



Erasmus
Mundus

*Parenting experiences of Formerly Abducted Young Mothers
in post-conflict Northern Uganda*

By Sara Paoletti

Erasmus Mundus Master's Programme in Social Work with Families
and Children

Supervisors: Dr. Eric Awich Ochen and Dr. Justus Twesigye

Makerere University, June 2016



ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

CBC	Children Born in Captivity
FAYM	Formerly Abducted Young Mothers
FCS	Former Child Soldiers
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FGDs	Focus Group Discussions
GoU	Government of Uganda
GuSCO	Gulu Support for Children Organisation
HRW	Human Rights Watch
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
PP	Parenting Practices
TA	Thematic Analysis
UPDF	Uganda People's Defence Force

ABSTRACT

Parenting is a universal responsibility worldwide and the basis for better future generations. In other words, the future is in parents' hands; the way the next generation is going to be largely depends on how parents experience parenting. The phenomenon of child soldiers remains prominent in more than 86 different countries. Northern Uganda has seen the brutal involvement of child soldiers during the decades-long civil war between the rebellious Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) and the Uganda People's Defense Forces (UPDF). It was estimated that 30% to 40% of child soldiers in Uganda were girls and most of them were compelled into forced marriages with LRA commanders. In the last decade, with the conflict on the wane, more and more Former Child Soldiers (FCS) have returned to their villages: female FCS returned with children resulted of forced sexual relationships, explaining the reason why they are called Formerly Abducted Young Mothers (FAYM). The aim of the study was to examine FAYM's parenting experiences ranging from the time they were captive (in the bush) to the time of resettlement and reintegration in their former communities. In particular, the study focuses on three specific issues: 1) parenting practices among FAYM; 2) challenges FAYM experienced and 3) support, which FAYM received towards their parenting. FAYM constituted the main participants in the study. The other participants in the study were NGOs staff. Data for this study were collected using semi-structured, in-depth individual interviews and focus group discussions. The data were analysed according to a combined approach, including: Template Analysis and Narrative Analysis. The interpretation was based on Bronfenbrenner's Ecological model and the Inglehart and Welzel's Cultural Map. Various ethical considerations such as informed consent and confidentiality were adhered to while conducting this study. The results of this study were 1) from captivity to resettlement, parenting practices underwent a shift from focusing on mere survival needs to value education and life teachings; 2) FAYM found parenting more challenging and complicated once they returned to civil society; 3) formal and informal supports were present, but quite strained and scattered, moreover almost no public welfare services or programs were available targeted at well-being of FAYM, nor at their parenting.

Title : Formerly Abducted Young Mothers in post-conflict Northern Uganda: an Overview on their Parenting Experiences

Author : Sara Paoletti

Key words : FAYM, CBC, parenting, parenting practices, challenges, informal and formal support, Northern Uganda

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACRONYMS	i
ABSTRACT	ii
TABLE OF CONTENTS	iii
LIST OF TABLES	vi
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	vii
1. INTRODUCTION	1
<i>1.1 Background to the study</i>	<i>1</i>
1.1.1 The armed conflict in Northern Uganda and the LRA.....	1
1.1.2 Child soldiers.....	2
1.1.3 Female child soldiers: forced marriages, young mothers and the challenge of reintegration.....	3
<i>1.2 Problem Statement</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>1.3 Study objectives</i>	<i>5</i>
1.3.1 Over all study objectives.....	5
1.3.2 Specific study objectives	5
<i>1.4 Research Question</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>1.5 Scope of the study</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>1.6 Rationale</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>1.7 layout of thesis</i>	<i>7</i>
2. LITERATURE REVIEW	8
<i>2.1 Parenting and Parenting Practices</i>	<i>8</i>
<i>2.2 Parenting in difficult conditions</i>	<i>10</i>
2.2.1 Parenting in conflict-affected areas, related consequences and harsh parenting.....	11
2.2.2 Parenting and socio-economic adversity: a closer look.....	13
2.2.3 Parenting as a Single Mother.....	15
3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK	17
<i>3.1 Systems Theory: an Ecological Perspective</i>	<i>17</i>
3.1.1 Social change and social stability.....	17
3.1.2 The ecological perspective.....	17
3.1.3 The Microsystem: the Dyad Parent-Child and Primary Support Network.....	19
3.1.4 The Mesosystem: the interaction of FAYMs' Microsystems.....	20
3.1.5 The Exosystem: Secondarily Support.....	21
3.1.6 The Macrosystem: Cultural Context and Parenting.....	22
3.1.7 The Chronosystem: Antecedents and Subsequent Intrafamilial Development.....	25
4. METHODOLOGY	27
<i>4.1 Description of the study Context and Area</i>	<i>27</i>
<i>4.2 The Description of Research Design</i>	<i>27</i>
4.2.1 Study population.....	28
4.2.2 Selection of Participants.....	28
<i>4.3 Data Collection</i>	<i>31</i>

4.3.1	Semi-structured, In-depth Interviews.....	31
4.3.2	Focus Group Discussion.....	32
4.4	<i>Data Processing and Analysis</i>	32
4.5	<i>Ethical Issues</i>	34
4.5.1	Voluntary Participation.....	34
4.5.2	Informed Consent.....	34
4.5.3	No harm to participants.....	35
4.5.4	Privacy and Confidentiality.....	36
4.6	<i>Limitations of the study</i>	36
4.6.1	Researcher's background.....	36
4.6.2	Time and pragmatic constraints.....	37
5.	FINDINGS: ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION.....	38
5.1	<i>Introduction</i>	38
5.2	<i>Formerly abducted young mothers' Socio-Demographic Characteristics</i>	38
5.3	<i>Pre-return and Post-captivity FAYM's parenting practices</i>	39
5.3.1	Parenting Practices "in the bush".....	40
5.3.2	Child-care Routine.....	41
5.3.3	Safety.....	42
5.3.4	Child's misbehaviour.....	44
5.3.5	Parenting Practices "during resettlement".....	44
5.3.6	Conveying Life Values.....	46
5.3.7	Parental Involvement.....	48
5.3.8	Parental Monitoring.....	49
5.4	<i>Challenges faced by FAYM in childrearing</i>	51
5.4.1	Challenges in the bush.....	51
5.4.2	"On the Move".....	51
5.4.3	At war.....	53
5.4.4	"Stone-age" kind of life.....	54
5.4.5	Unplanned Teen Pregnancy/ Motherhood.....	55
5.4.6	Stigma in the Hospitals.....	56
5.4.7	Challenges during resettlement.....	57
5.4.8	Providing basic needs for their children.....	58
5.4.9	Stigma on CBCs and FAYM.....	60
5.4.10	Single Motherhood.....	62
5.4.11	Despair and reminiscence of traumas.....	63
5.5	<i>Actual formal and informal support received by FAYM regarding their parenting</i>	64
5.5.1	Family support.....	65
5.5.2	Support from the Community.....	68
5.5.3	NGOs: FAYM's first Support.....	70
5.5.4	Government and public services.....	72
6.	CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	74
6.1	<i>Conclusions</i>	74
6.2	<i>Recommendations</i>	75
6.2.1	<i>To local NGOs</i>	75
6.2.2	<i>To international NGOs</i>	76

6.2.3 To GoU.....	76
6.2.4 To Future Researchers.....	77
7. BIBLIOGRAPHY	78
8. APPENDICES.....	92
Appendix 1: <i>Semi-structured, in-depth interviews with FAYM,</i> <i>Guideline Questions.....</i>	92
Appendix 2: <i>Semi-structured, in-depth interviews/FGD with FAYM,</i> <i>Guideline Questions.....</i>	95
Appendix 3: <i>Semi-structured interviews with Key Informants,</i> <i>Guideline Questions.....</i>	97
Appendix 4: <i>Informed Consent.....</i>	98
Appendix 5: <i>Inglehart–Welzel's Cultural Map - WVS wave 4 (1996).....</i>	99

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE 1:.....	20
FIGURE 2:.....	24
FIGURE 3:.....	29
FIGURE 4:.....	41
FIGURE 5:.....	46
FIGURE 6:.....	52
FIGURE 7:.....	58
FIGURE 8:.....	65

AKNOLEDGEMENTS

First of all, I am extremely grateful to the Formerly Abducted Young Mothers, who generously and confidently shared their stories with me and to GuSCO for supporting me during the data collection. I would also like to mention Terra Renaissance. Without all of them, this research would have been impossible.

I would like to express my gratitude to the Department of Social Work and Social Administration of Makerere University for giving me the opportunity of conducting my master research in Uganda. Among this, I would like to mention my Supervisors Dr. Eric Awich Ochen and Dr. Justus Twesigye, for the support received during the thesis elaboration.

I feel very grateful to the European Commission. Without the funds assigned to the Erasmus Mundus Programme, I would have never had the opportunity of living such an important experience, which will certainly mark my future. It gave me the extraordinary opportunity of receiving an academic formation, which benefited of the possibility of living and studying in four different European and non-European countries.

Special thanks to all my MFamily friends and MFamily teachers, who have gained a special place in my heart and who I feel as a second family. Thanks to the M-Family program and all the people who are behind it, who gave me this amazing opportunity; in particular thanks to María das Dores Guerreiro.

Heartfelt gratitude to my housemate in Kampala. Her friendship and sustain helped me through some of the most critical moments in the writing of this thesis. And thanks to my other fellow students who were in Uganda as well, their company made the whole process much lighter and more pleasant.

And last, but not least, thanks to all my family back home, my boyfriend and my friends for the constant support and encouragement during this journey, they gave me the strength and the confidence to keep going in difficult moments.

Introduction

1.1 Background to the study

1.1.1 The armed conflict in Northern Uganda and the LRA

This research explored the practice of parenting in the post-conflict environment of Northern Uganda. Northern Uganda experienced the decades-long armed conflict which began shortly after the president, Yoweri Museveni took power through a military coup in 1986 (Carlson and Mazurana, 2008). Museveni took power from Tito Okello Lutwa's government and the latter's remnants fled into northern Uganda (HRW, 2003). The HRW (2003) also states that many of the soldiers against the new government originated from the north, including the districts of Gulu, Kitgum and Pader, which are inhabited mainly by the Acholi people. According to HRW (3003), Acholi-land witnessed the formation of several splinter groups; one of these groups, which was organized by Joseph Kony, came to be Lord's Resistance Army (LRA). The conflict between the Ugandan government and the LRA did not have the traditional characteristics of a civil war, considering that the LRA did not present a coherent political agenda (Veale and Stavrou, 2007, p275). Such incoherency did not stop LRA's race toward infamous actions. About 25,000 children were abducted by the LRA from the beginning of the conflict; abductions peaked after 2002, with an estimated 10,000 children abducted between May 2002 and May 2003 alone (Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, 2008, p.347). Children were abducted in order to make them child soldiers and increase LRA's ranks. Unspeakable things were done to these children, such as being forced to commit atrocities themselves and being abused e.g. sexually, physically and psychologically. According to the Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers (2008), during active hostilities children in the LRA were forced to participate in combat and to carry out raids, kill and mutilate other child soldiers and civilians and loot and burn houses; they were forced to kill relatives, and they were trampled to death, beaten or mutilated either as punishment.

Since 2006, however, the LRA has been forced out of Uganda and operated at a reduced capacity in areas of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Central African Republic, and South Sudan (United Nations Children's Fund ([UNICEF], 2012). According to the United Nations (2015, p.21), during the reporting period (year 2014), despite the fact that LRA

continued to engage in attacks on civilians, looting and kidnapping, such army seemed to be on the wane.

1.1.2 Child soldiers

UNICEF, 2007, p.7) defines a child associated with an armed force or armed group (namely, child soldier) as any person below 18 years of age who is or who has been recruited or used by an armed force or armed group in any capacity, including but not limited to children, boys and girls, used as fighters, cooks, porters, messengers, spies or for sexual purposes. The use of child soldiers remains a prominent issue, with children being used in a military capacity in more than 86 different countries and territories. This concern is salient in Northern Uganda, which has experienced a decades-long struggle with the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA). Several studies were conducted on these children's stories and experiences of their abduction and training into the LRA (Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, 2008). For example, Mazurana, McKay, Carlson, and Kasper (2002) reported that in the time-span between the years 1998 and 2001 children were used as soldiers in at least 87 out of 178 countries, including both conflict and non-conflict situations.

Abducting and recruiting children as soldiers are a severe multiple violation of children's and human rights. UNICEF (2015) describes violence against children, whether physical, emotional or sexual, as a major violation of their right to protection. Some specific target groups are highly vulnerable, for example those affected by armed conflict (otherwise, child soldiers). The United Nations OCHA/IRIN (2004) describes the disruption in former abductees' daily routine, which usually includes being scarred for life, constantly reliving their maltreatment, living permanently with the knowledge that they had been forced to beat, maim or kill others, even their own parents and relatives. The report adds a focus on the girls, amongst who, some face the additional burden of unwanted pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections, including HIV/AIDS.

This brief description displays a picture of what it means for these children to be violated of their basic rights. To put it in UCRNN's words (2000, p.22) children's rights to family, parental support, education and health services have been threatened. Today, the principle that children should not be involved in conflict is almost universally accepted: 152 states have demonstrated their commitment to this objective by ratifying OPAC (Child Soldiers International, 2013). OPAC is the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict, which came into force on 12 February

2002. It consists in the core international human rights treaty on child soldiers (Child Soldiers International website).

1.1.3 Female Child Soldiers: forced marriages, FAYM and the challenge of reintegration

Among child soldiers, female abductees have a different destiny compared to their male counterparts, once recruited in the LRA. Mazurana et al. (2002, p.99) report that just as the use of child soldiers had been a largely invisible and an unacknowledged international phenomenon, scant attention has been given to girls' distinct experiences and the effects of gender-specific human rights violations. McKay and Mazurana (2004) estimated that the percentage of girls abducted in Northern Uganda by the fanatic LRA was equivalent to 30%. Similarly, the Coalition to End the Use of Child Soldiers (2001) reports that approximately 30% to 40% of child soldiers in Uganda were girls.

Many studies describe former female abductees' particular vicissitudes in the LRA and their devastating consequences, which left such girls scarred for life (Mazurana; McKay; Carlson; Kasper, 2002. Veale; McKay, 2004; Stavrou, 2007; Martin, 2009. Mazurana and McKay 2001). The HRW (2003) provides a brief, but comprehensive summary of the brutality that female child soldiers were forced to face during their captivity. Some were given military training and were forced to fight, carry out raids on villages, and help abduct other children; most were virtual slaves, forced to work long hours and walking long distances and performing other tasks. At age fourteen or fifteen, many were sexually enslaved as "wives" of commanders and subjected to rape, unwanted pregnancies, and the risk of sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS.

Former female child soldiers are usually defined, due to the early age of their pregnancy (or pregnancies), as child or young mothers, or more specifically FAYM (Formerly Abducted Young Mothers) according to others, some even call them "bush wives" and sex slaves. Some researchers, for instance Martin (2009) and Carlson and Mazurana (2008), do not agree with the latter terminology, since the term "sex slave" does not entirely represent the condition of abducted young girls in LRA. Indeed, the latter above mentioned studies, indicate girls in captivity to be subjected not only to undesired sexual relationships, but they are used as well as combatants, domestics and they take care of the children born by these unwanted relationships; in other words they are compelled into "forced marriages". As it is clearly

stated in Carlson and Mazurana's work (2008), forced marriages are coercive relationships without valid consent of the female and her family. Within captivity, it is the coercive context of forced marriages that women and girls have to provide for themselves or their children through satisfactorily performing sexually, domestically, and militarily for their captor husbands and commanders. Therefore, it is imperative that the dimensions of forced marriages not be confused with those of the more singular crimes of sexual slavery or rape.

In the last decade many FCS were released by LRA, escaped from the bush or were saved by local NGOs and international humanitarian associations. Among these, also FAYM with their children made it out of captivity, one way or another. Many children returned from rebel captivity to an unfamiliar context devoid of the earlier protective and supportive environment that would have nurtured them into adulthood (Allen and Vlassenroot, 2010) and where reconciliation and reintegration are looked forward to. According to Ochen et al. (2012), reintegration involves supporting former child abductees to marshal personal and community resources to live as normal a life as possible, despite their experiences.

Unfortunately, given the prominence of the use of children in military activities, the difficulties faced by former combatants upon their return to civilian life were a major cause for concern. For example, former combatants were often faced with a hostile community after leaving their military group (Preston, 2015). Specifically, great part of literature on reintegration of FCS report that girls especially those who returned with babies faced rejection from their families and community. In some studies, returning child soldiers reported extensive and persistent stigmatization and rejection by their communities and constant bullying by their peers at school (Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, 2008; Ochen, 2013).

1.2 Problem Statement

Parenting plays a critical role in children's development and in the outcomes the latter attain later as adults. The ways parents nurture children are influenced by their personal childhood and later life experiences, the latter which are also influenced by environmental and contextual situations (Kershaw et al., 2014). The case of FAYM constitutes a unique parenting situation. Many of these young women became mothers at a very tender age (e.g. 12-16 years old), in an unfamiliar context and without the usual preparation that motherhood goes with, within the normal Acholi society (Ochen, 2015). This research explored whether

the circumstances in which FAYMs became mothers undermined their capacities as parents or if such vicissitudes triggered some resilient parenting capacities. As their traumatic experiences suggest so far, these mothers are likely to be in distress regarding their parenting. The manner in which such distress is dealt could be damaging for their children (Rees, Thorpe, Tol, Fonseca, & Silove, 2015). The scars arising from the FAYM's experiences during the conflict and the limited resources to support their reintegration and resettlement could have undermined their capacities as parents.

Despite the challenges that the FAYM experienced, in their quest to mother and parent their children, the literature on how these young women negotiate the difficult terrain of motherhood in a post conflict situation is limited. Little information is available on coping strategies, management of difficult children, absence of fathers, stigma directed at their children as well as the life changes among their children. Information about parenting practices and experiences of these young women is not only critical for their wellbeing and welfare but the long-term reintegration of their own children born in captivity. This study therefore aimed at contributing to scanty knowledge on parenting among FAYMs in Northern Uganda.

1.3 Study Objectives

1.3.1 Over all study objective

The overall objective of this study was to explore parenting experiences among FAYM in the post-conflict Acholi-land in Northern Uganda.

1.3.2 Specific study objectives

The specific study objectives were to:

- 1) Investigate pre-return and post-captivity parenting experiences and practices of the FAYM.
- 2) Understand challenges faced by FAYM in the childrearing of their CBC.
- 3) Explore the actual formal and informal support that FAYM receive in their parenting efforts from relevant social support systems.

1.4 Research Question

During this study the following research questions were examined:

- a) What were FAYM's actual parenting practices they made use of while being in captivity and did they change during resettlement?
- b) What are the main pre-return and post-captivity challenges faced by FAYM in the parenting of their CBC?
- c) During resettlement what kind of support do FAYM receive in the upbringing of their CBC and from which sources?

1.5 Scope of the study

Through this study, the researcher sought to gain a wide perspective on parenting experiences, practices and challenges of FAYM who returned from the bush with the children they bore during captivity. The focus is stressed on the FAYM's point of view, without losing sight of the context, past experiences and events, and the several external factors which star in shaping the characteristics of parenting (e.g.: communities, NGOs, Government and social policies and so on). The research aimed at contributing to a better understanding and a further insight into what the armed conflict in Northern Uganda brought into the current generation of young returnees in terms of family matters. The researcher intended to explore the dimension concerning parenting of these FAYM toward their CBC, in terms of experiences, parenting practices, challenges and eventual external support.

1.6 Rationale

Literature review showed that there is a gap in terms of academic investigation of parenting condition of FAYM who returned from a conflict, in which they were used as child soldiers, and their children born from captivity. Still, there are numerous reports, articles, dissertations and researches on the difficulty faced by this specific target group in the reintegration procedure.

More knowledge needs to be pursued in these regards, not only for the purpose of enriching the panorama of social research, but overall to serve the needs of the FAYM. The study might be used

as a tool in order to provide insight into these households' strengths and difficulties, which can be used by local NGOs to advance and enhance their social practices to meet FAYM and CBC needs.

Such deeper insight can also serve the Government of Uganda with a tool for strengthening, editing or creating - where lacking- effective and efficient social policies ad hoc for the spreading and imminent issue so far described.

1.7 Layout of the Thesis

Chapter 2 will provide literature review on parenting and parenting practices, followed by an overview on studies conducted around parenting in difficult conditions. Chapter 3 will display the theoretical framework, including as the main highlight the Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Model. In Chapter 4, methodology used for the study will be outlined, including description of population, sampling, data collection methods and study limitations. Subsequently, Chapter 5 will exhibit the results in detail with relative quotations from the data and grouped according to the research questions. Finally, Chapter 6 will discuss the conclusions on the main findings and consequent recommendations to the main stakeholders involved.

Literature Review

2.1 Parenting and Parenting Practices

Most of the world population are parents, and whoever has lived had parents or a care-taker. Nevertheless, defining parents and parenting is neither an easy task nor a universally shared concept. The difficulty in defining parenting is due to the rich variety that hovers norms in different parts of the world. Selin and SpringerLink's manual (2014) takes us on a virtual trip around the world, showing us the diversity of meanings of the concept of parenting in relation to different continents and specific countries. It is clear that the conceptualisation of parenting varies from culture to culture, and within the same cultures there are differences arising from social status, sub-cultures and ethnicities. Moreover, Ramaekers, Suissa, and SpringerLink (2012) emphasize the fact that parenting is a reflection of values, norms and assumption of a society.

Despite this variation about the concept, some authors have still defined the term "parenting" For example, Mayhew (2015, p. 370) defines parenting as "to be or act as a mother or father to someone". In the same article, Mayhew then adds: "For Aitken in Kitchin and Thrift (2009), (parenting is) an emotional and day-to-day practice that is embedded in larger social and spatial contexts". Other authors, like Castree et al. (2013), believe that parenting concerns general care, well-being, education, and socialization and also affirm that parenting is gendered, with women expected to take a more active role and to socio-spatially structure their lives to provide childcare. Bornstein (2001, p. 1) defines parenting as "perhaps first and foremost, a functional status in the life cycle. Parents issue as well as protect, care for, and represent their progeny [...]. Parenthood is therefore a job that has the child as its primary object of attention and action". Finally, Ramaekers, Suissa, and SpringerLink (2012, p. 3) show instead to be more cautious than their colleagues and limit the definition to: "parenting refers to what we would like to identify as the scientisation of the parent-child relationship".

There are many constructs that help in exploring the science of parenting; for example the literature presents an abundance of material about parenting styles and parenting practices. Since this study was concerned with only parenting practices and it excludes structured parenting styles, it is important to mark the difference between the two constructs. The labels parenting styles and parenting practices have been used often interchangeably (Maccoby and Martin, 1983); however, Darling and Steinberg (1993) suggest that it is important to

distinguish between parenting practices and parenting styles for the sake of understanding socialisation processes more precisely. The latter authors define parenting practices as "the specific behaviours that parents use to socialize their children" (Darling and Steinberg, 1993, p. 489). For example, when socializing their children to play with their peers, parents might enact certain practices such as inviting one of their children's friend home, providing their children with time to go out, and making friends with neighbouring parents having same or similar age to their own children. In contrast, Darling and Steinberg (1993, p. 493) define parenting style as "the emotional climate in which parents raise their children". Parenting styles have been characterized by dimensions of parental responsiveness and demandingness (Baumrind, 1991). Spera, (2005) also identifies and addresses some parenting constructs underpinning parenting practices, such as: parental involvement; parental monitoring; and parental goals, values, and aspirations. Pereplechikova, and Kazdin's work (2004) emphasise parenting practices' possible negative impact on the child. The authors describe parenting practices as (i) coercive parent-child communications, (ii) dysfunctional disciplining practices, (iii) inconsistent parental control, (iv) harsh, physical and violent punishment, (v) negative parental attitudes and relations, (vi) limited parental praise, approval and support, (vii) negative reinforcement of deviant behaviour, (viii) poor parental supervision and monitoring, and others.

Apparently, also the definition of parenting practices needs to be more clearly defined. The website of Psychology Glossary (2016) might have an inclusive and yet broad definition of parenting experiences as: "the specific things that parents do while raising their children. These can include imposing and using of schedules, rules, expectations, punishments and rewards. Basically, parenting practices can refer to any type of regular interaction that a parent has with their children.

Despite slightly different definitions of parenting and parenting practices, the researcher shares the view of Pereplechikova and Kazdin (2004), who regard parenting and parenting practices as multifaceted and thus no single measure can be expected to assess the range of cognitive, affective, and behavioural domains that are critical to the development of children.

Nevertheless, parenting practices are considered of importance in the upbringing of children. Solans and Caggianelli (2015) explain the reason why on top of facilitating socialisation processes (as stated above) through parenting practices, children are able to learn those valuable aspects of their surrounding culture, which include norms, values, symbolic codes and behavioural rules.

From another point of view, parenting practices also reflect themselves onto children in a dysfunctional way. Certain parenting practices play a critical role in the development and maintenance of conduct disorder and oppositional defiant disorder (Perepletchikova and Kazdin, 2004, p. 385). Also, aggressive parenting practices, either physical (corporal punishment or abuse) or non-physical forms (derogatory verbal comments, psychological control), are associated with negative child outcomes (Selin and SpringerLink, 2014, p. 447). Hence, a specific set of parenting practices operated during childrearing influences a specific outcome in children's future life.

Therefore, it is essential to understand what can be influential on parenting as a whole, and in particular on parenting practices displayed. Practices and beliefs are often based on cultural constructions that are the reflections of factors such as economic status and available local resources rather than what is physically or innately optimum care for children (Green and Groves, 2008). Selin and SpringerLink (2014) reports that parenting capacities largely depend, not only on culture, but also are affected by poor conditions such as physical or mental illness, poverty or inadequate social and cognitive resources. The parallel between parenting and environmental influences will be discussed in chapter 3.

The next paragraph describes the conflict and post-conflict contexts, which the study population- namely FAYM - experienced and their implications for parenting.

2.2 Parenting in difficult conditions

A great part of the literature on parenting takes the phenomenon into consideration within standard life conditions; however life does not always provide situations that fit normative standards. There are conditions dictated by external events, which despite being out of the individual's control, have a significant impact on an individual's life.

According to Cohen, Zerach and Solomon (2011, p. 688), parenting is “an important role taken on by most adults and is characterized by constant changes depending on the developmental stage of the children. Parenting is also a complex and multifaceted role influenced by a variety of internal (i.e., personality) and external (i.e., life-events) factors”. Cohen et al. (2011) state that parenting, like any other condition in life, has to deal with the surrounding circumstances and it is inevitable. Therefore, it can be assumed that very challenging and atypical environments create different outcomes of parenting experiences and problems. For example, in the case of the present study, the conflict in Northern Uganda

implied very harsh life conditions (i.e., poverty, horrific war experiences, losses), which largely affected the surrounding population and had an impact on parenting issues. Indeed, the following paragraphs will show literature on what it means to parent in conflict-affected areas, in socio-economic disadvantaged environments and being a single mother.

2.2.1 Parenting in conflict-affected areas, related consequences and harsh parenting

Regardless of the type, war has always brought damage to civilians in a way or another: namely, the outbreak of violence and the failure of economic system, resulting in widespread poverty. In northern Uganda, often civilians were directly involved in the conflict as many children were abducted. These children came back as adults to their old villages and communities, after many years of severe physical and psychological abuse, often bringing their children born in captivity with them. Several studies concerning parenting within conflict and post-conflict situations, refer to how psychological consequences dictated by the war affected soldiers in their family life and also in their parenting. Rees et al. (2015) investigate upon the cycle of violence within families of civilians in Timor-Leste, which were heavily impacted by the war, because of the military occupation. The study focuses on the female counterpart in the family and reaches the conclusion that mothers, who have faced traumas due to the conflict, and who currently are victims of intimate partner violence (IPV), are more prone to harsh parenting. Harsh parenting was associated with anger explosions of the mothers directed to their children, usually involving bad language, shouting and hitting. A similar study was conducted in war-affected Uganda, showing that mothers exposed to IPV (intimate partner violence) presented harsher parenting in their interactions with their children compared to mothers living in non-violent conjugal relationships (Saile, Ertl, Neuner, Catani, 2013). Both studies show that the conflict had an impact on these mothers' parenting skills. In particular, Rees et al. (2015) highlights how the environmental influences protracted harsh parenting practices. These environmental influences include the lack of support from public services and from informal sources, the stress provoked by poverty and the burden of a family household, and finally cultural premises. However, while many details apply to the present study, the two studies mentioned above include family households where the male counterpart is present, while in this research the women are single mothers (at least the majority of them).

In addition to increasing psychological dysfunction amongst people, conflict usually brings disastrous aftermath in terms of economy and public services. As a matter of fact, a study conducted in Gulu district itself (Omona 2008) investigated the support system on the ground. The study stated that the fragile nature of the environment, due to prolonged civil war, has rendered ineffective the implementation of public policies that should enable the population access to services. In other words, civil society intervention in this area is an urgent requirement as government and market have failed to deliver services to the people. The same research (Omona 2008) also concludes that essentially, service provision is often plagued by very poor quality, limited coverage, inadequate technical capacity, inefficiency and massive corruption. Therefore, the support to civilians affected by the conflict between governmental forces and the LRA mostly need to come from informal support like family and community members, or from non-governmental organisations (NGOs).

Other consequences of the war are discussed in a study regarding vulnerability of youth in conflict-related areas in Uganda. Schlecht Rowley, and Babirye (2013) , reports that parents and community leaders contend that the conflict had led to poverty, limited educational opportunities, and weakened family structure. Also, intergenerational transmission of family violence, substance abuse, and harsh parenting seem to be only a few of the related consequences of war on family and community functioning (Catani, Jacob, Schauer, Kohila, and Neuner, 2008; Olema, Catani, Ertl, Saile, and Neuner, 2014; Saile et al., 2013). Specifically in Northern Uganda, exposure to trauma due to the civil war is associated with family violence and substance use (Wieling, Mehus, M'ollerherm, Neuner, Achan, Catani, 2015) and as the same article affirms the effects of war and mass trauma on parent-child relationships are far reaching. Moreover, according to Wieling et al. (2015), the use of coercive parenting practices and infrequent use of positive parenting practices contribute to a child's deviant behaviour, while risk-laden contexts such as poverty or family violence can contribute to disrupted parenting practices.

In the light of such information, some intervention is needed in order to support parents in post-conflict situations and indeed a study addressing this issue (Wieling et al., 2015) developed a program called Enhancing Family Connection, aiming at mediating parent-child relationships and broader family dynamics within a community devastated by war. The authors believe that the program will benefit parents and children in the present and potentially serve as a catalyst for a positive trajectory in the long term (Wieling et al., 2015). A growing literature is documenting the importance of parenting support for populations affected by traumatic war experiences, as parents are the most proximal resources to

effectively intervene and improve child outcomes (Gewirtz, Forgatch, and Wieling, 2008; Siegel, 2013). Another proof of such growing awareness is a study by Wieling, et al (2015), which is a component of an overall program of research aiming at reducing the long-term negative effects of war on parenting practices and childhood outcomes, which have considerable implications for preventing mental, neurological, and substance-use disorders. Like these studies, the present research is based on the belief that intervention for parents in war-affected areas is necessary both for present issues and also to prevent future ones.

To summarise, parenting in a war-affected area is intertwined with several issues, such as: the role of traumatic experiences faced during the conflict, which often lead to psychological instability and therefore has consequences on the relationship child-parent; the support (formal or informal) provided to civilians affected by conflict constitutes a changing factor in their parenting abilities; the aftermath of the war leaves all civilians in a widespread poverty and with the consequent stress of dealing with it and of struggling to support the household.

2.2.2 Parenting and socio-economic adversity: a closer look

There is substantial evidence for the link between socio-economic adversity and parenting (Klebanov, Brooks-Gunn and Duncan, 1994; Flouri, 2008; Vernon-Feagans and Cox, 2013; Placa, and Corlyon, 2016; Steele et al., 2016). Evidence suggests that the relationship between poverty, parenting and child outcome is far more intricate than a simple linear relation. Indeed, rather than a simplistic causal relationship between poverty, parenting and child outcomes, the authors Placa and Corlyon (2016) present a complex and mediating processes of income, parental stress, disrupted parenting practices, and neighbourhoods and environments. Additionally, Vernon-Feagans, and Cox (2013) also express the fact that poverty comes with a series of associated social risks resulting in alterations to parenting quality, including language, cognitive stimulation, and responsivity, as well as alterations to child stress physiology. In other words, social risk has been hypothesized to threaten nurturing parenting, such that parental disorders and difficulties are more likely to develop, diminishing the capacity for supportive, consistent, and involved parenting (Vernon-Feagans and Cox, 2013). Another interesting study witnessing the complex relation between socio-economic adversity and parenting reported that parents living in poverty conditions felt ‘On the Margins of Defeat’ throughout their parenting experience. All participants in this study felt that their capacity to parent was threatened by their predominant state of poverty (Russell,

Harris and Gockel, 2008). In other words, parents uniformly identified poverty as the primary barrier to their capacity to provide adequate care for their children. Flouri (2008) addressed the relationship poverty-parenting through the factor of temperament: impact on individual functioning and development may be influenced by environmental conditions, namely socio-economic disadvantages moderates the temperament–parenting and the temperament–child psychopathology links. Other relations addressed to poverty and parenting are presented by Slack et al. (2004); results from the analyses of this study show that within an economically disadvantaged sample of families, particular aspects of poverty and parenting are more strongly associated with physical child neglect reports. Ultimately, according to Steele (2016) parenting distress and adverse childhood experiences were significantly higher in participants belonging to low socio-economic status; in addition the authors stated that there is need for intervention in cases like these in order to reduce the intergenerational transmission of risk associated with problematic parenting and poverty.

There is also overwhelming evidence for the association between socioeconomic adversity and mental health (Braveman et al., 2005; Duncan, Brooks-Gunn and Klebanov, 1994; Williams, 2003) and on how depression and despair associated with poverty were acknowledged to impair parenting and increase self-doubt about parenting capacity (Russell, et al., 2008) . Furthermore, there is a large body of evidence for the role of the duration and developmental timing of socio-economic adversity in child outcomes showing that persistent poverty has more detrimental effects on child outcomes than transitory poverty, although children experiencing both types of poverty generally do less well than never-poor children (Ackerman, Brown, and Izard, 2004; McLoyd, 1998).

Finally, there is one more dimension to the relationship between poverty and parenting, the most immediate one: having the possibility to afford to pay for own children's needs or not. As a matter of fact, in a study conducted in rural Uganda (Waiswa et al. 2008), the recommended maternal-newborn practices are generally acceptable to the community and health service providers, but often are not practiced due to lack of resources, meaning that mothers cannot afford health care. And this is how socio-economic disadvantages hinder parents to give appropriate care to their off-springs.

2.2.3 Parenting as a Single Mother

Single parenting is attributed to either the disappearance of a spouse or divorce. Once left alone, single parents have to deal with their own stressful psychological, emotional and physical needs by themselves and, at the same time, attending to their children's needs. Hence, single parents need extra help and attention especially the single working mothers, because of the difficulty to balance their time between work and family roles (Hamid and Salleh, 2013). Being a single parent and more specifically a single mother can imply several challenges, which families with both parents do not face. According to Hamid and Salleh (2013), single parents encounter double major roles, namely the parenting role and the role of a sole breadwinner for their family. This double role compels a single working mother to have social and psychological problems, such as work family conflicts and financial constraints. These issues apparently create helplessness, anxiety, guilt and anger as they were not able to provide enough attention, love and basic needs for their children in the absence of the father in the household (Hamid and Salleh, 2013). Another study (Kavas and Gündüz-Hoşgör, 2013) examines various cultural and structural factors faced by single mothers in a patriarchal society, such as Turkey, and demonstrates that single mothers experience numerous challenges. These challenges include the difficulty to maintain authority in their new family setting; the struggle to keep the sense of a complete family; and the experience of negative attitudes toward single mothers and their children. In addition, Gulfem Cakir (2010) concluded that financial problems, problems related to absence of fathers' in children's lives, role overload, cultural attitudes toward single mothers and concerns over effective parenting were the most frequently expressed problems. Research indicates that the combination of being a single mother and being exposed to a violent environment can lead to aggressive parenting; single mothers exposed to moderate and high levels of community violence were more likely to engage in a higher level of physically aggressive parenting, when compared to single mothers without such exposure (Zhang and Anderson, 2010). The latter study particularly fits the present research as, the FAYM have been living in a extremely violent environment (the bush) for several years, some of them even more than a decade.

For all the reasons stated above, research has showed the importance of social support system in helping the single working mother to effectively undertake their roles such as parenting (Hamid, and Salleh, 2013). In relation to the topic of support, another study (Gulfem Cakir, 2010) the participants (single mothers) viewed one's own extended family members, friends, ex-spouses and relatives as the most important sources of financial, social, and emotional support. In other cases, joining organised religions grants poor single mothers precious

resources and support for them and their children (Sullivan, 2008). Parents look to churches, synagogues, and other religious institutions to teach children traditions, reinforce morals and values, and to provide a community.

In summary, single mothers are burdened with several challenges, which do not apply to mothers who raise their children with a life partner. The issues concerning single mothers are complex and they extend from the challenge of covering two roles in family, to financial problems; from how patriarchal ideals impacts on a single mother's life to the different forms of support single mothers can count on and ultimately to the way the environment conditions shape their parenting practices.

Theoretical Framework

3.1 Systems Theory: an Ecological Perspective

Despite the fact that this study can suit a variety of theoretical concepts, the researcher adopted the Systems Theory in the context of parenting experiences in a post-conflict environment.

3.1.1 Social change and social stability

The reason for this choice is that Systems Theory serves a dual function in social work: it consists of an instrument of both social stability and social change (Siporin, 1980). The present study takes both instruments into consideration. Undoubtedly, FAYM went through a lot of changes in their lives and in their experiences as mothers: most of them gave birth to their babies while being kept captive within the LRA's ranks and later on some of them returned to their communities, having to adapt to a whole new reality. Nevertheless, in both circumstances of captivity and resettlement, FAYM have experienced a certain kind of social stability. As far as living in captivity is mostly considered to be an abnormal situation, meaning that it is not commonly experienced by most of people, it still holds inside norms for which abductees would consider certain things as "normal".

3.1.2 The ecological perspective

While developing Systems Theory, Bronfenbrenner (1986, p.723) was trying to answer the question "how are intrafamilial processes affected by extrafamilial conditions?". Ecological systems theory was revolutionary as it introduced the concept of environmental influences shaping the internal assets of an individual and of a family. The idea that took root implied that individual experiences within families were continually being shaped and influenced by the evolving interaction patterns of communication (Walker, 2012). Moreover, systems theory enabled professionals to think about how the dynamics are constantly altering as each family member deals with life both inside and outside the family. This moved the thinking away from linear causality and introduced the idea of circular causality (Walker, 2012). Since this study looks at the parenting of FAYM and the relationship with their children, the

ecological approach is useful and particularly suitable it provides the perfect tool to explore what are the dynamics and external dimensions that are or have shaped FAYM's parenting experiences. Indeed, the choice of researching about FAYM and not a standard group of individuals, was due to their particular life circumstances in the present and past. According to Siporin (1980, p.509) the "ecological theory [...] is concerned with people interacting in real life time and space, within territorial habitats, so that there is a renewed emphasis in social work on the concepts of reciprocal complementarity, of resource exchange, and adaptive fit between sub-systems of person and situation".

The quotation gives an insight on how the ecological approach provides the individual 1) with a context of interactions with the entities existing in the surrounding environment and 2) with a time lapse within those interactions take place and develop. This means that the pattern of interactions is not only influenced by what the environment offers, but the theory also takes into consideration a very crucial element, that is, the dimension of time in an individual's life. Time is important in anyone's life as it determines the experiences gained during one's life span. It is known that past experiences shape present and future ones, providing the individual with specific lens which filter the way that the individual views reality. Indeed, it is essential to explore how the past experiences in FAYM's life as child soldiers in the LRA influence their parenting and thus their children's lives.

Further exploration into ecological systems theory reveals that the environmental context is not unitary; it is rather constituted by multiple dimensions or multiple environmental situations (Bronfenbrenner, 1995). The theory takes into consideration the interaction between personal-process-context-time, otherwise called the PPCT model (Bronfenbrenner, 1995). The PPCT model was further developed into several systems listed and described in a hierarchical order (Bronfenbrenner, 1999). Whereas, a system can be defined as a complex of interacting elements; interaction means that those elements stand in a certain relation so that their behaviours in that relation differ from behaviours in another relation (Von Bertalanffy, 2008). Those systems constitute the complex platform with which the individual has interactions and which he/she is surrounded by. The ecological systems theory suggests the following subsystems systems, arranged in order from the inner one (closer to the individual) to the outer one (the furthest from the individual's control): (i) Microsystem, (ii) Mesosystem, (iii) Exosystem, (iv) Macrosystem, and (v) Chronosystem. All of them will be explained and linked to the FAYM's case in the next paragraphs. What is important to emphasize is the fact that the ecological systems theory well suits the issue of parenting in post-conflict

environments, given that the present study can be seen as the study of the FAYM's different systems and how these impact FAYM's parenting.

As González and Ko (2005) have noted, the ecological-systems perspective is a fruitful tool for facilitating an understanding of the various aspects of the migration experience and more effective assessment and interventions. Despite the fact that the present research do not deal with migration processes, in the above mentioned study highlighted the value of adopting an ecological perspective on complex and vast issues such as migration. The same is valid for the issue of parenting amongst the FAYM; the factors involved are many to be considered and most of the time they are entangled with one another. The ecological approach can be useful, not only as an interpretative and explanatory framework, but also as a way to intervene. González and Ko (2005) reported that problems of Hispanic immigrants would be significantly reduced if they were assisted in mediating complex social systems; in obtaining community resources; in attaining vocational/job skills; and in learning English as a second language. The same can apply for the FAYM and whatever difficulties they are facing in parenting with their children. If FAYM receive consistent support from their surrounding systems, their problems can be tackled one by one, instead of imagining a complex, but yet single solution. Here below the researcher proceeded with an illustration of the systems contained in Systems Theory and their applied meaning to FAYM's parenting condition.

3.1.3 The Microsystem: the Dyad Parent-Child and Primary Support Network

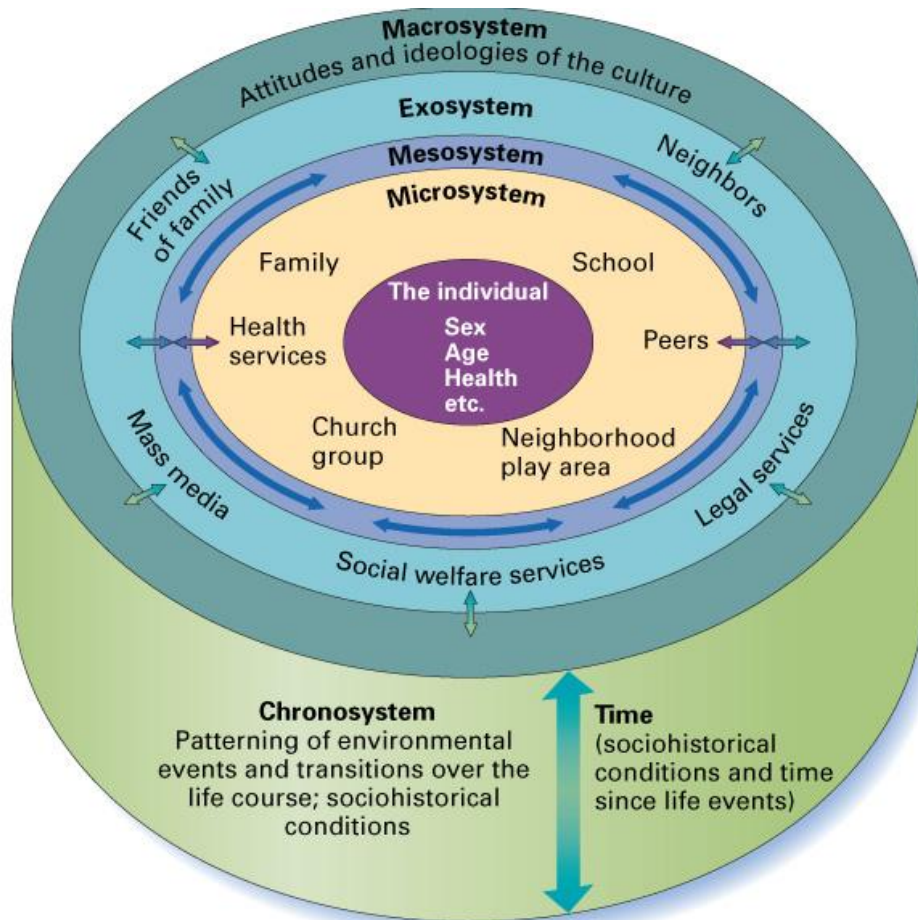
A microsystem was defined as the inner dimension, the most proximal environmental setting (Bronfenbrenner, 1999), within which the individual experiences influences, emanated within the person, from physical features and persons in the immediate face-to-face setting (Bolger, 1988). Figure 1 represents and visually explains Systems theory in its composition of systems. It is noticeable that the microsystem level shows characteristics held within the person (sex, age, health, etc) and the interactions of the individual with her/his close relationships (family, school, peers, church group, health services) (figure 1). Hence, there is a part of the microsystem which envisage a causal process emanating primarily from the characteristics of the organism itself, while the other part focuses mainly on the events in the individual's immediate surroundings (Bolger, 1988). Whilst, the present study does not concern the first part, only the second one is discussed. Family is included in the inner level - the microsystem (see figure 1) and it suggests the relationship between children and parents. Within the dyad parent-child, the relation goes from the child to the parent and vice versa. In other words, the relationship is bilateral; the behaviour of the parents influences the behaviour of the child and

the child's actions influence the parents' actions (Bronfenbrenner, 1999). Nevertheless, to comment on the present study, it is convenient to clarify that in this study, the mothers' (FAYM) point of view is stressed and investigated, not their children's. Thus, while discussing of Ecological Systems theory, the reader has to bear in mind that the mothers are located at the centre of the circular structure of systems. Specifically, the mothers (FAYM) are placed in the microsystem, which include the dyad parent-child. Such dyad is the level where parenting happens and develops, where attachment patterns are initiated and protracted, where parenting practices take place and parenting styles take shape. Literature and information regarding parenting and parenting practices were already covered up in chapter 1 and 2. The present research and the ecological systems theory cross their paths and their intersection is represented by parenting and parenting practices. The website of Psychology Glossary (2016) defines parenting practices as: "specific things that parents do while raising their children. These can refer to the imposing and use of schedules, rules, expectations, punishments, rewards, etc. Basically, parenting practices can refer to any type of regular interaction that a parent has with their children". The definition particularly focuses on the communication and interactions between the parent and the child independently from other external factors, which smoothly matches with the description of the microsystem in systems theory. Included in the microsystem are also other kind of proximal interactions; for example within the contexts of health services, work place (basically the equivalent adult-version of school), peers and church groups (see figure 1). All of these are elements which need to be taken into consideration to investigate on the forms of primary support received by FAYM in their parenting, namely that support coming from FAYM's most immediate relations.

3.1.4 The Mesosystem: the interaction of FAYM's Microsystems

The mesosystem refers instead to those connections between the individual's microsystems (Bronfenbrenner, 1999). The mesosystem component of the Bronfenbrenner's ecological model emphasizes the relationship between different developmental settings; namely it comprises the linkages and processes taking place between two or more settings containing the individual (Bolger, 1988). a mesosystem is a system of microsystems (Bolger, 1988). Even though the family is the principal context in which the individual's development happens, it is one of several settings in which developmental process can occur. Furthermore, the processes operating in different settings are dependent on one another. For example, events at home can affect the child's progress in school, and vice versa. Other examples are, family genetics; genetics-environment interaction in family processes; the family and hospital; the family and day care; family and school (Bronfenbrenner, 1986).

Figure 1: Representation of Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Model



Copyright©The McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc. Permission required for reproduction or display.

In the case of FAYM, what happens in one of their microsystems also affects the others: for example, the interactions within church groups of support might be of help in relating with family members, and interacting with family members might influence the FAYM's participation to church groups. The way these microsystems influence one another is important in FAYM's lives as it can improve or rather hinder their skills as parents. Practically the way those Microsystems affect one another, is reflected on the dyad parent-child.

3.1.5 The Exosystem: Secondary Support

The Exosystem concerns a level of interaction between the individual and the context, within which the individual has no direct influential power, but rather he/she has to undergo events displayed in such system (Bronfenbrenner, 1999). The exosystem encompasses the linkages and processes taking place between two or more settings, in which events occur that influence process within the immediate setting - the one upon which the individual is in proximal relation with (Bolger, 1988). More simply, the exosystem consists of face-to-face settings in

which the individual does not actively participate (Bolger, 1988). From the children's point of view the exosystem reveals itself, not only by what happens in the other environments in which they spend their time but also by what occurs in the other settings in which their parents live their lives, for instance: the parents' world of work, circle of friends and acquaintances and their social network (Bronfenbrenner, 1986). In the case of FAYM, the exosystem is most likely to be composed by their community, their neighbours, social public and private services (figure 1). These systems obviously have an effect on FAYM who returned from captivity; these systems can constitute a helping hand to raise the FAYM's livelihood and therefore being supportive of their parenting capacity. In fact, FAYM's exosystem would be constituted by a secondarily support network, a network that extends itself out of the microsystems and proximal relations. The community in FAYM's reintegration and rehabilitation role has already been discussed in chapter 1 (Introduction), whereas it could be as empowering as disempowering in accordance with the community level of acceptance and sustainment towards FAYM. Such support - whether lacking or present- has an impact on the mesosystem and the microsystems of the FAYM, which inevitably affect also their children's systems and the way parenting develops within those same systems.

3.1.6 The Macrosystem: Cultural Context and Parenting

The macrosystem is the most external level in the ecological model and it is constituted by the peculiarities and characteristics of a certain culture, and its customs and beliefs (Bronfenbrenner, 1999). The macrosystem comprises the patterns of micro, meso and exo system characteristics of a given society, which can be explained as the overreaching pattern of ideology and organisation of the social institutions commonly shared in a culture or subculture (Bolger, 1988). A cultural context includes several dimensions, such as: developing and industrialized countries, socioeconomic status, poverty, and ethnicity. All systems ordinarily underlying the macrosystem are influenced by the latter: community, health services, welfare services, family ties, peer relations and so on are all embedded within the macrosystem (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

From the researcher's perspective, the macrosystem can be described as a personal set of values and beliefs that serves as a filter or lens through which each individual learns how to interpret not only the world around him or her, but also the past, present and future experiences. The way the researcher envisions the macrosystem is a giant spiral staircase; the

individual is at the bottom of this spiral staircase and his/her life experience is represented by the journey up the staircase. With each step the individual encounters societal expectations and judgements, beliefs and values. The individual grows up in a particular culture and adds up with a form of government, raised according to specific religious values and within a particular socio-economic status (education and income).

However, as the individual goes around one curve on the spiral staircase, the impact of a belief or value is presented and as she or he then rounds the next curve, the previously encountered value or belief will shape the new experience the individual's is facing at that given point. This process keeps adding on itself, curve after curve, expanding more and more.

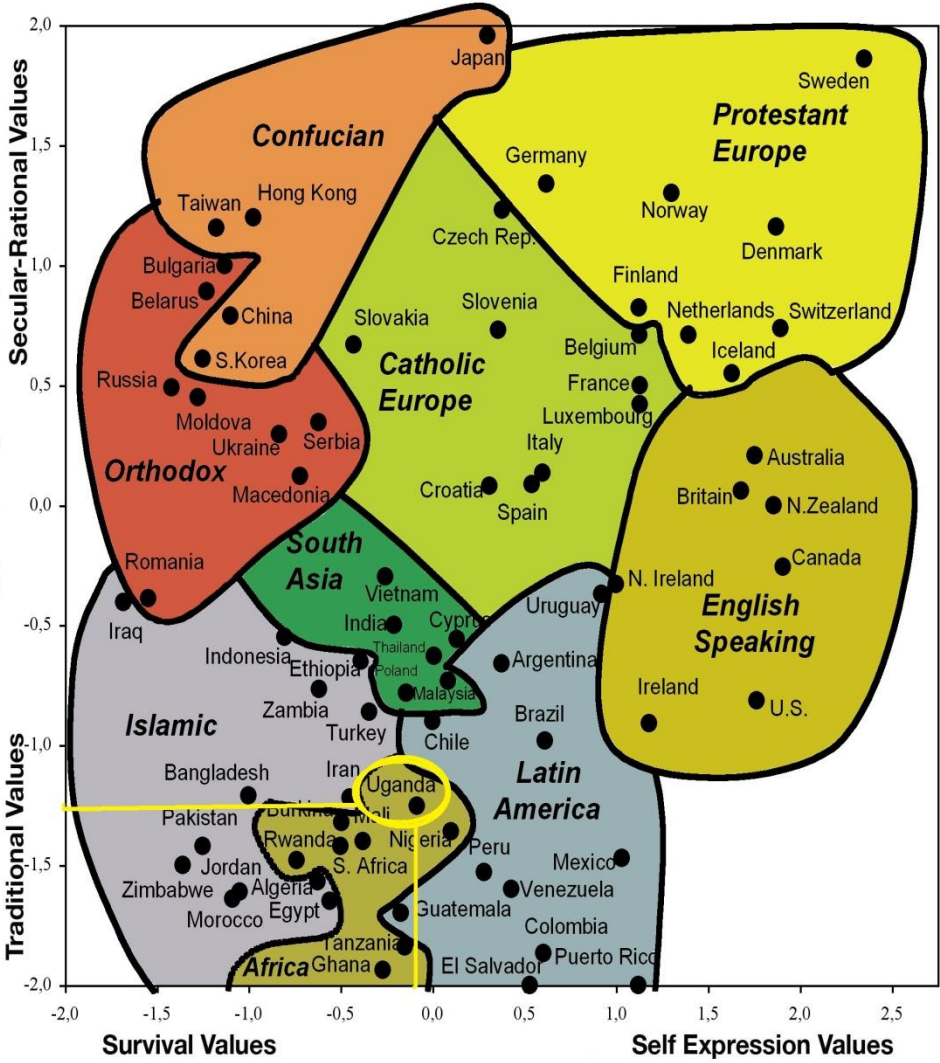
The same process described for the latter anonymous individual happens to the FAYM who returned from captivity; the cultural context they have been living in shaped their beliefs and values about life and consequently it modelled also beliefs and values regarding parenting. As members of a cultural group, FAYM share a common identity, heritage, and values with their community, which never stay exactly the same as the macrosystem evolves over time, because each successive generation may change the macrosystem, leading to the development of a new unique macrosystem (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Therefore, it is important to be aware of what kind of cultural values FAYM are embedded with, in order to avoid misunderstandings and attributing certain results to factors of dysfunctional parenting practices, when instead it simply addresses common practices within their cultural context. What can provide an insight into cultural context in Uganda is the "Cultural Map" designed by political scientists Inglehart and Welzel (2008) and based on the WVS's -World Values Survey- set of data.

The map is not a geographical map but rather a chart in which countries are positioned based on their scores for two continuums of values. The map shows where clusters of countries are located in within two dimensions. The first dimension sees opposite values set in a continuum mapped on the x-axis, which has as its extremes: survival values and self-expression values. Survival values revere economic and physical security and safety and are linked to low levels of trust and tolerance. On the other side, self-expression values give high priority to protecting the environment, promoting gender equality, and tolerating foreigners and gays and lesbians, and rising demands for participation in decision-making in economic and political life (Inglehart and Welzel, 2008).

Figure 2: WVS (World Values Survey)- Inglehart and Welzel - wave 5 (2008).



WVS5, 2008



Instead, the second dimension is represented on the y-axis by a continuum that contemplates the following opposites: traditional values and secular-rational values. Traditional values emphasize the importance of religion, parent-child ties, deference to authority and traditional family values. People who embrace these values have the tendency of rejecting practices such as: divorce, abortion, euthanasia and suicide. These clusters of countries have high levels of national pride and a nationalistic outlook. Whereas, secular-rational values have the opposite preferences to the traditional values. These countries place less emphasis on religion, traditional family values and authority; moreover, divorce, abortion, euthanasia and suicide are seen as relatively socially acceptable (Inglehart and Welzel, 2008).

In particular, the map showed in figure 2 is the wave 5 of the cultural map, namely it is the map designed out of data collected around the World during 2008. In this specific version of the map, Uganda is collocated at ca. -0,1 on the x-axis, which means that the country slightly

tends to survival values. Instead, on the y-axis Uganda takes the numeric value equal to -1,25, which places the country in a fairly traditional values setting. These measures can give an insight of how to interpret certain results, since they reveal what kind of values the Ugandan context (although on a spread out National level) provide regarding parenting. First of all, according to the map, in Uganda are applied traditional family values, for which Ugandans greatly count on the support of family ties and the strength of parent-child relationship is treasured to a great degree. Additionally, abortion would not be taken lightly and for some women would not be an option at all, even in extreme cases. Moreover, still according to the map, Ugandan parents focus more on survival values, such as ensuring their children a present and a future envisaging a steady economic situation. Ugandan parents are also concerned with their off-springs' physical safety, namely their health. Considering that wave 5 of the cultural map is relatively recent and concerning the final stages of the LRA's conflict, a more suitable one is the cultural map of wave 4, designed in 1994. A year, in which most of the participants were probably about to become child mothers or would have in a few years later. Either way, the wave 4 map (appendix 5) cast a scenario that sees Uganda embracing the tendencies described in wave 5 even more. Indeed, Uganda scored on the x-axis about -0.6 and -1.5 on the y-axis. Thus, the reader have to considered all what was said about parenting in relation to the wave 5 map, just more intensely. Both wave 4 and wave 5 cultural maps were considered to be the lens through which the researcher looked at the results.

3.1.7 The Chronosystem: Antecedents and Subsequent Intrafamilial Development

Traditionally in developmental science, the passage of time has been treated as synonymous with chronological age. However, a change has occurred as an increasing number of investigators have employed research designs that take into account changes over time not only within the person but also in the environment. This new design allows an alternative perspective, which permit to analyse the dynamic relation between these two processes -the individual's and the environment's development in time (Bronfenbrenner, 1986). Bronfenbrenner understood the necessity of examining the mutual interplay of individuals and their environments over time, which resulted in the added chronosystem to his Ecological model (Bolger, 1988). This system is the one that quite certainly added the most value to the research. In fact, a crucial key point in taking FAYM's parenting experiences into consideration was the circumstances of their past problematic lives as former child soldiers. The chronosystem's design allows to identify the impact of prior life events, singly or

sequentially, on subsequent development (Bolger, 1988). Thus, the last addition to the Bronfenbrenner's ecological model, provides the perfect filter to analyse FAYM's parenting experiences and how their parenting evolved over time. Their antecedents in captivity, according to this model, have affected their parenting at that time and keeps having a role in present times, even if they went back to their villages.

Essentially, chronosystem focuses around a life transition. Two types of transitions are usefully distinguished: normative (school entry, puberty, entering the labour force, marriage, retirement) and non-normative (a death or severe illness in the family, divorce, moving, winning the sweepstakes). Such transitions occur throughout the life span of an individual and often serve as a direct impetus for developmental change or affect family processes. In other words, extrafamilial transitions -more specifically the events occurring over time- have a potential destabilizing impact on intrafamilial processes (Bronfenbrenner, 1986).

Methodology

4.1 The study Context and Area

This research was conducted in in Gulu district, Northern Uganda. Gulu alongside Kitgum, Lamwo, Agago, Amuru, Nwoya and Pader districts, are also commonly known as Acholi-land. Between the end of the 1990's and the beginning of the early 2000s, this region bore the greatest brunt of the armed conflict in Northern Uganda. Acholi-land was subjected to loots, abductions and other atrocities caused by the LRA. Gulu therefore district represented an ideal site to study experiences of FAYM and of their CBC. Moreover, at the moment, a few humanitarian NGOs are located in Gulu district working directly with the FAYM and the CBC. At the time of carrying out the study, the researcher was hosted by a Non-Governmental Organisation known as Gulu Support for Children Organisation (GuSCO) which was actively involved in the rehabilitation and reintegration of formerly abducted children.

4.2 The Description of Research Design

The researcher adopted a phenomenological study design. Phenomenology is a philosophy that is concerned with the question of how individuals make sense of the world around them (Bryman, 2012). In other words it is a descriptive study of how individuals experience a phenomenon. It seems particularly adequate for exploring the point of view of FAYM regarding their condition as parents. In this way , the researcher made sure that FAYM's voice was heard and explored through the narrative of their experiences, gaining a precious perspective on the situation.

Also, the study was exclusively qualitative in nature. The reason for this choice was determined by the need to describe the research issue of parenting experiences amongst FAYM within a particular context, which was constituted by the war-affected Northern Uganda. The significance of qualitative approaches is to present an understanding of particular research phenomena within the context in which they are happening; as well as an emphasis of the subjective experiences of the participants within a given context (Natasha et al., 2005).

4.2.1 Study population

Formerly Abducted Young Mothers

The primary study population from which the sample was drawn concerns FAYM. Namely, girls who were abducted by the LRA during their childhood or early teenage, who somehow managed to end their captivity and returned to their villages, families or communities along with their children. These female former child soldiers are estimated to be within the span of 25-35 years of age.

Key Informants

Secondarily, the study also accounted a smaller population of key informants (3). These key informants were accessed in order to gain an alternative point of view other than the FAYM's one. Key informants were selected on the basis of their role in FAYM's lives. In fact, for the purpose, the researcher recruited workers of local NGOs, specifically of GuSCO and Terra Renaissance.

4.2.2 Selection of Participants

Formerly Abducted Young Mothers

A sample of 17 formerly abducted mothers was drawn from the study population. The selection criteria comprised the following: (i) having belonged to the LRA as a child soldier, (ii) being female, (iii) having returned from the bush either with own children born in captivity or being pregnant (iv) having had a "husband" within the LRA commanders, (v) being aged between age 20-40 years and (vi) being all from Northern Uganda.

FAYM were mainly recruited thanks to the help of GuSCO, which provided the researcher with a location and resources to conduct the 8 individual interviews; secondarily, Terra Renaissance permitted the researcher to conduct the two FGDs.

The research assistant played a key role helping the researcher to access the participants. The research assistant was a young woman who had previously worked with GuSCO and therefore had direct contact with those FAYM, who were being served by this organisation. Being an Acholi native speaker, she also operated as an interpreter during interviews and FGDs with the FAYM. Her gender, mother-tongue and previous job in GuSCO were essential

to accessing the FAYM, who accepted to participate in the study because they trusted the research assistant. Consequently, the researcher and the research assistant closely worked together in order to ensure that the sample displayed a sufficient intra-group diversity.

Figure 3 shows basic socio-demographic characteristics of the participants. The variables registered are divided in: age; time spent in the bush (with starting year); time spent in the resettlement (with starting year); children (divided in: children born in captivity (CBC) and children born out of captivity (CBOC); each category has subcategories, such as: number of children, age of children; gender of children); marital status; current residency.

Figure 3: Socio-demographic characteristics of the sample regarding main participants.

	AGE	YEARS SPENT IN THE BUSH	YEARS SPENT IN RESETTLEMENT	CBC			CBOC			MARITAL STATUS	CURRENT RESIDENCY
				N°	Age	Gender	N°	Age	Gender		
Mom1	31	10 (2000)	5 (2011)	3	10 6 3	Girl Girl Boy	none			Single	Gulu
Mom2	28	12 (1998)	6 (2010)	3	10 8 3	Boy Girl Girl	none			Single	Kasubi
Mom3	32	16 (1995)	5 (2011)	6	18 15 13 10 6 4	Girl Boy Boy Boy Boy Boy	none			Single	Bardege
Mom4	35	19 (1991)	6 (2010)	6	17 14 11 8 6 4	Boy Girl Boy Girl Girl Girl	none			Single	Kasubi Central

Mom5	34	10 (1994)	12 (2004)	7	16 14 12 9 7 5 3	Girl Girl Girl Boy Girl Girl	none			Single	Kabedop ong
Mom6	29	5 (1997)	14 (2002)	1	15	Girl	2	5 2	Girl Boy	-Ex-bf - Curren t bf	Holy Rosary ward, forest
Mom7	32	15 (1994)	7 (2009)	3	17 11 8	Boy Girl Boy	none			Single	Akonyib edo
Mom8	36	16 (1993)	7 (2009)	1	13	Boy (pregna nt in the bush)	3	10 3 1	Boy Boy Girl	Remar ried twice. Curren tly widow .	Limu
Mom9	25	15 (2000)	1 (2015)	2	6 <1	Girl Girl	none			Single	Kanyago ga
Mom10	25	10 (2002)	4 (2012)	2	6 3	Girl Girl	none			Single	Pece, Hukung
Moom1 1	25	10 (2004)	2 (2014)	2	6 1	Girl Girl	none			Single	Bardege
Mom12	25	12 (2002)	2 (2014)	3	8 5 2	Girl Girl Girl	none			Single	Bardege
Mom13	25	12 (2002)	2 (2014)	3	8 4 2	Girl Girl Boy	none			Single	Kanyago ga
Mom14	30	7 (1999)	10 (2006)	3	10 5 2	Boy Girl Boy	none			Boyfri end	Pece Huking
Mom15	24	15	2	3	11	Boy	none			Single	Bardege

		(1999)	(2014)		7 5	Boy Girl			
Mom16	30	8 (1996)	2 (2014)	2	5 3	Girl Boy	none	Single	Kanyago ga
Mom17	25	9 (2003)	2 (2014)	2	8 >1	Girl Girl	none	New husba nd. Separa ted.	Kanyago ga

Key Informants

The researcher also interviewed 3 key informants, who were staff members of two different organisations working with the FAYM: GuSCO and Terra Renaissance. The key informants, 2 from GuSCO and 1 from Terra Renaissance, represented different functions within their organisations, that is, managers, social workers and teachers. The researcher aimed at having a diverse perspective even among the key informants to ensure a well-depicted multifaceted reality. The researcher was linked to GuSCO by the thesis supervisor; while Terra Renaissance was contacted by the research assistant.

4.3 Data Collection

Data for this study were collected through qualitative methods, namely in-depth semi-structured individual interviews and FGDs. To be able to interview FAYM, who generally did not speak English, the researcher received the support of an interpreter, as mentioned above.

4.3.1 Semi-structured, In-depth Interviews

The research made use of semi-structured in-depth interviews with the primary study participants. Bryman (2012, p. 471) writes that "the relatively unstructured nature of the semi-structured interview reveals the capacity to provide insights into how research participants view the world". In other words, in-depth interviews are useful for learning about the perspectives of individuals (Natasha et al., 2005). As a matter of fact, such methodology largely matches the essence of a phenomenological study. Moreover, while the interviewer

has the possibility to cover all the aspired topics, the interviewee has a great deal of leeway in how to reply. A semi-structured interview is a flexible process through which the researcher gains emphasis on how the interviewee frames and understands issues and events (Bryman, 2012). At the same time, in-depth interviews are designed to elicit a vivid picture of the participants' perspective on the research topic and offer them the opportunity to express themselves in a way ordinary life rarely affords them. They are also an opportunity for the researcher to gain insight into how people interpret and order the world (Natasha et al., 2005). Considering the sensitivity of the research topic, semi-structured, in-depth interviews were appropriate for all the characteristics displayed above. The researcher conducted 8 individual interviews with FAYM until the saturation point was reached (Babbie, 2010).

4.3.2 Focus Group Discussion

A Focus Group Discussion is appropriate where there is a need to examine the social norms of a community or subgroup, as well as the range of perspectives that exist within that community or subgroup (Natasha et al., 2005). As the design of the study was phenomenological and explorative, it was essential to consider not only individuals' perspectives, but also the ways those perspectives reflected themselves into the community as a subgroup. Therefore the use of FGD seemed adequate to the purpose, since the FGD disclosed mechanisms of how FAYM constructed collective meaning of life events, situations and past experiences (Bryman, 2012). The researcher conducted two FGDs comprising 4 and 5 participants respectively, to remain within an acceptable and feasible number of participants as suggested in Bryman (2012).

4.4 Data Processing and Analysis

The data collected by the means of individual semi-structured in-depth interviews and FGDs with the FAYM were transcribed and translated from the Acholi language into the English language with the help of the interpreter/research assistant. In contrast, all the interviews with the key informants were transcribed by the researcher. As these interviews were conducted in the English language by the researcher herself, there was no need for translation, since the language adopted in writing this dissertation is English. However, in both cases, transcriptions were verbatim.

Transcripts were afterwards analyzed thematically using Template Analysis (TA), which is a useful method in analyzing textual data emerging from fieldwork (King, 2004) and an

adaptation of thematic analysis successfully applied in qualitative research. The technique involves reducing large amounts of data into manageable clusters of themes in the following way: the strategy in TA is to determine the main themes for the study and derive the subsequent smaller level themes in a complex but orderly hierarchical way (King, 2004). For this study, an initial template was developed by utilising information from the main research questions and the interview guidelines in order to determine initial codes (King, 2004). Secondly, codes were identified also by bearing in mind the literature found and the information given by the key informants. Successively, the researcher aimed to identify already established themes -or group of codes (Bryman, 2012)- and new emerging ones from the body of data, which led to apply more codes to the initial template and modify the original template (Cassells et al, 2004). The analysis, after the transcriptions, started by reading the material in its entirety, which allowed the researcher to apply firstly open coding, secondly axial coding and finally selective coding as described by several manuals on social research (Babbie, 2010; Neuman, 2007; Bryman, 2012).

The reasons why the researcher considered TA the most suitable analysis for the current research, are as it follows. Firstly, TA granted the study the ability to extract from FAYM's narratives the social constructions based on their own perceptions, experiences and interpretations of the world around them (Murray, 2008), which is what is expected from phenomenological study design. Furthermore, TA is more adaptable and flexible without necessarily applying inductive procedures, unlike grounded theory, and the researcher can amend its use to the needs of the research project (Troung and Simmons, 2010; Wainright and Waring, 2007). Finally, TA provides structure and consistency to the categorising and unitizing of qualitative in-depth interview transcripts (Troung and Simmons, 2010).

Identifying themes or core codes was needed in order to highlight factors describing the whole parenting experience of FAYM with their children. This means that contextual frame, and time and space narrative coordinates could be left behind, though. While it was essential to underline the timeline, since the interviews themselves (the ones held with the FAYM) elicited a narrative of the FAYM's experiences in relation to their children, which covered their entire parenthood from the birth of the children in captivity until their return and resettlement. Thereafter, the use of narrative analysis was clearly necessary, since it is sensitive to the sense of spatial-temporal sequence that participants detected in their lives and surrounding episodes and injected into their accounts (Bryman, 2012). Moreover, narrative analysis allowed the researcher to convey an authentic feel for participants' life's complexity as experienced in specific circumstances (Neuman, 2007). Consequently, the researcher

triangulated methods of qualitative analysis to provide contextual meaning to the themes that emerged from the data. Mixed methods has been successfully used in a number of studies (Floersch et al., 2010; Shukla, Wilson, Boddy, 2014).

4.5 Ethical Issues

Before conducting the study, the researcher obtained an official clearance from MFamily Erasmus Mundus Committee and from Makerere University - Department of Social Work and Social Administration. Additionally the researcher received supervision from two experienced senior academics from the Department of Social Work at Makerere University.

4.5.1 Voluntary Participation

Participants to the study joined the research on a voluntary basis. The research assistant recruited participants through phone calls, explaining the purpose of the study in brief and clearly stating that participating was absolutely their own choice. Even just before starting the interview, participants were re-told that they were free to leave the interview at any point with no consequences.

4.5.2 Informed Consent

The written informed consent was provided to all the participants (appendix 4) and based on the template indicated in the guidelines, offered by MFamily Erasmus Mundus Committee. The informed consent was translated word by word in Acholi to the FAYM, whilst an English version was given to key informants, and all participants were asked to sign. All interviews were audio recorded on the premises that each interviewee was aware of it and had given their verbal assent. Also, participants were informed about the nature of the study, the identity and role of the researcher and her relations with Makerere University. The purpose of such practice intended to both make them aware of what they were committing to and to rule out eventual expectations regarding benefits as it is explained in the following paragraph here below.

4.5.3 No harm to participants

The primary participants in this study were a typical vulnerable group; their vulnerability needed to be considered during the conduct of this study to avoid aggravating harm among this vulnerable group of people (Neuman, 2007).

While most of the studies about former child soldiers focus in detail on their past atrocious experiences as abductees, the researcher's intention was to look at a specific condition which is parenting, both in their past and present lives. Therefore, stories regarding life in captivity were not the focus, even though the research question touches upon the parenting also in the bush. This consideration is necessary to make from an ethical point of view, as vulnerable participants should not be forced to re-live their traumatic experiences. Consequently research methods were set in a way to avoid psychological harm to the participants. In case of questions having triggered emotional vulnerability, recalled traumatic experiences and aroused psychological stress, the researcher made use of all her sensitivity as a human being and all of her knowledge as a graduate in Psychology, in order to make those moments more bearable and possibly an occasion for participants to set free of some heavy life loads. As a matter of fact, all participants were thankful to have participated to the study. Some of them openly stated that the interview had a therapeutic and counselling effect on them. To be able to elicit such effect, the researcher also valued the importance of rapport and trust building during the interviews. Furthermore, as another measure to prevent psychological harm, participants were granted the right to skip any question they did not feel comfortable responding to, and to interrupt the interview at any point.

Another issue to be addressed arose from Pittaway, Bartolomei & Hugman's article (2010), which gives an interesting insight on how participants belonging to vulnerable groups feel deprived of their stories by researchers. This is explained to happen as these groups of participants think that the researcher has the possibility to arise their condition, often in the immediate time lapse of the study. Hence, it was important to clarify the objectives of the study to the participants and to state what they were going to get in return as straight forward as possible. For this study participants were clearly told about the purpose of the study and the role of the researcher. Additionally, FAYM did get in return for their time and transport a modest amount of money (about 10000 UGX per each, equivalent to ca. 2,50 Euros) and a more abstract, but also hopefully long-term reward in terms of enhancing and strengthening both social practices within governmental and non-governmental organisations, and social policies in support of FAYM and their children.

4.5.4 Privacy and Confidentiality

Privacy was assured by conducting the interviews and focus group discussions in locations where the FAYM could feel safe, at ease and in absence of indiscrete looks from their community members. Furthermore, the researcher committed to not disclose the participants' identities in any way. For instance, their names were purposefully changed and their personal (demographic) data are not traceable to any name.

4.6 Limitations of the study

Limitations to the study are related to the researcher's background and to independent external factors.

4.6.1 Reflexivity and Positionality

The researcher's background reflects in great part what is usually defined as Western culture. Western culture is a very broad term, though, and there are many degrees of it: in particular, the researcher was raised in Italy in a relatively wealthy family and was a student for most of her life. The researcher's provenience and life experiences made her an outsider of Ugandan culture, and more specifically of Acholi community. The cultural barrier might be translated in mistrust by the participants and in misunderstanding of local costumes. The mitigation of such aspect was achieved by gathering information on Acholi community through literature, interviews with key informants and the help of the research assistant, who was a local. Moreover, despite all the differences, there were some elements that associated both participants and researcher. For example, the researcher belongs to the same gender of the participants (female) and fits the age gap (26): these characteristics might have been facilitators in conducting interviews and obtaining trust from participants, who probably found in those similarities a way to connect with the researcher.

Secondly, different cultures do often come with different languages and create a language barrier, which can constitute a limitation in order to fluently communicating with the participants. To solve this issue, the researcher made use of an interpreter: the communication was slow, but effective. The use of an interpreter might implicate some biases which can result in misinterpretation of data. To avoid such outcome, the researcher discussed the purpose and the objectives of the study with the interpreter previously to data collection. Explaining the interpreter what the research was meant to achieve allowed the study to

maintain its internal validity. It also developed a good work relationship between the interpreter and the researcher, and an appropriate understanding during data collection.

Moreover, the use of a former GuSCO worker might lead to assume that sample's intra-group diversity was poor. Mitigation of such bias was achieved by encouraging the research assistant to recruit FAYM living in different villages under the Gulu district and who attended different NGOs other than GuSCO. Also, the researcher with the help of the research assistant recruited FAYM from Terra Renaissance for the FGDs, which amplified diversity within the sample.

4.6.2 Time and pragmatic constraints

The length of the research needs to be addressed. Indeed, because of the nature of the master programme itself, the organisation of the research, from the thought-process and ideas development stages to the actual end of writing up of the thesis was given a period of barely four months. This condition required the researcher to adapt to the new and different reality of Uganda very quickly, which often affected the development of the research. Nevertheless, such relatively short period of time helped the researcher to perform a full-immersion into the topic of the study. The other issue related to time constraints concerns unforeseen complications. When the period of time given to conduct and write up a study is already limited, any unexpected event can be a threat for the research. For instance, unexpectedly the research assistant, who was in charge of transcribing and translating the interviews with the FAYMs, was already terribly late in handing the data to the researcher, when she accidentally lost all the files. Therefore the research assistant had to restart the whole process from the beginning which caused even more delay. As a consequence, the researcher had a very short time lapse to carry on the analysis and complete the writing up of the present study.

Findings: Analysis and Discussion

5.1 Introduction

The findings are presented following clusters of codes - or themes - organised per macro-themes that emerged from the collected data. The clusters are aligned to the research objectives and they attempt to answer the key research issues of the study which are 1) pre-return and post-captivity FAYM's parenting practices; 2) challenges faced by FAYM in childrearing; 3) actual formal and informal support received by FAYM regarding their parenting. In order to emphasize the authenticity for this study reporting parenting experiences of FAYM, the findings are presented mainly by their direct citations. Additionally, key informants' quotes are also reported with the intention of providing context to FAYM's affirmations and to highlight discrepancies between the two points of view.

5.2 FAYM' Socio-Demographic Characteristics

The first part of the interview to the FAYM was dedicated to get acquaintance of their background and intra-group differences, regarding: age; time spent in the bush; time spent in the resettlement; children (born in captivity (CBC) and born out of captivity (CBOC)); marital status and current residency. All of these variables are listed in appendix 6.

To start with, the age of the interviewed mothers stands in a span of about 10 years: the youngest one is 24 years old, while the oldest is 35 years old. The reason why the age gap can reach up till an entire decade is because the conflict between the LRA and the governmental forces lasted for decades itself and officially is not over yet, up to current date. Moreover some mothers stood in the bush for several years, while others had a shorter captivity life. Indeed 13 participants out of 17 were kept in the bush for 10 to 19 years, while the rest (5 out of 17) covered from 2 to 9 years. It is important to note such diversification within the group as the time spent in the bush can be a predictor of a better reintegration into communities, indeed key informant states that:

"These people (FAYM) have different behaviours depending on how long they've been in the bush. So when you see a mother, who was in the bush for 3 years/2 years you can't compare with these mothers who have been in the bush for over 10 years. In that way, for that family who actually grew in the bush, they're used to the bush life and it

does not see any sense in our life, normal life. But these of 2-3 years, you went yesterday and still came back. So, their behaviour is little bit kind of different"
(Michael, Terra Renaissance)

Also the years spent in the resettlement, have an impact on their reintegration and such span within the sample is widely covered: starting as recent as 1 year, up to longer periods such as 14 years. Most of the participants have been resettled for a span of time between 1 year to 6 years (12 out of 17), while the rest 5 (out of 17) lived in resettlement from 7 up to 14 years).

All the interviewees left their "husbands" in the bush, since they were LRA soldiers or commanders, and some of them have disappeared or died. Therefore, most of these young women went back to their communities being single and so they remained. However there are a few participants who found themselves in a new relationship once back from the bush, as a matter of fact 4 out of 17 had a boyfriend or even remarried, even though 2 of them became single again (one got separated and the other is unfortunately widowed). Another difference that can occur amongst the participants is that 2 of them had children, not only born in the bush (CBC), but also born out of the bush, once they were back to their villages.

Despite differences, all the interviewed mothers are former child soldiers, who gave birth (once or more) while being in the bush these children vary in gender and age (from 1 to 18 years old). Additionally, all mothers were living in Gulu district.

5.3 Pre-return and Post-captivity FAYM's parenting practices

FAYM were confronted with very difficult circumstances while trying to fulfil their role as parents. Since the researcher clarified the importance of cultural context or Macrosystem (see section 3.1.6), it is necessary to discuss the definition of good parenting in Acholi culture.

"A good parent in Acholi community simply means: a parent who is able to provide the basic needs for a child. For example, when you produce a child, you know that this child is supposed to be taken care of. And you know that the child is supposed to go to school at one point, [...] to eat healthy food, [...] to be clothed, [...] to be taken to the hospital in case the child is sick and [...] to be under a healthy roof. And when you do all that, you are looked at as responsible parent" Michael, Terra Renaissance

Although a good Acholi parent focuses mainly on providing children with their basic needs and rights (such as nutrition, safety and education), another key informant brought up the question of love.

"These mothers love their children even though they were born from captivity. [...] It's not the child's fault or something like that. So they love their children". Sandra, GuSCO

In fact, it was pleasantly surprising that participants had rationalised their children had nothing to do with their situation and since the beginning of their parenting journey, they loved their children unconditionally.

"I was given a child when I just went to the bush and that time I didn't want to be mother, [...] but when I gave birth I decided to love my child, I couldn't hate him". Angella

"I felt like it (my baby) was a good gift that the Lord had given me, only that it had happened under such unfavorable conditions". Kamali

"It was not my wish to have those children (and it) was already enough to make me angry, not on the kids but on the person who abducted me and got me given to a man". Patience

5.3.1 Parenting Practices "in the bush"

FAYM's parenting practices during captivity gravitate around three main themes, each divided in subthemes (figure 3): their parenting mainly concerned child-care routine, their children's safety and how to respond to their children misbehaving. Before proceeding, the researcher would like to note that the father's presence in the child-rearing is significantly absent in captivity, as a participant put it:

"Mostly it (the up-bringing of the child) is on mothers. Even if you have a husband, as a mother the responsibility of the child's wellbeing is all on you". FGD1

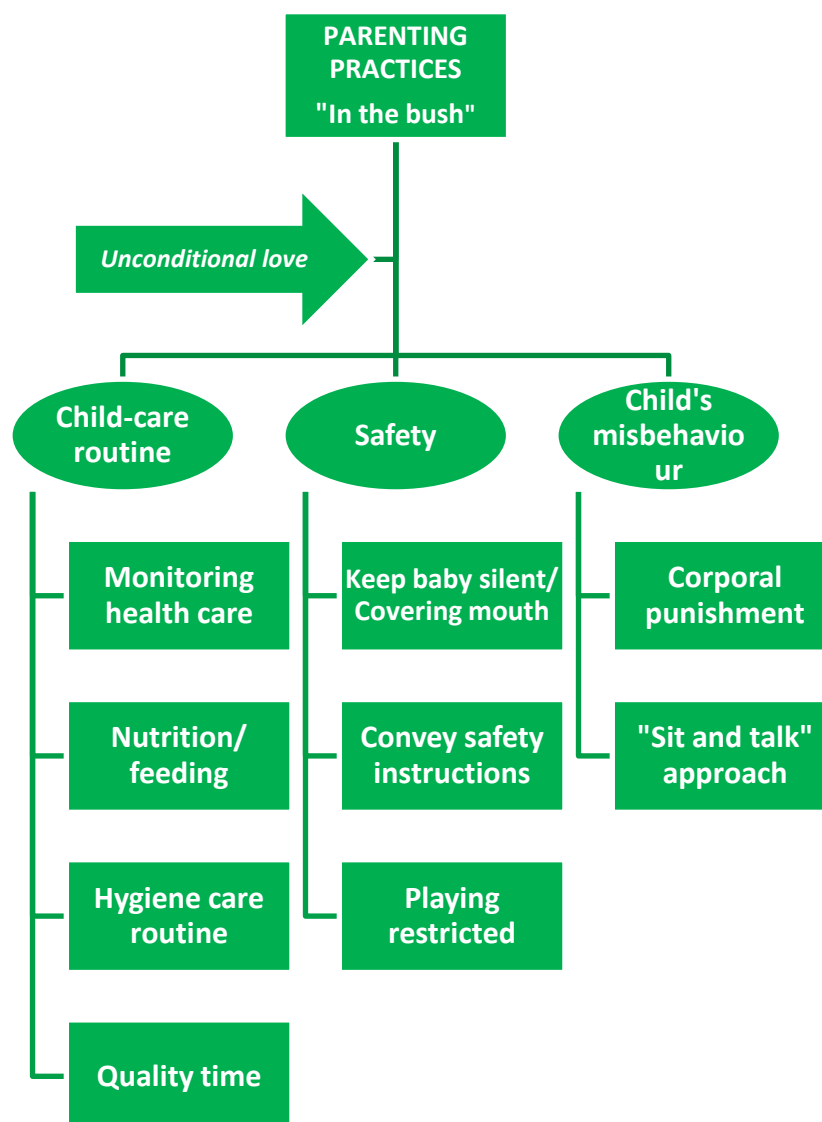
5.3.2 Child-care Routine

Taking care of their children basic needs is one of the main activities of FAYM's parenting experience in the bush. This completely aligns with the survival values displayed in the Inglehart and Welzel's cultural map (2008). First of all, FAYM worry about feeding their progeny.

"Majorly as a mother I had to cook for my children". Beatrice

"Firstly, (my task is) ensuring that they are in good health and they have eaten". Stella

Figure 4



***Author's Illustration**

The health and hygiene routine is also another important slice of FAYM's concerns for their children. Often, hygiene is largely used to prevent damages to their children's health. In fact, medical services are not easily accessible, if not at all, to FAYM (see section 5.4 down below).

"I monitor the health of child everyday". Angella

"Early in the morning I wake up to bath the child and watch over it". Stella

"if your child has urinated or defecated in the cloth you had to wash and iron the cloth it was a policy that had to be followed. [...] The reason why we did that was because in the bush there were very many ticks. [...]if the cloth is not ironed the ticks can stick in the cloth of the child and when the cloth is put on the child it can stick on the child and end up causing a disease on the child". Beatrice

Other than for basic needs, several participants - but all of them- declared that they would spend some quality time with their children between a battle and the other, and once finished working in the garden. Many of them found relief in interacting positively with their children.

"When the kids are not crying they would make me forget some pains as we would chat and laugh together". Patience

"Sometimes we play and chat together[...] and the children say anything so amusing and you just find yourself laughing". Stella

"What makes me happy is that sometimes I sit and talk with them and we laugh together". Angella

5.3.3 Safety

Also safety comes under survival values: Ugandan parents generally worry about their children's safety, on average more than in other countries according to Inglehart and Welzel's Cultural Map (2008). Surely, this worry goes out of proportion in a war context, such as the one FAYM lived during their period under the LRA.

"The difference is that while in the bush, you cannot leave your child behind in case you are going anywhere unlike here where you can leave the child behind with hope that they will be safe". FGD1

"My responsibility was to make sure they are safe even during the battle". Angella

Concerns about children's safety were expressed under different forms in the interviews. For example, playing was restricted for CBCs, their mothers had to impose restrictions and limitations to their playing as the adverse Army could have attacked them anytime.

"So in terms of security, you need to watch and be careful where your child goes whether to play or what they even eat". FGD2

"In the bush, it was difficult for children to play fully to their satisfaction for outbreak of wars uncertainly, [...] Children in the bush can't move out alone without a parent following up". FGD1

Another precaution measure for FAYM was to give some kind of safety instructions to their children, if they were old enough to understand. One participant also shared information with her elder son about her old village, in case they would get separated.

"For the children who are a little old, as a mother you had to tell them that in case of a gunshot they have to keep near you, run to where you go, they shouldn't stay alone". Beatrice

"In the bush, we train the children to be careful of wars or gun shots". FGD1

"My other child was old enough so I would tell him that if we ever got separated, know that our home is in Gulu, because situations around the bush were very unpredictable so you would never know what would happen next". Kamali

One of the most difficult practices FAYM had to use in order to ensure protection to their babies, was covering their mouth. A crying baby meant revealing their position to the enemy, which would have endangered their safety in the bush, whenever their enemies were in the vicinity of their positions. This is a practice reported by each participant, always accompanied by expressions of sorrow and guilt.

"I had to sometime cover or put something in the baby's mouth such that the child doesn't cry and this was very challenging for me". Beatrice

"The kids wouldn't stop crying but now it would be your responsibility to hold the child's mouth so they aren't heard". Patience

"We would try so hard to ensure they don't cry, we would put our hands around the mouth". Stella

5.3.4 Child's misbehaviour

Great part of parenting practices is observed when the parent responds to his or her child's misbehaviour (Psychology Glossary, 2016). The way the punishment is carried out can have different effects on the child, as already discussed in chapter 1, 2.1.1: harsh parenting can have dysfunctional consequences on the child (Perepletchikova, and Kazdin, 2004; Selin and SpringerLink, 2014; Rees et al., 2015). Many participants, while in captivity, did not spare their children from corporal punishment.

"They (LRA soldiers) don't want them (children) to cry, so as a mother I was to make sure that they don't cry. But sometimes I try to stop the child and the child refuses to stop, so it makes me angry and sometimes I slapped the child". Beatrice

"There were laws that were put in place. One of them prohibited the mothers from beating their children. [...] They (LRA commanders) don't allow you to beat them (children) and also because you get to a point where you accept this children as a gift from God, you may not want to beat them. What would annoy me would be the pace at which they could walk so at that point I would have to beat because the army could be following us from behind and we wouldn't want to be caught". Kamali

After all, to the researcher's surprise, many other participants reported instead to make use of another approach to punish their children. Despite the high continuous stress due to the conflict and to the way FAYM were treated within the LRA, a few of them tried to use a "sit and talk" approach, way more constructive than corporal punishment.

"For me if a child does something bad to me, I sit him down and tell him (that) what he has done is bad, don't repeat it". Angella

5.3.5 Parenting Practices "during resettlement"

In the transition from parenting in a context of captivity under the LRA to a context of resettlement, many changes have occurred for FAYM and their children. Mainly, these changes can be explained from an Ecological perspective: passing from captivity to

resettlement determined a major enlargement of FAYM's and CBC's Micro- and Exo-system (Bolger, 1988; Bronfenbrenner, 1999). Their opportunities underwent an exponential increase.

"In the bush, it was difficult for children to play fully to their satisfaction for outbreak of wars uncertainly, but here (in resettlement), it's now different. The children can play up to when they feel like quitting". FGD1

"There's little change here in terms of diet. We now give children balanced diet as compared to the bush". FGD2

"The mother can beat up a child in the bush because when the child has asked for something you cannot provide but here you can get money and provide". FGD1

Additionally, children in resettlement have infrastructures for pursuing education, unlike in captivity where no school was to be found. All participants were struggling to give that opportunity to their children. Indeed, mothers coming from the bush are aware of the importance of sending their off-spring to school: ensuring an education to children is an essential duty for parents (Castree et al., 2013), and Acholi culture is no exception. Education is considered to be a mean to elevate one's status.

"What is good parenting. First of all, you judge on the basis whether they are able to send their children to school. No matter what you do, if your children don't go to school, that's really bad parenting". Ronaldo, GuSCO

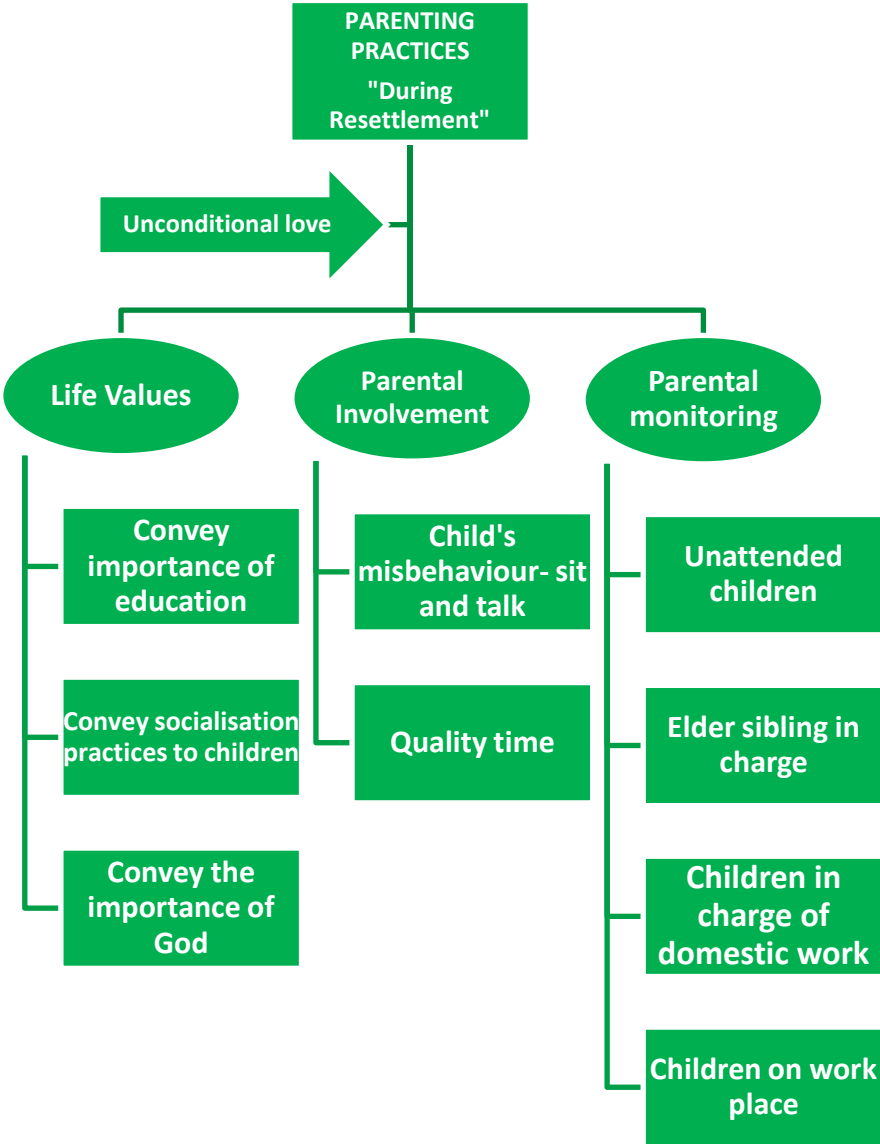
Regardless, something which participants report not to have changed in the transition is their unconditional love toward their progeny.

"The kind of relationship we had remained the same the way we use to love each other from the bush". Harriet

"They (my children) are my happiness because when we are together they make me happy and life would be harder for me without them, so they are my happiness". Angella

"Most times I am happy when I am together with her (my daughter), first of all she is the first child God has given me so I love her and she loves me". Doreen

Figure 5



***Author's Illustration**

5.3.6 Conveying Life Values

A substantial shift has happened in parenting practices, since the participants returned to their villages and communities. The struggle to provide basic needs to their children continues but in a much more subtle tone, compared to captivity. Survival values comprehend ensuring economic and physical safety (Inglehart and Welzel, 2008). The researcher noticed that while in captivity mothers were more worried about their children's physical security, during resettlement they were concerned more about economic safety or survival. Indeed, despite the fact that their environment was filled with more Microsystems (Bolger, 1988;

Bronfenbrenner, 1999), it was difficult to access them for economical reasons. Therefore, when asked about the parenting experiences during their resettlement, participants tended to rather focus more on different topics rather than providing basic needs, contrary to what the cultural map indicates (Inglehart and Welzel, 2008).

Indeed, several participants reported talking about specific life values to their off-spring. There were three main clusters of values presented. Firstly, almost each participant stressed on the importance of education in one's life, as they knew what challenges not having gone to school brings (see section 5.4.8).

"Most times I advise and encourage her (my daughter) to study hard and surpass my education level each time I am free". Doreen

"I want them (my children) to take studies seriously and they should know what they want after studies. I don't want them not studying and then becoming drunkards". Kamali

"I also encourage them (my children) to study hard even when I am not very able to take care of their education completely because you never know what tomorrow may bring". Patience

Some other participants - specifically two: Angella and Patience - tried to teach their children how to behave with the community and the people around them. In other words, these two mothers engaged their children in a process of socialisation, which is a parental task related to parenting practices (Darling & Steinberg, 1993).

"Every evening is all I get with my children, I always advise them to be respectful and avoid despising people. [...] It's important to train the child in a respectful manner so that they grow up knowing and remembering it". Patience

Thirdly, conveying to children the importance of God in life seemed to be an important value to transmit for several participants. This finding is in line with the Inglehart and Welzel's cultural map (2008), since Uganda scored quite highly in traditional values, for which the importance of religion is emphasised.

" I want them to learn to love God, because even if you have everything without God it's useless. First love God because He is the one that gives everything that we need in this life". Kamali

"First I want them (my children) to know more about God. People who know God are easy to work with. I also want to teach them as most of them are girls to live a morally upright life so they can grow up right and get settled with a good man". Patience

"I would love for them (my children) to grow in the knowledge of God's word. They should live a godly life wherever they go". Stella

5.3.7 Parental Involvement

Parental involvement is considered to be one of the underpinning characteristics of parenting practices (Perepletchikova and Kazdin, 2004). Moreover, according to Inglehart and Welzel's cultural map (2008), family ties in Uganda are strongly valued and the relationship parent-child is even tighter. The analysis found that FAYM during resettlement increased the quality time spent with their children, performing activities such as chatting, telling stories and laughing. Not only the mentions of quality time increased in each interview and it revealed more constant patterns, but also the number of participants who reported sharing those moments with their children increased enormously, compared to captivity.

"Each day when I come back from my sales work I ask them (my children) what they were doing especially my eldest daughter". Angella

"When I come back from work they (my children) welcome me: we laugh and sit and talk together". Harriet

"Mainly on weekends we (my children and I) sit and chat together and tell stories".
Doreen

"It's so nice to spend time with them (my children), because when we are together we are very happy: we chat, tell stories and laugh, like when we are at the garden, we sit under the tree and chat and laugh". Kamali

The involvement of a parent also shows when the children misbehave (Perepletchikova and Kazdin, 2004). The way a parent deal with punishment counts and affects the relationship between the parent and the child (Selin and SpringerLink, 2014; Rees et al., 2015). In Acholi culture, corporal punishment is a common practice, to a certain extent, according to key informantsk.

"Here in Acholi (culture) [...] parents beat their children. But, giving that punishment to the child, it doesn't mean you don't love the child, you are giving that punishment maybe to correct your child". Sandra, GuSCO

However, contrarily to this norm, none of the participants reported practices of corporal punishment during the period of their resettlement, which they actually admitted to perform while being in captivity. Therefore it must be a consistent change and not a matter of being ashamed of it, since: 1) it is a common practice in Acholi context and 2) they were not ashamed to admit it while discussing of their parenting in captivity. Thus, the way they deal with misbehaviour seemed to be a "sit and talk" approach.

"Sometimes they (my children) go to the well and someone abuses them and they fight. And I sit them down and tell them to try to control their temper, because fighting is not good". Harriet

"I am trying every day to prone them (my children) up such that they do what I want them to do. [...] I call them and talk to them: sometimes one of them opens up and say - Mummy, I (just)wanted to play". Beatrice

"So when I come back home at that time I may be angry at the one (the child) who burnt the food, so I put him or her down and teach him or her [...], such that next time he or she does not make the same mistake again". Kamali

5.3.8 Parental Monitoring

Also parental monitoring is associated to parenting practices as one of its underpinning characteristics (Pereplechikova and Kazdin, 2004). This is the case to remind the reader that once FAYM move to resettlement they have to make counts with their own Chronosystem (Bronfenbrenner, 1986; Bolger 1988). As a matter of fact, they need to confront themselves with the fact that they lived completely different experiences, compared to parents who did not go to the bush. Their antecedents in the bush had subsequent effects on their present outcomes, affecting also their intrafamilial development (Bronfenbrenner, 1986). Many of the challenges caused by the peculiarity of their past will be discussed in the next section (5.4). Anyhow, as discussed in section 2.1.1, parents who have faced traumas in the past can perform dysfunctional parenting practices (Saile et al., 2013; Rees et al., 2015).

"[...]when a parent has some trauma, maybe has got some problem in accepting trauma fine. Then maybe that's when you can realise there is a problem in parenting. [...] a parent who has trauma, may be having flashbacks, or keeps thinking and remembering what has happened. The child of a parent who has trauma, when you look at how she (the mother) takes care of the child at times is neglect". Sandra, GuSCO

Indeed, a form of neglect can be traced in FAYM's interviews. For instance, when the mothers go to work, their children often remained alone at home, unattended, if they are not old enough to go to school.

"The two younger ones (of my children) who don't go to school remain at home playing with other friend who are not schooling. One of them is 4 and the other 6 years old. [...] I leave the door open for them just in case they need to drink water".

Harriet

Leaving children under school-age unattended at home is surely a very hazardous parenting practice, given that the children are exposed to major risks. However, the researcher disagrees with the key informant Sandra, as far as it regards neglect. The way the key informant describes the neglectful act focuses on the trauma-related effects on FAYM and on their supposed disinterest towards their children. In the researcher's opinion, based on the interviews, the neglect happens because of the necessity of working rather than for apathy. It is a significant difference, since the first motif is definitely more easy to handle and find a solution for. Nevertheless, other than leaving under school-age children unattended at home, FAYM also need to put their elder children in charge of their younger siblings and of the domestic work, since most of them work full-time and are single mothers (Hamid and Salleh, 2013).

"If it's a week day I am rarely at home: I go to work in the morning and come back in the evening. But they (my children) wake up brush, sweep the house, wash dirty dishes then they go to school". Beatrice

"When I go to work and tell the child put some beans on fire the child will put, but then he goes to play so the beans gets burnt" . Kamali

"[...] when the children come home at lunch time they make fire and make food with the water in the flask then they eat and go back to school". Harriet

Sometimes when FAYM cannot dispose of their elder children to take care of the younger ones, they bring their babies on the workplace with them. Nevertheless, this is a much less common practice amongst participants.

"Nowadays I have a child to help me with the (younger) children. But (during) school times she also goes to school, so I carry one child on my back (where I work)".

Angella

5.4 Challenges faced by FAYM in childrearing

The findings responding to the third study objective concerns the challenges which FAYM had to put up with while raising their off-spring. In order to better describe this complex topic, the findings were divided according to the narrative timeline, namely: challenges in parenting faced while being in captivity ("In the bush") and the ones encountered once the FAYM were back to their communities ("During resettlement").

5.4.1 Challenges in the bush

In figure 6, the challenges regarding the period of captivity are briefly depicted in a graph, which is followed by a detailed explanation. For a mother, the upbringing of a child in the bush is associated with serious and intense challenges:

"It (parenting) was hard because there was no good way of taking care of the child from the bush". Angella

5.4.2 "On the Move"

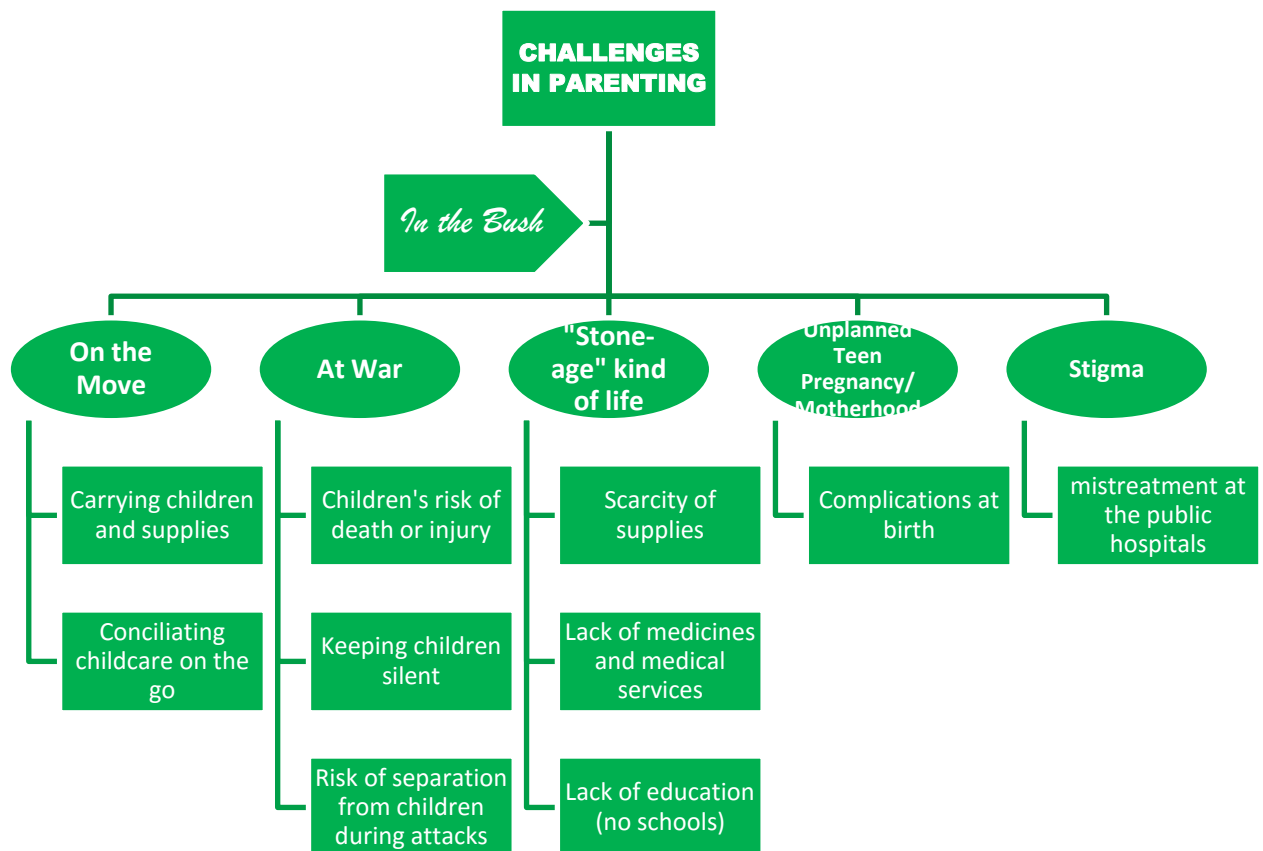
In each interview the researcher conducted, participants reported being "on the move" as a commonly shared challenge for FAYM to face with their children. The FAYM were often forced to flee from one location to another in order to escape the attacks of the UPDF Army. Children had to follow their mothers for very long distances and often with few or no breaks as they could have been attacked on the go or fallen in ambushes.

"In the bush, life is hard because any time you are on the move". FGD1

"Your child is young, sometimes you are required to walk 50miles in a day, you may not have drinking water for yourself and the child cannot also move at the same pace as an adult for that whole distance". Kamali

"(the major challenge was) mostly running because we had to wake up very early every day and I would let a nanny carry some on her back and my own because if we get on the run, a child might be left behind due to uncertain attacks". Patience

Figure 6



***Author's Illustration**

The former female child soldiers had to carry their babies along the way and make sure that the children who could walk would keep the same pace. They also had to carry supplies with them to ensure themselves and their off-spring to be able to have food and water to survive the journey. This had often harmful consequences:

"And because of constant movement the baby carrier hurt the children on the neck because as you carry the child at the back the carrier holds the neck of the child and when it overstays it can create some rushes, some even become real wounds and up to now one of my children has the scar on the neck." (Beatrice)

"Yes there was challenge of long distance while carrying heavy luggage up to now for me I have severe chest pains due to it and then there was battle whereby the UPDF Army would fight with us sometimes we would run and then come back to check on our things." (Doreen)

Many participants also reported the difficulty of being often on the move and conciliating childcare while walking long distances.

"First as a parent we had to carry food for the child and also water for the child because when the child wants water sometimes he or she refuses even breast milk." (Beatrice)

"I was used to breastfeeding her at 9am so sometimes when I stop to put her for short call she would request to be breastfed and people would leave me behind so it would annoy me as I wondered what if something happened to me here alone with baby." (Doreen)

5.4.3 At war

Being on the move was intertwined to the condition of being "at war". Formerly abducted mothers had to keep their babies and children safe from the horrors and dangers of the war. The concern about safety perfectly aligns to the tendency of Uganda towards survival values, shown in the Inglehart and Welzel cultural map (1994; 2008) and it surely fits the dangerous conflict context the FAYM and their progeny were living in (HRW, 2003). Almost every participant stated that one of their biggest worry was about their "children's risk of death or injury" and that it was their duty to set arrangements for their children's safety.

"One of my greatest worries was its very hard to raise a child in the bush amidst the gunshots and they would tell us not to make the child cry if you had two children and battle began you were asked to leave one child in the battle ground so I was always worried about my children". Angella

"(...) in the location where I was living, two children lost their lives". Kamali

"I was crossing the river and the gentleman walking behind me had a gun and he slide in the river and his gun got caught up so he pulled it with strength and it hit the forehead of my daughter". Doreen

Moreover, because of the constant threat of enemies' attacks, the mothers in the bush were forced to confront the unpleasant task of "keeping their children silent", in order not to be localised by the UPDF. Once more, the issue of safety is recalled.

"When a child cries it shows the hideout of the rebels but if the child begins to cry you cover the mouth of the child". Angella

"[...] we get (beatings) when our children cry. The children were not supposed to cry but if they do, we are beaten with wire locks or "pangas" (machetes). So most times I would be in tears crying and telling God that it wasn't her (the baby's) wish to be in the bush". Patience

Finally, always related to the subtheme of "at war" and to the Survival value of Safety (Inglehart and Welzel, 1994; 2008) is the "risk of separation from children" which can occur during the enemy's attacks or during escaping from a threat, which was reported by a few interviewees.

"One of my children remained in the bush up to now and I came back with two (of my children)". Beatrice

"That time we were seriously disturbed by UPDF Fighter choppers [...] (and) during the running, I was separated from my first born; I was left with the three until one week after". Patience

5.4.4 "Stone-age" kind of life

The third subtheme emerged from the data, namely "'stone-age" kind of life", was given such a title as it was inspired by the interview with a key informant. The term serves to describe an environment -captivity with the LRA- which corresponded to a very poorly equipped Microsystem (Bronfenbrenner, 1999) and consequently an inactive Mesosystem around FAYM (Bronfenbrenner, 1986): there are no schools, nor hospitals, nor services in the bush.

"In the bush, first of all, they (FAYM) don't have the facilities for proper child-bringing. There are no schools in the bush, there are no hospitals and so the life is almost like stone-age. There's no proper food and no proper accommodation". Ronaldo, GuSCO

"[...] the basic needs of the child were not taken as important because anyway are not there: you don't find schools in the bush, nor hospitals. [...]when the child is sick they would drink these herbs, sometimes they would survive by grace of God, they don't have formal kind of services that would protect them". Michael, Terra Renaissance

Connected to living in a wild-life environment like the bush, "scarcity of supplies" was reported by several participants. Food and water were usually difficult to find and difficult to keep due to sudden attacks and battles. All this affected the nutrition and consequently the health of the FAYM's children, another concept related to survival values.

"They (LRA soldiers) would gather for us food and sometimes the food gets over and yet you have to breast feed the child but the good thing they would keep food for the children". Angella

"[...] there was no food [...], we would eat bitter cassava and if you eat too much of it you feel dizzy and fail to walk [...]. The most painful thing was that we would have millet seeds and grind it on the stones to make flour, but the child would not have what to eat". Doreen

5.4.5 Unplanned Teen Pregnancy/ Motherhood

"Unplanned Teen Pregnancy/ Motherhood", the last subtheme regarding challenges in parenting, was highlighted by two of the key informants and several FAYM. As the literature witnesses, young female LRA abductees (under 18) are forced to "marry" a LRA and "fulfil their duties as spouses" against their will. Considering a Macrosystem and a cultural context perspective (Bronfenbrenner, 1979), such practice is not considered to be a norm within Uganda, nor Acholi community. The result of those unwanted intercoursages was inevitable pregnancies, for which FAYM were not prepared, nor willing for (HRW, 2003; Carlson and Mazurana, 2008).

"They (FAYM) tell us they were not willing for that (sexual intercourses with LRA commanders), they (FAYM) were just forced to do it. You know, from the bush, you are just given to a man out of your will". Sandra, GuSCO

"[...] the other issue is that these mothers, they were not prepared to be mothers themselves". Ronaldo, GuSCO

"I was given a child when I just went to the bush and that time I didn't want to be mother". Stella

Giving birth at an early age can result into health complications both for the mother as well for the child, rather than giving birth at a more mature age. Noticeable is also the fact that most of the girls were not prepared to become mothers and had no idea of how to deliver a baby nor how to take care of it. Such difficulty was even brought out of proportion by the absence of medical infrastructure in the bush - interpretable as the lack of options within the Microsystem (Bolger, 1988) - even though in a few cases there was the possibility of reaching a public hospital

"I was given to a man because while with the abductees, you have no say, so they give you to anyone to be your husband. So that's how I conceived the first born at 16yrs. After giving birth, life was not easy. At birth, air got into the umbilical cord of the baby and I was taken to hospital". Patience

"I gave birth from the bush and one of them the ear bleeds". Harriet

"I first gave birth from the bush to a baby boy but he died, I didn't know the cause of his death at first but later I discovered it was Tetanus because when I gave birth he was healthy for 4days then on the fifth day he fell sick and died after having serious convulsions". Doreen

5.4.6 Stigma in the Hospitals

Even in those cases when the pregnant abductees were brought up to the nearest public hospitals, the issue of stigma already made its way in. The medical personnel would instantly recognise women from the bush and would treat them far way differently from other patients, since they were considered to be responsible for the war's horrors. Stigma was essentially an intruder between the FAYM (the individuals) and health services (Microsystem). Here is what a participant revealed about her experience in a public hospital, at the end of her pregnancy:

"You know in that hospital, there was discrimination. They would call me a rebel of Kony. [...] And the fact that they had the awareness that we were from the rebel group, we were not given the support we needed. Sometimes during meal time, I would line up but only to be denied food and also there was no visitation (for me) in that hospital". Patience

5.4.7 Challenges during resettlement

Comparing figure 6 and figure 7, it is visually immediately noticeable that the challenges in parenting confronted by FAYM are definitely more numerous than the ones encountered in captivity.

Despite the fact that the challenges faced in captivity were far more dangerous and put both mothers and children at life and serious injury risks, as seen above, it was surprising for the researcher to hear from more than a few participants that reintegration into seemed even more challenging than raising up a child in the bush. Adopting the concept of a Chronosystem, the difficulties in front of resettlement are to be interpreted as a huge shift in FAYM's systems (Exo-, Meso- and Micro-systems in particular) due to a non-normative life event (Bronfenbrenner, 1986).

"[...] there are people who remained home and they are doing ok, but me who was abducted I have to start from scratch which is not an easy thing, so that's how my past life is influencing my present life". Beatrice

"Here I realized that there are more problems than there is in the bush". FGD1

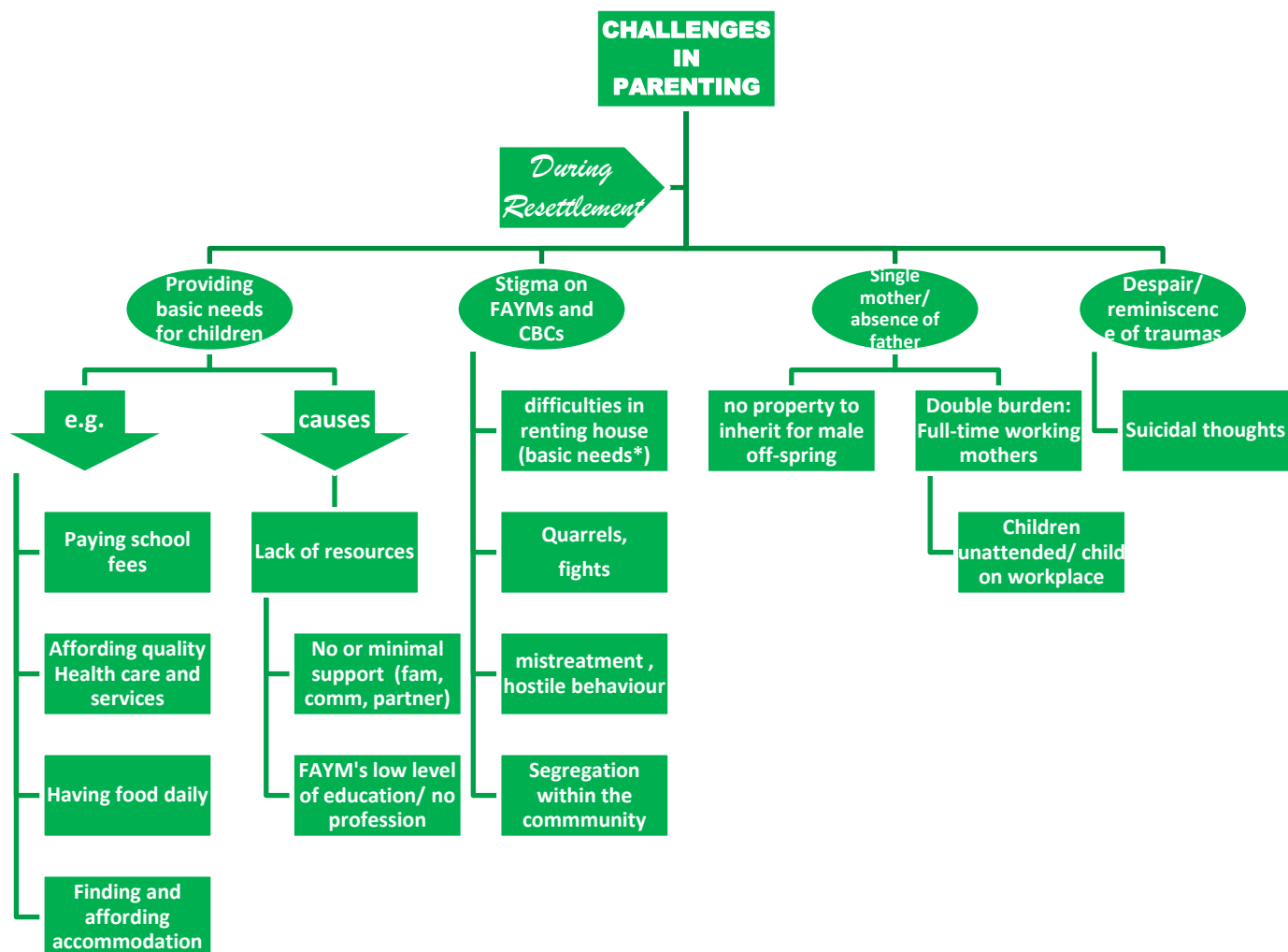
As already described in the section 5.3, the Macrosystem around Acholi parents display certain standards to follow. The main tasks Acholi parents need to accomplish refer to survival values (Inglehart and Welzel, 2008): overall pursuing education for their children, feeding them correctly and daily, ensuring their children's health by providing them with appropriate medical services and educating their children with discipline. All participants depicted such tasks as their main challenge during the resettlement phase. To further contextualise the content of the ongoing and subsequent sections, here it follows another interesting way to better understand the Macrosystem displaying around parents in Acholi community.

"That is why a difference comes between a parent and someone who produce a child. Now a parent takes care of the child [...]. Someone who has just produced a child [...] (is) like a snake: it produces the eggs there, it lays the eggs there and just goes so that the eggs hatch by itself and then start life by itself". Michael, Terra Renaissance

5.4.8 Providing basic needs for their children

One of the main challenges that FAYM face once they return corresponds to "providing basic needs for their children". Contrarily to the circumstances confronted in captivity, during the resettlement the FAYM's Micro- and Meso- and Exo-systems are far more enriched. In fact, in the villages where the participants resettled there are schools, health and social services, in some cases the community is active and some FAYM have found family members.

Figure 7



*Author's Illustration

In other words, resources are present, unlike in captivity. However, the challenge consisted in accessing those resources, leaving survival values on top of FAYM's lives as the literature suggests (Inglehart and Welzel, 2008), similarly to captivity.

To start with, sending their children to school and maintaining them throughout the whole education path seems to be the most mentioned and concerning problem, it is also an important aspect of parenting (Castree et al., 2013):

"The most (difficult) challenge is paying their school fees". Doreen

"What is more challenging now is the school issue and [...] get some of their school requirements since other children go with everything to school but they always lack some things". Beatrice

"I hope to pay my children school fees until they finish". FGD1

Moreover, "affording quality health care and services" or simply affording medicines for their children - also an important task in parenting (Castree et al., 2013) - is often impossible for FAYM, whose only alternative is to turn to poorly equipped health infrastructures.

"Some time when I need the help first I go to the clinic and pay and when I don't have money I go to the public hospitals". Harriet

Additionally, despite the fact that food seems to come "automatically" according to key informant Ronaldo (GuSCO), a few participants actually mentioned that "having food daily" for their family is a concern of theirs.

"Sometimes when there is money they come back from school and find either food or tea depending on what I was able to get". Stella

"I began to think that if the food staff I was given from the centre gets done where will I begin from? So life was not easy for me for about three months (after my return)". Kamali

Renting a place where to live also concerns FAYM because of two main factors: first of all renting a house costs money, which most of them are in lack of or struggling with; secondly the stigma that follows them makes it challenging to maintain the rented place since house owners are usually reluctant to rent to former child soldiers (this topic will be discussed later in this same chapter as it belongs to a different subtheme).

"From the time I came with my children it has not been easy for them, like sometimes I have to shift from one rental to another. My landlords always want to know what happens and who I bring to my place in fear it would be a rebel". Angella

Worth mentioning is the one case for which a participant reported another kind of inability to meet her child's basic needs. Unfortunately, this particular child of hers is a special-need child for whom the mother cannot sustain the expenses of medical attention and no public nor private service seems to be there supporting her condition (lack of options in the Exo- and Micro-systems).

"What hurts me about my children is that one of them is dumb and deaf and I don't know how to communicate (with him)". Angella

The struggle of the FAYM to meet their children's basic needs can be explained by a multitude of factors. However, the immediate common reason to which all these factors respond to is the "lack of resources": FAYM do not have enough money to afford to cover their children's needs. There are a few factors which have led FAYM to this status over time: extrafamilial factors affect intrafamilial ones (Bronfenbrenner, 1986). Primarily, all of them were abducted at a school-going age, which means their studies were interrupted and therefore they were not allowed to learn any profession.

"Most of the people who didn't go to the bush work because they had better opportunities". FGD1

Also, unlikely other parents who did not go to the bush, the returnees have had no time to save up money for their families as in the bush it is all about survival and battles. Also, once the FAYM found themselves back to their communities did not always find consistent support; however, this topic will be deepened in the next section (5.5).

5.4.9 Stigma on CBCs and FAYM

The stigma concerning former child soldiers has been reported by several studies and described as incisive on FAYM's and CBC's lives (CSUCS, 2008; Ochen, 2013; Preston, 2015). As it can be noticed from the graph, the subtheme of stigma is the one with the most numerous consequences on parenting for FAYM and the one subtheme which repeats itself also during captivity:

"And another challenge that we also see is that people point fingers a lot on them (CBCs), that's the issue of stigma.". Michael, Terra Renaissance

"When I just came back at my home they (community members) never accepted my children. But where I live now they accepted my children because [...] the people don't know that I was in the bush, because if I tell them it would become a stigma issue". Harriet

"These (my) kids were highly discriminated with strong languages like: "take away your demons" and so it was hard for me to erase that from their minds. [...] They (my kids) tell me that even in school they find life very difficult". Patience

"The name "returnees" has also destroyed our opportunities". FGD1

One of parents' tasks consist in socialisation of their own children (Darling & Steinberg, 1993). Such task is seriously hindered if parents themselves are refused by society. Furthermore, this condition systematically result in verbal and physical fights between mothers, between children and sometimes between an adult and a child. The overall conclusion is an effect of segregation of both FAYM and CBC.

"Sometimes my children are called Kony (rebels) which brings quarrels and fights. [...] my neighbor [...] began quarrelling and he even chases my children when they are playing, and insults and calls them demons and this hurts the children.". Angella

"Sometimes my children go to the well and someone abuses them and they fight".
Harriet

"For example I remember one day they (FAYM's family) told me that at one point, when they went to fetch water they got some children playing and they made a very bad comment, that you are "a rebel". And indeed the mother got so hard and actually beat that kid. [...] So, after beating this child, the mother of that child also came out and [...] the mothers had a fight". Michael, Terra Renaissance

Stigma is a pervasive issue in the reintegration of FAYM (Ochen, 2011; 2013; Preston, 2015) and even renting a place where to live becomes difficult when the owner is aware of where the FAYM come from. However, such topic has been discussed above (5.4.8). Similarly (and sadly), FAYM and CBCs often undergo mistreatment and exploitation not only by the hand of their own community members, but also by their own family members.

"I would leave my child home with the wife of my cousin brother but she was mistreating my child. [...] every time I would come back home, I would find my child seated on the veranda [...] crying. So my neighbours told me what she (my cousin's wife) was doing to her. And my aunt [...] also witnessed it and asked (me) to leave with my child for safety". Doreen

Despite the horrible deeds acted against FAYM and CBC because of the stigma, the researcher must notify that amongst the participants there were also many who reported happy endings stories of how family and community members actually helped them through their reintegration and parenting. These cases will be presented in the next section (5.5) as they concern the macro-theme regarding support.

"When we got home, the children coped up easily because they were not discriminated nor did they face with stigmatizing words used against them. They got used to the others, they play together, and they go to school together so they coped up really well". Kamali

5.4.10 Single Motherhood

In most of the cases FAYM return from captivity with their children, but not with their captor husbands (Carlson and Mazurana, 2008) simply because they had either died in battle or remained in the bush. Either way, the FAYM go back to , being single mothers. This is in line with the literature, since also in another study was confirmed that the absence of father is one of the biggest difficulties encountered by single mothers (Gulfem Cakir, 2010)

"First of all they are single mothers, totally, so they have challenges on how to take care of their children. [...] they are single mothers, because when they come back they tell us that maybe some of them have lost their husbands, or their husband has remained there, they are not yet back". Sandra, GuSCO

"I find it hard since also they have no father to live with". Patience

"People who didn't go to the bush [...] could be happily married and have the ability to take care of their kids together as compared to me". Stella

"The absence of the father" implies that there is "no property to inherit for male off-spring". This is a common practice in Ugandan culture, according to key informants. In fact, while a

daughter will be given in marriage and thus become part of the groom's family, a son will remain in his own family and inherit properties and goods to pay the dowry for a future bride. On the other hand, CBCs do not have anything to inherit since they have no father to inherit from, as witnessed by literature (Ochen, 2015) and by key informants and participants:

"And when they come back here, the problem they (FAYM) face is single parenthood.. [...]Because here in their culture, a child has to grow up in the father's home. When you grow up in your mother's home, you don't have any inheritance". Ronaldo, GuSCO

"Land is a big problem to us. If one has male children, you wonder where they will live in the future when they need their own land". FGD1

"I want and hope to get a lace of my own since my children don't have a father, if I can only get a place for them to call home". Stella

Moreover, being a single parent means having a single income, therefore FAYM need full-time jobs, which means to be absent from home for most of the day. Consequently, FAYM have to leave their children alone at home unattended or bring them over their workplaces.

"[...] if it's a week day I am rarely at home: I go to work in the morning and come back in the evening, but they (my children) wake up brush, sweep the house, wash dirty dishes then they go to school". Beatrice

"Nowadays I have a child to help me with the children but school times she also goes to school so I carry one child on my back". Angella

5.4.11 Despair and reminiscence of traumas

"Despair and reminiscence of traumas" can be a major enemy for FCS and more specifically in their parenting (Rees et al., 2015). Sometimes even looking at their own children can cause very unpleasant memories to emerge and it can trigger dysfunctional psychological reactions.

"There are those who come from the bush, they have a lot of psychological problems, they have nightmares, they have a lot of thoughts in their head and all this". Michael, Terra Renaissance

"[...] because sometimes when I look at her (my daughter) I remember how I suffered in the bush". Doreen

"There are certain things that happen in my life that take my mind back to the past."
(Stella)

Some other times, the trauma is not interfering with the mother, rather with the children:

"[...]all that scenario (the horrors of the war), the child has it on his mind that his peer is dead: this impact is seen as the child grows lonely and loses interest in other things". Kamali

5.5 Actual formal and informal support received by FAYM regarding their parenting

From an Ecological point of view Since FAYM's Micro- and Meso-systems were quite restricted in captivity and the Exosystem was not available, since they were in conflict as rebels, presenting findings about support networks in captivity is not relevant for this research. Therefore, the findings on support focus on the phase of resettlement. Social support was of extreme usefulness for FAYM, as single mothers, in alignment with the literature (Hamid and Salleh, 2013). Support networks can be divided into two types: formal and informal. Formal supports consist in services provided by government agencies and private service providers set up to assist people (Lyons and Zarit, 1999). Namely, in the case of the present study (figure 8): NGOs, as a private counterpart for social services, and Government, in terms of policies and public welfare services. On the other hand informal support comprehends help, information, advice, resources and opportunities from family members, friends, neighbors, acquaintances, or co-workers to help with daily life (Lyons and Zarit, 1999). Informal support systems are generally families, friends, co-workers and neighbours, which are represented by "Family and friends" in figure 8. Informal networks of support are not organized like the formal systems are, but they can "get together" to help when people need them.

The reader can observe that in figure 8, half of the elements belong to a formal kind of support (the lower half of the circumference), which also correspond to the Exosystem in the Bronfenbrenner's Ecological model (Bolger, 1988; Bronfenbrenner, 1999): NGOs and Government. While, the upper half of the circumference in the graph (figure 8) is identifiable with informal support networks: family and friends, and community, which are Microsystems in Systems theory (Bolger, 1988; Bronfenbrenner, 1999). The superior half of the circle is smaller in order to remind that Microsystems are underlying the Exosystems.

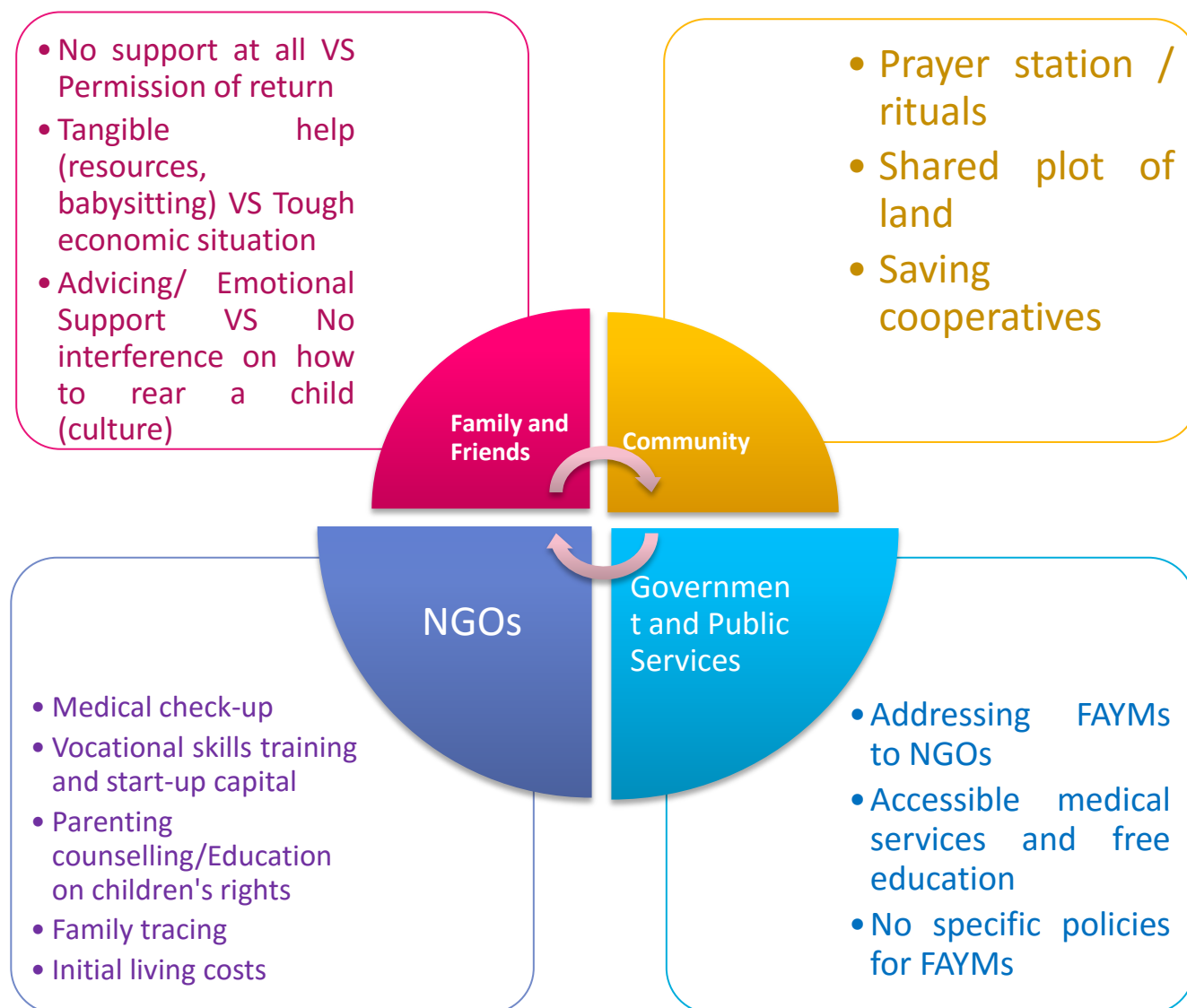
5.5.1 Family support

Despite the strong family ties valued in Uganda, according to Inglehart and Welzel's map (2008), amongst the FAYM, who were lucky enough to be reconnected to their family members, there were some who did not find their families open to welcome them back right away, often because of stigma-related issues (CSUCS, 2008; Ochen, 2013; Preston 2015).

"They (my family members) only welcomed me and I was told to stay with one of my brother's wife and my brother started complaining that he couldn't take care of all the children". Beatrice

"It was painful because I would leave my child home with the wife of my cousin brother, but she was mistreating my child". Doreen

Figure 8



***Author's Illustration**

And amongst the ones, who, on the contrary, were welcomed back by their family members, some did not get much of a support, as their family situation was already disastrous. For instance, some participants reported that their only alive family members were at times too old or sick to help or simply too broke. Indeed, the economical situation, represented in the Macrosystem (Bronfenbrenner, 1979), was quite fragile and of a widespread poverty, as it often happens in war-affected areas (Omona, 2008).

"I did not get any help from my family. they lacked the ability to support me. They didn't have the ability to provide for me but they always told me to continue staying home since am back. I (also) found (that) my only mother was weak already to help me". Angella

"(My family stopped supporting me) because they also don't have enough money. They also have to dig for survival". Patience

Instead, other FAYM found great support within their family, thanks to which they could face the whole resettlement phase with someone who helped them in their parenting, both directly and indirectly.

"I was welcomed well and it was ok. (Although) when I reached home my dad was already dead, however there were my brothers who welcomed me back home".
Beatrice

As the literature reports, single mothers usually look for help people with whom they have a close relationship: family members, but also friends and neighbours (Gulfem Cakir, 2010). The help provided can acquire a tangible form, namely a practical action that directly and immediately helps the FAYM in accomplishing their duties as mothers. Such as having an accommodation, or borrowing money or even babysitting their children while FAYM are at work.

"A friend offered me accommodation until I was able to rent my own place". Harriet

"One of my friends helped me with ten thousand and I left and came back to Gulu".
Beatrice

"My brother helped me with rent for one month and that's how I picked up my life until I had to start thinking of what to do on my own". Patience

"Sometimes I leave them with a good neighbour or my sisters' child who is 15 years old takes care of them". Stella

Another kind of support in parenting for FAYM is a more indirect one: receiving advices when needed or being listened and supported in tough times, so that they can be supporting themselves and their children. These are single mothers and have a lot of responsibilities leaning on themselves. Sometimes it is the family who sustain the FAYM, like in other cases of single mothers (Gulfem Cakir, 2010)

"I felt like committing suicide: maybe enter in a hut with my children and burn the house so that we all die instead of suffering. [...] my grand mum told me God has a plan for me so I don't have to die". Harriet

"They (my family) advise that I should work hard and take care of my children such that they don't suffer in the future and also tell me to teach my children the right path of life". Kamali

Some other times, FAYM find emotional support in their friends, neighbours (Gulfem Cakir, 2010) or even in their fellow returnees, who are facing their same situation.

"I had a neighbour who was also a victim of the same problems who would give me advice and my grand mum also guided me a lot. [...] They told me how I should teach my children to leave their daily life". Harriet

"When I share what is burdening me to my friend, my friend advises me and this helps me to calm down and stop worrying". Beatrice

"I didn't know how to live, but some day I met fellow returnees who shared with me many things and how to live with my children". Stella

Contrarily, the information received from key informants regarding the family role in FAYM parenting displayed the rearing of a child as independent from FAYM's family involvement or any other third party:

"No, no I don't think that this (family involvement in child rearing) is something which is a priority in the community: the rearing of your child is up to you, how you are going to take care of your child, that's your own business". Ronaldo, GuSCO

The contrasting information result even more discordant, if combined with the following quotation from a participant.

"And (when) I am not home, if the children are doing something wrong they (my family members) stop them and tell them that what they are about to do is wrong and the children listen and do the right thing". Kamali

All things considered, it is clear that the FAYM's Microsystems are providing them and their children a support in a various range, although it results being highly scattered and it does not happen for all the participants.

5.5.2 Support from the Community

Another apparatus of the Microsystem is composed by the individuals who are forming the community where FAYM lived at the moment of the research (Bronfenbrenner, 1999). As mentioned above in section 5.5, informal networks of support differentiate themselves from formal systems for not being so organized, however, they can "get together" to help when people need them (Lyons and Zarit, 1999). This is exactly the case, some of the communities where FAYM were living had initiatives to support them, although some of them were not purposefully designed targeting FAYM, but helped anyways. Experiences in relating with the community as a returnee with children, can take several shapes: for some participants interacting with the community was pleasant and helpful in their parenting, for others was rather challenging and counter-productive (see section 5.4.9).

"I have been robbed twice so I feel it's not the right community to tell what happened to me". Harriet

"When I returned home, nobody else helped me except my mother. Other people in the community were positive but some few were not. It was hard for me to start life in the community.[...] The community would tell me that nowadays people do their own things that bring money in their hands". Stella

"And when they go back in the communities in the villages, it's usually survival for the fittest and it's quite difficult to work their head, to be able to support their children".

Ronaldo, GuSCO

Nonetheless, several participants witnessed some kind of support from their community, majorly consisting in "get together" groups of people in need, who used the collective strength to help each other (Lyons and Zarit, 1999). For many FAYM, the faith in God is a very important part of their existence and has helped them while being captive in the bush, as well as during their resettlement.

"For me, I really pray because if I didn't pray I would have done bad things, I thank God when I pray (and) he opens door for me". Doreen

"The most important advice that I have ever got is from the word of God that I get from the bible that we share with other people from the church. And this scriptures are so useful more than any advice a person can give you". Kamali

"My strength to pass through this challenges, I get them from God because when I have challenges I wake up in the night and pray to God for solution to my problems". Kamali

For this reason, family and community organise and participate to prayer groups in order to support FAYM through their tough times. Joining a religious group was a strategy used by single mothers to be able to count on another network support (Sullivan, 2008).

"Some of them (FAYM) prefer to go for prayer station and family and community members will always gather together and pray. Especially, if Christians. [...] if you are not a Christian, some [...] do their rituals, because they believe that it will help them emotionally to calm down". Michael, Terra Renaissance

Other ways community supported FAYM was putting at anyone's disposal a shared plot of land: anyone can cultivate it and collect the food fruit of one's gardening,

"Also here we have other things we do as a community. For example, we can have a big plot of land, (that)s who want to cultivate can. [...] at the end of the day, you appreciate the food. At least you can have food and, you know". Ronaldo, GuSCO

Also, some communities have organised some saving cooperatives on their own initiative, so that whoever is in lack of money can ask for a little loan from the group to commence their own business and return the money at a later time.

"In the villages there are saving groups, a group of people come together and say "we are going to save our money". So every week they drop in whatever they can be able to save and then at the end of the year they might decide to use what they saved as capital. So, that helps a lot and for the women (FAYM) who have joined this groups they have been able to move along with their community members". Ronaldo, GuSCO

5.5.3 NGOs: FAYM's first Support

NGOs are the first safe harbour encountered by FAYM after escaping captivity (Ochen, 2011). NGOs are notoriously private service providers and, as mentioned above, they are part of a formal network of support (Lyons and Zarit, 1999) positioned in one of the outer circles in the Ecological model - the Exosystem. Different NGOs provide different programs, but sometimes the offer is instead similar. For instance, GuSCO provides a place to stay while FAYM are given the time to resettle before going into again, after a long time. They need to slowly get reused to a normal life. Most of the participant were former GuSCO's users, but some participants mentioned also experiences with other NGOs. Anyhow, while FAYM are given shelter in the organisation, whichever NGO is, they are usually provided with various services. Firstly, once they reach the centre, FAYM and their CBCs are brought to the hospital for a general medical check-up.

"So when they come, we receive them there. The first thing we do is we take them for medical check-up to the hospital. So, in case just to find out if they are healthy, if they have any sickness so they are treated". Sandra, GuSCO

Successively, many NGOs like GuSCO, initiate the FAYM to A vocational skills training, namely a program on how to handle business and create IGA - Income Generating Activities. Some of the FAYM learn how to tailor, others how to make jewellery out of paper bids and others how to make bags and so on, depending on the association they are in. This is a great work towards empowerment: the FAYM are equipped with skills they can use to sustain their children, once returned to their communities.

"We do vocational skills training to equip them with knowledge intended to do help them to generate income. Many NGOs tried to give them skills for livelihood, so that they are able to work and get some income". Ronaldo, GuSCO

"Here in GuSCO, we have been supporting them (FAYM), by giving them IGA - Income Generating Activities. It's like a project: we train them in business skills, how to do business, depending on the business that each one has chosen. [...] When they go back home, they can start their life". Sandra, GuSCO

Vocational skill training is the most mentioned kind of support that participants mentioned while interviewed on informal support.

"When I arrived I lived in caritas Pader center and I was taken to World vision and was registered for tailoring training". Doreen

"I was taken to Lukodi where we learnt some skills on some work". Beatrice

*"The (biggest) help I received was the training I got from GUSCO: Business training".
Stella*

Some participants also mentioned that NGOs have given them some money as a start-up capital to initiate their business activities.

"It is Gusco that gave me some money to start with some business and that that has been helping me so much". Harriet

Often paired with business training, NGOs also provided FAYM with some sort of parenting counselling, which treated children's rights and the ways to deal with children out of captivity. This is the only form of direct parenting support - within formal support - that was mentioned throughout the whole research.

"I got some help, however it was not in-depth because we were very many at that time. They (NGO's staff) would tell us that now that we had returned home we ought to love our children, teach them right so the child could have a good future because at the moment we would be both the father and mother that this child needed. This was done from living hope". Kamali

"At the center they (NGO's staff) started renewing my life as I also renewed the lives of the children. Even now I still feel like am being renewed". Beatrice

*"They counselled me on how to live like a human being among others and that helped a lot. [...]sometimes some people speak badly about us and we would do something bad but with the training and counselling, we control the feelings".
Stella*

Once the rehabilitation is coming to an end, NGOs, GuSCO in particular, take care of tracing FAYM's family members with the aim of reuniting them and provide these FAYM an eventual support within the community.

"We do family tracing for them and then we identify their families, after that we follow them up and provide reintegration support". Ronaldo, GuSCO

So, when time comes for them to go back home we do the family tracing. We trace where the family is, because they were abducted, so they don't know where their parents are. [...] After getting the family we inform the family, they can come and

check on them, before we take them back home. [...] After we reunite them with the family members back home". Sandra, GuSCO

Finally, on their way back home, FAYM are at times covered by the NGOs with some initial living costs, such as house objects or food provisions.

*" I was given (from the association) a basin , cups, mattresses, things like that".
Beatrice*

"GUSCO used to give me food on a monthly basis". Patience

5.5.4 Government and public services

When the researcher drove the interview towards the type of support provided by the Government of Uganda (GoU) for FAYM and their parenting, key informants provided very confusing and vague answers, often also contradictory to one another. In the findings, the researcher tried to come to common points to which key informants gave a coherent response. On the other side, FAYM do not even mention anything related to the GoU and its support. The interpretation of it is that due to prolonged civil war, the implementation of public policies was rendered ineffective and the GoU is essentially failing in helping the disadvantaged category of FAYM, as it is confirmed by the literature (Omona, 2008). Anyhow, it is a fact that participants did not know what to answer to the question related to GoU support, which, in the researcher's opinion, constitutes a failure for GoU in reaching such a broad category of vulnerable people. The only positive mention of GoU from a FAYM's side regards a law prohibiting to verbally assault anyone on the basis of stigma.

"There was an already passed law against anyone found speaking ill (badly) about returnees. So this brought some changes and the evil against us reduced". Patience

A key informant suggested a very convincing perspective on this FAYM's silence around the GoU support.

"I remember some of them (FAYM) saying - you know, government failed to protect us. [...]They (FAYM) even say government has neglected them". Michael, Terra Renaissance

The remaining findings on this topic are all coming from key informants. A task that apparently GoU is fulfilling in order to sustain FAYM in their parenting is to sort them to

different NGOs and allow the latter ones to operate. It also perform check-ups on NGOs' work.

"They have to supervise the reception centres. Like, our work is under the ministry of labour gender and social development, so we report to them whatever we've done. So, if we are not doing the right thing, they caution us". Ronaldo, GuSCO

"Government programs say sometimes, ok, those who are from the bush when they write their names at the LC and call them, sometimes the government will facilitate another organisation for training (FAYM)(and check on) how are they doing psychologically, how are they have reintegrated themselves in the community". Michael, Terra Renaissance

And Michael continues later on in the conversation, after the researcher prompted him:

"Government uses NGO as their partners down there. Ok, government won't do everything down there. So, NGO will always support the government where there is a gap, NGO come there to support". Michael, Terra Renaissance

Others services provided by GoU are medical cures and, supposedly free education for CBCs. The latter information is in strong disagreement with all the interviews performed with FAYM, who report as one of their main challenge maintaining their children in school (section 5.4.8).

"Issues to do with registration of ID. used to do with immunisation of children and all those issues are government programs". Ronaldo, GuSCO

"The government program of free education down there. It does help also those women with their children because, remember these people have come home, they don't have a job, they don't have business, they don't have their spouses. So, for children to go to school they needed actually a fee school that the government has provided to them. Also when you go to the hospital there's children, in those health centres. Those are the support I know the government really gives". Michael, Terra Renaissance

To conclude with, it seems like there is no effective policy specifically tailored for supporting FAYM, even less for sustaining their parenting.

Conclusions and Recommendations

This section summarises the analysis of the findings and proposes recommendations and interventions to different actors, as they work to ensure the greatest possible parenting experience for FAYM.

6.1 Conclusions

This study aimed to present an overview of the parenting experiences of FAYM from their own point of view, from three different angles. Questions and objectives corresponded: to identifying parenting experiences and parenting practices of the FAYM, both in pre-return and present times; to understand challenges faced by FAYM in the childrearing of their children; and explore the formal and informal support networks implied in FAYM's parenting.

After analysing the main findings, this study answers the original research questions as below:

1) During captivity, FAYM's parenting practices and their overall parenting experience revolved around satisfying basic survival needs in order to maintain their children alive: food search, hygiene care routine to prevent sickness and promote health, safety measures to protect their children from the dangers of the war. Most of these practices left space to other ones, when FAYMs returned to their villages. Despite the need of earning money to ensure all those basic survival needs also outside the bush (especially ensuring food and good health, with the addition of providing education as well), FAYM's parenting practices shifted onto more abstract levels. In fact, FAYM focused more on conveying life teachings and values and had to deal with their absence from home because of their full-time jobs. Another significant change regarded the ways of punishment in case of children's misbehaviour: in captivity FAYM made use of both corporal punishment and a more constructive approach which consisted in explaining the children what they did wrong. Subsequently, during resettlement FAYM abandoned the practice of corporal punishment, availing themselves just of the "sit and talk" approach.

2) While living in captivity, FAYM had to face challenges mainly due to the environment around them. Survival was the key concept in taking care of their children and it applied both

to the harsh and wild conditions they were living in and to the daily life threats caused by the conflict. FAYM struggled for the health and safety of their children. Although it would be natural to think that an environment like captivity brought a larger number of challenges for FAYM as parents, surprisingly FAYM found challenges in parenting more complicated and more numerous, once they returned to their communities. One of the main difference consisted in the fact that ensuring basic needs to their children had to be done through money. Therefore FAYM had to strive in finding a job without an education and maintaining a sufficient income despite being single mothers, for the sake of their children. Also, the issue of stigma is quite predominant during resettlement and caused difficulties in their reintegration and consequently in the socialisation of their children.

3) After escaping or being rescued from captivity, the first network of support encountered by FAYM consisted in private service providers, which embody a formal type of support, namely NGOs. These private organisations took care of FAYM and CBC's rehabilitation and reintegration into society, mainly by giving FAYM profession-oriented trainings, which enabled them to sustain their family. Within the formal network of support, the Government intervention did not stand out, on the contrary from FAYM's perspective it has failed in giving any kind of support to them. On the other hand, formal support constituted one of the major long-term assistance in FAYM's lives. Family members, friends, fellow returnees and neighbours were the main actors accompanied by activities and groups organised on a community level. FAYM received both tangible help concerning material resources and emotional support as well as an aid in parenting. Although patterns of support were present, they were quite jeopardized, scattered and at times randomly distributed, leaving many FAYM devoid of any help.

6.2 Recommendations

6.2.1 To local NGOs

- The rehabilitation work done with FAYM, especially the vocational skills trainings, resulted to have an empowering effect on FAYM's lives and parenting experience, and by reflex it also impacts their children's existence. Such work will continue to be necessary and largely needed.

- Nevertheless, an implementation on parenting counselling would greatly improve the FAYM's condition as parents. Although parent counselling was mentioned as a service provided by some NGOs, it was presented as aside of the business training. Such counselling need to have its own priorities and importance, so that FAYM can make the best out of it.
- The work of the NGOs present on the territory seems slightly scattered from one another and not well interconnected. Instead, working in synchrony would enhance their outreach and vary their offer, avoiding their work to overlap on each other's.

6.2.2 To international NGOs

- Some participants have complained about certain organisations that approached them directly coming over their houses. This created suspects amongst the community members, in particular because the NGO operator in question was of a Caucasian ethnicity, which led to the belief he or she brought money to the young mother. Unfortunately, this is more common than one might think and it endangers the FAYM as it triggers robberies into their houses. The recommendation is to not reach FAYM directly at their places, but to rather meet them over discrete locations.

6.2.3 To GoU

- Although there seems to be public services for FAYM and other disadvantaged people, there is great need for policies, programs and public services specifically designed according the needs and condition of FAYM returned from captivity. FAYM need to have a steady support to sustain their children that only the State can give them and which they would be absolutely entitled to receive, since the Government was unable to offer protection to them in the first place. Offering effective assistance is the minimum that could be done.
- An even more useful intervention and more effective in a long-term perspective, would consist in restoring the socio-economic situation in Gulu District, caused by the aftermath of the war. In an environment which offers better opportunities, FAYM would have more chances to elevate theirs and their children condition.

6.2.4 To Future Researchers

- For the same reasons explained in paragraph 6.2.1 (last point) above, researchers, especially if noticeably foreigners in Uganda, should not reach out participants directly at their homes, as they could put participants at risk.
- A more in depth study is required for the evaluation of the factors, which gravitate around FAYM's parenting experience and their role in providing a better outcome in their children. In other words, the present research could be used as a base to deepen the analysis and understand which are the factors that in such conditions trigger a better parenting outcome over other parenting practices.
- It would be useful to interview, other than FAYM, also their children to obtain a second perspective on the topic.
- It would be interesting to conduct a study on FAYM's parenting styles, instead of parenting practices, and determining which one is the most successful in overcoming challenges in parenting faced by FAYM
- A comparison study conducted in other war-affected areas of the world would result in a further insight of FAYM's situation on an international scale. Such research would be helpful in designing services and support for future generations of former child soldiers and their progeny all over the world.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Ackerman B.P., Brown ED, Izard CE (2004) "The relations between persistent poverty and contextual risk and children's behavior in elementary school", *Dev. Psychol.* 40:367–377

Allen, T., and Vlassenroot, K. (2010) *The Lord's resistance army: Myth and reality*, London: Zed Books.

Babbie, E. R. (2010) *The practice of social research*, (International ed.), London; Belmont, Calif;: Wadsworth.

Baumrind, D. (1991) "The influence of parenting style on adolescent competence and substance use", *The Journal of Early Adolescence*, 11(1), 56-95.

Bayer, C. P.; Klasen, F.; Adam, H. (2007) "Association of trauma and PTSD symptoms with openness to reconciliation and feelings of revenge among former Ugandan and Congolese child soldiers", *JAMA: Journal of the American Medical Association* 298.5 (Aug 2007): 555-559.

Betancourt, T. S., (2010) "A longitudinal study of psychosocial adjustment and community reintegration among former child soldiers in Sierra Leone", *International Psychiatry* 7.3 (Jul 2010): 60-61.

Betancourt, T. S., McBain, R. K., Newnham, E. A., and Brennan, R. T. (2015) "The intergenerational impact of war: Longitudinal relationships between caregiver and child mental health in post-conflict Sierra Leone", *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry*, 56(10), 1101-1107.

Bolger, N. (1988) *Persons in context: Developmental processes*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Boothby, N.; Crawford, J; Halperin, J., (2006) "Mozambique child soldier life outcome study: lessons learned in rehabilitation and reintegration efforts", *Global public health* 1.1 (Feb 2006): 87-108.

Borisova, I. I. (2009) *Child soldiers returning home from war: Family and caregiver impact on psychosocial reintegration*, Dissertation of Harvard University.

Borisova, I. I.; Betancourt, T. S.; Willett, J. B., (2013) "Reintegration of former child soldiers in Sierra Leone: The role of caregivers and their awareness of the violence adolescents experienced during the war", *Journal of Aggression, Maltreatment and Trauma* 22.8 (Sep 2013): 803-828.

Bornstein, M. H. (2001) "Parenting: Science and Practice", *Parenting: Science and Practice* (January–June 2001) Volume 1 Numbers 1 and 2, Pages 1–4.

Boyden, J. (2003) "The moral development of child soldiers: What do adults have to fear?" *Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology*, 9(4), 343-362.

Braveman P.A., Cubbin C., Egerter S., Chideya S., Marchi K.S., Metzler M., Posner S. (2005) "Socioeconomic status in health research: one size does not fit all", *JAMA* 294:2879–2888

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1979) *The Ecology of Human Development: Experiments by Nature and Design*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1986) "Ecology of the family as a context for human development: Research perspectives", *Developmental Psychology*, 22(6), 723-742.

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1995) "Developmental ecology through space and time: A future perspective", in Moen, P., Elder, G. H., Lüscher, K., and Bronfenbrenner, U., *Examining lives in context: Perspectives on the ecology of human development*, (1.th ed.). Washington, D.C: American Psychological Association. 619, 647.

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1999) "Environments in developmental perspective: Theoretical and operational models", in Friedman S.L. and Wachs T.D. (Eds.), *Measuring environment across the life span: Emerging methods and concepts*, , D.C: American Psychological Association. 3-28.

Bryman, A. (2012) *Social Research Methods*, 4th Edition-Oxford University Press.

Carlson, K. and Mazurana, D. (2008): "Forced Marriage within the Lord's Resistance Army, Uganda", Report (May 2008) - Feinstein International Center.

Cassels, C. and G. Symon , G. (eds.) (2004) *Essential Guide to Qualitative Methods in Organizational Research*. London: Sage.

Castree, N.; Kitchin, R. and Rogers A. (2013) *A Dictionary of Human Geography*, Oxford University Press.

Duncan G.J., Brooks-Gunn J, Klebanov PK (1994) "Economic deprivation and early childhood development", *Child Development* 65:296–318.

Catani, C., Jacob, N., Schauer, E., Kohila, M., and Neuner, F. (2008) "Family violence, war, and natural disaster: A study of the effect of extreme stress on children's mental health in Sri Lanka", *BMC Psychiatry*, 8(33), 1–10.

Child Soldiers International (2013) Can rehabilitation and reintegration programs contribute to preventing the recruitment and use of children in conflict?, Available at: http://www.child-soldiers.org/theme_reader.php?id=5 (accessed February 2016).

Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers (CSUCS) (2001) "Child soldiers global report", London: Author.

Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers (CSUCS) (2008) "Child Soldiers global report", London: Author.

Cohen E., Zerach G., Solomon Z., (2011) "The Implication of Combat-Induced Stress Reaction, PTSD, and Attachment in Parenting Among War Veterans", *Journal of Family Psychology* 2011, Vol. 25, No. 5, 688–698.

Darling, N., and Steinberg, L. (1993) "Parenting style as context: An integrative model", *Psychological Bulletin* 113(3), 487-496.

De Berry, J. (2000) *Life after loss: An anthropological study of post-war recovery, Teso, East Uganda, with special reference to young people*. Dissertation, ProQuest Dissertations Publishing.

Denov, M., and Marchard, I. (2014) "'One cannot take away the stain': Rejection and stigma among former child soldiers in Colombia", *Peace and Conflict*, 20(3), 227.

Derluyn, I., Vandenhole, W., Parmentier, S., and Mels, C. (2015) "Victims and/or perpetrators? Towards an interdisciplinary dialogue on child soldiers", *BMC International Health and Human Rights*, 15, 28.

Floersch, J., Longhofer, J. L., Kranke, D., and Townsend, L. (2010) "Integrating thematic, grounded theory and narrative analysis: A case study of adolescent psychotropic treatment", *Qualitative Social Work*, 9(3), 407-425.

Flouri, E. (2008) "Temperament influences on parenting and child psychopathology: Socio-economic disadvantage as moderator", *Child Psychiatry and Human Development*, 39(4), 369-379.

Gonzalez, M.J., Lopez, J.J., and Ko, E. (2005) "The mariel and balsero cuban immigrant experience: Family reunification issues and treatment recommendations", *Journal of Immigrant and Refugee Services*, 3(1-2), 141-153.

Green, K. E. and Groves, M. M. (2008) "Attachment parenting: an exploration of demographics and practices", *Early Child Development and Care* Vol. 178, No. 5, July 2008, pp. 513–525

Gregory, J., and Embrey, D. G. (2009) "Companion recovery model to reduce the effects of profound catastrophic trauma for former child soldiers in Ganta, Liberia", *Traumatology*, 15(1), 40-51.

Gulfem Cakir S. (2010) "A pilot study on stress and support sources of single mothers in Turkey", *Social and Behavioral Sciences*, Volume 5, Pages 1079–1083.

Hamid, S. R. A., and Salleh, S. (2013) "Exploring single parenting process in Malaysia: Issues and coping strategies", *Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 84, 1154-1159.

Hetherington, E.M. (1999) *Coping with divorce, single parenting and remarriage: A risk and resiliency perspective*. London; Mahwah, N.J.; Lawrence Erlbaum.

Human Rights Watch (HRW) (2003) Uganda Stolen Children: Abduction and Recruitment in Northern Uganda. Available at: <https://www.hrw.org/report/2003/03/28/stolen-children/abduction-and-recruitment-northern-uganda> (accessed February, 2016).

Inglehart, R. and Welzel, C - World Values Survey (WVS)- wave 4 (1994); wave 5 (2008) The WVS Cultural Map of the World. Available at: <http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/WVSContents.jsp?CMSID=Findings> (accessed May, 2016)

Kavas, S., and Gündüz-Hoşgör, A. (2013) "The parenting practice of single mothers in Turkey:

Challenges and strategies", *Women's Studies International Forum*, 40, 56-67.

Kershaw, T., Murphy, A., Lewis, J., Divney, A., Albritton, T., Magriples, U., and Gordon, D. (2014) "Family and relationship influences on parenting behaviors of young parents", *The Journal of Adolescent Health*, 54(2), 197-203.

King, N. (2004) "Using Templates in the Thematic Analysis of Text", in Cassels, C. and Symon, G. eds., *Essential Guide to Qualitative Methods in Organizational Research*. London: Sage, 256-270.

Kiyala, J. C. K. (2015) "Challenges of reintegrating self-demobilised child soldiers in north Kivu province: Prospects for accountability and reconciliation via restorative justice peacemaking circles", *Human Rights Review*, 16(2), 99-122.

Klasen, F., Oettingen, G., Daniels, J., Post, M., Hoyer, C., and Adam, H. (2010) "Post-traumatic resilience in former Ugandan child soldiers", *Child Development*, 81(4), 1096-1113.

Klebanov P.K., Brooks-Gunn J, Duncan GJ (1994) "Does neighborhood and family poverty affect mothers' parenting, mental health, and social support?", *Journal of Marriage and Family* 56:441–455.

Kohrt, B. A., Jordans, M. J. D., Tol, W. A., Perera, E., Karki, R., Koirala, S., and Upadhaya, N. (2010) "Social ecology of child soldiers: Child, family, and community determinants of mental health, psychosocial well-being, and reintegration in Nepal", *Transcultural Psychiatry*, 47(5), 727-753.

Lyons, K. S., and Zarit, S. H. (1999) "Formal and informal support: The great divide", *International Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry*, 14(3), 183-192.

Maccoby, E. E., and Martin, J. A. (1983) "Socialization in the context of the family: Parent-child interaction", in Mussen, P. H. (Series ed.) and Heatherington, E. M. (Vol. ed.), *Handbook of Child Psychology: Vol. 4. Socialization, Personality, and Social Development*, Wiley, New York.

Martin, A. (2009) *Exploring the reintegration process of child soldiers: A case study of young women and their children in Northern Uganda*. Dissertation, Wilfrid Laurier University (Canada).

Mayhew, S. (2015) *A Dictionary of Geography*, (5th ed.) Oxford University Press.

Mazurana, Dyan E.; McKay, Susan A. (2001) "Child Soldiers: What about the girls?", *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* Vol. 57, No. 5, pp. 30-35

Mazurana, Dyan E.; McKay, Susan A.; Carlson, Khristopher C.; Kasper, Janel C. (2002) "Girls in fighting forces and groups: Their recruitment, participation, demobilization, and reintegration", *Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology* 8.2 (Jun 2002): 97-123.

McKay, Susan (2004) "Reconstructing Fragile Lives: Girls' Social Reintegration in Northern Uganda and Sierra Leone", *Gender and Development*, Vol. 12, No. 3, Peace building and Reconstruction (Nov., 2004)

McKay, S., and Mazurana, D. (2004) *Where are the girls? Girls in fighting forces in Northern Uganda, Sierra Leone and Mozambique: Their lives during and after war*, Rights & Democracy.

Mendelsohn, M., and Straker, G. (1998) "Child soldiers: Psychosocial implications of the graça machel / UN study", *Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology*, 4(4), 399-413.

Murray, M. (2008) "Narrative Psychology", in Smith, J.A ed., *Qualitative Psychology: A Practical Guide to Research Methods*, London: Sage. pp. 111-132.

Natasha, M., Woodson, C., MacQueen, K., Guest, G., and Namely, E. (2005) "Qualitative Research Methods: A Data Collector's Field Guide", North Carolina, USA: *Family Health International*.

Neuman, W. L (2007) *Basics of social research: Qualitative and quantitative approaches*. Boston: Pearson.

Ochen, E.A. (2011) *An exposition of intra-bush and post-bush experiences of formerly abducted child mothers in Northern Uganda: Issues in rehabilitation, resettlement and reintegration*. PhD Thesis, Makerere University (Uganda).

Ochen, E.A.; Jones, A.D.; McAuley J.W. (2012) "Formerly Abducted Child Mothers in Northern Uganda: A Critique of Modern Structures for Child Protection and Reintegration", *Journal of Community Practice*, 20:1-2, 89-111.

Ochen, E.A. (2013) "Women on the Periphery? Gendered Survival among Formerly Abducted Young Women in Northern Uganda", in Wray, S. and Rae, R., *Personal and Public lives and Relationships in a Changing Social World*, Publisher: Cambridge Scholars. Chapter 3.

Ochen, E.A. (2015) "Children and young mothers' agency in the context of conflict: A review of the experiences of formerly abducted young people in Northern Uganda", *Child Abuse and Neglect* 42 (2015) 183–194.

Olema, D. K., Catani, C., Ertl, V., Saile, R., and Neuner, F. (2014) "The hidden effects of child-maltreatment in a war-region: Predictors of psychopathology in two generations living in Northern Uganda", *Journal of Traumatic Stress*, 27(1), 35–41.

Omona J., (2008) "Civil Society Intervention in the War-Torn Gulu District in Northern Uganda: Policy Implications for Social Service Delivery", *Journal of Civil Society*, 4:2, 131-148.

Perepletchikova, F., and Kazdin, A. E. (2004) "Assessment of parenting practices related to conduct problems: Development and validation of the management of children's behavior scale", *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, 13(4), 385-403.

Pittaway, E., Bartolomei, L., and Hugman, R. (2010) "'stop stealing our stories': The ethics of research with vulnerable groups", *Journal of Human Rights Practice*, 2(2), 229-251. doi:10.1093/jhuman/huq004

Placa, V. L., and Corlyon, J. (2016) "Unpacking the relationship between parenting and poverty: Theory, evidence and policy", *Social Policy and Society*, 15(1), 11.

Preston, Justin M. (2015) "'If They Abduct You, You Don't Come Back': Understanding Ugandan Former Child Soldiers in the Context of Their Life", *Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology*, Vol. 21, No. 3, 432–444.

Psychology Glossary, Available at:
<http://www.alleydog.com/glossary/definition.php?term=Parenting%20Practices> (accessed February, 2016)

Ramaekers, S., Suissa, J., and SpringerLink (2012) *The claims of parenting: Reasons, responsibility and society*. Dordrecht; New York;: Springer.

Rees, S., Thorpe, R., Tol, W., Fonseca, M., and Silove, D. (2015) "Testing a cycle of family violence model in conflict-affected, low-income countries: A qualitative study from Timor-Leste", *Social Science and Medicine* (1982), 130, 284.

Russell, M., Harris, B., and Gockel, A. (2008) "Parenting in poverty: Perspectives of high-risk parents", *Journal of Children and Poverty*, 14(1), 83-98.

Saile, R., Ertl, V., Neuner, F., Catani, C., (2013) "Does war contribute to family violence against children? Findings from a two-generational multi-informant study in Northern Uganda". *Child Abuse Negl.*, 38 (1), 135e146.

Schlecht, J., Rowley, E., and Babirye, J. (2013) "Early relationships and marriage in conflict and post-conflict settings: Vulnerability of youth in Uganda", *Reproductive Health Matters* 21(41), 234-242.

Selin, H., and SpringerLink (2014) *Parenting across cultures: Childrearing, motherhood and fatherhood in non-western cultures*, Dordrecht: Springer Netherlands.

Shanahan, F., and Veale, A. (2016) "How mothers mediate the social integration of their children conceived of forced marriage within the lord's resistance army", *Child Abuse and Neglect*, 51, 72.

Shukla, N., Wilson, E., Boddy, J. (2014) "Combining thematic and narrative analysis of qualitative interviews to understand children's spatialities in Andhra Pradesh, India", *NOVELLA Working Paper: Narrative Research in Action*.

Siegel, J. (2013) "Breaking the links in intergenerational violence: An emotional regulation perspective", *Family Process*, 52(2), 163–178.

Siporin, M. (1980) "Ecological systems theory in social work", *Journal of Sociology and Social Welfare*, 7(4), 507-532.

Slack, K. S., Holl, J. L., McDaniel, M., Yoo, J., and Bolger, K. (2004) "Understanding the risks of child neglect: An exploration of poverty and parenting characteristics", *Child Maltreatment*, 9(4), 395-408.

Solans, A. P., Berta Rotstein de Gueller, and Caggianelli, A. (2015) "Derechos y Deberes en las Pràcticas de Crianza", (in english: "Rights and duties in parenting practices"), *Revista Sobre La Infancia y La Adolescencia*, (9), 60-73.

Song, S. J., and Jong, d., J. (2013) "The role of silence in burundian former child soldiers", *International Journal for the Advancement of Counseling*, 36(1), 84-95.

Song, S. J., Tol, W., and Jong, J. (2014) "Indero: Intergenerational trauma and resilience between burundian former child soldiers and their children", *Family Process*, 53(2), 239-251.

Spera, C. (2005) "A Review of the Relationship Among Parenting Practices, Parenting Styles, and Adolescent School Achievement", *Educational Psychology Review*, Vol. 17, No. 2, June 2005.

Steele, H., Bate, J., Steele, M., Danskin, K., Knafo, H., Nikitiades, A., Murphy, A. (2016) "Adverse childhood experiences, poverty, and parenting stress", *Canadian Journal of Behavioural Science*, 48(1), 32.

Sullivan, S.C. (2008) "Unaccompanied children in churches: Low-income urban single mothers, religion, and parenting", *Review of Religious Research*, 50(2), 157-175.

Truong, Y. and Simmons, G. (2010) "Perceived Intrusiveness in Digital Advertising: strategic marketing implications", *Journal of Strategic Marketing*, 18(3), pp 239-256.

Uganda Child Rights NGO Network (UCRNN) (2000) Complementary Report to the GoU- First Period Report on the CRC. Available at: <http://resourcecentre.savethechildren.se/sites/default/files/documents/2281.pdf> (accessed March, 2016).

United Nations (UN) (2015): Children and armed conflict: Report of the Secretary-General. Available at: <http://watchlist.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/080615-SG-report-on-Children-and-armed-conflict-revised.pdf> (accessed March, 2016).

United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) (2007) The Paris Principles. Principles and Guidelines on Children Associated With Armed Forces or Armed Groups. Available at: <http://www.refworld.org/docid/465198442.html> (accessed March, 2016).

United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) (2015) Situation Analysis of Children in Uganda. Available at: [http://www.unicef.org/uganda/UNICEF_SitAn_7_2015_\(Full_report\).pdf](http://www.unicef.org/uganda/UNICEF_SitAn_7_2015_(Full_report).pdf) (accessed March, 2016).

United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) (2012) Child soldiers.

United Nations OCHA/IRIN (2004) "*When the sun sets, we start to worry...*" - *An account of life in Northern Uganda*, OCHA/IRIN.

Veale, Angela; Stavrou, Aki (2007) "Former Lord's Resistance Army Child Soldier Abductees: Explorations of Identity in Reintegration and Reconciliation", *Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology* 13.3 (Aug 2007): 273-292.

Vernon-Feagans, L., and Cox, M. (2013) "Poverty, Rurality, Parenting, and Risk: An Introduction", *Monographs of the Society for Research in Child Development*, 78(5), 1-23.

Von Bertalanffy, L. (2008) "An outline of general system theory", *The British Journal for the Philosophy of Science*, Vol. 1, No. 2 (Aug., 1950), pp. 134- 165

Wainright, D.W. and Waring, T.S. (2007) "The Application and Adaptation of a Diffusion of Innovation Framework for Information Systems Research in NHS General Medical Practice", *Journal of Information Technology*, pp. 44-58.

Waiswa, P., Kemigisa, M., Kiguli, J., Naikoba, S., Pariyo, G. W., Peterson, S., Internationell mödra- och barnhälsovård (IMCH) (2008) "Acceptability of evidence-based neonatal care practices in rural Uganda - Implications for Programming", *BMC Pregnancy and Childbirth*, 8(1), 21-21.

Walker, S. (2012) "Systems Theory", in Walker, S., *Effective social work with children, young people and families: Putting systems theory into practice*, London: SAGE.

Wieling, E., Mehus, C., Yumbul, C., Möllerherm, J., Ertl, V., Laura, A., Catani, C. (2015) "Preparing the field for feasibility testing of a parenting intervention for war-affected mothers in Northern Uganda", *Family Process*, n/a.

Williams R.B. (2003) "Invited commentary: socioeconomic status, hostility, and health behaviors: does it matter which comes first?", *Am J Epidemiol* 158:743–746

Wieling E., Mehus C., Möllerherm J., Neuner F., Achan L., Catani C. (2015) "Assessing the Feasibility of Providing a Parenting Intervention for War-Affected Families in Northern Uganda", *Family Community Health* Vol. 38, No. 3, pp. 252–267

Zhang, S., and Anderson, S.G. (2010) "Low-income single mothers' community violence exposure and aggressive parenting practices", *Children and Youth Services Review*, 32(6), 889-895.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Semi-structured, in-depth interviews with FAYM,

Guideline Questions

Introduction:

Presentation, informed consent and explanation of the study purpose.

My name is Sara, I am from Italy and currently studying in Kampala at Makerere University. This interview with you will help me in developing my master thesis; I am here as a student and my scope here is solely academic . Sandra, the interpreter will be translating the informed consent here, to which I ask you to pay particular attention.

My hope is that my study will help women like yourself. By collecting knowledge of your situation as a mother NGOs might find it useful to enhance their own practices, suggestions for social policies will be made and the importance of your situation will not remain unheard. Thank you for contributing to this study.

Practical Info box:

- Name:
- Age:
- Marital Status:
- Number of children, age, gender:
- Date of abduction:
- Date of rescue/escape:
- Date of reunion:
- Place of origins:
- Current place of residency:

Ice-breaking questions:

Tell me about yourself.

Tell me about your kids and your motherhood.

What is the first memory you have of each of your children?

1. **In the bush**
2. Tell me about your children's birth.

3. How/from whom did you learn to take care of your children?
4. What did parenting mean in the bush?
5. Describe a typical day of your life as a mother in the bush.
6. What were your responsibilities toward your child as a mother?
7. What were the main challenges about raising your child back then?
8. What are the things that used to make you angry or anxious about your child? And what was your reaction to those behaviours?
9. What are the things that used to make you happy about your child? And what was your reaction to those behaviours?
10. What did your child mean to you at that time?

1. Journey back home

1. Tell me about your escape and what changed for you as a mother.
2. What was the biggest help in taking care of your children during your escape?
3. What did make you hold onto your child?

2. Resettlement

1. Tell me about your resettlement.
2. How difficult was to introduce your child/children to the community and to your family?
3. What were the main challenges as a mother during your resettlement?
4. How did the community and your family get involved in your mothering?
5. What role did local NGOs play in your life and the life of your child/children?
6. How did your relationship with your child/children change once you returned from the bush?

3. Nowadays

1. How does a typical day with your children look like today?
2. What are the moments you share together?

3. What are the things that your child do that make you angry or anxious? And what is your reaction to those behaviours?
4. What are the things that your child do that make you happy and proud? And what is your reaction to those behaviours?
5. What does your child represent in your life right now?
6. What is the most important thing you want your children to understand about life?
7. What are the main difficulties regarding raising up your child/children nowadays?
8. To whom do you turn to when you have hard times with your children?
9. How do you think your past might influence your children's life?
10. How different or similar do you feel as a parent compared to the other parents of your community who did not spend time in the bush?
11. How do you see in your family's future? What are your hopes for it?

Conclusion:

Fill in the practical info box if necessary.

Give closure to the participant, after reliving some traumatic life events:

I cannot even imagine all the things you went through. It was very brave of you to face some of those things in our presence today. You are an extraordinary and very strong woman, who hasn't given up despite what life put you through. You have all my admiration for doing so and my gratitude for contributing to this study, which I hope may serve you in the future.

Appendix 2: Semi-structured, in-depth interviews/FGD with FAYM,

Guideline Questions

Before starting-Practical Info box:

Information regarding each mother will be gathered:

Practical Info box:

- Name:
- Age:
- Marital Status:
- Number of children, age, gender:
- Date of abduction:
- Date of rescue/escape:
- Date of reunion:
- Place of origins:
- Current place of residency:

Introduction:

Presentation, informed consent and explanation of the study purpose.

My name is Sara, I am from Italy and currently studying in Kampala at Makerere University. This FGD with you will help me in developing my master thesis; I am here as a student and my scope here is solely academic . Sandra, the interpreter will be translating the informed consent here, to which I ask you to pay particular attention.

My hope is that my study will help women like yourself. By collecting knowledge of your situation as a mother NGOs might find it useful to enhance their own practices, suggestions for social policies will be made and the importance of your situation will not remain unheard. Thank you for contributing to this study.

Questions

1. How did you learn about parenting?
2. What did parenting mean in the bush?
3. What impact had the resettlement on the relationship with your children, compared to the bush?

4. What are the challenges you had to face in parenting, both in past and present times?
5. Within whom or what did you find support in your parenting when you had hard times?
6. What are the strengths that differentiate you from other parents who did not go to the bush?
7. What do you see in your children's future?

Conclusion:

Fill in the practical info box if necessary.

Give closure to the participant, after reliving some traumatic life events:

I cannot even imagine all the things you went through. It was very brave of you to face some of those things within the group today. You all are an extraordinary and very strong women, who haven't given up despite what life put you through. You have all my admiration for doing so and my gratitude for contributing to this study, which I hope may serve you in the future.

Appendix 3: Semi-structured interviews with Key Informants, Guideline Questions

Introduction:

Presentation, informed consent and explanation of the study purpose.

- 1) What is your position in the organisation?
- 2) What kind of work do you conduct with FAYM? What's the nature of your relationship with them?
- 3) How would you describe FAYMs when you first see them?
- 4) What are the main challenges faced by FAYM in parenting?
- 5) What kind of support network can FAYM count on?
- 6) How are currently FAYM coping as mothers?
- 7) Do FAYM receive family support? If not, why?
- 8) What kind of programs were or are there in support of FAYM as parents?
- 9) How is the State helping in enhancing the FAYM's experiences as mothers?
- 10) How are CBC dealing with their surrounding (community members, relatives, peers...)?
- 11) What do FAYM and CBC are in need of at the moment?
- 12) What are similarities and differences you notice between FAYM's parenting and the one of other parents who did not spend time in the bush?
- 13) What kind of future do you foresee for FAYMs and their CBC?

Many thanks for your participation.

Appendix 4: Informed Consent

The following is a presentation of how I will use the data collected in the interview.

In order to insure that projects meet the ethical requirements for good research I promise to adhere to the following principles:

- Interviewees in the project will be given information about the purpose of the project.
- Interviewees have the right to decide whether they will participate in the project, even after the interview has been concluded.
- The collected data will be handled confidentially and will be kept in such a way that no unauthorized person can view or access it.

The interview or the focus group discussion will be recorded as this makes it easier for me to document what is said during the interview and also helps me in the continuing work with the project. In my analysis, some data may be changed so that no interviewee will be recognized. After finishing the project, the data will be destroyed. The data I collect will only be used in this project.

You have the right to decline answering any questions, or terminate the interview without giving an explanation.

You are welcome to contact me or my supervisor in case you have any questions (e-mail addresses below).

Student name & e-mail

Sara Paoletti 0758714986

sara.paoletti.sp@gmail.com

Supervisor name & e-mail

Dr. Erich Awich Ochen

ericawich@yahoo.co.uk

Interviewee

The Inglehart-Welzel Cultural Map of the World

