in)security and workers' rights

Job insecurity is prevalent across all tiers of the catering labour market. With only a few exceptions, all those we talked to had not signed formal contracts with their employers. This was as evident in the top-end establishments as it was in the lowest tiers. There was no evidence of workers' unions in the industry. This is not to say they do not exist, but rather that our respondents had no knowledge of them. Many respondents were also not aware of formal complaints procedures or grievance mechanisms within the workplace. One young male interviewee said: 'Who can I complain to? The owner is the sole [person] in charge and he treats you as he pleases'.[43] Thus, the lines between the personal and the professional are extremely blurred. Should a formal complaints procedure even exist, it is far from clear whether many employees would have the confidence to use it.

A lack of formal contractual arrangements between employer and employee is quite a common characteristic of the wider labour market in Uganda. A recent nationwide survey of over 1,000 Ugandan workers found that up to 35% of workers are in 'very informal jobs' without social security, agreed hours or contracts (Besamusca et al., 2012). Some of the older managers we talked to in Lira seemed to suggest that young people's employment preferences and behaviours were the reason behind the lack of formal contractual arrangements in the workplace. Their argument was that such arrangements do not exist because it is not what young people want; in their eyes, Lira's youth prefer flexibility to formal, contractual ties.

However, this argument overlooks the reasons why many move from one job to the next in a matter of weeks or months. These include: bad experiences in the first few weeks (with other staff, with customers, with the standards of the working conditions); the fact that many are initially employed on a probationary basis, where pay might be extremely low (a real concern for those struggling to meet basic subsistence needs); and ongoing responsibilities or new challenges in the domestic sphere of reproductive economic life (if a child is missing a lot of school or an ageing parent in the village falls sick). In this final scenario, the individual might feel compelled to take on the new job, only to find a few weeks down the line that the dual economic responsibilities are too burdensome.

The high levels of 'horizontal mobility' – that is, rapid movement between different establishments of a similar standard – found in the low and middle tiers of the labour market work against career progression: a young person moving rapidly between establishments stands very little chance of promotion or significant pay increases.[44] That said, while we might expect to see increments in the salaries of those working a number of years in a single establishment, there was little evidence of this actually happening. This speaks to the nature of the industry more generally: gaining experience as a waiter does not necessarily increase a person's chances of becoming a manager, a role which demands a separate skill-set.

In any case, job insecurity is a defining feature of many parts of the catering labour market – at least for employees. Eric, a young manager of a fairly successful family bar and restaurant business, put it

---

[43] Interview 09 [female, 24, cook and general service, low tier establishment]
[44] Our evidence suggests that promotions are extremely long-term processes. Some individuals remain in roughly the same roles for years and years, with no pay increments.

succinctly: 'This sector is a hire-and-fire business. The work is not pensionable, it is not secure. You cannot be sure of yourself'. Ultimately, this is not what most young people are looking for in the urban labour market.

4.3   On meanings and effects

In this final sub-section we turn our attention to the question of what people get out of the labour market. The discussion covers four connected themes. The first considers the extent to which participation in the sector supports workers to make a decent living. The second illustrates how participation in the urban labour market more generally undergirds and often strengthens the connections between rural and urban spaces. The third examines the idea and role of social networks from a more critical perspective, showing that participation in such networks is at once an enabling and constraining factor on people's livelihoods. The fourth concerns the deep interconnections between productive and reproductive economic activity. These four themes are tied together by the overarching and recurring finding that, in negotiating the urban labour market, young people must make trade-offs at every turn; taking up certain opportunities usually means shutting a door on others.

4.3.1   Survival vs. accumulation

Our evidence suggests that, in general, participation in the catering sector helps young people meet subsistence needs and maybe save a small bit on the side. Interviewees reported using their incomes to cover basic costs, such as rent and food, and also send money back to their families in the villages outside Lira town. However, incomes in the sector do not appear to help people accumulate on a significant scale. This is partly due to the level of income relative to both the costs of urban living and social obligations to support family members in rural areas. But it is also partly due to the long working hours involved, as employees are left with very little time to pursue additional livelihood activities. Many expressed an interest in setting up small enterprises on the side – farming or trading, for example. But they found it difficult to invest time and resources in these because of the pressures of everyday work in the catering sector.

The irony of this particular situation is that the reason people need to pursue additional livelihood activities in the first place (especially those that produce food or small but regular incomes) is precisely because of the informal and unreliable nature of work in the catering sector. Workers need something to fall back on when they are not paid on time, when they are fired abruptly or when their employer's costs and losses come out of their personal salary. Thus, the labour market is pushing people towards participation in other economic activities at the same time as limiting their capacity to actually do so.

Moreover, at the lowest tiers of the labour market, young people run the risk of undermining their ability to build and maintain social ties within the local socio-economic community, which we know to be important in shaping access to opportunities and sources of capital (Malual, 2014). As we have discussed above, people working in the sector, and particularly young women, often get labelled in extremely derogatory and demeaning ways which damage their reputation within the community. Employment choices in the present thus potentially undermine progression and accumulation in the future.

4.3.2   Not returning but (largely) still connected: understanding the links between urban and rural life

Many of those we interviewed were not originally from Lira town itself. It is common for people to migrate into northern Uganda's urban centres from the surrounding rural areas, which accounts for much of the region's urban expansion over the last few decades (Potts, 2013). In most cases, respondents had left behind family members in their 'home village' (either that, or once-displaced

family members had since returned to the village), which introduces a certain reciprocal dynamic to a young person's participation in the urban labour market.

What is particularly interesting, however, is that despite the resilience of ideas about the village being an important cultural site, closely connected to key moments in the life cycle such as marriage and burial, the rural pull does not seem powerful enough to compel return migration among large sections of the urban youth. It is perhaps the combination of protracted urban living together with the perception of limited rural livelihood options that works to construct the city as an economic space with few rivals. As such, it is actually less the case that the urban labour market is seen as having so much to offer, but more that the rural labour market is seen to offer so little.

On the question of links between rural and urban spaces and people, recent work by Stites et al. (2014) in the north-eastern region of Karamoja shows how, for urban migrants, the retention of connections with rural areas enables successful town-based livelihoods. They find that the maintenance of networks between urban and rural places is a key means through which systems of exchange are upheld: food can be sent in either direction, children can be sent to live with their grandparents in the village, and having a family presence in rural areas can secure access to key assets such as land and livestock. Our own evidence tells us that this is true for many of those living in Lira; respondents often discussed the maintenance of relationships with family and kin networks back in the village with reference to the material benefits it brought. One focus group discussant, for example, explained that 'Sometimes in the rainy season, one goes back to the village to farm in order to complement activities here'.[45] For this individual, taking up a town-based livelihood option did not mean having to give up her association with agriculture. In fact, far from being seen as mutually exclusive, the two were viewed as complementary; a viable way of navigating the seasonal dynamics which affect the livelihoods of those living in predominantly agriculture-based regions such as northern Uganda. For another interviewee, there was an intrinsic, non-material value in retaining connections with the village: 'You know, family home in the village should be organised because all things happen there – not in town'.[46] The village is understood here – as it is throughout many parts of Ugandan society – as an important site of social life and cultural activity. This young man drew his income from the urban centre, but felt no desire to detach himself from life back in his village.

The finding that social networks between rural and urban places are retained in order to support livelihoods for people in both places is an important one. But our analysis adds two further points to this discussion. First, it appears that for some young people in Lira, participation in the urban labour market is viewed as a means through which they might actively deepen connections with rural places and people. In many cases, an urban livelihood contributes to asset accumulation back in the village. This is related to the economic and social significance of land ownership: land still equates to financial, physical and cultural capital in northern Uganda (Lenhart, 2013), and it therefore remains in high demand. The prevalence of land disputes in the region over recent years has arguably served to reinforce the imperative to secure access to land. Anna, a single mother working in a low-level restaurant in central Lira, explained that she was doing this job so that her child could have a better future. Part of this was about ensuring he gets educated, but it was also about buying land: 'Since I have a boy, I should secure land for him since I cannot inherit it from my own family. I don't want people to harass my child over land ever'.[47] Uganda's system of land rights has evolved quite considerably over time, but what probably puts women at greatest disadvantage is the continued patriarchal bias of the system combined with a shift towards land commodification (Naybor, 2014). While women's rights to land may exist in theory in Uganda, their access remains vulnerable, particularly in places characterised

---

[45] Interview 02 [female focus group discussion]
[46] Interview 05 [male, 27, cashier, mid-tier establishment]
[47] Interview 12 [female, 30, supervisor, low tier establishment]

by land scarcity (Hopwood and Atkinson, 2013). For many women, their only way of securing land today is to engage in the market, which means first saving and then accumulating over time. So too the case with livestock. Anna also expressed a desire to buy animals for her son in order to 'prepare him for the future'. As mentioned, agricultural capital such as land and livestock are still considered important to cultural life, involved as they are in ceremonial processes concerning marriage. Thus, by participating in Lira's urban labour market, Anna hopes to carve out a space in the village, the ultimate purpose of which is to improve the future wellbeing of her family.

Second, despite the evidence we and others have generated (e.g. Stites et al., 2014), it is not always the case that migration to urban centres is associated with the retention (let alone strengthening) of rural connections. We heard of a number of instances where young people living and working in Lira had, in a sense, become detached from their families and communities back in the village. It does not necessarily seem to be the act of migration *per se* that results in this condition, but rather the nature of generational attitudes towards both young people (and particularly young women) and urban life:

> **'Leaving the village for the town, you are considered a prostitute. So if you come to work [here], you had better stick with it because there is already enough stigma around women who come to live in town.'**[48]

Settling in an urban environment is seen to call an individual's moral character into question (Sommers, 2001), which may in some cases result in that person being cut off from rural networks and, hence, key assets:[49]

> **'For us, if we move to town, people don't try to consider us as having access to land. We are told to look for our own home, that there is no land to give us [in the village]. Sometimes, it is useless to go back home to farm.'**[50]

Participation in the urban labour market can thus be considered something of a gamble. Without the backing of the family, there is a risk of social detachment which can have major consequences for future wellbeing. In other words, rural-urban connections between migrant and family are neither intrinsically secure nor automatically retained.

4.3.3   Social networks as both an enabling and constraining force

There is considerable evidence to suggest that identity and connections to social networks of various kinds are important determinants of labour market opportunity and mobility (Wietzke, 2014). Quite often, we see that inclusion in networks is good for an individual's labour market outcomes; knowing the right people can increase knowledge of and access to economic opportunities. However, our evidence suggests that social networks often have a double-edged character in that they also carry obligations. While inclusion in family, kin and peer contacts can certainly help with labour market entry, these very networks can also act as a drain in the longer term. We tend to hear much less about this side of social networks, even though it is an important part of how we should understand both the terms and consequences of labour market participation. Social networks are not simply about the number of connections an individual has or what they can do for them, but are manifested through sets of social expectations between 'members'. In a sense, group membership is embedded in a system of exchange; members can draw on the support or capital of others in the network, but they too are expected to provide some form of contribution (often beyond simple solidarity). It is easy, then, to

---

[48] Interview 12 [female, 30, supervisor, low tier establishment]
[49] This might also be related to struggles over land more generally: migrating to town potentially gives families a legitimate excuse to exclude that person from land ownership, especially if an already high number of people are sharing a small piece of land.
[50] Interview 02 [female focus group discussion]

imagine a scenario whereby an individual puts more in to a social network than they get out of it, resulting in a form of group participation that is more extractive than supportive for some.

Many interviewees talked of a pressure to support family members in the village, typically parents but sometimes also extended family.

> **'If I got a job but did not support [my family], my parents would not be happy. They expect any child to support the family. My elders are girls and they are all married. I am the eldest boy so I take on the responsibility of providing for my parents and siblings.'**[51]

Looking after their parents financially is a common expectation of young people in Uganda. But the obligation arguably sharpens following a rural-urban migration for two reasons: first, the migrant is perceived to have a wider range of work opportunities available to her, some of which potentially pay quite well (or certainly which are perceived by others to pay well); and second, the migrant may be expected to reward those who helped enable the migration through their financial and psychological support (or to pay them back at the very least). These kinds of 'remittance obligations' (see Akuei, 2005) create an additional burden on new urban dwellers, who may already be finding that the need for cash is far greater in an urban economy relative to a rural one, something which is often not understood by rural relatives. Thus, while the urban migrant might be making an amount of money that seems substantial to those back in the village (and which therefore increases the expectation of support), this migrant is now paying for food, accommodation, water, transport and other essentials. Cash resources in urban areas can thus deplete quite rapidly.[52]

But it is not just relatives' expectations that place a burden on young people in Lira. Maintaining a social network of urban-based friends and acquaintances can also come at a price. As we have already discussed, connections can help secure employment, but drawing on them often involves striking a negotiation or bargain of some kind. The story of one interviewee illustrates how this works. Anna was facing pressure from her family to find her brother a job in Lira. He had dropped out of school at Senior 4 level, and was struggling to find something to do. Eventually, Anna's brother found an opening at a local radio station in town, but his recruitment there was far from guaranteed. In addition to going through a formal application process, he learnt that he would have to provide some kind of financial incentive to his prospective employer. As he could not afford this, he turned to Anna. She explained: 'You know, when someone is connecting you to a job, you have to give them some incentives – airtime, soft drinks etc. – which makes my work hard. My brother has no income, so relies on me for any help'. Anna found herself having to buy her way into a social network so that her brother might stand a better chance of finding work. Connections in the labour market are not, therefore, simply an outcome of prior social relationships; sometimes they have to be bought.[53]

4.3.4 'Everything starts at home': the links between the productive and reproductive economy

Our final theme in this section is a brief but significant one. There are clear social dimensions to participation in labour markets, and much of the time these are rooted in the reproductive economy. For example, the decision to enter the catering sector is sometimes related to the fact that a woman might have a child to care for. In many sectors, it would not be possible for her to simultaneously earn an income and take care of her child, but employment in certain catering establishments provides a means through which these dual ends can be met.

---

[51] Interview 07 [male, 19, laundry attendant, top tier establishment]
[52] Thanks to Liz Stites for articulating this point.
[53] Interview 12 [female, 30, supervisor, low tier restaurant]

For women, there is another major concern – widely voiced in our interviews – that working in bars or low-level restaurants makes it much harder to find a husband. The industry's perceived associations with prostitution mean that taking low-level work in the sector compromises a woman's ability to achieve her own goals, which often include getting married and raising a stable family (among other things of course). But participation is also problematic for married women, as the long hours involved make it hard to meet expectations vis-à-vis domestic responsibilities. As described by one of our male respondents:

> '**Time [spent working in the industry] is not good for a married woman with a husband. It is difficult because they are expected to serve their husbands […] One leaves home at 6am and returns at 10pm. No man can accept that. They will just go away or find another woman. Sometimes such women cannot even have children if they [work in the sector] – they have no time to care for them.**'[54]

These kinds of effects are not limited to women or to the catering sector. Negative attitudes towards those living and working in towns and cities appear to undermine social ties and relations within the family network, which has implications for the achievement of life goals, such as marriage. This was summed up by Anna, a supervisor at a low-level restaurant:

> '**If a boy from the village wants to marry a girl who came to live in town, he would be stopped there and then. He is told [by his parents] that this lady has roamed everywhere, that she is spoilt and would just waste the family dowry…that she will not make a good wife or spouse to their son. If both youth were living in town and decide to marry, they are both considered as crooks who can manage each other; "***wek gi rib oyayi gi***" (meaning, let them join their dubious lifestyle). Parents worry about wasting their resources to marry such a woman who has been in town and is now considered a prostitute.**'[55]

The nature of one's employment thus matters in dimensions other than the personal or the economic. Choosing bar work – or ending up there because of a lack of alternatives – potentially means making trade-offs in various aspects of one's life. In short, earning an income is obviously important, but, from a social perspective, so too are the means through which that income is earned.

---

[54] Interview 07 [male, 19, laundry attendant, top tier establishment]
[55] Interview 12 [female, 30, supervisor, low tier establishment]

5   Catering compared: the cases of hairdressing and carpentry

We set out to tell a story of post-conflict youth employment through an analysis of economic and social life in Lira's catering sector. But in order to get a sense of whether the things we have seen are specific to catering or are instead indicative of broader patterns, this study also draws on interviews with young people working in the town's hairdressing and carpentry sectors.

Both these sectors are more deeply gendered than catering and in more distinct ways. The labour force of the catering sector may be dominated by young women, with the more powerful and lucrative managerial positions dominated by older men, but it is nonetheless a sector in which significant numbers of both sexes work. In contrast, carpentry is very much dominated by men and is not considered an appropriate occupation for women. Likewise, hairdressing is largely considered a female economic space (although this designation is not quite so clear-cut).

5.1   Carpentry compared

For young men, entry into carpentry through training programmes is broadly similar to formal entry into catering, except for the training duration. On average, the training takes about three years at a reputable government technical institute, with several months to a year of industrial training before completion. Only two interviewees were trained on the job, either with a family member or a family acquaintance. Nonetheless, a period of apprenticeship is often also required. Beginners tend to start out at the workshops of established carpenters, working for several months or years before they can go on to open workshops of their own (three years is not uncommon). The period spent at the workshops enables them to hone their skills, gain exposure, and build the necessary capital to buy their own tools.

Social relationships appear important in influencing a young worker's trajectory after formal training has been completed. Even though people in the carpentry sector (owners, trainees and employers) come from different parts of Lango sub-region (with a few others from other parts of Uganda), what is remarkable are the familiar patterns based on social connection and networks that determine the choice of on-the-job trainer and workshop partners. In fact, it is not unusual to find workshop owners employing trainees who come from the same village, while workshop partners tend to be friends. Clearly, social connections and networks matter in the carpentry trade – a finding that also emerged through the Kabul case study (Pain and Mallett, 2014).

Although starting out in the carpentry business is still challenging, it does appear easier for most trained carpenters to progress than those working in catering. After a few years of work at others' workshops, the majority of those we talked to were able to go on and start workshops of their own so long as they could afford to acquire space, put up a shade and work table, pay monthly rent, and procure a few hand tools. Still, these are not insignificant barriers to many people, so it appears quite common for young carpenters to establish a workshop jointly with friends as a way to cut overheads. They share rent and other operational costs, such as electricity bills (roughly USH 50,000–80,000 a month) and annual licence fees (roughly USH 50,000–70,000 a year).

On the other hand, establishing a well-equipped workshop complete with advanced machinery is impossible for most in the sector. As one carpenter put it: 'Machines and equipment for carpentry are very expensive, and we have to rely on hand-tools. A simple machine for sanding timber costs USH

600,000 ($230), while sawing and ripping machine goes for USH 10 million ($3,850). We can never afford to buy such machines on our own'.[56]

In contrast to catering, nearly every carpenter earns a daily amount that is dependent on sales. Trainees and those who have recently completed the training can expect to earn a minimum of USH 3,000 and a maximum of USH 10,000 a day, while more experienced and established carpenters running their own workshop can expect to earn a minimum of USH 30,000 and a maximum of USH 100,000 a day in the good season.[57] Thus, the economic returns from carpentry are potentially many times greater than those associated with catering work.

5.2   Hairdressing compared

There are no dedicated professional training centres for hairdressing in Lira town. There is only one (non-accredited) training centre for hairdressing owned by a lady who operates out of her salon. Some other vocational centres also sometimes offer the skill, but they lack appropriate equipment and good trainers, with some having to sub-contract salon owners to provide hairdressing skills to their students. None of the existing training centres offer an official certificate. The fee paid to train in hairdressing is roughly the same as for catering: about USH 300,000 ($115) for three months of training that includes practical materials. Most trainees are concerned that three months training is not adequate. The majority of those training in hairdressing are young women and most are sponsored by NGOs.[58] Entrance into the sector depends on the individual having at least some basic skills, such as a degree of basic education and the ability to speak English. This is also the case for anyone wanting to enter catering.

Although there are exceptions, women in the sector typically train in specific hairdressing skills such as applying and using chemicals or plaiting – services mainly required by women customers – while men tend to be trained only in cutting hair. It is also uncommon for young women to work as barbers; we interviewed only one woman working in a roadside barber salon, and she found entrance into this sub-sector quite challenging: 'Some people think I can't cut hair well because I am a woman and want to go away to another salon. This was especially the case when I had just started. Men left as soon as they knew I was the one cutting their hair but after a while, I gained their confidence as a good barber'.[59]

The cost of starting a roadside barber salon in a kiosk is much less than establishing the kind of salon that mainly serves female customers. The latter requires more equipment, meaning few young women can start their own salon. A majority of young people interviewed work in existing establishments and only a few who had their own salons or kiosks. Generally, it takes many years for most young people to start their own salon, unless supported by their family.

Just as women working in the catering sector are considered immoral or deviant by members of the community, a similar phenomenon is seen in the hairdressing and beauty parlour sector. While male youths in the sector might be seen as charlatans (locally called *oyai*), it is women who bear the brunt from both ends. As one female salon worker clearly put it, 'With this job, we only do haircuts. I am in constant contact with men especially. Some of them disturb me for sexual favour although I refuse. In turn, some people then think I truly have relationship with some of the men who come here to cut their hair thus, consider me a prostitute'.[60] But these negative attitudes seem to be slowly changing and

[56] Interview 35 [male, 31, carpentry workshop owner]
[57] Carpentry is highly seasonal. From the months of February through July (the planting season and start of school term), business is said to be comparatively slow. From August through January (after harvesting, in the dry season), business is reportedly much better.
[58] Interviews 34 [salon focus group discussion], 27 [female, 27, salon manager]
[59] Interview 30 [male, 20, hairdresser]
[60] Interview 30 [male, 20, hairdresser]

many families encourage and support their young daughters to train in hairdressing. One interviewee, Lucy, explained that her mother gave her money to study hairdressing at a technical school.[61] Increasingly, the sector is viewed as a decent livelihood option for the majority of young people who are unable to attain qualifications through formal schooling.

In terms of economic returns, women working in a hair salon can expect to earn USH 4,000–10,000 a day. However, in the good season (festive season), it is possible to make USH 25,000–50,000 a day. Pay generally depends on the amount of work done each day; there tends to be no monthly structure. Young men who own their own salon are able to earn USH 7,000–20,000 daily (and about USH 50,000–100,000 daily during good seasons). However, the good season is very short. Pay also depends on skills and the location of the salon: locations in strategic areas tend to attract high rents and it takes many years to gain customers' trust and confidence.

Many of the young men who own a kiosk seem able to live a comfortable life, and some are able to achieve real progress. Jackson, the owner of a barber salon in town, explained: 'I bought land here in town where I hope to build a house. I saved money from salon work to buy the land. It was not much land but at least it is something'.[62] However, this is not easy: 'I had been saving since 2003–2010 to get the USH 4 million, it is not easy. I had to balance between immediate and long term needs to realise my goals of 4 million to set up a salon'.[63] While a few young men appear able to overcome this challenge, it appears much harder for women to progress, due in part to their reproductive role:

> **'I decided to put this makeshift kiosk (made of papyrus both roof and wall), so that I can make my own business … It only costs USH 50,000 to make this, but it's not good. It is practically a shade, anytime it can be blow away, more so the roof is not metal. While it seems easy to start a salon, for me I have a lot of challenges for the one month I have been here. Sometimes my clients come and go away because I have no drier. If a customer decides to stay, I have to take them to anther salon where there is a drier, otherwise I only do braiding of which I earn between 0 and 50,000 per week. Right now I'm not doing any other thing, and I can't start something else because I am very poor. I have a baby to take care of alone. The father of the baby is very irresponsible and doesn't want to take care of me and the baby. I wish I had no child.'[64]**

For this reason, some trainees we talked to explained that they will delay their decision to get married or have children until they feel able. Doreen, a young hairdressing trainee, explained why: 'I have seen those who married early are struggling with children they can't provide for. Sometimes the man leaves them in the house especially if they are a burden or doing nothing to support the family'.[65]

***

So, what does this brief description and analysis of life in Lira's carpentry and hairdressing sectors add to our understanding of the urban labour market? There are some clear differences, for example in the more sharply gendered nature of these two sectors relative to catering, a sector accessed by significant numbers of both men and women. There is perhaps also less evidence that sexual relationships form part of a young woman's experience in the hairdressing sector, arguably because salons are more likely to be owned by women, and the clientele in these places is more likely to be female. However, there are also several similarities.

---

[61] Interview 47 [female, 16, hairdresser]
[62] Interview 31 [male, 29, salon owner]
[63] Interview 31 [male, 29, salon owner]
[64] Interview 37 [female, 24, salon owner]
[65] Interview 29 [female, 20, trainee hairdresser]

First, although their number and quality might vary, formal training programmes designed to equip young people with the necessary skills exist within all three sectors. These programmes carry financial costs, meaning they are not accessible to the very poorest. At the same time, social connections and inclusion in certain networks still appear to matter: a newly trained carpenter, for example, will still depend on contacts in order to secure a post-training placement, and clubbing together with friends can be an effective strategy to overcome high start-up costs.

Second, the kind of negative labelling and stereotyping of women observed in the catering sector is also present in the hairdressing and beauty parlour industries. This is more than a simple annoyance for those affected, weakening as it does their sense of occupational identity and potentially undermining the capacity to build social ties for the future.

And third, reproductive economic duties shape abilities to participate in productive economic spaces. Work in any one of these three sectors is no guarantee of a decent income, so it is quite common for young people to look for additional opportunities on the side. However, shouldering the burden of childcare and meeting the financial costs of bringing up a family in an urban environment – often alone – places enormous constraints on a young woman's ability to diversify income streams in this way.

6   Conclusion

According to the latest nationally representative household survey data, 9% of Uganda's urban labour force is made up of the 'working poor' – those who are both employed and earning less than a dollar a day (UNHS, 2013). A crude reading of this statistic would imply that, by this particular metric, 91% of the working population in urban areas are doing alright (insofar as they are not living in absolute poverty).[66] That is not to say, though, that their labour market participation is necessarily working for them.

Many young people working in Lira's catering sector are earning enough to get by; some are even doing quite well by average standards. But the analysis presented in this paper clearly shows that: (1) workers' incomes are not typically enough for them to achieve their life goals; and (2) participation in the catering sector has a range of negative impacts on their welfare and wellbeing. The catering labour market is, for many, characterised by chronic job insecurity, an absence of workers' rights, long hours, demeaning attitudes from others in the community, and – especially for young women in the mid- and lower tiers of the sector – exposure to different forms of sexual and physical vulnerability.

Young people around the world look for employment that serves their interests and aspirations beyond simply generating economic capital. A good income of course remains a major element of 'decent work', but, as the UN's 2011 World Youth Report makes clear, greater emphasis should be placed on improving the *quality* of jobs available to young people. It is after all young people who disproportionately make up a huge chunk of the global working poor; it is young people who most often cannot afford to stay out of work and so end up taking any work available (UN, 2011). Improving the quality of employment means getting to grips with the nature of labour market participation. Wages and incomes are part of this, but so too are working conditions, relations between employees and employers, job (in)security, structural violence, and gender inequality.

Failing to create quality jobs, or to do anything about the detrimental nature of much labour market participation, will have wide-ranging effects. People's experiences in the labour market spill over into other aspects of their life; the world of paid work has profound consequences for an individual's wellbeing more generally. As the UN report makes clear, a lack of decent work is associated with a range of negative effects on relational and subjective wellbeing, from severe mental health problems to strained family relations to 'anti-social' behaviours (ILO, 2010, in UN, 2011: 36-7). And it is not just poor working conditions that produce these kinds of effects: studies have also found job insecurity to negatively affect individual wellbeing (de Witte, 2005; Hellgren et al., 1999; Sverke et al., 2002).

6.1   How labour market participation on negative terms pushes people into self-employment

Embedded within mainstream policy narratives about economic growth in developing countries – and especially in places emerging from war – are strong assumptions about entrepreneurship, local enterprise and self-employment. More specifically, the ways in which mainstream development actors talk about growth, and the kinds of programming approaches often pursued in fragile states, reflect an idea that what poor people want and need is support to enter the labour market as owners and managers of their own private enterprises. Hundreds of millions of dollars are ploughed into microfinance and lending schemes in developing countries each year, and a major policy focus in post-conflict countries is placed on building the vocational skills of young people so that they might then go

---

[66] The limits of such a definition of poverty are openly recognised here.

on to set up successful businesses of their own. The popularity of these approaches reflects the continuing influence of neoliberal economic agendas on international development policy and practice (Bateman and Chang, 2009).

There is, however, a compelling argument to be made that what many young, war-affected people want is not in fact the chance to set up a business of their own, but rather the security and dependability of a decent job working for someone else. Entrepreneurship works for some – a minority, probably – but not for all. Self-employment carries with it an inherent risk of failing to secure regular income, which as our evidence from Lira shows, is at odds with what many young people are looking for. In many places and sectors, people are trying to carve out space in already very crowded economic marketplaces; competition is fierce and margins are thin. As such, the capacity to accumulate is typically quite low. Moreover, economic activity is socially regulated. This might work through multiple mechanisms, but the end result is usually the same: market access and participation become easier for some and harder for others. Connections, trust and identity all mediate the process of engaging with the market, meaning there are factors beyond skills and capital that determine success.

Knowing that an income will come in every week or at the end of each month was hugely important to those we spoke to in Lira town. Without it, there are on impacts on both material wellbeing (failing to meet subsistence needs or to pursue additional livelihood activities) and subjective wellbeing (stress, anxiety, depression). What our study has clearly demonstrated is that these negative fall-outs are by no means restricted to the world of self-employment; that the security we might expect to accompany working for someone else is so often absent from workers' lives. Of course, this is not a concern particular to poor people in the global south: research from the UK and US has shown that the recent rise of 'zero hour' contracts – one form of what are euphemistically termed 'flexible working practices' which place substantial power in the hands of employers over employees' work hours and pay – is linked to increases in financial and social insecurity, leading to what the authors refer to as 'depressed mental states' among employees (*The Observer*, 2014).

The majority of those we spoke to in Lira do not have formal employment contracts, have limited access to complaints procedures, and work extremely long hours for an insufficient wage. Moreover, late payments appear to be a relatively common occurrence. Combined with the poor working conditions of many establishments, a lack of upward mobility in the labour market (contrasted with a great deal of horizontal mobility), and exposure to gendered forms of harassment and violence, Lira's catering sector – or at least large parts of it – emerges as a fairly undesirable place to work. At the very least, employment in the sector falls well short of what young people hope to get out of the urban labour market.

It is hardly surprising, then, that when we asked young people in Lira what they wanted to achieve in their lives, 'owning a business' came up with striking regularity. Respondents tended to talk about this in relation to ideas of autonomy, being their own boss, and establishing forms of economic activity on their own terms. For many, self-employment in the sector is seen to be a more respectful and dignified means of achieving one's life goals as compared to waged employment in the sector. Our interpretation of the evidence suggests that this preference is grounded less in any sort of inherent aspiration to become an entrepreneur, and more in the young people's negative experiences of employment in the catering sector so far. In other words, these people do not appear to constitute 'born entrepreneurs', but have been pushed towards this option through the nature of their participation in the urban labour market.

Investing so many resources in things like microfinance, then, appears to miss the point, addressing a symptom and consequence of poorly functioning labour markets and weak workers' rights rather than getting to grips with the reasons why a young man or woman in northern Uganda might perceive self-

employment as their most viable option. Ultimately, this evidence suggests that looking at why people reject certain kinds of jobs – and how that might be changed for the better – is just as important as understanding what people want in the first place.

7   References

AAU, DRT and UNNGOF (2012) *Lost opportunity? Gaps in youth policy and programming in Uganda*. Kampala: ActionAid Uganda, Development Research and Training, and Uganda National NGO Forum.

ActionAid International Uganda (2012) *Country Strategy Paper IV: 2012-2017*. Kampala: ActionAid International Uganda.

Aggrey, N. (2013) 'An assessment of the social assistance grants for empowerment in Uganda'. In Devereux, S. and Getu, M. (Eds.) *Informal and formal social protection systems in sub-Saharan Africa*. Kampala: Fountain.

Ahikire, J., Madanda, A. and Ampaire, C. (2012) Post-war economic opportunities in northern Uganda: implications for women's empowerment and political participation. London: International Alert.

Akuei, S. R. (2005) 'Remittances as unforeseen burdens: the livelihoods and social obligations of Sudanese refugees'. Global Migration Perspectives No. 18. Geneva: Global Commission on International Migration.

Bateman, M. and Chang, H-J. (2009) 'The microfinance illusion'. Accessed September 2014: http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2385174

Besamusca, J., Tijdens, K., Kahyarara, G. and Ngeh Tingum, E. (2012) 'Wages in Uganda'. WageIndicator Survey 2012. Amsterdam: WageIndicator Foundation.

Bidwell, K., Galbraith, C., Haddad, L., Hermes, R., Kleiner, S., Raheem, Z. and Scheffler, K. (2008) 'Youth and sustainable livelihoods: linking vocational training programs to market opportunities in Northern Uganda'. New York, N.Y.: Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children.

Blattman, C., Fiala, N. and Martinez, S. (2014a) 'Generating skilled self-employment in developing countries: experimental evidence from Uganda'. *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 129(2): 697-752.

Blattman, C., Jamison, J., Green, E. P. and Annan, J. (2014b) 'The returns to cash and microenterprise support among the ultra-poor: a field experiment'. Accessed November 2014: file:///C:/Users/rmallett/AppData/Local/Temp/SSRN-id2439488.pdf

Cramer, C. (2010) 'Unemployment and participation in violence'. Background paper for World Bank 2011 World Development Report.

de Witte, H. (2005) 'Job insecurity: review of the international literature on definitions, prevalence, antecedents and consequences'. *South African Journal of Industrial Psychology* 31(4): 1-6.

Dolan, C. (2008) 'Is the PRDP a three-legged table? Challenges for NGOs in moving from humanitarian and short-term interventions to longer term approaches in light of the PRDP and the conflict setting'. Keynote speech given at an NGO seminar for Scandinavian-based international NGOs working in northern Uganda. Kampala. April.

Dooley, D. and Prause, J. (2009) *The social costs of underemployment: inadequate employment as disguised unemployment*. Cambridge: Cambridge University.

DRT (Development Research and Training) (2013) 'The minimum wage in Uganda: an urgent call'. DRT policy brief 4. Accessed December 2014: http://www.fes-uganda.org/media/documents/Final_Policy_Brief_Minimum_Wage_An_urgent_call.pdf

Elson, D. (1999) 'Labor Markets as Gendered Institutions: Equality, Efficiency and Empowerment Issues'. *World Development* 27(3): 611-27.

Geenen, S. (2011) 'Relations and regulations in local gold trade networks in South Kivu, Democratic Republic of Congo'. *Journal of Eastern African Studies* 5(3): 427-46.

Golooba-Mutebi, F. and Hickey, S. (2009) 'Governing chronic poverty under inclusive liberalism: the case of the Northern Uganda Social Action Fund'. Working paper 150. Manchester: Chronic Poverty Research Network.

GoU and UNFPA (2013) *The state of Uganda population report 2013*. Kampala: Government of Uganda and UN Population Fund.

Greenwood, A. M. (1999) 'International definitions and prospects of underemployment statistics'. Paper prepared for the "Seminario sobre Subempleo", Bogota, 8-12 November.

Hellgren, J., Sverke, M. and Isaksson, K. (1999) 'A two-dimensional approach to job insecurity: consequences for employee attitudes and well-being'. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology* 8(2): 179-95.

Hopwood, J. and Atkinson, R. (2013) 'Land conflict monitoring and mapping tool for the Acholi sub-region'. Final report. Accessed August 2014: http://www.lcmt.org/pdf/final_report.pdf

International Youth Foundation (2011) 'Navigating challenges. Charting hope. A cross-sector situational analysis on youth in Uganda'. Executive version. YouthMap Uganda.

Kabeer, N. (2012) 'Women's Economic Empowerment and Inclusive Growth: Labour Markets and Enterprise Development'. SIS Working Paper 2012/1. IDRC.

Lenhart, L. (2013) 'Alleged land grabs and governance: exploring mistrust and trust in northern Uganda – the case of the Apaa land conflict'. *Journal of Peace and Security Studies* 1.

Liebowitz, J. and Sentamu, R. (2012) 'Public perceptions of Uganda's economy: in crisis?' Briefing paper 101. Afrobarometer

Mallett, R. (2010) 'Transition, connection and uncertainty: IDPs in Kampala'. *Forced Migration Review* 34: 34-35.

Malual, J. D. (2014) 'Social capital, agricultural technical assistance, access to productive resources, and good security in post-conflict Lira, northern Uganda'. Iowa State University PhD dissertation.

Mazurana, D, Atim, T., Brunet, A. and Kezie-Nwoha, H. (2013) *Making gender-just remedy and reparation possible: upholding the rights of women and girls in the Greater North of Uganda*. Kampala and Somerville, M.A.: Isis Women's International Cross Cultural Exchange and Feinstein International Center.

Mazurana, D., Marshak, A., Opio, J. H. and Gordon, R. (2014) 'Surveying livelihoods, service delivery and governance: baseline evidence from Uganda'. Working paper 12. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (2006) *Labour market information status report for Uganda*. Kampala: Government of Uganda.

Naybor, D. (2014) 'Land as fictitious commodity: the continuing evolution of women's land rights in Uganda'. *Gender, Place and Culture: A Journal of Feminist Geography* Online First.

Nordstrom, C. (2010) 'Women, Economy, War'. *International Review of the Red Cross* 877(92): 161-76.

Ntozi, J. P., Najjumba, I. M., Ahimbisibwe, F., Ayiga, N. and Odwee, J. (2003) 'Has the HIV/AIDS epidemic changed sexual behaviour of high risk groups in Uganda?'. *African Health Science* 3(3): 107-16.

Pain, A. and Mallett, R. (2014) 'Gender, youth and urban labour market participation: evidence from the tailoring sector in Kabul, Afghanistan'. Working paper 18. London: Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

Pfeiffer, A. and Elbert, T. (2011) 'PTSD, depression and anxiety among former abductees in Northern Uganda'. *Conflict and Health* 5(14)

Potts, D. (2013) 'Rural-urban and urban-rural migration flows as indicators of economic opportunity in sub-Saharan Africa: what do the data tell us?'. Working Paper 9. Brighton: Migrating Out Of Poverty, University of Sussex.

Raeymaekers, T. (2011) 'Forced displacement and youth employment in the aftermath of the Congo war: from making a living to making a life'. Working paper 38. Brighton: MicroCon.

Saferworld (2012) Perception survey of Northern Uganda Youth Development Centre: For the Advisory Consortium on Conflict Sensitivity. London: Saferworld.

Sommers, M. (2001) 'Young, male and Pentecostal: urban refugees in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania'. *Journal of Refugee Studies* 14(4): 347-70.

Stites, E., Burns, J. and Akabwai, D. (2014) *"It's better to sweat than to die": rural-to-urban migration, northern Karamoja, Uganda*. Somerville, M.A.: Feinstein International Center, Tufts University.

Sverke, M., Hellgren, J. and Naswall, K. (2002) 'No security: a meta-analysis and review of job insecurity and its consequences'. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology* 7(3): 242-64.

The Observer (2014) 'Supermarket shifts "cause anxiety and insecurity"'. 19 April. Accessed September 2014: http://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2014/apr/19/zero-hours-contracts-flexible-working

Titeca, K. and de Herdt, T. (2010) 'Regulation, cross-border trade and practical norms in West Nile, North-Western Uganda'. *Africa* 80(4): 573-94.

UBoS (2010a) *The Urban Labour Force Survey 2009 Report*. Kampala: Uganda Bureau of Statistics.

UBoS (2010b) *Uganda National Household Survey 2009/10.* Kampala: Uganda Bureau of Statistics.

UBoS (2012) *2012 Statistical Abstract*. Kampala: Uganda Bureau of Statistics.

UHRC and OHCHR (2011) "The dust has not yet settled": Victims' views on the right to remedy and reparation. A report from the Greater North of Uganda. Kampala: Uganda Human Rights Commission and UN High Commissioner for Human Rights.

UN (2011) World Youth Report 2011: Youth employment: youth perspectives on the pursuit of decent work in changing times. New York, N.Y.: UNDESC.

UNHS (2013) 'The Uganda National Household Survey 2012/13'. Presentation by Ssennono Fred Vincent, UBoS. Accessed November 2014:
file:///C:/Users/rmallett/AppData/Local/Temp/UNHS%202012-131.pdf

Vinck, P., Pham, P. N., Stover, E. and Weinstein, H. M. (2007) 'Exposure to war crimes and implications for peace building in northern Uganda'. *Journal of the American Medical Association* 298(5).

Walakira, E. J. (2009) 'Interpretation of child labour in Uganda: a case of children's work in fishing communities in Wakiso district'. University of Wien PhD dissertation.

Walker, D., Pereznieto, P., Bantebya, G. and Ochen, E. (2014) 'Sexual exploitation of adolescent girls in Uganda: the drivers, consequences and responses to the "sugar daddy" phenomenon'. Report. London: Overseas Development Institute.

Wietzke, F-B. (2014) 'Pathways from jobs to social cohesion'. Policy research working paper 6804. Washington, D.C.: World Bank.

World Bank (2014) Uganda: World Development Indicators. Accessed November 2014:
http://data.worldbank.org/country/uganda

World Population Review (2014) 'Major cities in Uganda population 2014'. Website accessed November 2014: http://worldpopulationreview.com/countries/uganda-population/major-cities-in-uganda/

Young Leaders Think Tank for Policy Alternatives (2011) 'A paper on the challenges of youth (un)employment in Uganda'. Draft. Accessed November 2014: http://www.kas.de/wf/doc/kas_29017-1522-2-30.pdf?111020125911

Annex

Interview No.	Name	Gender	Age	Profession / role	Level of hotel (if appropriate)
01	Focus Group	Male	Mixed	Mixed	N/A
02	Focus Group	Female	Mixed	Mixed	N/A
03	Justus	Male	25	Supervisor	Top level cafe
04	Judith	Female	35	Cook / kitchen worker	Top level cafe
05	David	Male	27	Cashier / service	Mid-level bar and lodging
06	Florence	Female	28	Service / waitress	Top level hotel
07	Brian	Male	19	Laundry attendant	High level hotel
08	Stella	Female	27	Owner – cook / service	Low level hotel
09	Shamim	Female	24	Cook, service, clean	Low level restaurant
10	Sammy Joe	Male	Adult	Principle at catering school	Catering school
11	Margaret	Female	20	Waitress	Mid-level restaurant
12	Anna	Female	30	Supervisor	Low level restaurant
13	Sylvia	Female	25	Waitress	Top level hotel
14	Adimo	Female	Late 20s, early 30s	Chef / manager	Low level restaurant
15	Geoffrey	Male		Supervisor	Top level hotel
16	Carol	Female	30	Waitress	Top level hotel
17	Student Focus Group	Female	Mixed	Catering school	N/A
18	Dan	Male	24	Chef	Mid-level hotel
19	Geoffrey	Male	27	Manager	Low-level hotel
20	Alex	Male	32	Manager / supervisor	Mid-level hotel
21	Harriet	Female	33	Cleaner / housekeeper	Mid-level hotel
22	Lucy	Female	26	Cashier / manager	Mid-level hotel
23	Peter	Male	64	Manager	Mid-level hotel
24	Godfrey	Male	34	General staff	Mid-level hotel
25	Peter	Male	60	Owner	Mid-level hotel
26	Eric	Male	31	Manager	Mid-level bar
27	Mama Donna	Female	-	Salon manager	N/A
28	Dillis	Female	19	Trainee hairdresser	N/A
29	Doreen	Female	20	Trainee hairdresser	N/A
30	Kevin	Male	20	Hairdresser	N/A

31	Jackson	Male	29	Salon owner	N/A
32	Dennis	Male	-	NGO Director	N/A
33	Tom	Male	-	Local government labour officer	N/A
34	Salon Focus Group	Mixed	Mixed (average 19)	Mixed	N/A
35	Basil	Male	31	Owns carpentry workshop	N/A
36	Justin	Male	20	Hairdresser	N/A
37	Doreen	Female	24	Hairdresser (owns salon)	N/A
38	Charles	Male	36	Carpenter	N/A
39	Sam	Male	28	Carpenter	N/A
40	Fred	Male	35	Carpenter	N/A
41	Martin	Male	28	Carpenter	N/A
42	Daniel	Male	22	Hairdresser	N/A
43	Isaac	Male	22	Carpenter	N/A
44	Fred	Male	20	Hairdresser	N/A
45	Emmanuel	Male	18	Carpenter	N/A
46	Francis	Male	18	Carpenter	N/A
47	Lucy	Female	16	Hairdresser	N/A