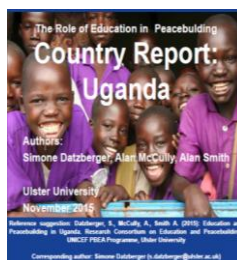


The Role of Formal and Non-Formal Youth Initiatives in Peacebuilding

UGANDA



Research Area 3: Youth in Uganda



Research Objective:
Explore how formal and non-formal education programming increases young people's agency (political, economic and social) in the peacebuilding process of Uganda.

Research Questions

1. To what extent do policies include a focus on youth agency for the realization of sustainable peace?
2. To what extent do formal and non-formal education initiatives focused on youth promote agency for the realization of sustainable peace?
3. What are youth's experiences and understandings of their agency in a (post-)conflict environment?

Focus

- Policies, frameworks and national youth bodies as well as civil society coalitions
- Formal macro education and livelihood initiatives
- 2 non-formal education initiatives (micro-case studies)

Methods

- Semi-structured interviews with CSOs, youth-led organisations, MoESTS, youth, ...
- Three micro case FGDs were conducted in Gulu and Adjumani.
- Four FGDs focused broadly on education and livelihoods initiatives in order to complement / substantiate or contrast quantitative data obtained from UNICEF U-Report.
- Collaboration with Gulu and Makerere University

Location	No of FGDs	Initiative or Theme	Participants: Whenever possible we sought to have 50 % female and 50% male participants (aged: 18-35)
Gulu	2	Gulu War-affected training Centre (mainly for women)	Total: 20
Adjumani	1	Piggery Project (livelihoods)	Total: 10
Karamoja	2	One FGD on education initiatives - backed with quantitative U-Report Data One FGD on livelihoods initiatives - backed with quantitative U-Report Data	Total: 20
Kampala	2	One FGD on education initiatives - backed with quantitative U-Report Data One FGD on livelihoods initiatives - backed with quantitative U-Report Data	Total: 20

Impressions



Situation of Youth in Uganda

Background

- Uganda had the largest percentage of young people under 30 in 2012 - that is 78% of the total population
- UBOS: 64% of all unemployed persons in the country are youth (18-30)
- UBOS: urban youth tend to be more likely to be unemployed than rural youth, with females twice as much unemployed than male youth.
- Several research reports highlight that the level of education or vocational training did not increase employment in Uganda
- Secondary or vocational training affect the quality of work but not necessarily the quantity.

Youth related policies and framing (Macro-Level)

Policies and Frameworks	Main national bodies & civil society coalitions
National Youth Policy 2004 (NYP)	National Youth Council
Draft National Youth Policy	Uganda Parliamentary Forum for Youth Affairs
National Youth Manifesto (2011-16)	The Uganda Civil Society Youth Coalition
National Youth Manifesto (2016-21)	Uganda Scouts Association
	Uganda Youth Network

Youth related policies and framing

Policies and frameworks

- Interviews: the absence of a Ministry for Youth was a recurring theme
- Ambiguous perception of youth: on the one hand depicted as “vulnerable” because of high unemployment rates, on the other hand portrayed as a bearer of hope / actor who ought to actively participate in the development process of the country
- Uganda is in the main perceived as a developing and not post-conflict country – therefore education is not embraced as an integral part of the country’s peacebuilding process.
- More generally: education is identified as a tool for economic development but not necessarily as a means to foster political participation and voice

Youth related policies and framing

Main national bodies and civil society coalitions

- All of these institutions made it to their priority to either advocate for, or enhance the agency and participation for youth.
- Main engagement tool: Non-formal education programmes or leadership training programmes
- Leadership programmes frequently marginalise less privileged youth with lower levels of educational attainment.
- Efforts to increase the political literacy should reach out to a much wider youth segment – especially youth with low educational attainment, from remote or rural areas (= youth that are not part of macro-level organisations/associations)

Formal Education and Livelihood Initiatives

- USE
- BTVET – Business, Technical and Vocational Education Training
- Tertiary/ higher education
- Uganda Youth Capital Venture Fund
- Youth Livelihood Programme

Formal Education and Livelihood Initiatives

Findings (interviews, FGDs, reviewed literature):

- USE consistently critiqued for lacking the practical component needed for future employability
- USE not entirely free (FHI 360)
- Higher education: state scholarships are highly competitive and only students from high quality standard schools are able to compete
- Mixed perceptions about BTVET, UYCVF, YLP: unclear to what extent these programmes have contributed to sustainable employment generation in Uganda
- Difficulties in accessing the UYCVF and YLP
- Positive mentions were made regarding saving groups and some CSOs (e.g.: BRAC, C&D, Restless Development, or VSO).
- Education per se was recurrently perceived by participants as a means to increase social, economic and political agency in situations of conflict (point is also made by HHI 2015)
- Points of criticism mainly revolved around how education programmes are implemented, the structural barriers surrounding them and what is being taught at schools.

Micro Non-Formal Education initiatives

Gulu War Affected Training Centre



Piggery Initiative “Takenyira”



Micro-Case Studies

	1 st Micro Case	2 nd Micro Case
	GWATC Gulu War Affected Training Centre	"Takanyira" Pigery Project
Location	Gulu	Adjumani
Purpose of the initiative	Skills-training for youth who are most affected by the past conflict in northern Uganda, including former abductees, school-drop outs, child mothers, widows or orphans. While the majority of beneficiaries are female, the GWATC also caters for male youth, and youth outside Gulu town including South Sudanese refugees.	Income-generating and home-grown youth initiative specializing in pigery. Takanyira's purpose is to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generate an income for all members • Create social livelihoods • Employ group members and keep them occupied • Socialize • Create unity among group members • Eradicate poverty • Reduce unemployment • Develop skills and knowledge of group members
Peacebuilding component	According to FGD participants the initiative indirectly or directly contributes to the peacebuilding process in that it helped them to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gain skills, knowledge and experience • Establish a positive social network • Survive and productive • Pursue desired plans for the future • New sense of belonging to other youth • "Makes their lives easy" • Engage in other activities than farming 	FGD participants / members expressed that Takanyira promotes peace through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overcoming social and economic grievances • Creating peace and harmony first within and among themselves (then outside the group) • Being mentally, socially and economically stable • Establishing relationships of mutual understanding (first within and then outside groups)

Both initiatives not only respond to but also emerged out of the political economy context in the region.

- Findings:**
- Informal support system that helps youth to nurture 'inner peace' apart from training and education
 - Size, locality, flexible nature make them more context specific
 - Structural barriers remain (e.g.: lack of tools, no enabling economic environment)

Youth Agency

Political agency

- Youth's possibilities / capabilities to get involved in decision making processes are limited
- The design, delivery and approach of civic education / leadership trainings need to be enhanced / rethought (usually held only during election time)
- Uganda Youth Map (2011): Issue of citizenship education is of growing importance to youth – apart from representation in stakeholder meetings, youth remain excluded in the planning of development and education programmes

Economic agency

- Political and economic environment matters.
- MGLSD: 400.000 youth compete for 9.000 available jobs
- Design of education / livelihood programmes have not significantly improved economic agency of youth
- Reasons include: urban / rural divide, lack of skills to prepare application, no consistent guidance during project implementation, clientelism (selection procedures), local challenges (e.g. infertile soil, land disputes)

Social agency / issues

- Still big gender disparities in secondary education in conflict affected regions (Karamoja, West-Nile, ...)
- Female youth are less exposed to opportunities outside their homes, not to mention political or participatory decision-making processes
- New technologies and social media offer new opportunities for youth to express their concerns (e.g. U-Report). – issues around access persists, such as reaching out to rural females.

Youth perceptions on agency

What are youth's experiences and responses to different forms of violence?

indirect / structural / economic violence (= aspects of inequality, unequal opportunity)

Kampala	Rural Areas
Informal ways of income generation such as illegal businesses at "Nasser Road", Owino and Kaja market, bars	'Self-help' groups, formation of non-formal/homegrown youth groups, saving groups (→ difficult to detect degree of external influence)

Who and what supports/hinders youth's social, economic and political space for manoeuvre in their context?

Actors that hamper agency	Actors that enforce agency
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Government, politicians - District Officials - Spouses (in some instances) - Youth - Unsupportive Parents - Schools (for being too theoretical) - Youth Capital Venture Fund - Statehouse scholarships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Positive image of INGOs or CSOs - Youth / Youth leaders (in some instances) - Community Development Officer (in some instances) - Supportive Parents - Supportive Spouses - Religious leaders

RA-3 Findings

1) Even though educational infrastructures have improved over the past two decades, these efforts did not increase the economic and political agency of youth at large.

2) Structural barriers and indirect forms of violence not only hamper youth agency but also challenge the sustainability and equal redistribution of education and livelihood initiatives.

3) Youth lack political representation in the planning and decision-making processes targeting education programmes, skills training and livelihood initiatives.

4) There is an underlying notion within the rhetoric of policies and frameworks to empower youth through education economically but not necessarily politically

5) Micro-initiatives show greater potential to act as an implicit vehicle for conflict-resolution or reconciliation among youth than macro education initiatives at the national level.