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A Displaced People:

Documenting the History and Displacement of the Batwa Tribe in Bundibugyo District, Uganda.



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Major: International Affairs

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for School for International Training (SIT):

Uganda Global Development Studies Programme, Spring 2022

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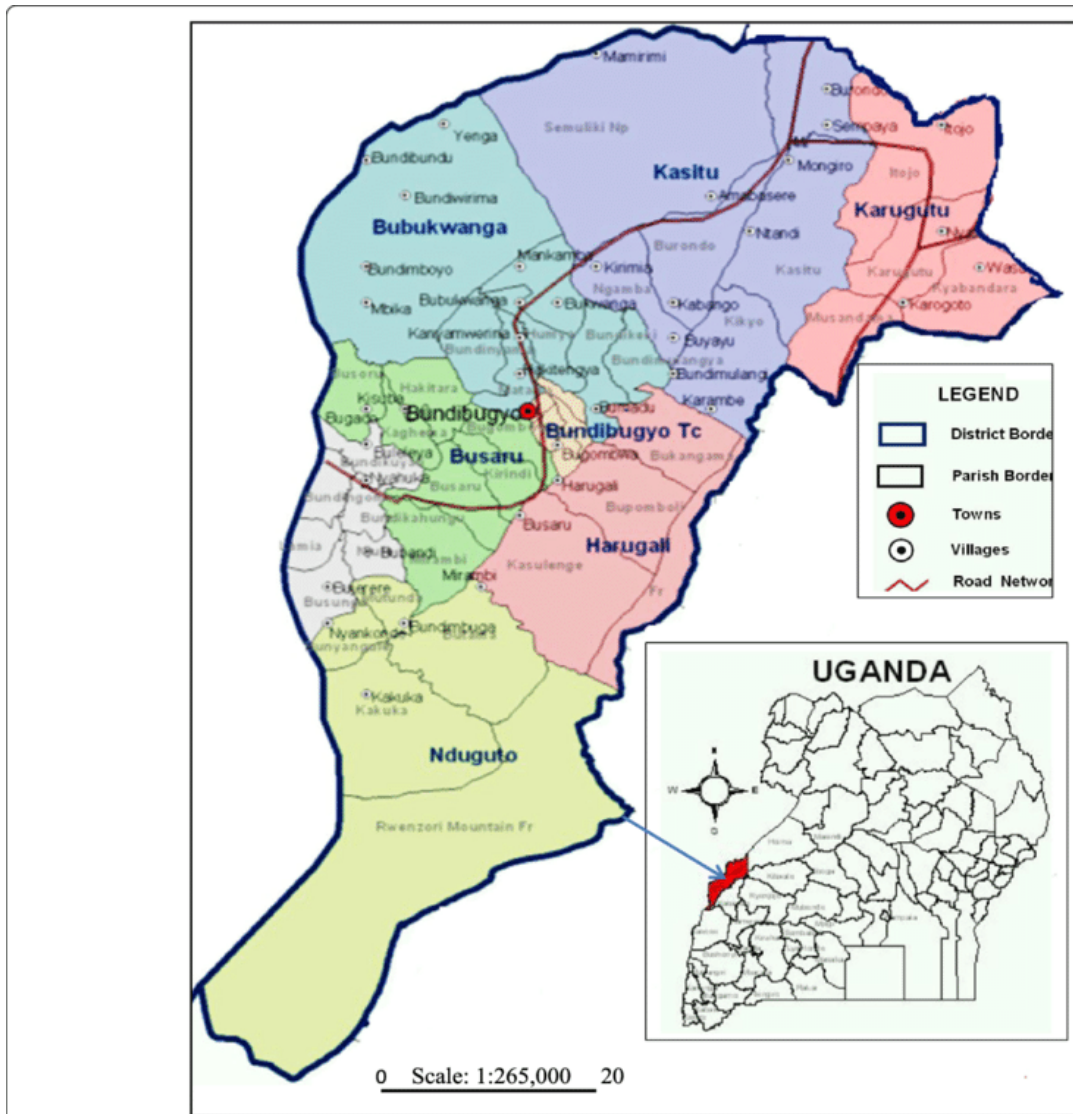
I express my deepest gratitude to Dr. Charlotte Mafumbo who guided me through my pre and post research processes, and pushed me to investigate a topic of which I had great passion and curiosity for. She offered constructive redirection when I lacked depth of knowledge or understanding, and was a constant source of inspiration and support. This study would not have happened without her help. A special thanks goes to Jackie Kitentela for introducing me to Bundibugyo District, and for providing me with a network of people that ensured my safety and my productive period of research. I extend the utmost appreciation to Mugisa Nicholas Robert (Robert)—who in addition to risking his life for me—introduced me to the Batwa tribe and served as a facilitator and translator for interviews that, at times, crossed through three different languages. He is the sole reason my bond with the Batwa community formed into a friendly and trusting relationship—which was a requirement to perform this study. I am grateful to UNCIDA UGANDA NGO, of which Robert is Executive Director, for providing me with a rural research base in the field. And of course, a sincere applause goes to my SIT Uganda mentors Dorothy Kamukama, Helen Lwemamo, and Paul Musungu for their ongoing support throughout the duration of my study.

Abstract:

The Batwa in Bundibugyo are an indigenous minority group that originated in the forest of the Democratic Republic of Congo. Since then, various displacement factors have taken effect that have forced them out of the forest. Currently they live in Bundibugyo District, Uganda. This study aimed at identifying those displacement factors while also investigating Batwa history and culture as they are a relatively undocumented group. The Batwa have various traditions they established while in the forest, such as unique methods for hunting forest animals. Because Uganda forced them out of the forest, many of their cultural practices no longer occur. However, violence within the forests that took place during the regimes of Mobutu in DRC and Amin, Obote, and Museveni in Uganda, all played a role in their displacement. The Allied Democratic Forces disrupted them in the 1990s and official removal from the forest in 2007 has made life excessively difficult for them. Various donor groups attempt to assist the Batwa; however, mistargeting Batwa needs has led to excessive challenges. Evidence of onset for development induced displacement is prominent in the development initiatives currently aimed at assisting the Batwa. The study questions how Uganda prioritizes minority rights, addresses malpractice in development.

Location:

Bundibugyo District, Uganda, with specific focus in the towns of Bundibugyo and Ntande.



Background to the Study:

The Batwa are an indigenous people that originate from the forests of Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC); however, due to their semi-nomadic nature Batwa are found in

various locations across the Great Lakes Region and Central Africa (Gowen, 2010, 4). Considered a minority, only a few Batwa communities exist within Uganda, residing along the Western border with DRC in Bundibugyo, Kabale, Kanunga, and Kisoro districts (Gowen, 2010, 4). The Batwa are forest people that are believed to be among the oldest inhabitants of forests in equatorial Africa (CCFU, 2017, 7). Traditionally, they lived as hunter and gatherers constructing temporary huts for shelter, and thriving off of foods found in the forests such as honey, fruit, wild animals, vegetables, and mushrooms (CCFU, 2017, 8). The Batwa general needs were fulfilled by the forests where they could find medicines, tools used in basket weaving, hunting, and fishing (CCFU, 2017, 8). The forests were part of the Batwa identity, providing sources for spiritual and emotional well being, and allowed Batwa communities to have socially organized clans that had strong cultural and traditional beliefs (CCFU, 2017, 8).

Often referred to as ‘Pygmies,’ the Batwa have experienced extreme levels of marginalization by other ethnic groups that surround the forests that they came from (CCFU, 2017, 7). In 1991, the establishment of national parks in Uganda forced the Batwa to leave their traditional homeland and unwillingly entered a new life, prompting many to struggle in adapting to the outside world (Gowen, 2010, 4). In Uganda, the term Batwa stems from the root word Twa which is Bantu in origin and is synonymous with the words stranger, foreigner, and other (Gowen, 2010, 4). Batwa means multiple Twa, or ‘Pygmies’ (plural), while Mutwa is one individual Twa person (Gowen, 2010, 4). It is important to note that the term ‘Pygmy’ is considered derogatory when not capitalized because it is derived from the Greek word, *pygmy*, which is the term used to measure the distance between the wrist and the elbow (Gowen, 2010, 4).

This study focuses primarily on Batwa within the Bundibugyo region of Uganda. Those individuals were evicted from Semuliki National Park in effort to develop a tourism industry within Uganda (CCFU, 2017, 11). The Ugandan government was not involved in relocation of the Batwa after the park establishment in the early 1990's (CCFU, 2017, 7). As of 2017, there were approximately 160 Batwa members living in Ntandi, Bundibugyo, Uganda, residing in semi permanent buildings that lacked proper sanitation (CCFU, 2017, 13). There is very limited understanding of the Batwa in Bundibugyo by the academic community; however, this study aims at changing that.

Research Question:

How have the Batwa of Bundibugyo been displaced through the years, and how has the Ugandan government responded to their needs?

Objectives:

This study encompassed four main objectives:

1. Investigating the causes for displacement of Batwa in Bundibugyo.
2. Documenting the culture and history of the Batwa in Bundibugyo.
3. Investigating Batwa resilience and manifested resilience.
4. Examining the role of the Ugandan government in addressing the needs of the Batwa.

Justification:

Although Uganda has over 18 indigenous minority groups, with the Batwa making up approximately 1.8% of Ugandan population (Minority Rights, 2019), the choice to conduct this

study on the Batwa in Bundibugyo rather than other indigenous communities, initially stemmed from curiosity and general interest in understanding who the Batwa are. Interest in Ugandan tourism additionally factored in the decision to study Batwa, as gazettement of their home forests as tourist attractions played a role in their displacement. Although Batwa live in numerous locations along the western border regions of Uganda, specifying Bundibugyo as the district of study resulted from higher feasibility of conducting research there. In comparison to other locations, the Batwa in Bundibugyo have greater willingness to participate in research due to the structure of their community and its proximity to the main town (Kitentela, Personal Communications, April 2 2022.). Bundibugyo is a region that lacks significant research and has limited documentation of its cultures and historical events. This is especially true when comparing Bundibugyo to other districts that Batwa resides in, signifying the value this study adds to historical records and the academic community.

The stated objectives were important because they identified gaps in previous research and relevant literature. Because most relevant literature delegate establishment of national parks as a significant factor in Batwa displacement—yet typically fail to examine other causes of displacement—the first objective focussed immensely on other displacement factors potent in Bundibugyo, and not just the establishment of national parks. Not only did this allow for greater understanding of historical events in Bundibugyo district, it also revealed that Batwa are affected by other forms of displacement that are often not focussed or elaborated on in other documentations. Relevant literature with specific regard to Batwa in Bundibugyo, is scarce, especially compared to other Batwa containing regions; however, this study helped alleviate that through its attempted documentation of Batwa history and culture in objective two. Effects of

displacement factors on Batwa culture in the Bundibugyo region were documented, and historical understanding of Batwa push factors were gathered.

The third objective was important because it provided insight on how Batwa have attempted to overcome the adversity they have faced. Information about ongoing issues as well as efforts to thrive were gathered. This objective accounted for previous instances of displacement and government initiatives as it evaluated Batwa response to each of those events. Through understanding Batwa resilience, insight on the coexistence of Batwa and their greater community was documented.

In regard to objective four, various development plans created by the Ugandan government, placed emphasis on prioritizing the needs of indigenous communities. This objective allowed for examination of the extent to which the Ugandan government has been active in addressing the needs of the Batwa with consideration of its planned development goals for indigenous populations. One of these plans is the Ugandan National Development Plan III, which has a goal of “increased household incomes and improved quality of life for Ugandans” by 2040 (Third NDPIII, 2020). Additionally, the Ugandan constitution states in article 36, that minorities’ interests should influence decision making of the Ugandan directorate, and that minorities are allowed to participate in government (Uganda, 1984). Based on Uganda’s policies, this objective evaluated the extent to which the government has fulfilled its stated plans. The effectiveness of government initiatives were analyzed, and led to suggestions for government legislation to be redirected to more efficiently target specific Batwa needs.

Context:

This study aligns itself under various development theories. Because the study documents development initiatives focussed on the Batwa, the inequality-adjusted human development index is important to understand. This index requires understanding the gaps in development that minority communities face when developing. Typically, the human development index measures education level, income level, and health care level. The higher the level of three respective aspects of the index, the more developed a community is considered. However, the inequality adjusted index accounts for the development levels of the three aspects with consideration of the inequality a community may face, which affects development progress. This is applicable to the Batwa as they are an indigenous minority group.

The human security index is important to understand as well, as it measures the security of a community based on particular factors. Measuring the security of a community provides developers with indicators on what aspects of life should be focussed on for development. Some of what is measured includes food security, war/conflict security, political stability. Perhaps a more important development theory to consider is the idea of development induced displacement. This is considered when development projects end up having negative effects on communities they meant to impact. At times some development projects can lead to degression rather than progress.

Literature Review:

The Batwa are a marginalized group of people that are minimally documented. Although some literature in regard to the Batwa does exist, it mostly focuses on Batwa in the Southwestern region of Uganda, and fails to discuss Batwa living at the base of Rwenzori in the Bundibugyo district. Additionally, the literature found provides general perceptions of Batwa – information

sourced from outside groups such as NGOs – while first hand accounts from Batwa individuals are scarce and of little information. Various relevant literature focuses on displacement; however, detail about causes for displacement are typically lacking and the information can be vague.

Below reveals a selection of literature that is relevant to this study; because this study involves the understanding of development induced displacement, as national parks were established to develop Uganda, it is important to consider the impact of development on local communities.

An article by Sreya Maitra, “Development Induced Displacement: Issues of Compensation and Resettlement - Experiences from the Narmada Valley and Sardar Sarovar Project,” discusses the negative long term impacts that development initiatives in India had on local communities. Maitra argues that the Indian government must prioritize refocusing development projects to make them sustainable, just, and equitable (Maitra, 2009). Additionally, she suggests that development projects must be designed to ensure long term benefits of the project, rather than immediate results with negative long lasting impacts (Maitra, 2009).

An article by Danielle Beswick titled: “Democracy, identity and the politics of exclusion in post-genocide Rwanda: the case of the Batwa, focuses on the Batwa of Rwanda that reside at the border region of Uganda and DRC”. The paper aims at understanding the effects that the Rwandan genocide had on the Batwa identity for Batwa living in Rwanda (Beswick, 2010). Beswick’s research discovers the effects on Batwa identity through comparing treatments and perceptions of Batwa to the way other ethnicities in Rwanda are regarded (Beswick, 2010). Although this study is focussed on Batwa identity in post genocidal Rwanda, the fact that it analyzes the Batwa in a post conflict society is valuable because it provides insight to how Batwa might be affected in the Bundibudgyo region as conflict in the form of terrorism near the DRC border has been prominent there. As sighted by Beswick, the impacts of the Rwandan conflicts

on the Batwa included increased levels of marginalization in part due to the conflict itself, but also due to government policy that unintentionally encouraged marginalization (Beswick, 2010). This discrimination stemmed from government policy that outlawed verbal marginalisation of Hutu and Tutsi individuals; however, enforcement of the law never applied for Batwa marginalisation (Beswick, 2010). These findings trigger the notion that government policy may actually unintentionally promote displacement, making it important to understand what laws and policies are in place in the Bundibugyo district that may negatively impact the Batwa there. Emphasis on the second objective which aims at understanding the role of the Ugandan government in regards to the Batwa was increasingly important based on Beswick's findings. This article also suggests that conflict in the form of war can be a driver for displacement, revealing a potential reason for instability induced displacement under objective one, as war or violent conflict has been prevalent in Bundibugyo.

An additional article published in the Minority Rights Group International by Emma Eastwood reveals the impacts that establishment of Ugandan National Parks had on Batwa in Southwestern Uganda (Eastwood). Eastwood reveals that "the connection between [the Batwa] community and their [traditional] land is now severed, their culture and livelihoods have been devastated too." Although this is valuable information that provides insight into how establishment of national parks has resulted negatively for the Batwa, this article does not provide specifics of how Batwa are disadvantaged from national park establishment. Because of this, the opportunity to investigate the effects of national park establishment was of importance in my study. Additionally, this article focuses on the Batwa in the Kisoro district of Uganda, who formerly lived in Bwindi Impenetrable Forest and Mgahinga Gorilla National Park, but does not mention Batwa that have been forced out of national parks bordering the Bundibugyo district.

My study required investigation into Batwa that have been disadvantaged from establishment of Semuliki National Park. This influenced the decision to include information about Batwa experiences as a result of park establishment.

An article from the BBC reveals how some Batwa have responded to research and investigation – they are typically unwilling to participate in studies due to previous marginalisation and ongoing discrimination (Atuhaire, 2022). This highlighted the importance of maintaining proper ethical considerations and building rapport. Patience and willingness to accept that particular individuals may refuse to participate in research was important.

In addition to ongoing marginalization that occurs amongst Batwa, it is likely that violence stemming from intrapolitics could be prevalent in Bundibugyo. The basis for this comes from a study done by Fergus O’Leary Simpson that suggests that slow violence and the escalation of quick violence can occur in communities where there is a history of displacement (Simpson, 2021). Simpson points out that although spurts of violence may seem isolated, they are actually rooted in ongoing conflict that is a result of previous displacement and issues surrounding that displacement (Simpson, 2021). Simpson’s study focussed on a Batwa community in Kahuzi-Biega National Park of eastern Democratic Republic of Congo. It made evident that there was potential to find in this study how violence (that has occurred because of former displacement) contributes to additional displacement presently occurring.

Perhaps a more important piece of literature came from the Cross-Cultural Foundation of Uganda (CCFU). This article is titled “Stakeholder meeting on the development of the Batwa community in Bundibugyo,” and provides insight to recent CCFU efforts to assist the Batwa located there. The CCFU frequently organizes stakeholder meetings with Batwa in Bundibugyo to understand what their needs are (Ahabyona, 2021). Through CCFU efforts, various resources

have been provided for the Batwa including access to land within Semuliki National Park, which the Batwa are appreciative of (Ahabyona, 2021). Additional efforts of CCFU are listed, as well as various complaints of Batwa; however, despite the provided information in the article, detailed accounts of Batwa grievances are lacking leading to little understanding of their needs and wants. This is evidence that this study was necessary as even groups that have current contact with Batwa display limited information about their needs.

Ethical Considerations:

Because the Batwa are a minority group that have undergone excessive trauma due to displacement, the researcher followed ethical standards while conducting research. This involved the disbursement of consent forms that inform interviewees of the researchers intentions, and made it clear that providing information was completely optional. It was emphasized that interviews could be stopped at any time if the interviewee chose so. Consent for recordings and audio recording were required, as well as consent for direct quotes (see appendix I.)

Positionality:

Perhaps the most important ethical aspect for the researcher to consider is positionality. When white foreigners attempt to conduct research within marginalized communities, it is important to acknowledge that a white person's presence may prompt various responses by Batwa. This was true as the Batwa are used to white foreigners providing them with monetary gifts via NGO or tourist donations. When money was not provided for the Batwa, they became very angry and did not wish to provide information to the researcher. It was later decided that

Batwa that were interviewed would be compensated up to 5000 UGX per interview. It was necessary for the researcher to establish that, that amount of money was the only compensation for the research. Additionally it was important for the researcher to maintain a positive reputation within the community as extra attention for being white was prominent, and ease of running into trouble and being dissed by the community was high if kind behavior was not relayed by the researcher.

Methodology:

The proposed methodology for this study included a wide array of research methods; many of which proved to be unsuccessful upon arrival to Bundibugyo. The research took place in Ntandi Town Council, Bundibugyo District, Uganda. Initially, the research required establishment with an NGO connected to the Batwa, prior to beginning the study. Once established, focus group discussions (FGD's) were to take precedence in order to encourage discussion that would expose valuable information. Three FGD's were planned: one with six Batwa leaders, one with six Batwa elders, and one with six Batwa youth. After conducting one FGD with Batwa leaders, it was clear that FGD's would not be valuable in obtaining information. The one FGD that was performed was excessively difficult to navigate because some participants felt the urge to dominate discussion preventing some individuals' participation. Translation was stressful due to the number of speakers in the FGD, and demands for compensation at the end of the discussion were impossible to accommodate, as the Batwa pleads were inordinate when in large groups.

Fortunately, the issue of gathering information through large groups proved unsuccessful at the first stage of research, rather than later on. This resulted in the cancellation of other

proposed discussions well before they were to take place. Two panel discussions (one male panel, and one female panel) each containing five members with unique experiences of displacement, were called off, as the likelihood of those groups providing information through a productive manner was low. Additionally, surveys meant to aid in creation of a timeline of events that caused Batwa displacement, were eliminated from the methodology due to immediate realization that illiteracy amongst the Batwa was high when consent forms were signed prior to the FGD. Rather than direct energy on methods that would hinder limited information because of the presented challenges, research methods were redirected. Upon reassessment of the methodology, the research methods first focussed on introductions, followed by a focus group discussion, key informant interviews, and personal communications. The study spanned from 3 April through 21 April 2022, and

The initial research method involved introduction to local government authorities, including the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) of Bundibugyo district, the District Community Development Officer (DCDO) of Bundibugyo district, the local police force in Bundibugyo city, the Chairman of Ntandi town council, and the local police force in Ntandi town council. During introductions, discussion of the research proposal was important and a letter of introduction was required. In order to conduct the study in Bundibugyo, proof of approval from the CAO was necessary—individuals would refuse to be interviewed otherwise. The proof was provided through the CAO's stamp and signature on the official letter of introduction (see appendix II). Following introductions, a research advisor and translator was established via the recommendations of the DCDO. The person serving this role was Mugisa Nicholas Robert (Robert), Executive Director of UNCIDA UGANDA NGO (UNCIDA), who had significant trust

and involvement within the Batwa community. This establishment allowed for proper facilitation of interviews.

Once the research advisor and translator was established, the study was conducted. First, the focus group discussion took place. Although disorganized, it allowed for the formation of an interview guide (see appendix IV) that paved discussion during key informant interviews. This was because the information that was gathered, although limited, allowed for key issues within the Batwa community to be pinpointed for further investigation. Next, key informant interviews were conducted. The interviews were executed in a manner which focused first on interviewing the Batwa, as potential for them to lose engagement with the research was possible. Questions were meant to target each of the four objectives and were adjusted based on experiences of each Mutwa individual. The interviews with Batwa provided historical timelines and occurrences of displacement, as well as cultural knowledge and current issues in their lives. Once the interviews with the Batwa took place, key informant interviews with government officials and NGOs were scheduled. The government interviews proved successful in exposing government initiatives that addressed Batwa needs both at local and central government levels. Interviews with NGOs served the purpose of verifying information provided by the Batwa: however, also expanded knowledge of Batwa history and displacement. Both government and NGO interviews addressed issues regarding lack of communication between government officials, and both highlighted concerns surrounding development induced displacement and need for greater communication with donors.

In total, seven key informant interviews were conducted with Batwa community members, including two interviews with the Batwa King, two interviews with a Batwa traditional midwife, one interview with the Batwa Prince, one interview with the Batwa Spokesperson, and

one interview with a female Batwa elder. Each interview spanned from 30 minutes to one hour long. Three interviews with government administrators were held, as well as various personal conversations with other government officials. Three further interviews with NGOs were conducted: one interview with World Vision officials, and two interviews with UNCIDA officials. In addition to key informant interviews, personal communications were a valuable research method as they sourced large deals of information. Personal communications involved various unofficial conversations with missionaries and government officials, attendance at a Mutwa funeral, tours of Ntandi Town Council and neighboring sub-counties, site visits to government initiatives in the district, and national park exploration with members of the batwa community. These personal communications were not scheduled, but rather occurred randomly throughout the period of research.

Obviously, conducting key informant interviews limited the number of Batwa community members that provided input into the study. More voices could have been heard if focus group discussion had remained; however, emphasis on key informant interviews eliminated complications with FGD's and allowed for rapport building as relationships were strengthened with individual interview participants—especially those that agreed to return for further inquisition. Not only did this allow for exposure to more in-depth information due to extensive attention given to the participants; it also developed a sense of trust between the researcher and interviewees. This trust allowed for revelations of sensitive details that, otherwise, would not have been communicated. However, this sense of trust did not result solely from key informant interviews. Part of the time spent in the field involved touring through Ntandi town council which required passing through Batwa neighborhoods. These passages turned into visitations

where friendly small talk left the researcher as a friendly and familiar face to the Batwa community and surrounding town.

Due to the instances where small talk did occur, personal communications became a valuable research tool. Although successful at extracting information, the nature of unofficial discussion prevented the ability for immediate documentation of knowledge gained. At times, many hours passed before data could be recorded, resulting in loss of information. However, because of the amount of historical and cultural data gathered from both key informant interviews and personal communications, it was evident that a new objective was required. Objective two calls for the documentation of Batwa history and culture, and was added because the understanding of displacement factors required investigation into the historical and cultural aspects of the Batwa tribe. Because displacement happened over time—and cultural shifts and changes resulted from displacement—knowledge of Batwa history and culture was imperative. This realization occurred on the third day in the field and resulted in immediate re-establishment of objectives. Additionally, personal communications involved an aspect of ethnography, in which understanding and immersion into the Batwa culture was necessary to learn about them.

Findings:

History, Culture, and Traditions:

The Batwa tribe of Bundibugyo originated from the Mahoyo Forest in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo. Their livelihood depended on hunting animals and gathering fruits found in the jungle (King, Personal Communication, April 6, 2022). The animals they hunted included elephants, snakes, buffalos, wild boars, and even primates. They would gather plants for food and medicinal purposes, and relied on the forest for shelter. They used bows and

arrows as well as spears to hunt for food (King, Personal Communication, April 6, 2022). It was typical for arrows and spears to contain poison on their tips in order for more effective killing of prey (personal communication). The Batwa spoke the Kuswa language (Chairman, Personal Communication, April 15, 2022) and favored elephants, calling them their favorite meat (King, Personal Communication, April 6, 2022), and had a unique elephant hunting technique. Upon discovery of fresh elephant feces and a nearby elephant, the Batwa would cover themselves in the dung (personal communication). This would disguise their smell, preventing the elephant from sensing their presence. As they neared the elephant, they would strike it with arrows or spears and harvest the meat rather quickly. During the time the elephant was dying, it was tradition for girls not yet married to stand on its back prior to the meat being harvested. The meat would then be taken to a central location—in more recent years this place was a large and recognizable tree, dubbed in English as the Batwa parliament tree, where tribal announcements by the king were made. When the meat arrived at this location, the king would divide it up amongst his people, typically leaving himself a larger portion because of his status as King (personal communication). When a large animal was killed for meat it was typical for small celebrations to take place involving singing and dancing as the meat was divided (Midwife, Personal Communication, April 6, 2022).

The Batwa hunted all types of primates in the forest, of which monkey and chimpanzees were most common in Mahoyo and Semuliki (personal communication). Although they acknowledged that hunting primates was a more difficult task because of their resemblance to humans, they had several tactics that were successful in primate killing. The first was hunting using bows and arrows as the nature of those weapons made striking monkeys in high trees more feasible. However, the Batwa would also apply poison to the tips of their arrows and shoot them

at trees that often had many monkeys in the branches. As a result of being struck with poison, the tree would die, and overtime monkeys swinging through the branches would fall to the ground when branches broke, as the tree grew sicker (personal communication). One memory that is ingrained in the mind of some Batwa, was about one of their tribal members who shot an arrow at a chimpanzee (personal communication). He missed his target; however the chimpanzee understood what was happening, and rather than running, grabbed the arrow and threw it back at the Mutwa that shot it. The chimpanzee struck the Mutwa, and because the arrow had poison on it, the Mutwa died (personal communication).

In discussions with a Batwa traditional midwife who was born in the Congo forest over 70 years ago, she explained the life she used to lead, and shared extensive knowledge of herbal medicines. She stated that life was so good when the Batwa used to live in the forest (Midwife, Personal Communication, April 6, 2022). Husbands would go hunt for food, and they would celebrate when eating. The forest had good weather and a good environment. The nature of the Batwa was to move around the forest in search of what to eat. Wherever they ended up by the end of the day after finding food, is where they would typically sleep. Their housing in the forest were grass thatched huts with enough space for around four people to lie in snugly. They blocked rain from entering the huts by layering large leaves in a manner that sheltered themselves from water. When thirsty, the Batwa would drink water that had collected in elephant footprints, and used clay pots for heating food. All of her ancestors and siblings were born in the DRC forest, and when individuals fell sick, they would try to harmonize the situation. This called for gathering of plants and herbs to treat that individual, and would require that the tribe remain in one location until that person recovered. At times recovery could take up to two months (Midwife, Personal Communication, April 6, 2022).

The Batwa Midwife learned her medicinal skills from her grandmother who wanted to pass on her knowledge before she died (Midwife, Personal Communication, April 7, 2022). As a midwife, she was able to examine if somebody was pregnant and could determine any complications prior to or during birth. For assessment, she would require the pregnant woman to squat down, which allowed her to determine whether complications were likely. In the case that a Mutwa woman would have difficulty giving birth, special herbs from the forest were gathered and boiled, and made into a concoction that would aid in proper contractions. This concoction was rubbed on the enlarged abdomen and genital areas of the pregnant woman. She helped birth many Batwa, of whom approximately 30 are still living in the Ntandi community (Midwife, Personal Communication, April 7, 2022).

In addition to her midwifery skills, she discussed various herbs that were used for other medical purposes on a tour through Semuliki National Park (personal communication). One herb aided in solving issues of domestic violence by which the herb would be made into a concoction and rubbed over the bodies of the couple fighting. After rubbing the herb over the bodies and performing a small ritual, she claimed that those domestic violence issues would be no longer. She gave the example that if internal family conflicts were due to lack of food, then food would be more easily attainable after use of that herb. An additional herb that she discussed was one that treated people with diarrhea. This herb would be mashed and mixed with water. Using a straw made from a bamboo like plant, the solution would then be blown into the anus of the diuretic person, cleansing the intestines which is credited to stopping the diarrhea (personal communication). Furthermore, discussion about male circumcision arose, in which it is tradition for Batwa to circumcise boys one week after birth using a specific tree bark that is sharp enough to perform the surgery (King, Personal Communication, April 6, 2022). It is a taboo for Batwa

boys not to be circumcised (King, Personal Communications, April 6, 2022). Ceremonial type activities used to take place during circumcision; however, according to the Chairman of Ntandi Town Council, the ceremonial aspect of Batwa circumcision was adopted from the Bwamba tribe who's culture also relies on the forest to a lesser extent (Chairman, Personal Communications, April 15, 2022). Batwa interaction with the Bwamba occurred once they began trading with outside tribal groups after entering Semuliki National Park.

Typical movement of the Batwa depended on the situation at hand (Midwife, Personal Communication, April 6, 2022). As a semi-nomadic peoples, it was common for one location to be considered home for one week (King, Personal Communication, April 6, 2022), or up to three to four weeks depending on food availability (Midwife, Personal Communication, April 6, 2022). Once food became scarce in that surrounding area, they would travel as a group in search of new food, and establish themselves where animals and fruits were more abundant. Movement was usually no further than one or two kilometers, and as they moved, they would name the locations they lived in based on different landmarks such as streams or interesting topography. They would rebuild their homes every time they relocated. One interesting aspect of their culture is a rule that requires relocation every time a member of the Batwa tribe dies. When a Mutwa dies, they are typically buried at the base of a large recognizable tree that can serve as a grave marker. Once burial takes place, the Batwa vacates that location (Midwife, Personal Communication, April 6, 2022).

The Batwa also partook in traditional dancing and singing (King, Personal Communication, April 7, 2022). In the forest, dancing typically occurred in areas with clearings large enough for Batwa to move around. The men would dance in one location, and the women, in another spot nearby. Both dances occurred simultaneously and served various ceremonial

purposes (King, Personal Communication, April 7, 2022). When death happened, a song pronounced as ‘feh-leh-weh’, would be sung and accompanied by a dance with both male and female Batwa gently waving leaves around while slowly moving in what resembles a line formation (personal communication). The lyrics in the accompanying song mean “I have lost my fellows, my relatives, my friends, and my family members” (King, Personal Communication, April 7, 2022). Another song the king accredited as being very important to Batwa culture is one with lyrics explaining how the king’s father crossed the Semuliki River in Uganda at the DRC Uganda border, without even using a boat. Rather, he rolled with the water. the king mentioned how rituals were carried out to prevent children from crying. Dancing and singing to the ancestors would take place until the child stopped (King, Personal Communication, April 7, 2022). At one point, the king expressed great frustration saying “the culture, the culture. It’s disappearing” (King, Personal Communication, April 6, 2022).

Traditional Batwa marriages involved a trade between two families (Midwife, Personal Communication, April 6, 2022). If a son was to be married, the family of the son and the family of the daughter would present themselves, with an elder man (typically father or grandfather) as witness. The daughter's family would give her to the groom’s family in exchange for another daughter. If a marriage was to take place, and the groom’s family did not have daughters, a good hunting dog would satisfy the trade. At times a daughter swap would occur if son’s in both families were to be married (Midwife, Personal Communication, April 6, 2022). Additionally, the structure of the Batwa community required that marriages not happen between direct relatives, but could happen within the same clan. Often individuals would marry their first cousins. When the Batwa were at their prime population prior to gazetting of the forests as national parks (likely in the 1960’s), they made up 40 clans. It was typical for each clan to have

specific taboos and foods they would not eat. Clans typically consisted of direct and extended family members; however, at the time when 40 clans existed, the Batwa population was approximately 260 people (Midwife, Personal Communication, April 6, 2022). One Batwa legend required that Batwa men only marry one wife (Chairman, Personal Communication, April 15, 2022). The legend suggests that a Mutwa man once married two wives. Due to jealousy, one wife killed the other, which resulted in the surviving wife leaving the tribe followed by a significant portion of the Batwa population (Chairman, Personal Communications, April 15, 2022). Currently, the Batwa believe that their members who branched off still remain in the DRC forest (King, Personal Communication, April 7, 2022) Since the Batwa have left the forest, the teachings to only marry one wife have stopped being followed (King, Personal Communication, April 7, 2022).

History and Displacement

Prior to the Batwa coming to Semuliki Forest, they lived in the neighboring Mahoyo Forest in Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Many of their current ancestors were born there, as well as the majority of the elder population that were born prior to crossing the Semuliki River into Uganda (personal communication). Although movement was typically due to search for food and following the animals, there were other factors that played a role in Batwa movement.

According to the Batwa midwife, who is now in her 70th decade and was born in DRC, there were various instances of violence that influenced the Batwa movements through the forest. Beginning when she was young, the Batwa were attacked from non-Batwa groups that encountered them when they were in the DRC (Midwife, Personal Communication, April 6,

2022). Initially, the Batwa would interact with non-Batwa groups they encountered at intersections of forest and outside civilization. Trade would take place at times, by which the Batwa would exchange animal meat for commodities such as metal saucepans. However, at some point prior to entering Uganda, the Congolese began isolating the Batwa and sometimes chased them through the forest, calling them ‘rebels.’ The midwife suggested that at times their members would be captured by the Congolese, and under the regime of Mobutu Sese Sseko who was the former leader of DRC, there was violence in which the Congolese would find the Batwa and cut them into pieces. At one point, that would happen daily (Midwife, Personal Communication, April 6, 2022).

In response to attacks, the Batwa would flee to safe areas of the forest (Midwife, Personal Communication, April 6, 2022). However, instead of moving the normal one to two kilometers that was typical of them when in search for food, they would relocate upwards of three kilometers away. The midwife revealed that her ancestors also experienced similar attacks and would flee in the same manner. However, during the time of the attacks, illness was prominent and many of the Batwa members died. Prior to crossing the Semuliki River into Uganda, their numbers were approximately 100 people (Midwife, Personal Communication, April 6, 2022).

When the Batwa reached Uganda after crossing the border at Semuliki River, the regime of Mobutu existed in DRC and the regime of Idi Amin existed in Uganda (Midwife, Personal Communication, April 6, 2022). Under Amin’s regime in the Semuliki Forest the Batwa thrived, and their population increased to over 200 members, reaching approximately 260 at the height of their population. When they crossed the Semuliki River, the Congolese groups that were violent towards them did not enter Uganda, allowing Semuliki to serve as a Batwa refuge (Midwife, Personal Communications, April 6, 2022). However, in the 1970’s white foreigners began

exploring Semuliki Forest for tourism purposes, and the Batwa of Bundibugyo were considered as officially discovered (Chairman, Personal Communications, April 15, 2022). According to the midwife, it was not until President Obote's second regime ended, that the entire Batwa tribe had moved out of the forest into Bundibugyo (Midwife, Personal Communications, April 6, 2022).

Prior to the end of President Obote's regime, a Seventh Day Adventist missionary group, known as the Adventist Relief and Development Agency (ADRA), purchased a plot of land for the Batwa in the early 1980's at a location called Burondo (King, Personal Communications, April 7, 2022). The plot of land was located at the very edge of the forest along the main road of Bundibugyo (Robert, Personal Communications, April 19, 2022). This border was the exact point where forest and outside civilization met. Semi-permanent housing was constructed for the Batwa; however, because they were not used to the sound of rain on tin roofs, the Batwa deconstructed some of the houses and remained in huts (Robert, Personal Communications, April 19, 2022). When the land was purchased by ADRA, only one group of the Batwa tribe decided to relocate to the plot of land (King, Personal Communications, April 7, 2022). The rest of the Batwa remained within Semuliki; however, because of the Batwa nomadic nature, movement at times brought the tribe to the edge of the forest (King, Personal Communications, April 7, 2022).

In 1984 or 1985, after ADRA relocated some of the Batwa, the king claims that President Museveni, not yet president of Uganda at the time, traveled to Bundibugyo in search of the Batwa (King, Personal Communications, April 7, 2022). He found some members living along the roadside and recruited 25 of them to his Army which was known as the National Resistance Movement (NRM). The 25 Batwa he recruited included three women and the king. Initially, the Batwa that agreed to fight were promised 700 UGX per month and were trained at a military base in Ntoroko District, which was formerly part of Bundibugyo District. They were recruited

prior to Museveni's liberation of Fort Portal and were assigned to fight in various places including Mbarara, Uganda, which is where the king went. Some Batwa members went to fight in Gulu, Uganda, amongst the Acholi people who lived there (King, Personal Communication, April 7, 2022).

The Batwa became trusted members of the military, as their short stature allowed them to fight on the front lines and remain undetected by the opposition (King, Personal Communication, April 7, 2022). The Batwa of Bundibugyo fought alongside Batwa from Kisoro and other parts of western Uganda. Out of the 25 Batwa from Bundibugyo, none of them died in war; however, several of them left the war early. In the case of the king, he began questioning his decision to fight as he did not stand for the situation and received very low pay. Around that same time, he received news that his father had died. Due to this, he returned to Bundibugyo after five years of fighting, eliminating his chance for veteran status; however, his return was necessary as it secured the throne as his own. Other Batwa that fought the entirety of the war, gained veteran status and receive veteran benefits to this day. By the time the king returned after five years of fighting, Museveni was the new leader of Uganda, and all members of the Batwa tribe had moved to the roadside at the plot of land purchased by ADRA. Upon returning home, the king learned that after Museveni took power, the Ugandan government began complicating the lives of the Batwa in which restrictions on forest activities were established (King, Personal Communication, April 7, 2022).

In an interview with the Journal Secretary of the Batwa, who is also the king's brother, he revealed that the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) rebel group's displacement of the Batwa began in 1992, soon after the king returned from fighting (Journal Secretary, Personal Communication, April 6, 2022). Official documentation of ADF activities in Bundibugyo is

extremely limited; however, confirmation that the ADF were active in Bundibugyo beginning in 1991, exists (Mafumbo, 2007, p. 174). According to the Journal Secretary, the ADF attacked the Batwa over six times beginning in 1992 and extending on for around six years (Journal Secretary, Personal Communication, April 6, 2022). Most attacks resulted in the Batwa fleeing their homes and seeking refuge in nearby places until the ADF cleared out. One vivid attack occurred on a Monday, forcing the Batwa to flee into the Rwenzori Mountains amidst Bantu tribal members that lived in the villages within Ntandi Town Council. They stayed there for approximately three months before returning to the property purchased by ADRA (Journal Secretary, Personal Communication, April 6, 2022). When in the mountains, they lived amongst various Bantu tribal members who fled to the mountains as a result of ADF attacks as well (Robert, Personal Communication, April 19, 2022). At that time, many of the surrounding Bantu tribal members interacted with the Batwa for the first time (Robert, Personal Communication, April 19, 2022). During the time of ADF attacks, 20 Batwa members were killed; however, by the time of the fifth ADF attack, the Ugandan military entered Bundibugyo to secure the area (King, Personal Communication, April 6, 2022). The ADF did not specifically target the Batwa; rather, they planned surprise ambushes within Bundibugyo, which affected both the Batwa and other Bundibugyo citizens (Robert, Personal Communication, April 19, 2022).

In 2007, approximately 10 years after the ADF ended their attacks on the Batwa, the European Union (EU) purchased two plots of land within Ntandi Town Council and built new housing for the Batwa to live in (Journal Secretary, Personal Communication, April 6, 2022). The two plots of land are now considered villages and were named Bundimwasoli village, led by the king, and Kapepepe village, led by the Journal Secretary. These villages are approximately 200 meters from each other and house a majority of the remaining Batwa. They are within the

town council and border neighborhoods various Bantu tribal members call home (Journal Secretary, Personal Communication, April 6, 2022). In addition to the two villages, the EU purchased several other land plots near the forest border, meant to serve as agricultural land for the Batwa (Robert, Personal Communication, April 19, 2022). By 2007 when the government officially kicked the Batwa out of the forest, extreme enforcement of National Park rules began, as new housing was constructed for them by the EU in a location that is a 15-minute walk to the forest border (Journal Secretary, Personal Communication, April 6, 2022). Since 1985 restrictions on Batwa activities in the park have been present; however in 2007, extreme measures were established to protect the park's ecology. Due to this, the Batwa were extremely disadvantaged. Hunting was no longer permitted and restrictions on park access became prominent. Adjusting to the life of their neighbors is still a constant struggle (Journal Secretary, Personal Communication, April 6, 2022).

Since the Batwa have lived within Ntandi Town Council in their two villages, an additional problem arose that resulted in starvation and left many Batwa lives at risk (Journal Secretary, Personal Communication, April 6, 2022). Political elections for Member of Parliament from Bundibugyo and local government officials resulted in war between two tribes as members from both tribes were running against each other as the top contenders in the election. After some time, the Ugandan military entered Ntandi Town Council to protect Ugandans at risk from the war. The Batwa were included in this protection; however, many individuals were unable to partake in income generating activities for some time due to political insecurity, and prominence of war (Journal Secretary, Personal Communication, April 6, 2022). Since then, there have been no significant issues that have challenged the Batwa aside from the Covid-19 pandemic.

Recent Challenges and Batwa Resilience

Due to the hardships the Batwa tribe has faced, one of their members has taken on the role of Batwa Spokesperson. The Spokesperson, who knows some English, mostly tries to identify possible solutions to the challenges the Batwa community has encountered (Spokesperson, Personal Communication. April 6, 2022). One of the spokesperson's arguments is that the Batwa of Bundibugyo are not developed the way other Batwa groups in Uganda are. The Bundibugyo branch is less educated compared to Batwa of Kisoro—many of whom have gone to college. Since 2007, the Batwa of Bundibugyo have been limited in the forest activities they can perform as extreme measures were established to protect the park's ecology. In doing so, the Batwa were extremely disadvantaged. Hunting was no longer permitted and restrictions on park access became prominent (Spokesperson, Personal Communication. April 6, 2022). According to non Batwa individuals who live at the edge of the forest, and wished to remain anonymous, the Batwa used to be permitted to enter the park only once a week; however, that policy has since changed and they can enter on a daily basis with restrictions on what forest items can be extracted (Anonymous, Personal Communication, April 14, 2022). In a focus group discussion, the Batwa however, expressed frustration with park authorities as breaking the rules results in apprehension, and being whipped with a pole. Now Batwa can only extract herbs and firewood from dead and fallen trees, or trees deemed as invasive or considered non suitable for animals in the park (Anonymous, Personal Communication. April 14, 2022). The Batwa often feel that their “rights are being violated like they are not human beings because there are so many restrictions...they ask themselves are we in the world, are we human beings...we are being treated like animals” (Elder Woman, Personal Communication, April 7, 2022).

As a result of losing access to the forest's resources, various donor groups have stepped up to support Batwa needs. The spokesperson blamed the new found hardships on the European Union (EU), as the EU purchased them land in the Ntandi Town Council that had no food resources on it (Spokesperson, Personal Communication. April 6, 2022). Formerly, the Batwa considered eating domesticated animals to be a taboo, so adjusting to a mostly domesticated animal diet was difficult. Other organizations have lent a helping hand, including various NGOs and missionaries. The spokesperson argued that the NGOs are quite helpful as they sometimes help teach English language, but not the Ugandan government. The Batwa have a challenge with current government leadership. This is because the Batwa feel that under the current authority, different donor efforts meant to benefit them, end up benefiting other non-Batwa groups once the projects are completed. At times, missionary groups attempt to assist the Batwa; however, the spokesperson stated that they come to perform various tasks and are not necessarily welcome by the Batwa community (Spokesperson, Personal Communication. April 6, 2022).

An additional challenge the Batwa experience is impregnation of their sisters and daughters (Spokesperson, Personal Communication. April 6, 2022). Since the Batwa moved to the road at the edge of the forest approximately 40 years ago—and eventually forced out of the national park—rape and intermarriages with outside tribes has created many difficulties for them. In a focus group discussion with Batwa, it was revealed that these rapes and intermarriages impart resulted from the myth that sex with a Mutwa woman will heal backache and rejuvenate the body. Additionally, one Mutwa stated that outside tribes noticed how white people were helping the Batwa, so they impregnated the Batwa thinking that those children would be better off because of the support from white donors (Midwife, Personal Communication, April 7, 2022). The Spokesperson stated that their new neighbors intermarry with them; however once

sexual pleasures have been fulfilled, non-Batwa male sex partners typically abandon the Batwa women they had been with (Spokesperson, Personal Communication. April 6, 2022). When the women produce children after men from other tribes impregnate them, they rarely get support from the children's father. "People impregnate the daughters and sisters and have sex with them and dump them and leave them away" (Spokesperson, Personal Communication. April 6, 2022). A Mutwa elder woman used to question different men who wanted to have sex with her. She used to ask them, "why do you want to marry me?...you say you do not like Batwa because of their smell, so why do you want to get married with me?" (Elder Woman, Personal Communication. April 7, 2022). At first she married a Muwisi man and produced two children with him. Next she produced two children with a Mutoro man. Now she has 10 children with many different men (Elder Woman, Personal Communication. April 7, 2022). Other Batwa women endure similar challenges, including the Batwa midwife who has many grandchildren but no awareness of who the fathers are (Midwife, Personal Communication. April 7, 2022). The Batwa also revealed in a focus group discussion, that they used to not produce twins in the forest until intermarriages with outside tribes took place.

The Mutwa elder woman with 10 kids, suggested that Batwa women face a general problem of getting married (Elder Woman, Personal Communication. April 7, 2022). It is typical for men to run away from Batwa women, abandoning children, and forcing the women to provide for the children by themselves. This is difficult as the income generating activities they partake in yield minimal amounts of money, making it difficult to care for many children. When the man runs away when the woman is still pregnant, she will face discrimination as it is unconventional to be pregnant and unmarried. Pregnancy prevents the Mutwa woman from entering the forest to collect firewood, and if firewood cannot be collected, no money can be

made as that is the most prominent income generating activity for the Batwa. Pregnancy prevents Mutwa from attending to tourists as well, preventing income generation if tourists request to see them. Although participation in income generating activities occurs after pregnancy is over, during pregnancy, the women are often weak and sick because they have no money for food. Currently, the elder woman enters the park everyday to get firewood to sell for income (Elder Woman, Personal Communication. April 7, 2022).

The elder woman also revealed that Batwa are generally uneducated on the idea of family planning (Elder Woman, Personal Communication. April 7, 2022). It is rare when groups approach the Batwa to teach them about family planning; however, the few Batwa that are interested go to health centers to utilize family planning resources, only to find that they are already pregnant. Although some Batwa attempt to partake in family planning, a general goal of the Batwa is to produce more children as they wish not to see their population die off (Elder Woman, Personal Communication. April 7, 2022).

As a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, tourism was nearly eradicated, excessively disadvantaged the Batwa as they are over reliant on monetary donations especially from foreigners (Anonymous, Personal Communication, April 14, 2022). According to that source, individuals that have directly been affected by the establishment of Semuliki National Park, receive various benefits from tourism, as 20% of national park profits are given to communities that lie at the edge of the forest. The Batwa are targeted in this monetary compensation (Anonymous, Personal Communication. April 14, 2022); however, the funds are distributed to a wide array of communities that border the park, so evidence of the policy's existence is limited, likely because funds are minimal once divided and dispersed.

Perhaps a more difficult issue Batwa deal with is the spread of HIV (Elder Woman, Personal Communication. April 7, 2022). In addition to excessive rapes and intermarriages beginning around 40 years ago, but at its height between 2007 and 2015, many Batwa partake in sexual intercourse with individuals they do not know. Some women feel that performing sexual services for profit is necessary due to limited income; however, both Batwa women and men engage in sexual activity after drinking at bars. The elder woman considers that a significant reason for the spread of HIV in the Batwa community. Additionally, alcoholism amongst men leads women to feel unhappy and unsupported in the home. As a result, some women seek other partners, which is also a contributor to the spread of HIV (Elder Woman, Personal Communication. April 7, 2022). According to officials at the Ntandi Health Center III, there five Batwa that get treated for HIV through that facility (Ntandi Health Centre III Employee, Personal Communication, April 7, 2022), and at least one other that gets treated at Ebenezer Health Centre (Moses, Personal Communication, April 13, 2022). Approximately 500 people get treated for HIV at Ntandi Health Center III which is in a town council with approximately 9,500 people (Ntandi Health Centre III Employee, Personal Communication, April 7, 2022).

According to the elder woman, alcoholism in the Batwa community is very common amongst the adult male population (Elder Woman, Personal Communication, April 7, 2022). As a result, the women are negatively affected as all caretaking tasks are left to them. In the past, men have demanded money and food when drunk, and are often unable to receive what they want in part because their drunkenness prevents them from providing for the family. Drunk men typically fight with everybody in the home, causing unnecessary tension which leads to issues of domestic violence. Because alcohol prevents men from being productive providers for their family, they typically do not enter the forest to collect firewood. If men cannot gather firewood

from the forest, then they cannot eat or support themselves or their family financially. As a result, food will not be purchased and clothing cannot be washed, as those necessities become unaffordable when individuals do not generate income. The elder woman suggested that when tourists see the Batwa wearing poor clothing, they laugh at how ‘uncivilized’ the Batwa look, when the reality is that they are able to live like other people when income is steady. She revealed that the opportunity to appear ‘normal’ is not always there unless there is financial support in the home (Elder Woman, Personal Communication, April 7, 2022).

However, despite all of these challenges, the Batwa still attempt to improve their livelihoods through various methods. According to the Batwa Spokesperson, the Batwa have set up a money savings group which allows for loans to be dispersed, mostly for school fees and living necessities (Spokesperson, Personal Communication. April 6, 2022). This group is called the Batwa Development Association with approximately 40 members. Although helpful, it is not a registered group, and can lead to conflict as there is not always money to be dispersed. When money does get given away in the form of a loan, jealousy usually causes loan distribution to be a complicated process. Some Batwa parents do not send their children to school because, although free, the school meals are unaffordable (Journal Secretary, Personal Communication, April 6, 2022). Despite that, sending kids to school is still a priority because the Batwa want their children to have professions and make money to better provide for the Batwa population in the years to come (Journal Secretary, Personal Communication, April 6, 2022). The Spokesperson also revealed that the Batwa have a crafts making group that sells products to tourists; however, tourism dwindled as a result of the coronavirus so that group has mostly stalled since then. An additional Batwa group raises animals; however, funding to purchase animals is limited so the group has not profited from that (Spokesperson, Personal Communication. April 6, 2022).

According to the Batwa midwife, she sells various medicinal herbs to make money, including one to female sex workers both in Bundibugyo and Kampala, as she claims the herb attracts men (Midwife, Personal Communication, April 7, 2022). Amongst the local transportation industry, there has been a push to encourage the Batwa to become motorcycle taxi drivers; however, this proposal is an unrealistic income generating activity because the Batwa are too short to properly balance the motorcycle, making it excessively difficult and dangerous to ride (personal communication). Aside from these activities, the only other income generating activity is selling firewood from the forest, which is sold at a very low price (Elder Woman, Personal Communication, April 7, 2022). Various local NGOs have attempted to assist the Batwa in learning important income generating skills, including UNCIDA UGANDA NGO; however, the Covid-19 pandemic stopped funding for those initiatives that were to teach hair cutting and sewing activities (Robert, Personal Communication, April 19, 2022). Currently there are still a few local NGOs dedicated towards teaching English classes to the Batwa—who are appreciative because they credit learning English to assisting them in making money (personal communication).

Government and New Development Initiatives

In an interview with the Bundibugyo District Community Development Officer (DCDO) it was evident that the central and district governments both did not have initiatives that specifically targeted the Batwa population (Simon, Personal Communication, April, 13, 2022). Rather, all initiatives that are meant to benefit the district population, indirectly benefit the Batwa. The DCDO argued that the Batwa indeed benefited from the government's various projects, such as expansion of the water supply network, as those initiatives targeted jurisdictions

that the Batwa population fell under (Simon, Personal Communication, April, 13, 2022). Additionally, the local government does not have any initiatives that target Batwa either (Chairman, Personal Communication, April 15, 2022). Rather, they maintain that Batwa are viewed as all other members of the Ntandi Town Council (Chairman, Personal Communication, April 15, 2022); however, this proclamation seemed to be made in effort to encourage the idea of equality amongst all members of Ntandi, in order for the Ntandi population to be more inclusive of Batwa. It was evident however, that local government in Ntandi Town Council was extremely adherent to Batwa needs (personal communication).

Unlike the district government and local governments, the Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA) does target Batwa. According to people familiar with the Batwa on the inside of the park, they acknowledge that UWA assisted in providing income generating activities for the Batwa (Anonymous, Personal Communication, April 14, 2022). Several years ago beehives were constructed for them inside the forest to allow them to harvest and sell honey for profit (Anonymous, Personal Communications, April 14, 2022). However, those beehives were built poorly and incapable of housing bees (personal communication), causing UWA to reclaim the hives as their own (Anonymous, Personal Communications, April 14, 2022). Additionally, UWA does not advertise the Batwa as a tourist attraction, preventing tourists from requesting to see the Batwa as many of them are unaware that paying for the Batwa to guide them through the forest is an activity offered at Semuliki National Park. UWA in Bundibugyo created a Batwa Experience Trail attempting to mimic the Batwa tourism options at Mgahinga National Park in Kisoro, Uganda. Tourists flock to Kisoro to visit the Batwa and experience their culture on a nature walk that displays various cultural Kisoro Batwa elements. Although the Batwa Experience in Bundibugyo did not appear to be advertised, UWA in Bundibugyo does make an effort to assist

the Batwa. Oftentimes small monetary donations are offered to the Batwa especially when they are most in need. Recently, a Mutwa child was buried, and UWA of Semuliki National Park made a monetary donation to the family of that child, to assist with burial fees (Anonymous, Personal Communication, April 14, 2022).

Although the government does not target the Batwa directly, it often accepts donor requests to conduct projects that are solely meant to benefit the Batwa population. According to the DCDO, the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) of Bundibugyo, can sign off on any proposed project that a donor group will perform within the district (DCDO, Personal Communications, April 13, 2022). Once the CAO gives approval, the donor group can begin. In Bundibugyo, there were two donor groups specifically focussed on benefitting the Batwa population (personal communication). One group was led by Romanian Pentacostal Missionaries and focussed on building permanent housing next to the Kapepepe Batwa village (personal communication). The missionaries were also building a church in the same location; and the land they had been building on will be given to the Batwa once the project is complete (Missionary, Personal Communication, April 10, 2022). The other organization that has been targeting the Batwa is TAK Water, which is currently constructing permanent housing and a palace for the king (personal communication).

Although both donor groups' efforts seem like they would effectively benefit the Batwa population, various members of the Ntandi community disagreed. According to one NGO that chose to remain anonymous, the efforts of the two organizations will likely have ramifications that exponentially disadvantage Batwa (Anonymous NGO, Personal Communication, April, 13, 2022). The NGO speculated that the houses being built will cause the Batwa to be targeted by other community members, because the houses are top tier compared to most other homes in

Ntandi. Violence was projected as a possible outcome of donated houses, because non-Batwa groups may be jealous. Concern about actions the Batwa take once the homes are completed was brought up as well. The NGO suggested that the Batwa would likely sell the homes for extremely minimal profit, allowing other people to essentially steal the homes from them. There is potential for the homes to be used as drug safe havens because many Batwa are hooked on various illicit drugs and alcohol. If the missionaries do not synthesize the Batwa on the benefits of the new homes, the missionaries' intentions will be contradicted by Batwa actions. It was clear that if a local pastor was not established to run the church being built, then the building would serve unproductive activities. The reason for this is that many of the Batwa already belong to their own churches elsewhere in the town council (Anonymous NGO, Personal Communications, April 13, 2022). However, in discussion with the missionaries, they seem dedicated towards ensuring the Batwa settle into the new housing, and are committed towards finding a local pastor and being present at the church in order to support the Batwa through biblical matters and for developing income generating activities (Missionaries, Personal Communication, April 21, 2022).

The greater issue the anonymous NGO had was with TAK Water (Anonymous NGO, Personal Communications, April 13, 2022). This is because TAK Water's construction site involves building houses for the Batwa—including a palace for the king—except according to the NGO, the land that is being built on exists at the very edge of the Bundibugyo district in a very mountainous and remote location. The cost for traveling from the Batwa current home is approximately 26000 UGX, which is extremely unaffordable for them. Additionally, the Batwa have finally established themselves in Ntandi Town Council, and take advantage of the market there, where they can buy and trade goods; the proximity to the forest allows them to enter

whenever they choose as long as in the permits of UWA; they maintain mostly peaceful relationships with their current neighbors. According to the NGO, moving to the TAK Water property would serve as a disadvantage to the Batwa because they would be completely isolated from the new lives they established after being forced out of the park. If they moved to the TAK Water facility, it would mean re-displacement because the property does not provide opportunity for income generating activity the way Ntandi does, and it would be too expensive to return to Ntandi to enter the forest and trade. The NGO also expressed frustration with the two donor groups, because many NGOs and individuals that deal with the Batwa directly do not think houses are a necessity for them. This is because most Batwa already have homes, and are not needing better homes to improve their lives. The NGO revealed that the Batwa mostly need assistance in learning how to make money so they can be self-sufficient. The NGO was upset that the donor groups did not reach out to NGOs and local government officials that know what the Batwa need, as new homes will not help the Batwa in their current situation. Rather, the NGO revealed that the construction of the new homes on a property solely for Batwa will likely result in Batwa becoming isolated and othered from the community because it distinguishes them as separate and different from the rest of the Ntandi Town Council members. The NGO suggests that this could cause a digression in the progress that Ntandi has made of inclusion and equality of all members of the town council (Anonymous NGO, Personal Communication, April 13, 2022).

To make matters worse, in a conversation with the king and midwife, they revealed that they will not be moving to either of the new donor houses because they already have homes (personal communication). The king stated how the palace being constructed is too far away for him to move to. Although he recognises that a palace would be nice, he stated that his culture

belongs to the forest, and his current home is close to the forest, so he will stay where he currently lives. Both the king and midwife revealed that if any Batwa want to move to the new houses, even the TAK Water homes which are far away, then they can. But at least for the Batwa that were raised in the park, although appreciative of the generosity, they view the new homes—especially TAK Water because of its distance—as a wasted effort (personal communication). During the interview with the anonymous NGO, it was revealed that previous donor initiatives have left the Batwa worse off because the projects mistarget what the Batwa actually need. The NGO expects these donor projects to result in that same outcome (Anonymous NGO, Personal Communication, April 13, 2022).

Analysis:

History that was documented during this study was difficult to place in time by asking the ages of interviewees when different events took place. This is because the Batwa were generally unaware of their ages, often naming different numbers when discussing current age. However, the historical data found involved conflict that took place during various political regimes. Rather than asking for age to place an event in a historical time place, investigating what leaders were in power was successful at locating the timeframe of different pieces of Batwa history. Because the Batwa lived during the regimes of political leaders that have reputations for being violent, it is important to speculate the possibility that political tension resulting from those regimes may be at fault for some of the displacement the Batwa endured while in Mahoyo and Semuliki forests. It is important to note that during some discussions about violence in the forest, various political leaders were brought up voluntarily. However, it can not be assumed that the voluntary discussion of regime leaders, that occurred while asking questions of displacement,

suggest that political tensions that existed under those leaders was the cause of violence and displacement in the forest that the Batwa mention. Rather, further research must be conducted to discover the root causes for the attacks the Batwa experienced, especially during the regime of Mobutu while in DRC. However, the history the Batwa provided was generally accepted as true by NGOs and individuals that are familiar with the Batwa narrative, suggesting credibility of the information they provided.

In regards to the current issues in Bundibugyo, a necessary action involves eliminating the issues at hand by requiring better communication between district level government and the miniscule governments within the Bundibugyo district, including town council governments and sub county governments. Although the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) designates final approval for all donor initiatives and projects within the district, the CAO is often unfamiliar with the specific issues of the smaller governments within district governance. Due to this, the CAO often approves projects that aim at assisting certain communities within. However, because the CAO may not always be educated on the specific issues in the town councils and sub counties, the projects that get approved do not always target the intended audience or target the most prominent needs.

Rather than continue the practice which allows loose approval of donor projects, increased collaboration and communication should be a required practice between the district government and the smaller government leaderships that fall under the district's authority. In addition to strengthening the relationships across the leaderships within the Bundibugyo government, it should be required that donors consult local NGOs, CBOs, religious officials, or any group that deals directly with specific issues of communities the donor is attempting to target. In doing so, a proper and reconstructed proposal should be made to redirect the initial

proposed project. This would initiate efforts that aim at eliminating the root causes of issues present in the target community. The goal of doing this would be to minimize instances of development induced displacement in which development projects make the target group worse off than before. But more importantly for the donor, this would prevent the donors from mistargeting their intended focus—ultimately preventing financial loss.

Once an efficient plan is developed, town council and district governments should require by law that monitoring and evaluation occurs. The district government should establish a monitoring process, and a systematic collection of the donor's progress on a quarterly basis. The government should establish monitoring teams to evaluate that progress and to keep the donors accountable. The district should require that donor resources be directed towards corrective actions in the case that the project begins straying from the proposed target.

In the case of Budnibugyo, if a law requiring the above suggestions was implemented, it is likely that the concerns of the various NGOs and local government officials would be alleviated. Additionally, proper targeting of Batwa needs could take place. This is because it would be required by law for the donor groups to consult NGOs, such as UNCIDA UGANDA, and local officials, such as the Ntandi Town Council Chairman. They deal with the Batwa directly, and would need to be consulted before finalizing a project proposal. That consultation would allow for a proper project proposal to be developed in a way that targets the most prominent Batwa needs. A likely target would be to establish income generating activity amongst the Batwa population. Additionally, it would be required for the Bundibugyo government to have a monitoring and evaluation team that inspects the donor efforts. This would ensure they are on track with the proposed plan to benefit the Batwa. If they are off track, Bundibugyo monitoring team would require their need for realignment.

Development induced displacement—that seems to come from donor projects that do not entirely understand the needs of the groups they are targeting—is evidently an issue that affects the Batwa in Ntandi. The above proposal could be efficient in preventing development induced displacement from taking effect, as the anonymous NGO suggested that the current donor efforts will likely disadvantage Batwa. However, the research in Ntandi seems to have recorded the onset of development induced displacement, right as it was about to take effect. Although the proposal made, could prevent development induced displacement, the example of Ntandi highlights how poorly thought out development measures can have negative impacts. Additionally, because the development initiatives could result in isolation and discrimination of the Batwa in part due to jealousy, it seems as if the Ugandan government's efforts to prioritize minority groups and improve the livelihoods *all* Ugandans by 2040—as suggested respectively by article 36 in Uganda's constitution, and the NDP III—may actually be backtracking in an unproductive direction, at least amongst individuals in Bundibugyo. The question then becomes, how does Uganda recover from this and address the issues of development induced displacement, if it is still intending to follow through with its stated objectives in its constitution and its National Development Plan III.

Conclusion:

The Batwa in Bundibugyo are an indigenous minority group that have undergone excessive challenges due to the displacement they have faced. The study involved four different objectives that aimed at documenting the history and displacement of the Batwa in Ntandi Town Council, Uganda. Investigations into the history, culture, and traditions of the Batwa took place, as well as investigation into Batwa displacement and recent challenges. Evidence of Batwa

resilience came to light as a result of those inquiries; however, because of excessive challenges, the role of Ugandan government in addressing Batwa needs was examined as well.

Various unique cultural aspects of the Batwa tribe were documented. They have a unique method of hunting for animals; however, due to Ugandan law, they are no longer allowed to partake in hunting animals they formerly ate. Prior to exiting the forest, they enjoyed dance and song; however, now their traditional ways are less practiced. Their movement through the forest depended greatly on the movement of animals and availability of food. Often the Batwa would only move 1-2 kilometers per week depending on where food was more prominent. Every time they moved, new huts were constructed; however, at various times in the forest, movement did not come from search for food.

Rather, there were instances where non-Batwa groups began attacking the Batwa for unknown reasons. Trade was typical when the Batwa interacted with groups that they came across at intersections of forest and outside civilization; however, during the regime of Mobutu Sesse Seko while the Batwa were still in DRC, numerous attacks on them occurred. This caused them to flee into Semuliki National Park, Uganda. Once there, life was generally peaceful; however, movement eventually led them to settling near the main road in Bundibugyo. Once that settlement occurred various other displacement events took place.

When the Batwa first moved to the road, they began receiving attention from various donor groups that eventually bought them property and built them homes. However, due to lack of sensitization, the Batwa were not generally appreciative of the homes they received. Issues of rape and impregnation of Batwa daughters and sisters became a concerning issue once interaction with non-Batwa tribes occurred. As the years progressed the Batwa received

additional attention, including recruitment to President Museveni's National Resistance Movement, and additional aid from the European Union.

Finally in 2007, the Batwa were relocated and given several plots of land from the EU where they settled as a result of officially being banned from living in Uganda's forests. They moved into Ntandi Town Council where language barrier and challenges with integration were presented. However, prior to this in the 1990s, immense displacement occurred during a series of attacks from a rebel group called Allied Democratic Forces.

Since 2007 the Batwa have gained attention from outside donor groups who are interested in bettering their lives. However, many donor groups propose projects that do not always benefit the Batwa. Rather the projects, which are intended to help them, do not address the root issues the Batwa are dealing with. Currently two donor groups are involved in projects meant to benefit the Batwa. They are both dedicated towards building permanent housing for them. Although this seems like a valued investment, the Batwa are not in need of new housing. Rather, the new housing will cause the Batwa to be a target within their community and the housing has potential to be misused. Some officials familiar with the Batwa are concerned that the construction of housing will leave them worse off than before.

Individuals familiar with Batwa needs suggest that the most pressing investments would regard development of income generating activities. One donor group will evidently address that goal; however, some donor activity may result in unintended displacement of the Batwa because the new housing will isolate them from the limited income generating activity they currently enjoy. Considering the unintended ramifications of the current projects being built, the idea of development induced displacement becomes prominent as these donor projects are expected to cause that.

The research ultimately suggests a method that would assist in preventing donor groups from mistargeting the key issues that affect their target communities. This method involves greater communication between Ugandan district governments and the governments that fall within district jurisdiction. District governments

Add Headings (Format > Paragraph styles) and they will appear in your table of contents.

would be required to monitor and evaluate donor projects to ensure they are most efficiently assisting the communities the projects intend to impact. Additionally, the district governments must require that donors discuss with people familiar with their target groups, prior to initiating a project, in order to pinpoint the most important needs.

Because Uganda has emphasized the need to improve lives of all Ugandans including indigenous minorities, a question that arises is, how does Uganda address development induced displacement initiatives that, rather than benefit minorities, actually, disadvantage them? The issue of development induced displacement is evidence that many of the development initiatives that take place in Uganda may be leaving communities worse off than realized, sending Uganda's development goals for the future on a negative path. Identifying how development projects can properly address needs of communities is vital to efficiently direct resources to make positive impacts.

Limitations:

The greatest limitation to this study was the time allotted. If more time to conduct research was possible, deeper investigation into all aspects of the objectives could have occurred. Building rapport took significant time; however, by the end of the study individuals were excessive in their willingness to provide information. If more time were spent in the field,

significantly higher amounts of data could have been collected. An additional significant limitation was the language barrier. Often, Batwa and translators understood common languages; however, those languages were not primary for both parties. It is expected that significant data was not portrayed because of that matter.

Recommendations for Further Study:

To better understand some of the push factors of the Batwa out of the forest—both the DRC Mahoyo forest and Semuliki forest—investigation into the political conflicts present along the border territory of Uganda and DRC is necessary. This would involve investigating various regime changes in DRC and Uganda that may have stirred conflict in the Batwa homelands. Additionally, because the Batwa in Bundibugyo have hardly been documented before, and because they are a culture that is quickly integrating into the surrounding societies, further investigation and documentation on the Batwa culture is necessary. Furthermore, investigation into instances of development induced displacement across Uganda would be interesting to compare to the example of Bundibugyo.

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Appendices:

Appendix I:

Consent Form:



PARTICIPANT INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Title of the Study:

Researcher Name: Marcos Turk

My name is Marcos Turk, I am a student with the SIT Uganda: Global Development program.

I would like to invite you to participate in a study I am conducting as part of the SIT Study Abroad program in Uganda. Your participation is voluntary. Please read the information below, and ask questions about anything you do not understand, before deciding whether to participate. If you decide to participate, you will be asked to sign this form and you will be given a copy of this form.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

This study is designed to assess causes of displacement, how you are resilient, and government response to those issues.

STUDY PROCEDURES

I will simply be asking you questions about your life. The time should be near 25 minutes. Audio recording will take place for documentation purposes, but if you do not wish to be recorded, let me know and you can still participate.

POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS

There are no foreseeable risks to participating in this study and no penalties should you choose not to participate; participation is voluntary. During the interview (focus group) you have the right not to answer any questions or to discontinue participation at any time.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO PARTICIPANTS AND/OR TO SOCIETY Academic benefit.

PAYMENT/COMPENSATION FOR PARTICIPATION

A small gift will be given to chosen participants only. I am the only person with access to your information, and the report will not mention your names.

PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL

Your participation is voluntary. Your refusal to participate will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. You may withdraw your consent at any time and discontinue participation without penalty. You are not waiving any legal claims, rights or remedies because of your participation in this research study. “I have read the above and I understand its contents and I agree to participate in the study. I acknowledge that I am 18 years of age or older.”

Participant’s signature

_____ *Date* _____ *Researcher’s*

signature _____ *Date* _____

Consent to Quote from Interview

Can I quote you in my work. A fake name can be used

Initial one of the following to indicate your choice:

- _____ (initial) I agree to...
- _____ (initial) I do not agree to...

Consent to Audio-Record Interview

Initial one of the following to indicate your choice:

- _____ (initial) I agree to...
- _____ (initial) I do not agree to...

“I give my consent to be recorded and to allow that the recording be used in conference (classroom) presentation.”

Initial one of the following to indicate your choice:

- _____ (initial) I agree to...
- _____ (initial) I do not agree to...

RESEARCHER’S CONTACT INFORMATION

If you have any questions or want to get more information about this study, please contact UNCIDA

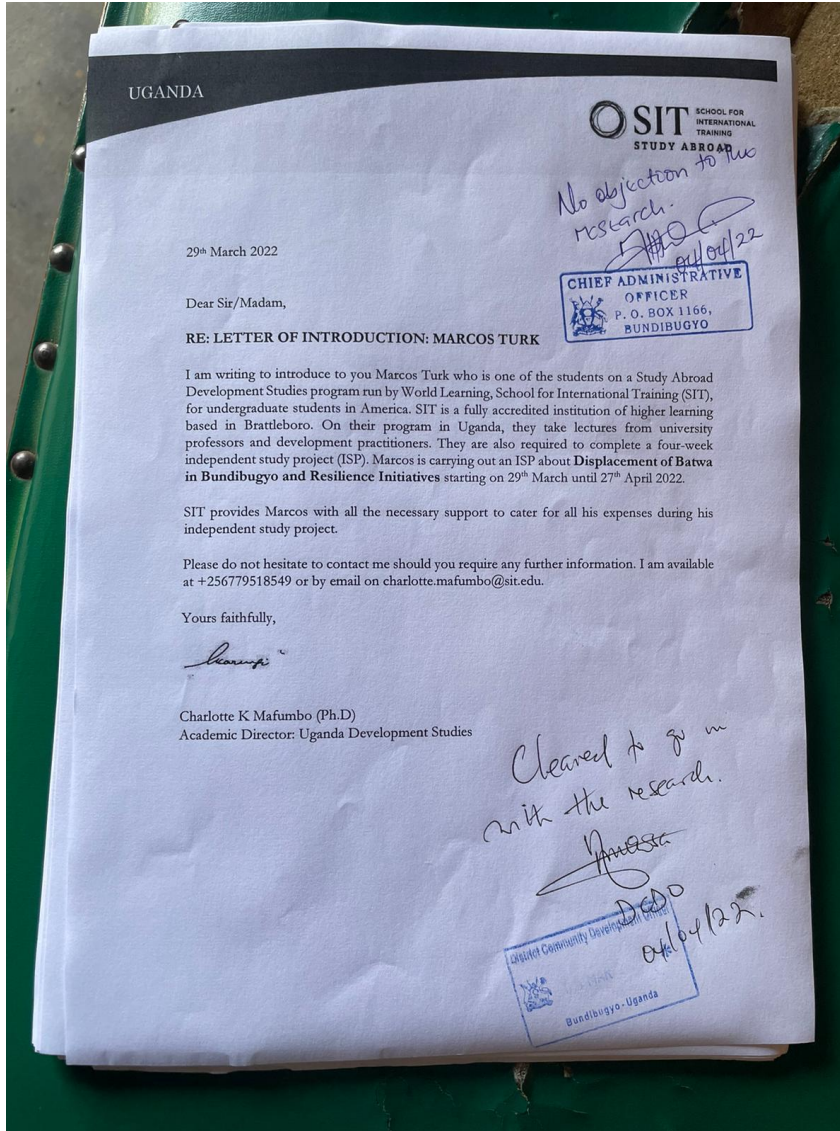
RIGHTS OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANT – IRB CONTACT INFORMATION In

an endeavor to uphold the ethical standards of all SIT proposals, this study has been reviewed and approved by an SIT Study Abroad Local Review Board or SIT Institutional Review Board. If you have questions, concerns, or complaints about your rights as a research participant or the research in general and are unable to contact the researcher please contact the Institutional Review Board at:

School for International Training
Institutional Review Board

1 Kipling Road, PO Box 676
Brattleboro, VT 05302-0676 USA
irb@sit.edu
802-258-3132

Appendix II:
Introduction Letter/Research Approval Form



Appendix III:
Interview List

Batwa Focus Group Discussion (6 members)

Batwa King
Batwa Spokesperson
Batwa Journal Secretary
Batwa Midwife
Batwa Elder Woman
Ntandi Town Council Chairman
Person Familiar with Batwa Who Lives at Park Border
Mugisa Nicholas Robert of UNCIDA NGO
Anonymous NGO
Bundibugyo District Community Development Officer
Budibugyo Vice Chief Administrative Officer
Romanian Pentacostal Missionary in Bundibugyo
Jacqueline Kitentela
Ntandi Health Centre III In Charge
Ntandi Health Centre III Employee
Moses from Ebenezer Seventh day-Adventist Health Centre III

Appendix IV:

Interview Guide

When did you move from DRC to Uganda?
What was difficult about living in DRC forest?
What was difficult about living in Semuliki?
When did the government show up at Semuliki?
What are your current challenges?
What is the hardest thing for you?
Who helps you?
What do you do to make life better for your children?
Do you know anything about the ADF?
Was there anything violent in the forest?
Is there anything violent about Ntandi?