Department of Social and Economic Geography
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SGEM01
HT 2009

Aid, Development and Power

Perceptions and Relations in the
Gulu Development Community

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Abstract

International development aid is big business. A flow of funds reaches the Global South each year, creating aid clusters with concentrated implementing development organizations. This study looks closer at development in practice in one of these aid hubs, studying the relations between the development community of Gulu, Northern Uganda, and its clients. In focus are power relations between the organizations and their clients, as well as among the actors in the community.

The aim of the study is to look closer at the development community in Gulu to understand how its self-perception and perception of its clients shape the development assistance given. This is driven by a desire to understand the implementation of development policies, thus studying the practice of development field-work. The research question for the study is *How do representatives from the Gulu development community perceive their own work and the relation to their clients?*, which in turn has been divided into three smaller questions in order to ease the practical study.

The study presents a theoretical framework grounded in ideas of development and poverty, and points to how processes of 'Othering' creates and maintain the notions of poor and other marginalized groups. The methodology used is qualitative, with 20 semi-structured interviews and participant observations conducted during two months of field-work in Gulu, and the analysis is done through a discourse analysis.

The study finds that the impact of development has led to an inflated local economy, hurting those with the least the most. In the wake of economic globalization and development there is a change of local culture as well, leading to clashes between tradition and modernity. The many interventions have led to a wide-spread dependency of the services introduced, coupled with high expectations of what development can and should provide.

 The development community itself is very concentrated both geographically and in terms of types of interventions, leading to a need of coordination and both to cooperation and competition over limited resources. This competition leads to a need for visibility, especially for smaller organizations, while many organizations tap into current or even obsolete symbolism in order to attract funding. There are high expectations of aid in the development community, but a frustration over the perceived little impact. This fuels assumptions of inefficiency and corruption of other actors, but one's own role is seldom evaluated.

The study also finds that development interventions often restrain the agency of clients, as decisions are based on presumptions rather than a dialogue with clients. As development practitioners act as self-proclaimed representatives of the non-privileged, the clients are subject to others' decisions and have to accept what is given. This causes a dilemma when it comes to weighting different opinions against each other, leading to sometimes contradicting interventions competing for the same clients.

Keywords: Agency, Development, Gulu, Power, Uganda

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List of Abbreviations

CBO – Community-Based organization

DRC – Democratic Republic of the Congo

GBV – Gender-Based Violence

IDP – Internally Displaced Person

INGO – International Non-Governmental Organization

LNGO – Local Non-Governmental Organization

LRA – Lord's Resistance Army

NGO – Non-Governmental Organization

NNGO – National Non-Governmental Organization

OOO – Out-Of-Office hours

PRDP – Peace, Recovery and Development Plan for Northern Uganda

USD – US Dollars

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1. Introduction

Poverty deprives people of the freedom to decide over and shape their own lives. As seen as a proportion of the world's population poverty is on the retreat, but this does not apply in absolute numbers, with more than one billion people living on less than 1$ a day.[1] This means that poverty remains a central issue in development and foreign aid. Following this, development policies are permeated by declaratory politics on how to reduce global and national poverty. The purpose of this study is to go beyond these policies and study the practical implementation, and how poverty and it implications are perceived by practitioners working directly with it.

International development aid is big business. When trying to put a figure on the business of aid, it has been a roughly estimated that there are more than 500.000 operating donors.[2] Receiving and implementing these funds are a multitude of transnational agencies and organs, large Northern International Non-Governmental Organizations (INGOs) and local Southern Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), together constituting the 'aid community'. The development industry has in many ways grown beyond the early demand, and has created its own momentum; to some part replacing demand-driven realism with aid-shoehorning, with huge power resting with the donors.[3] Some cities in the Global South have become veritable aid hubs, channeling billions of aid annually. This study has been conducted in such an aid hub, namely in Gulu, in Northern Uganda.

After having been plagued by civil war for 20 years, peace and stability has in the last few years returned to Northern Uganda and the inhabitants are returning from displacement camps. Gulu town is expanding from the resumed border trade with Sudan, and development aid is pouring into the region. The resulting is a development cluster that is not an extreme, neither an anomaly; it is rather the result of concentrated logistics and the opportunities clustering offers. The characteristics of the hub are therefore not generally applicable to all regions with development interventions, but are an interesting starting point to study fundamental development issues due to the scale and concentration of the interventions.

In order to formulate macro-level and long-term strategies it is important to study micro-level activities. This study proposes to explore this. The definitions and perceptions of poverty are central in dealing with poverty, however investigations that focus on the perceptions and understandings of poor people, inquiring about their situation remain sparse in the literature.[4] That is not what this study will do, but it will instead focus on another group of neglected research subjects, namely practitioners working in development programs. This study aims at examining the way practitioners perceive poverty, development and the clients of their efforts.

1.1 Aim and Research Questions

The aim of this study is to look closer at the development community in Gulu, Northern Uganda, to understand how the self-perception and perceptions of their clients shape the development assistance given. The aim is driven by a will to understand the implementation of development

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[1] Sida, 2002, Perspectives on poverty, Stockholm: Sida, p.7
[2] Moyo, Dambisa, 2009, *Dead Aid: Why Aid is Not Working and How There is Another Way for Africa*, London: Penguin, p.54
[3] Sachs, Jeffrey D., 2005, *End of Poverty*, London: Penguin, p.272
[4] Tiwari, Meera, 2009, "Poverty and Wellbeing at the 'Grassroots'—How Much is Visible to Researchers?". In: *Social Indicators Research*, 90:1, p.127

policies, thus studying the practice of development field-work. It is an important aim for social research in general to give a voice to marginalized groups in society, and following this the study is grounded in the notion that it is of special importance to scrutinize power relations.[5] The main research question for the study is the following:

- *How do representatives from the Gulu development community perceive their own work and the relation to their clients?*

In order to answer this overarching research question, it has in turn been broken down into three parts:

- *How do representatives of the Gulu development community view the impact of development on Gulu?*

- *How is the development community organized and what are the internal relations of the organizations?*

- *What are the relations between the development community and their clients?*

The first question aims at describing the self-perceptions of the development community, uncovered through interviews with representatives. This is in turn contrasted to the participant observations made. The second question tries to describe and explain the internal relations in the community based on interviews with representatives from different types of organization and observations in both field and office settings of how different organizations operate. Finally, the third question looks at the relations to the clients through interviews with the representatives, which is contrasted to the views of clients studied during the observations. To facilitate the conceptualization the core concepts of the study have been further detailed in the method chapter.

The delimitations for the thesis are several. The study is limited to Gulu and even though the results might be applicable elsewhere, the study makes no pretense for general application of the results. Even if somewhat included through the participant observations, the client perspective is not explored in greater detail, and however interesting, there has not been room to explore the donor perspective. Geographically the study is limited to the Gulu district, which refers to both Gulu town and the surrounding district. Unfortunately, I have not been able to access the necessary cartographic material to include GIS presentation and analysis in the study.

1.2 Disposition and Definitions

The thesis is split into six parts. In the introductory chapter the aim and research questions is presented and detailed. Following this is the theoretical framework, followed by a chapter presenting the methodological choices and presentation of the material. The fourth chapter shortly presents the context, presenting an overview of Gulu and Uganda in general. Thereafter the results of the study are accounted for, presenting and analyzing the material thematically. The conclusions are presented in the final chapter, followed by a list of references and an annexed interview-guide.

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[5] Ragin, Charles C., 1994, *Constructing Social Research: the unity and diversity of method*, Thousand Oaks: Pine Forge Press, p.16

The term 'development community' is partly based on the self-definition of the organizations themselves. The organizations included in the study define themselves as working with 'development', and are all funded through donors or similar activities channeling development aid. Due to the high concentration of development organizations in Gulu, I found it suitable to refer to this cluster as a community, thereby also shifting focus to the people working in this sector. The much-used terms development and poverty are discussed as part of the theoretical framework.

The included organizations are all NGOs, except one that defines itself as a Community-Based Organization (CBO) and one that is a government department working with development. To differentiate between the organizations I have labeled them according to the following scale; CBOs operating in one community specifically, Local Non-Governmental Organizations (LNGOs) operating solely in the Gulu and neighboring districts, National Non-Governmental Organizations (NNGOs) operating also in other parts of Uganda, and International Non-Governmental Organizations (INGOs) working in other countries as well.

Rather than using the contested and misleading dichotomies 'developed' and 'less-developed' countries or the 'first' and 'third' world, I have chosen to use the terms 'privileged' and 'non-privileged' worlds. The terms are used along with the Global South, focusing on the global processes shaping a majority and a minority world not equivalent to geographical boundaries.[6] The plural, worlds, is to draw attention to the dual or even more differentiated economies that exist in any country, with these variations making privileged and non-privileged people prevalent side by side in every country around the globe, even as the differences are more apparent in the Global South. The terms are not as clear-cut as the above mentioned definitions, and point to the variations inside countries as well.

Other choices have been made to facilitate reading. As the respondents are treated anonymously, all have been treated as men when the language has required a gender. I have also chosen to use the term respondent only, rather than interviewee or informant. The term 'Gulu' in the text refers to Gulu district, except when stated otherwise.

When longer quotes are used, these have been laid bare, while shorter quotes have been integrated into the text. When commenting in quotes these have been marked with square brackets [ ], while cut out parts of quotes have been marked with […].

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[6] Rigg, Jonathan, 2007, *An Everyday Geography of the Global south*, Abingdon, New York: Routledge, p.3

2. Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework is made up of theories of poverty and development, focusing on how the current global development infrastructure works and the issues that are facing it. Also the process of *Othering* is explored, as well as a discussion on how working in post-conflict areas affects development. In the analysis these parts are all merged into a holistic approach. This approach means that the analysis will be done through multiple layers at once, instead of singling out one, as opposed to the grand theories which long has dominated development theory. For example a specific gender perspective will not be applied, but is rather naturally blended into a holistic analysis, as neither poverty nor development is neutral to gender.

2.1 Poverty and 'Othering'

Poverty is multidimensional; with not one poor, but rather many poor_s_. Thus poverty is a very diverse experience, with different prospects, causes and contexts.[7] As such poverty is different in different contexts, and the different contexts shape different types of poverty.[8] There are many ways to approach definitions of poverty. Absolute measures, in USD earned per day, are the most common forms of defining poverty, with different criteria depending on the institution. As being quantitative, absolute measures are easy to aggregate; but poverty can also be measured quantitatively for example as being below a certain percentage of the national average income.[9]

More qualitative approaches point to subjective or objective wellbeing, based on other criteria than income. In the influential *Capability Approach*, poverty is seen as depriving basic capabilities. Development should stand for five complementary types of freedom; political freedom, economic facilities, social opportunities, transparency guarantees and protective securities. These freedoms are based on values, and poverty in this sense is both a lack of wealth as much as lack of mental satisfaction.[10]

Related to this is poverty as exclusion from opportunities and power over shaping one's own life. This power can be analyzed through *agency*, the individual's own capacities, competencies and activities through which they navigate their daily lives. Constraining agency can be political and cultural structures and expectations, rural location, poverty and moral constraints. Restrictive contexts leads to *thin* agency, where few viable alternatives are present and the individual have little power to affect their everyday life, while *thick* agency means having a broader range of options in how to deal with a situation. Agency is thus a way to describe the ability of an individual to influence her or his own life.[11]

No matter the definition, there is a cross-cultural stigma in being labeled as poor, and being helped as such.[12] People in the non-privileged world are being branded as poor and receive assistance as such. Symbols and images label and stigmatize marginal social groups, and the 'poor' are directly affected by this.[13] Even though sometimes treated as such, the 'poor' are not

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[7] Rigg 2007, p.8

[8] Lister, Ruth, 2004, *Poverty*, Cambridge: Polity, p.3

[9] *Ibid.*, p.4

[10] Sen, Amartya K., 2001, *Development as Freedom*, Oxford: Oxford university Press, p.10; p.19; p.30ff

[11] Bell, Stephen & Payne, Ruth, 2009, "Young People as Agents in Development Processes: reconsidering perspectives for development geography". In: *Third World Quarterly*, 30:5, p.1028f

[12] Sen 2001, p.136

[13] Lister 2004, p.180

detached from others. They know about development and the privileged worlds' abundance, and are tantalized by images of the vast riches of a world not far from them.[14]

There are very clear linkages between 'poor' and non-priviliged, which in most societies can almost be used interchangeably, referring to those with the least in terms of material wealth and individual options. Poverty, in all of the definitions developed above, constitutes a thinner agency and non-privileged position in the society the individual is part of than many others. 'Poor people' are however far from a homogenous group, experiencing similar problems. 'Poor people' is constructed by the 'non-poor' through a process of *Othering*. Through this process a non-fixed group is created by the outsiders' definition of poverty, and through the definition the identity of the 'non-poor' is affirmed.[15] *Othering* is the construction of category-based and hierarchical ordered dichotomies, such as *MAN-Woman*, *WHITE-Non-white* and *NON-POOR-Poor*. Through this binary logic identities of dissimilarity are created.[16] In this construction a dichotomy is created which is important for the definition of the dominant culture that maintains control over others.

The image of the two opposites is a prerequisite for "the Other's" identity and existence, and the production of knowledge about "the Other" is a part of controlling it. A distance between the two opposites is built into the relation between them and at the same time the surrounding world that is standardized and homogenized to fit into the template.[17] Important in the division into *Us-Them* is the active role that the creating part has, with "us" being a subject, rational and an ideal, while "them" is seen as an object, irrational and inferior.[18]

Globalization is a process of increased flows of capital, people, products and ideas. It also means an increased competition, even in rural areas far from the globalization flagships of world cities. In a globalized world communications is a backbone, which has divided the world in digital capacity. The information famine is widespread in the developing world, and even though cell-phones and internet is spreading rapidly, the capacity is far behind the western world.[19] Globalization is not only a flow from center to periphery, from an active privileged to a passive non-privileged world, but should rather be understood as alternating expressions of homogenization, heterogenization and creolization.[20]

Cultures are often seen as living side by side in a cultural mosaic, as distinctive and separable entities.[21] I would rather claim that cultures are mixed through creolization-processes, meaning that there are no fixed boundaries, but rather a 'leaking mosaic'.[22] The division into cultures is an important element of the *Us-Them*-binarity. The ethnic identity is naturally specific and confining, excluding the generic and universal, which is reduced to the 'Other'. Through globalization processes the 'Other' travels over geographical boundaries and cultural divisions are blurred, over time changing cultures through creolization. Globalization is expressed both in

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[14] Sachs 2005, p.19f

[15] Lister 2004, p.100ff

[16] Bhabha,Homi K., 2004, *The Location of Culture*, London: Routledge, p.5

[17] Loomba, Ania, 2005, *Colonialism/Postcolonialism*, London: Routledge, p.55

[18] Mehmet, Ozay, 1995, *Westernizing the Third World. The Eurocentricity of Economic Development Theories*, New York: Routledge, p.144

[19] Binns, Tony; Elliot, Jennifer A.; Potter, Robert, B. & Smith, David, 2008, *Geographies of Development: An Introduction to Development Studies*, Harlow: Pearson Prentice Hall, p.140

[20] Massey, Doreen B., 2005, *For Space*, London: SAGE, p. 83

[21] Cook, Ian; Crang, Philip & Thorpe, Mark, 2000, "Regions to be cheerful. Culinary Authenticity and its Geographies". I: Cook; Chrouch & Ryan (red.), *Cultural turns, geographical turns*, New York: Prentice Hall, p.112

[22] Cook, Ian & Crang, Philip, 1996. "The World on a Plate: Culinary Culture, Displacement and Geographical Knowledges". I: *Journal of Material Culture*, 1:2, p.139

terms of homogenization and heterogenization of the world, but most of all to creolization, breaking down cultural divisions and blurring identities into a mold of different expressions.[23] The flow of ideas and creolization that follow in the wake of economic globalization is often initially approached negatively by traditional societies. The flow of international aid is a globalization process that brings with it certain ideas and notions, and often weakens social capital and traditional structures.[24] Through aid for example rules of work regulation, trade regulation, ecology and other 'functional' Northern Eurocentric ideas and assumptions are spread universally. Hidden in this universalism is a notion that more 'advanced' or 'modern' societies have a responsibility to introduce these ideas and replace traditional custom in order to create conditions for development.[25] The resulting break-up of traditional structures creates new power structures and new opportunities and possibilities, increasing agency for some groups and lowering it for others.[26]

2.2 Development

As popularized by Oxford professor Paul Collier, the term *the Bottom Billion* incorporates the around one billion people in the world who see no progress, but rather are falling behind or even apart.[27] We live in a time of paradoxes, where extreme wealth and poverty is prevalent sometimes side by side. There is no homogenous 'developing' world to speak of, but rather private and intra-national differences.[28] It is a world of privileged and non-privileged people, where the former rids themselves of guilt through development assistance to the latter.

Central in contemporary development practice is poverty reduction, meaning above all creating conditions that will enable 'poor' to improve their lives. This is done by offering opportunities to partake in the possibilities of the global economy by creating conditions on regional and local level. This empowerment means seeing people as individuals rather than victims, who want help in getting jobs, starting enterprises and access to capital.

Closely linked to development is *developmentalism*, the proposition and policies that demand or provide for transformation of the affected societies into modernity.[29] Development discourse is the way development is described and talked about, but also how it is perceived and practiced; revealing underlying assumptions, assumptions and core 'truths'. This is reflected in text and speech, as well as in actual projects and procedures.[30] For those involved in development practice, reflection on words and their meanings may seem irrelevant in comparison to getting things done. Due to the normative appeal of their work, the language of development organizations can be hard to challenge. But at the same time the development sector is full with buzzwords, words that invite automatic approval. By arguing for a death of ideology, many terms

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[23] Binns *et al* 2008, p.129
[24] Moyo 2009, p.58f
[25] Latouche, Serge, 1997, "Paradoxial Growth". In: Rahnema & Bawtree (ed.), *The Post-Development Reader*
[26] Bannon *et al* 2005, p.12
[27] Collier, Paul, 2007, *The Bottom Billion: Why the poorest countries are failing and what can be done about it*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, p.4
[28] Little, Daniel, 2003, *The paradox of wealth and poverty: mapping the ethical dilemmas of global development*, Boulder: Westview Press, p.36
[29] Cloke, Paul; Crang, Philip & Goodwin, Mark, 2005, *Introducing Human Geographies*, London: Arnold, p.206
[30] Ebrahim, Alnoor, 2006, *NGOs and Organisational Change: Discourse, Reporting and Learning*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p.11

try to invoke universalism to hide their true identity.[31] It is therefore of importance to study the underlying power structures and motives of the development 'consensuses'.

Aid from North to South has a long history, and its existence has been debated vibrantly since its inception. Several campaigns and development advocates argue that current aid efforts are not enough, that the people of many of the poorest countries cannot even reach the bottom rung of the economic ladder as these countries lack the basic infrastructure for trade and development. Reaching a minimum standard has a threshold effect, where economic benefits such as income generation start to kick in. Aid proponents argue that aid should lift people at least to this point, and thus needs to be increased manifold in the short term.[32]

The opposite stance urges a stop to all aid beyond direct relief aid. Aid is argued to foster dependence on rich donors, creating incentives for corruption, cause misspending, impairing free trade and cramping entrepreneurialism, choking exports and increasing inflation. On a local scale aid contributes to the occurrence of a micro-macro paradox, where short-term macro interventions hurt long-term micro sustainability.[33] The incentives for corruption is highest in in over-regulated sectors and economies, especially where individuals hold much power but little wealth.[34] Conditionality, aid with strings attached, has been tried with little success, as aid frees up other public funds, resulting in money being spent in the originally intended way anyway.[35] This lack of accountability mean that aid often is something for nothing, and under the current system aid, representing a permanent and steady income, leaves little or no incentives for change.[36]

Aid has also been criticized as an export of pre-packed and standardized Eurocentric solutions, which are not in tune with the real, acute demands in poor countries. The priorities of aid are in this way distorted and imposed on local communities. This leads to that even though clean water is more efficient in improving poor people's health and quality of life, thousands of doctors are trained and maintained with the help of aid funds instead.[37]

Development is not only concerned with the technicality of production, but is also a political issue of distribution and inclusion.[38] In this regard, aid as a hinder or leverage for development processes is up to the recipient country.[39] But even with the best intentions the aid distribution chain has several implications and when aiding non-privileged countries it doesn't necessarily reach non-privileged people. In the Global South there is a divide between the rural and urban poor, essentially a rural-urban dichotomy. The *urban bias* theory argues that small farmers and rural landless laborers are the worst off, as governments tend to prioritize urban citizens. This is a key element for poverty and development to coexist, creating a dual economy

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[31] Cornwall, Andrea, 2007, "Buzzwords and fuzzwords: deconstructing development discourse". In: *Development in Practice*, 17:4, p.471f; 478f

[32] Sachs 2005, p.250

[33] Moyo 2009, p.31f; p.44; 61ff

[34] Sen 2001, p.276

[35] Browne, Stephen, 2006, *Aid & Influence: Do donors help or hinder?*, London: Earthscan, p.48

[36] Moyo 2009, p.152

[37] Illich, Ivan, 1997, "Development as Planned Poverty". In: Rahnema & Bawtree (ed.), *The Post-Development Reader*, p.95f

[38] Clark, John D., 2002, "NGOs and the State". In: Desai & Potter (ed.), 2002, *The Companion to Development Studies*, London: Arnold, p.504

[39] Brass, Jennifer N., 2008. "Djibouti's unusual resource curse". In: Journal of Modern African Studies, 46, 2008, p.523f; Browne 2006, p.148

and internally uneven development.[40] Non-privileged people are therefore predominantly found in rural areas, or as recent migrants to urban areas.

The importance of NGOs, both internationally and locally, in the distribution of aid and developmental processes has been growing steadily over the last 30 years. NGOs have several roles; among which are policy advocacy, service delivery, offering local knowledge and constituting field watchdogs. NGOs can be complimentary to the state, or do *other* things than the state do.[41] However, no matter how much the *N* in NGO is stressed, NGOs have a political role.[42] NGOs operate in close concert with governments and even if the government is seemingly absent they need a mandate to operate. It has been proposed that NGOs cannot operate where there is too much or too little government.[43]

Larger INGOs are often criticized in that they have more accountability upwards, towards funders and other patrons, than downwards, to the people they try to help. This can be argued for Northern and Southern NGOs alike.[44] Linked to this is the concern that weaker organizations are undermined, and that the better organized organizations get to channel aid, rather than the most suitable. This creates a catch-22, where writing proposals becomes more important than the actual implementation, while there is a pressure to emphasize certain activities and downplay others.[45] Having started small, unplanned growth is a cause for problems for many small-scale NGOs, making it hard to take micro-development gains on to the macro level.[46]

NGOs cannot be seen as isolated actors, rather as intermediary organizations between donors and clients. The flow of funds, from donors, to big NGOs, to smaller local implementers, means that local implementing organizations are plentiful in development hotspots.[47] In relation to ownership, the issue of local NGOs acting as deliverers of preplanned agendas and not truly participating in decision-making has been raised. The relationship however is better described as interdependent, where the local organizations also have the power to change partners. Large-scale NGOs operating in a region have a risk of eroding local capacities unless they create local linkages.[48]

Development aid and the INGOs that implement it also have a tendency of following each-other, creating aid clusters.[49] Development money coming in to a specific area will attract people both regionally and internationally, adding to the cluster, hindering effective coordination and attract brief-case NGOs established by people wanting to cash in on the influx of money.[50]

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[40] Lipton, Michael, 1977, *Why poor people stay poor: urban bias in world development*, Cambridge, Massachusetts, p.15; p.27
[41] Clark 2002, p.505
[42] Rigg 2007, p.150
[43] Deman, William E., 2005, *NGOs and Transitional Networks: Wild Cards in World Politics*, London: Pluto Press, p.165
[44] Lewis, Davis, 2002, "Non-Governmental Organisations: Questions of performance and accountability". In: Desai & Potter (ed.), 2002, *The Companion to Development Studies*, p.520
[45] Ebrahim 2006, p.33
[46] Davies, Rick, 2002, "Monitoring & Evaluating NGO achievements". In: Desai & Potter (ed.), 2002, *The Companion to Development Studies*, p.524; Lewis 2002, p.521
[47] Ebrahim 2006, p.32
[48] Mohan, Giles, 2002, "Participatory Development". In: Desai & Potter (ed.), 2002, *The Companion to Development Studies*, p.53
[49] Dreher, Axel, Koch, Dirk-Jan; Nunnenkamp, Peter & Thiele, Rainer, 2009, "Keeping a Low Profile: What Determines the Allocation of Aid by Non-Governmental Organizations?". In: *World Development*, 37, p.914
[50] Igoe, Jim & Kelsall, Tim, 2004, *Between a Rock and a Hard Place: African NGOs, Donors and the State*, Durham: Carolina Academic Press, p.8f

In assessing the impact of development projects in general, and the impact of NGOs specifically, data is poor and reliable evidence is scarce. Many development projects have vague objectives of "empowerment" and "institutional strengthening", poorly defined and therefore hard to measure and evaluate.[51]

Power, opportunities and security are intricately linked. The conflict perspective is especially important as the Gulu part of the country has been so harshly affected by the LRA uprising, and the linkages between security and poverty are clearly visible here. In order to inhibit conflict and terrorism, poverty and deprivation has to be focused on.[52] Improving the economic situation and the role of economic actors in the region will provide security in an insecure and politically important region. In including people in economic activity, businesses can act as agents of peace, as opposed to agents of war. Mutual dependence can bring parties together who otherwise are not on speaking terms, for example in the form of trade. Socio-economic exclusion is the root of many conflicts and developmental assistance should bridge this divide rather than add to tribal and other conflicts that have roots in economic disparity.[53] Many interventions in Northern Uganda and elsewhere though continue to be conflict-blind and feed into local tensions that are the inevitable result of years of displacement and rupture.[54]

There is a link between youth unemployment in post-conflict societies and the recurrence of violence, providing employment opportunities and vocational training to youth is essential; just as it is a cause of conflict in the first place, post-conflict societies can bounce back into disharmony due to disillusioned and marginalized young, especially men, at risk.[55] The long-running conflict in northern Uganda has had an impact on all parts of society, and has eroded the education system, making it even more important to provide ample opportunities.

[51] Davies 2002, p.523ff

[52] Sachs 2005, 215; 332f

[53] Moyo 2009, 60

[54] Banfield, Jessica & Naujoks, Jana, 2009, *Enabling peace economies through early recovery – Perspectives from Uganda*, London: International Alert, p.6

[55] Bannon, Ian; Bouta, Tsjeard & Frerks, Georg, 2005, *Gender, Conflict and Development*, Washington, D.C.: World Bank, p.148

3. Methods and Material

This study is based on field-work conducted in the Gulu district of Northern Uganda from October to December 2009. The study is qualitative in its approach and grounded in a hermeneutic tradition where formulation of research questions, literature study, material gathering, interpretation and analysis have all been done continuously.[56] In qualitative methodology, theory is an integral part of the work process and is continuously incorporated. Qualitative methodology is based on the researcher's presumptions and the theoretical framework and requires scientific imagination. Data is collected and analyzed continuously, and the different parts of the research process have been constantly feeding into each other.[57]

The methods used are semi-structured interviews and participant observations, with the analysis done using a discourse analysis. The main material is formed from 20 interviews, complemented by the conducted participant observations carried out as informal interviewing and participatory activities during the whole period while in the field. In a practical sense this means that more formal, on-the-record semi-structured interviews are labeled as interviews, and less structured informal interviews, not recorded, and direct observations are labeled as observations.

3.1 Application of Core Concepts

Being qualitative in its approach, the study aims to draw conclusions of social artefacts, social beings and behaviour in the Gulu development community by analyzing social constructions. These social constructions are representations that that help understand reality, however they only *represent* reality; they do *not constitute* reality.[58]

In order to answer be able to answer the research questions, the processes of conceptualization and operationalization has to be conducted. Through conceptualization, abstract concepts are refined and made more specific in order to be able to study them. Operationalization in turn develops the core concepts into specific research procedures, thus deciding how desired data will be collected.[59] Beyond those introduced in the theorethical framework, this chapter will define some core concepts of the study and present how these will be used in the study.

The *development community* is seen as the aggregated mass of all development organizations and other institutions involved in development interventions in Gulu. It is constituted by the individual actors, with internal relations and individual external relations, as well as external relations of the community as a whole. These external relations can still be made up by a single actor, but perceived as representative for all. The community is far from homogenous, with varying interests depending on the size and focus of the actor. The community is represented in the study by representatives from different actors from the community.

The *clients* are the people in Gulu interacting with the development community in the roles of direct beneficiaries or dependants. The clients are far from a coherent group, but rather represent a multitude of different interests and groups. A client might interact with one or several

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[56] Bell, Judith, 2005, *Doing your research project: a guide for first-time researchers in education, health and social science*, Maidenhead: Open University Press, p.19ff
[57] Flick, Uwe, 2006, *An Introduction to Qualitative Research*, London: SAGE, p.14ff; Bryman, Alan, 2008, *Social Research Methods*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, p.389; Cloke, Paul J; Cook, Ian; Crang, Philip; Goodwin, Mark A.; Painter, Joe M. & Philo, Chris, 2004, *Practising Human Geography*, London: SAGE, p.188
[58] Babbie, Earl R., 2009, *The Practice of Social Research*, Belmont, California: Wadsworth, p.130; Ragin 1994, p.2
[59] Babbie 2009, p.127f; p.134

of the actors in the community, and might perceive one actor as representative of all, or base his general assumptions on several actors.

The concept of *perceptions* refers to assumptions and ways of perceiving things that individuals have, including mental images and prejudices. In order to study, these language and language use is analyzed, not only explicit words but also implicit structures and notions.

In order to study how the representatives view the *impact* of development, respondents have been questioned regarding development in Gulu in general. Added to this is informal descriptions given during observations. Impact relates to the way something, in this study mainly development interventions, affects something else, often bringing some form of change.

The *organization* of the development community relates to how what type of actors, interests and relations the community is made up of. This has been studied through respondents giving informative answers regarding their and others' organizations.

In order to study *relations*, both in question two and three, I have relied on the way my respondents have described their relationships as well as how implicit notions of relations was expressed. During my observations I also had a chance to compare this to the treatment, services and language used in interaction between development community representatives and clients, as well as between representatives themselves.

In the study *project* and *intervention* have been used interchangeably, as constituting the tangible efforts of development organizations where clients and organizations meet directly. A project can be as little as a one-day event or a long-running everyday activity for years. The *implementation* of projects refers to the execution of activities; how projects are carried out in practice.

3.2 Interviews

The central part of the material for the study is made up of 20 interviews, and a detailed list of the interviews can be found in the references. The interviews have been semi-structured, based on a pre-made interview-guide, addressing common themes and areas for all the interviews.[60] The choice of semi-structured interviews was done due to the flexibility this gives, both for me as a researcher and the increased freedom of expression for the respondents. The interview-guide has given structure and guidance during the interviews, but they have not been restricted by this in any way, but rather branches and interesting side-questions have been encouraged during the interviews.[61] The interview-guide has therefore only served as a template, with no interview conducted strictly according to the guide. All have been adapted to the context; the person and the time available, the organization in question and the setting where the interview was being conducted in. The part differing the most were the more technical questions focusing on the organization at hand, which varied depending on the structure, scope and focus area of the organization.

The interview-guide was created based on the research questions and theory, altered on-site upon arriving in Gulu and was then constantly revised, according to new input from interviews. New questions have been added while some questions that were not working very well were removed. The guide is designed in to separate parts, in which each has been formulated into separate sub-questions.[62] The annexed interview-guide in Appendix 1 is the final version.

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[60] Please find the interview-guide annexed as Appendix 1.
[61] Bryman 2008, s.438f; s.464
[62] *Ibid.*, s.442

To a large extent, the respondents have functioned both as respondents, describing their own attitudes, experiences and reflections, but also as informants, providing information in different areas. The interviews commenced with inquiring basic data regarding the respondent, before moving on to questions scrutinizing the organization in question. In the middle of interview questions focused on the background of the respondent and their motivation for working in the development sector, before moving on to the last part focusing on their views on development in Gulu district in general.

Each section started with more open, general questions followed by more specific and prestigious questions at the end. Not all the questions in the interviews were directly linked to the research aim, but were required to put the discussion in its right context. By discussing in a larger developmental framework the chances of encountering something unexpected is increased, as well as minimizing the risk of the respondents working out their answers, i.e. answering according to what they think the interviewer wants to hear.

The interviews were done treading lightly, perceptive to what the respondents wanted to talk about and asking follow-up questions on this, rather than forcing a discussion on things the respondent was not comfortable and/or confident with. The questions were all formulated as clear and direct as possible, minimizing jargon and using as simple language as possible. This technique was used in order to avoid misunderstandings, but also in part as to not tax the respondents for answers. For example the question "How do you know what you do works?" related directly to monitoring and evaluation without specifically mentioning these commonly used terms and thus triggering all the baggage carried with them, rather leading the respondents themselves to interpret and answer accordingly.

The focus of the study has been on people working in the development community of the Gulu district. The sampling procedure was done using a snowball technique, where one contact led to the next. My established contact network thus generated new contacts, making it easier to establish new contacts and book interviews the longer I had been in the field.[63] As the focus areas of the organizations were of lesser importance for the study, the snowballing sampling led to a very varied sample of areas. With the snowballing sampling I came in contact with several to me unknown actors, which probably would not have been identified otherwise. I also found that scheduling interviews was more feasible this way, and that my success rate both in terms of actually managing to book an interview and the quality of the interview was much higher being introduced by someone than just rocking up at the gates of an organization without having a name. Out of the 20 interviews I found that three worked less well than the others, with one being very short, and two others were not in the position to answer that many of my questions, but all three were useful for the study nonetheless.

Wanting to cover the development community horizontally I strived to acquire as wide spread as possible, in which I found the snowballing technique resulting in a very varied sample. However, in the last stage of the fieldwork the snowballed interviews was complemented with a few selected through purposive sampling of key actors that I wanted to include in the study due to their importance and/or impact in the Gulu region.[64] As 17 out of the 20 were Ugandan I wanted to complement the sample by interviewing two more expatriates, but unfortunately due to sickness these were both cancelled.

The sample of 20 respondents includes persons from 20 different development organizations from the development community in the Gulu district. The 20 organizations

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[63] Bryman 2008, p.414f
[64] *Ibid.*, p.414f

represent CBOs, LNGOs, INGOs and IOs, working in such various areas as health, microfinance and agro-inputs. Positions vary among the respondents, with most being project officers or of equivalent position, and all work directly in the field in some way. The positions of the respondents are of lesser importance for the study, as the respondents are relevant as representatives of the same community, and have therefore been omitted.

The ages of respondents vary from 24 to 46, with the mean being 32 and a total of 11 respondents being in the age bracket 28-32. The rather young ages of respondents are not correlated to their positions however, as the directors of organizations and programmes that were included were all 32 or younger.

Out of the 20 respondents for this study 15 were male and 5 female. According to the "Organization Field-Contacts" list published by the Gulu NGO Forum, covering 80 organizations and listing contacts in the position of programme officers and above, 82 out of 289 are female.[65] This is of course not a full listing of the whole sector, but it is a clear indication that the development community in Gulu is very male-dominated.

The interviews are between 15 and 90 minutes long, with most around 60 minutes. The interviews were all adapted to the situation they were carried out in, and the situation has in this sense affected the interview rather than the opposite. The interviews have been carried out in different environments, with eight in an office setting, four in a field environment and eight in a neutral setting. The neutral settings were most often various cafés or restaurants in Gulu town which were chosen due to their accessibility and to ease finding each other. To increase my success rate I have made myself as available as possible and let the respondents decide upon the time and place for the interviews as much as possible, which resulted in the many out-of-office-hours interviews in neutral settings, as this minimized the effect on their work.

In the beginning of the interviews the respondents were informed of the focus of the study and of their anonymity in the study. The anonymity of the respondents is motivated in order not to disclose individual opinions due to the uncontrolled readership of the final study. The anonymity is applied both for the persons interviewed and the organizations in question and neither will therefore be named, nor has anything that can trace the specific source been used.[66] For easy identification, while still maintaining the anonymity of respondents, the interviews have been labeled chronologically according to international radiotelephony spelling alphabet, from Alpha to Tango.

After informing about the anonymity in the study I asked for permission to record the session, explaining that this would help me focus on the discussion rather than taking notes, without assuming approval. Out of the 20 interviews 18 was recorded, but whether or not recording was accepted separate notes were taken as a security if the recording should falter.

The transliteration of the recordings has been done by taking out relevant encapsulations and notes during several playbacks of the material. The transliteration has been done literal, but the text has been cleared from pauses, stutters and speech errors. The focus of the transliterations has been a readable text, with retained word order and substance.

All of the interviews were conducted in English, and no interpretation was needed. In the field I was expecting to have to use an interpreter in some interviews, even as I preferred not to use one due to the filter interpretation constitutes. Consequently the problem of translation is

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[65] Observation, 30/11 2009
[66] Bryndan, Lynne, 2006, "Ethical Practises in Doing Development Research". In: Desai & Potter (ed.), *Doing Development Research*, p.26f

often as bad as the respondents' inability to express themselves fully in English. In cases where the respondent's ability to speak English was too weak, I would have had to use an interpreter. However, the English spoken in the region in general and persons working in the development sector in particular was surprisingly well. This meant that translation was not required as expected. English is the mode of communication between different tribes and is the language used in schools, and is the language used when communicating with donors and partners. My respondents were generally very well-versed in English, especially in the vocabulary directly linked to their work and the activities of the organization. In the cases where the questions were not fully understood or when there were challenges in understanding each other, the question was rephrased using simpler English.

The interview questions was formulated as simple and direct as possible in order to ease communication, avoiding jargon and complicated language. However, during my observations I had conversations and participated in situations where other languages, mainly Luo, was used, and in these cases I had help in interpreting from persons present who were versed in English.

As noted, the 20 respondents are all employed in development organizations, rather than clients of the same projects. The perspective of recipients, clients to development programmes, has in a lesser extent been acquired through the observations. This perspective has been used as a complement, to avoid an 'active bias', relying too much on information gathered by elite groups.[67]

3.3 Participant Observations

In order to gather material for the study I stayed in Gulu for two months. During this period I conducted field-work not only in the form of formalized interviews, but also as participant observations. Field work means a top-down power situation, and power distributions often deceive results.[68] Even friendship in the field is based on unequal relations of power, as relations are skewed due to authorship equaling authority.[69] This power of definition means that prioritizing and being mindful of one's own position is vital to field research. Being a Northern scholar, Eurocentric introspection is vital, as the question of whose reality is described and studied is key.[70] Science and common knowledge is very much defined by the North, with northern scholars studying the South, very seldom being the other way around.[71] Having thicker agency than most I interacted with, I had the opportunity to leave the field at my own choice.

Field studies imply that studies are set among people who are subjects of the study, during a long-term investigation of social situations, and seek answers to certain questions without following a predetermined route. Focus is on trying to uncover actual events and human behavior and to unite theory with everyday practice.[72] The field study is a learning process and no matter how well-versed in theory and methods, the researcher is a novice in context, identities and

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[67] Chambers, Robert, 1983, *Rural Development: Putting the last first*, London: Longman, p.18f
[68] Chambers, Robert, 1997, *Whose reality counts?: Putting the first last*, London: ITDG Publishing, p.76
[69] Fox, Nick J., 2006, "Postmodern Field Relations in Health Research". In: Hobbs & Wright (ed.), 2006, *The SAGE Handbook of Fieldwork*, p.349; p.355
[70] Chambers 1997, p.77
[71] Mikkelsen, Britha, 2005, *Methods for development work and research*, New Delhi: SAGE, p.326; Rigg 2007, p.188f
[72] Cloke *et al* 2004, p.185f

languages.[73] The learning process means that new questions arise continuously that requires analysis, sometimes by using unthought-of methods. Through the field work data is uncovered in its context and analyzed through relevant theory where applicable.[74]

The field work has added dimensions to the study that could not be uncovered through the formalized interviews. The observations have given well-needed perspectives from persons not working in the development community, from local inhabitants as well as recipients from development efforts. It has also been a way to try to overcome the project bias that is common in research.[75]

The observations included drawing field maps, observing without interviewing, conducting unstructured and unrecorded interviews and using everyday conversations as an interview technique.[76] The unstructured observations were conducted all the time, including in markets and bus stations, and gave the opportunity of observing everyday life in both villages and development organizations, and in this way also including the views of clients and recipients of development projects in more informal settings.[77] As the observations were done constantly during the whole period, they have not been included in the list of references.

I also had the opportunity to study a small developmental organization under a long period, understanding the day-to-day problems and long-term aspirations. Living in a local village also gave well-needed perspectives and a deeper understanding of the local context. This way I had to live through development issues personally on a day-to-day basis, as well had the opportunity to discuss directly with local people under more casual terms, being an active listener for things related to research.[78] In doing this I tried to avoid rushing in to the field, arousing unmet expectations and leaving again; instead exploring the day-to-day reality and trying to help out beyond my researcher role, giving back to the community.[79]

For the observations I tried to view the world as text, not only written text but everything that can be read and interpreted, also studying people, environments, appearances, behaviors and social codes.[80] No specific guide was used for observing, but rather continuous field notes. While observing, taking notes in itself is a form of limitation, in choosing what to include in your notes. Data collection and data analysis was both done continuously, and I often lagged behind in my notes and had to try to catch-up with all the impressions before it faded from my memory.[81]

My role while doing the participant observations has been that of a participant-as-observer, a fully functioning member of the social setting but with others aware of my status as a researcher.[82] Being an observer therefore did not inhibit my actions and I even helped out in the development project I was staying with. Throughout my stay in Gulu I was very explicit with my role as a researcher, explaining my role and purpose for visiting and openly taking notes even during casual conversations. Of course this was most obvious to the people I interacted with on a

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[73] Simpson, Bob, 2006, "You Don't Do Fieldwork, Fieldwork Does You': Between Subjectivisation and Objectivisation in Antropological Fieldwork". In: Hobbs & Wright (ed.), *The SAGE Handbook of Fieldwork* , p.125

[74] Fox 2006, p.357

[75] Chambers 1983, p.16

[76] McCall, George J., 2006, "The Fieldwork Tradition". In: Hobbs & Wright (ed.), *The SAGE Handbook of Fieldwork*, p.4

[77] Barker, David, 2006, "Field Surveys and Inventories". In: Desai & Potter (ed.), *Doing Development Research*, p.130ff

[78] Marvasti, Amir B., 2004, *Qualitative research in sociology: an introduction*, London: SAGE, p.54ff

[79] Chambers 1997, p.213f

[80] Bryman 2008, p.526

[81] Marvasti 2004, p.55

[82] Bryman 2008, p.410

day-to-day basis, rather than for every casual encounter. Due to this I consider my participant observations as overt and that I had the informed consent of my study subjects for using my experiences for my study.[83]

3.4 Analysis

The analysis of the material has been done through a discourse analysis. There are several definitions of discourse analysis and it is hard to talk of a unified body of research or theory. In this study it will mainly be used for how the interpretation was carried out. A discourse is a set of written or spoken communication, and both describe and create reality itself. To study it means to examine actual content, structure and meaning.[84] However, analyzing discourse is more than just language as such, as it constitutes social worlds, interests and concerns.[85] Discourse analysis in this sense is analyzing not only *what* is said, but also *how* it is said, the way certain phenomenon is presented and described.

The text itself is the object of study just as much as what it refers to. In discourse analysis, context matter for analysis and I will in the analysis identify relations and patterns in the text relevant to the research aim.[86] This means asking questions on what the discourses are doing, how they are connected in order to make things happen, and identify what resources are available for them.[87] When discourse analysis is employed scrutinizing themes of ideology and power are central, in order to identify how discourses are used in relation to social structures and power relationships.[88] Discourse is a generative mechanism in itself, by influencing language and society, thereby constraining individual agency.[89]

In the analysis, different encapsulations and fragments from the material was classified into different themes, and then compared and analyzed. This was done by itemizing words and using free association.[90] The process of interpretation was an activity of ordering, giving structure and meaning to the messages I perceived in the text. Reflection is an integral part of the research process, and was done in relation to the theoretical framework.

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[83] Bryndon 2006, p.26; Bryman 2008, p.403
[84] Marvasti 2004, p.107
[85] Bryman 2008, p.499
[86] Flick 2006, p.319; p.326
[87] Bryman 2008, p.500
[88] *Ibid.*, p.508; Flick 2006, p.325
[89] Bryman 2008, p.508
[90] Flick 2006, p.325

4. Background

Uganda is a landlocked country in Eastern Africa, bordering Kenya, Sudan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Rwanda and Tanzania. A former British colony, the country has experienced a very violent history since independence in 1962, with the dictatorships of Idi Amin and Milton Obote gaining international prominence for their brutality. Since the inception of the current president Yoweri Museveni in 1986, stability came to most parts of the country.

However in Northern Uganda the infamous Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), continued fighting the central government and violence and insecurity have characterized the region since 1986. The LRA have been notorious for mutilating civilians and systematic abduction of children to become soldiers or sex slaves, which led to enforced concentration of civilians into protected villages.[91] After the breakdown of the most recent peace talks however, the LRA shifted its base of operations to Northeastern DRC in 2007, and there have been no confirmed LRA attacks in Uganda since August 2006 and the region has since then been experiencing a restored peace.

Uganda of today is a development acronym bonanza; qualifying both as a HIPC (Heavily Indebted Poor Country) and a LDC (Least Developed Countries) and with a majority of the larger international development actors present. Uganda has a population of 32,4 million on an area of 241.000 km², making it one of the most densely populated countries in Africa. A majority of the population lives as rural subsistence farmers, around 70%, and the urban population accounts for 13%. Gulu is the most urbanized district in Uganda, together with Jinja and the capital Kampala.[92] Uganda has been one of the most economically successful African countries during the last decade, with GDP growth averaging 6% annually since 2000. Despite this, Uganda remains one of the poorest countries in the world, with per capita income per annum of 1.300 USD and a HDI ranking of 156 out of 179. The poverty ratio stands at around 35%, with poverty most widespread in the Eastern and Northern parts of the country. Having had an adult HIV/AIDS prevalence rate of 18% in 1992, the rate has dropped dramatically to around 6%.[93]

> ## Figure 1 - Uganda at a Glance
>
> *Location:* Eastern Africa
> *Area:* 241.038 km²
> *Geography:* Land-locked, shares control of Lake Victoria
> *Borders to:* Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kenya, Rwanda, Sudan, Tanzania
> *Capital:* Kampala
> *Political system:* Republic
> *Head of State:* President Yoweri Museveni (the President is both the Chief of State and Head of Government)
> *Currency:* Ugandan Shilling (UGX)
> *Languages:* English, Luganda, Swahili
> *Religions:* Catholic 42%, Protestant 42%, Muslim 12% (2002 census)
> *Population:* 32,369 million (July 2009 est.)
> *Population Growth:* 2,7% (2009 est.)
> *GDP per Capita (PPP-adjusted):* 1.300 USD (2008 est.)
> *Infant Mortality Rate:* 64,82 deaths/1.000 live births (2009 est.)
> *Life Expectancy:* 52,72 years (2009 est.)
> *Adult Literacy Rate:* 66,8% (2002 census)
> *Poverty (% of population):* 35% (2001 est.)
> *Human Development Index Rank:* 157 out of 182 countries (2009 HDI report)
>
> *Source:* Central Intelligence Agency, 2010, "The World Factbook: Uganda", https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ug.html, 12/01 2010

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[91] Ward, Kevin, 2001, "The Armies of the Lord': Christianity, Rebels and the State in Northern Uganda, 1986-1999". In: *Journal of Religion in Africa*, 31:2, p.187f

[92] Tumuhairwe, Spelto (ed.), 2006, *Primary Social Studies Atlas for Uganda*, Kampala: Macmillan Africa, p.27

[93] Central Intelligence Agency, 2010, "The World Factbook: Uganda", https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ug.html, 12/01 2010

As a landlocked country, Uganda is reliant on neighboring countries' infrastructure and markets for trade.[94] Neighboring DRC, Rwanda and Sudan have all been experiencing civil war during the last decade, influencing the security in Uganda as well. Particularly the situation in Southern Sudan and Northern Uganda is closely linked, as the two governments under a long period of time funded the insurgents on the other side of the border and the two conflicts has fueled each-other.

Gulu is the economic capital of Northern Uganda, and administrative center of the Gulu district. In a recent reform the district was split into two parts, Gulu and Amuru. For all the purposes of this study, I refer to both Gulu and Amuru as the Gulu district. Statistics for the Gulu district have been hard to acquire, as most figures are aggregated on a national scale. However, according to the 2002 census Gulu had 331.600 inhabitants and Amuru 195.700, mainly of the Acholi tribe.[95] Northern Uganda has traditionally been highly productive in agriculture and cash crops in form of cotton and tobacco produce around Gulu. The cotton production was almost wiped out due to the conflict, and is only now slowly expanding again.[96] With people forced to protected villages and IDP camps, food output plummeted and a region that had previously been self-reliant and exported food to other parts of the country became dependent on food aid.[97]

Due to its proximity to the Sudanese border, informal and formal trade to and from Southern Sudan is important to Gulu. The border trade has expanded greatly to more than 55 million USD yearly since the LRA withdrawal in 2007, attracting banks and supermarkets but also resulting in spiking food prices in Gulu.[98] Being the largest town and administrative and economic centre of the Northern part of the country, Gulu is also effectively the aid hub for the region. Since LRA activity waned in the area, Gulu has experienced economic revitalization and an influx of international community organizations. The numbers of NGOs in the region is among the highest in Uganda and the Peace, Recovery and Development Plan for Northern Uganda (PRDP) attempts to provide an overarching framework for recovery of the region. Important NGO areas are assisting in providing food, medical help and rehabilitation centers for formerly abducted children. Due to the nearby fighting, Gulu became a focal point for Internally Displaced Persons

Figure 2 – Map of Uganda
Source: Central Intelligence Agency, 2010, "The World Factbook: Uganda", https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ug.html, 12/01 2010

(IDPs) and many camps were set up throughout the area, with more than one million IDPs in Northern Uganda at the peak. With peace restored the camps are gradually being closed and with the resettlement of people returning from the IDP camps and from other regions, new micro-conflicts are emerging on a local level primarily over land issues.[99]

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[94] Collier 2007, p.107; Sachs 2005, p.57f

[95] Tumuhairwe 2006, p.7

[96] Baffes, John, 2009, "The 'Full Potential' of Uganda's Cotton Industry". In: *Development Policy Review*, 27:1, p.69

[97] Banfield & Naujoks 2009, p.14

[98] Carrington, Graham, 2009, *Cross-border trade: fuelling conflict or building peace? An exploration of cross-border trade between Sudan and Uganda and the implications for peacebuilding*, London: Conciliation Resources, p.1; p.9; Banfield & Naujoks 2009, p.29

[99] Banfield & Naujoks 2009, p.13

5. Results

Hot and dusty, Gulu quickly presented itself as a development bonanza. In a way, everything is development; a majority of the cars in town are white pick-up trucks painted with some organizational affiliation on the side, zooming through the district and kicking up dust. People are dressed in t-shirts with messages from different NGO-activities. In the newly-built northern part of town, nearly every building is housing a development organization. Signs promote messages as "water is life" and "we need parental care, love and support", while advertisements raise awareness of intergenerational sex and promotes AIDS prevention. The town is busy with people in motion, and the returning economic activity is clearly visible, with scattered building sites and newly opened stores and banks.[100]

The long-term conflict is prevalent in all the interviews and the impact is described as cross-cutting society and affecting all. The present development community in Gulu has its roots in the conflict. Due to the conflict "NGOs and humanitarian assistance had to come here", as people were forced away into camps and resources left behind had to be destroyed, and the IDPs were more victims of circumstance than willfully moving.[101]

The reported abductions and LRA-fighting have ended, and freedom of movement and stability has returned.[102] But the future risks of returned conflict differ greatly between the respondents. Foxtrot points to how now that the big conflict over, small community-scale conflicts are taking its place, and how the continuation of peace is closely linked to the security in Southern Sudan.[103] Of importance is also to involve the affected youth, which can most easily be engaged in renewed conflict. To provide "sustainable long-term and productive employability opportunities, especially for youth" is the best way to prevent a new conflict, with this perspective.[104] Most however believe that the peace has come to stay. Even though there are land issues at the moment, these are small and can be resolved.[105]

5.1 Gulu in transition

Several respondents commented on how Gulu was expanding at the moment. The town has developed "hugely in just a couple of years, because of all the NGOs that has come in" and now "the skyline is changing".[106] Gulu is emerging as a business centre yet again, with repaired roads to Southern Sudan, increased population and booming business, especially in small-scale businesses.[107] The economy dipped at the start of the insurgency, but now there has been a "shift in economic activities from Lira to Gulu in only two years" as businesses shift back to the former economic hub.[108]

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[100] Observation, 04/11 2009
[101] Interview with Papa, 09/12 2009, 52 minutes, not recorded, IO, office, 32, male, Acholi; Interview with Juliet 04/12 2009, 65 minutes, LNGO, office, 32, male, Acholi
[102] Interview with Echo, 27/11 2009, 90 minutes, government department, OOO, 28, male, Acholi
[103] Interview with Foxtrot, 30/11 2009, 50 minutes, LNGO, office, 32, male, Acholi
[104] Echo, 27/11 2009
[105] Interview with Delta, 26/11 2009, 69 minutes, NNGO, OOO, 33, male, Acholi
[106] Interview with Bravo, 06/11 2009, 45 minutes, LNGO, field, 24, female, American; Delta, 26/11 2009
[107] Papa, 09/12 2009; Echo, 27/11 2009; Interview with Charlie, 23/11 2009, 70 minutes, LNGO, out-of-office (OOO), 30, male, Acholi
[108] Delta, 26/11 2009

The booming economy has led to spiraling prices, and the cost-of-living is even higher than in Kampala.[109] The price-hike and resulting inflation is a result of simple supply-demand, where "there is too much money and there is little service to offer".[110] This is a scenario found all over the world where aid money, NGOs and international expatriates are flooding in.[111] This process can be seen as a form of economic development disease. Even as prices are abnormal, people will still buy the goods and services, especially the development community, as "the muzungus are very many in Gulu, and they need to be accommodated, and they need to eat".[112] Due to the perception that expatriates have money, prices are hiked as a result:

> Very many muzungus, and very many expatriates from all over […] So all those also contribute negatively to the local people's day-to-day survival, because of me, because I am coming, I am being paid as an expatriate, as a high-level consultant. The people know that people who come to work in Gulu, they have money.[113]

The resulting balloon economy makes it most tough for local inhabitants, not paid high expatriate salaries. With "a lot of dollars coming against the shilling" the Gulu economy is inflated, affecting the living of the less-privileged".[114]

The border trade with Sudan only adds to the phenomenon. As Southern Sudan is flooded with aid money at the moment and there is "too much need for food items in Southern Sudan", people cross the border mainly for foodstuffs.[115] This increases the prices of food in Northern Gulu, but also tends to export the food shortage problem over the border; as communities sell the little they have left, creating food shortages also in Northern Uganda. The border trade leads to food insecurity.[116] The problems in Southern Sudan are therefore adding to the problems in Gulu.

There was a very noticeable discourse, related to the Sudanese border trade. The story of how the Sudanese come to Northern Uganda and buying food directly from the gardens, leading to the sellers squandering the money and ending up with no food and too little money for subsistence, was told in more or less the same words by no less than seven respondents.[117] According to the discourse, when the Sudanese come, as the offer of cash-in-hand is too tempting, the farmers sell of "six months of work, instead of keeping the stock, sell whole garden, [and then] finish money in one day".[118]

The development of Gulu and the migration of people in and out are also changing the perceptions of the town. Especially internally in Uganda, the region has had a bad reputation, "Gulu was known for bad people […] [now other people realize] oh the people is nice".[119] With

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[109] Papa, 09/12 2009; Echo, 27/11 2009

[110] Interview with Quebec, 10/12 2009, 71 minutes, IO, OOO, 32, male, Acholi

[111] Interview with Lima, 04/12 2009, 73 minutes, IO, OOO, 31, female, American

[112] Interview with November, 06/12 2009, 65 minutes, LNGO, OOO, 33, male, Acholi. *Muzungu* is nickname for foreigners, used all over East Africa.

[113] Echo, 27/11 2009

[114] *Ibid.*

[115] Quebec, 10/12 2009

[116] Interview with Kilo, 04/12 2009, 40 minutes, LNGO, office, 28, male, Bagandan

[117] Interview with Hotel, 01/12 2009, 35 minutes, LNGO, field, 46, male, Acholi; Interview with Tango, 14/12, 40 minutes, INGO, office, 37, female, Acholi; Interview with India, 03/12 2009, 43 minutes, LNGO, office, 26, female, Acholi; November, 06/12 2009; Papa, 09/12 2009; Kilo, 04/12 2009; Quebec, 10/12 2009

[118] India, 03/12 2009

[119] Interview with Mike, 05/12 2009, 49 minutes, LNGO, OOO, 27, male, Acholi; Delta 26/11 2009

people coming here "they will not go back the same", promoting the region positively beyond its borders.[120]

I was early on introduced to the idea that there had been a shift from humanitarian relief aid to more long-term development aid in Gulu over the last couple of years, which was a claim that I asked the respondents to reply to, and yielded a very positive response.[121] The shift can be seen through the "number of organizations coming in and out […] by the operations and type of organizations leaving and coming in".[122] One respondent points to how competing organizations are phasing out, with only long-term actors left, and the organization is "one of the few rehabilitation centers left, there was quite a few before, but they are pretty much all winding down now." Another respondent points to the relief aid relocating to the next region, now that the peace has been restored and people are moving back from the camps:

> Having been in Gulu for 5 years, I have seen very many NGOs withdraw […] Most of them have gone To Karamoja […] stopped funding, the emergency aspect of relief is almost over.[123]

However, even as most respondents would agree that there had been a shift, many underlined that it was still under way and that "the word transition has no demarcation" and is not very clear-cut.[124] The shift is in this sense partly a shift of words, as long-term development has been present all along.

The relief phase is still prevalent mentally, with "some programs are being designed and implemented just as it were more humanitarian emergency situation."[125] One respondent point to the shift in words not reflecting the reality on the ground, with funding ending with the relief phase over, which constitutes a big problem:

> The real interventions should have been now […] when people have access to land […] larger need now […] but the donors other way round […] donors were more comfortable funding emergency programs.[126]

Others point to the need to move on beyond the relief phase, and that in some ways "poverty has been politicized", with politicians looking to keep the relief aid as it is popular, and development organizations wanting to move on.[127] Even as the humanitarian relief *should* no longer be there, it is still there. Another respondent comments along the same lines and predicts that the food supplies will remain beyond the 2011 election and then disappear.[128] No matter the phrasing though, the situation on the ground demands continued work.[129]

Long-term sustainability in projects also encapsulates operation as much as the structures themselves. One respondent commented that Gulu has the best schools in Uganda, due to all the NGOs building schools here.[130] But buildings are not enough if they are only built and then left

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[120] Foxtrot, 30/11 2009
[121] Tango, 14/12, 40 minutes, INGO, office, 37, female, Acholi; Quebec, 10/12 2009
[122] Lima, 04/12 2009
[123] Charlie, 23/11 2009
[124] Foxtrot, 30/11 2009
[125] Lima, 04/12 2009
[126] Quebec, 10/12 2009
[127] Tango, 14/12, 40 minutes, INGO, office, 37, female, Acholi
[128] Charlie, 23/11 2009
[129] Lima, 04/12 2009; Delta 26/11 2009
[130] Foxtrot, 30/11 2009

like that; qualified personnel and continued funding is needed as well.[131] Even as hospitals and health-centers are built, there is still a need for drugs and competent staff.[132] Development organizations have to have a longer perspective:

> If that is what they have done, it will remain like that […] if glass is broken, it will remain like that […] NGOs do things, and it will remain like that.[133]

There is a need to have operation built into the intervention plans, as at the moment funds are often only enough for initiation, but not operation. Also, as much as long-term results are important, quick hope-instilling projects are also needed in a conflict-torn area:

> If you can build half of a school, and if it is just a roof and some sticks […] not brick and mortar […] the morale and hope will be much higher than waiting for years later […] Half a school better than nothing. Get something out there. […] that perfect structure can come later.[134]

5.2 Local problems, local organizations

When discussing local problems, the local identity and connection of the organizations were often stressed, as "it is a local NGO, with particular interest to address the local problems on the ground".[135] Another respondent stressed how his organization

> Is a local NGO, it is not something that came from America, or came from Europe, we started it here and so we are going to be here. Funders may change, cause were not depending on one.[136]

The local roots of the organizations are seen as a vital for its work, and as a guarantee for the long-term commitment that development work constitutes. As mentioned above, funding is of lesser importance as partnerships change constantly. This is also an important criterion for larger organizations when choosing partnering and implementing organizations;

> [We] try to strengthen local government and try to use indigenous NGOs […] make more independent, reliant and more focused […] most of the INGOs will go, but such indigenous NGOs will remain here, we are not going anywhere.[137]

> We prefer not to work directly with the community, but to work with an organization that is going to stay with the community even long after [organization] has gone.[138]

The local rootedness of organizations means that they have understanding of the local culture and can speak the local language, which is important if the nature of the work is to support the community.[139] When asked about a successful locally operating organization, one respondent commented that the chosen organization "has the heart for the place here […] most successful

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[131] Interview with Golf, 30/11 2009, 58 minutes, LNGO, OOO, 29, male, Acholi
[132] Interview with Sierra, 11/12 2009, 32 minutes, INGO, field, 44, female, Acholi; November, 06/12 2009
[133] Foxtrot, 30/11 2009
[134] Lima, 04/12 2009
[135] November, 06/12 2009
[136] Charlie, 23/11 2009
[137] Juliet 04/12 2009
[138] Delta, 26/11 2009
[139] Echo, 27/11 2009; Quebec, 10/12 2009

NGO here".[140] The local connection also creates commitment among workers, volunteers and community, with people working harder and more committed; "if not part of the project, could not do all this work".[141] Long-term commitments are also eased by having a local connection;

> The effects of a 24 year old war are huge, effects felt for a long time […] so the communities here will need interventions for a long time. This is why we have come here, and that is why we feel that we hopefully effectively help people for quite some time.[142]

It was also noticeable how former experiences had driven people to working in development. Two of the organizations were founded by former abductees, and out of the 20 respondents three were former abductees and two had lived as street kids.[143] That this worked as a motivation was expressed very explicitly in "that is where my happiness is based, because I do not want children to go through the problems I went through".[144] These experiences were also noticeable in the commitment shown, even prepared to "sell my own things, to get things going".[145] One respondent expressed working in his home region as to "come back and really contribute to resolving conflict and building peace in my area", while another as "contributing to addressing the dire need of our community".[146]

Local connections of both organizations and staff are perceived as something very positive. The local roots are presumed to mean both knowledge of local context and strong commitment, both easing work in the region. But just as local connections are seen as constituting something positive, a lack of local connections is problematic:

> Here, if anyone comes from central, most people who come here those are briefcase organizations, they lie in the name of the people in Northern Uganda that they want to help them, they get the money and they focus on taking it back.[147]

The emphasis on local partners and on the independence of local organizations is also fueled by a fear of short-term planning and that thing will not work out when the aid flow is stopped. This lack of sustainability is a "problem, that the money will be pouring out, and that people will suffer in that way."[148] In contrast, it is stressed that development projects must be sustainable and long-term, so that the local people can support themselves even in the absence of NGOs.[149]

> Assisting the community we are working in […] but to do it in a sustainable manner, because eventually the muzungus are going to leave and we wanted it to be sufficiently run by the locals eventually.[150]

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[140] Hotel, 01/12 2009
[141] Interview with Alpha, 04/11 2009, 44 minutes, CBO, field, 25, male, Acholi
[142] Bravo, 06/11 2009
[143] Mike, 05/12 2009; Golf, 30/11 2009; Alpha, 04/11 2009; Juliet 04/12 2009
[144] Juliet 04/12 2009
[145] Observation, 08/12 2009
[146] Foxtrot, 30/11 2009; Interview with Romeo, 11/12 2009, 30 minutes, LNGO, office, 31, male, Acholi
[147] Alpha, 04/11 2009
[148] Bravo, 06/11 2009
[149] Juliet 04/12 2009
[150] Bravo, 06/11 2009

This also affects the way development programs are run. Built-into the operation is an expectation of clients to become more self-reliant is the future, and they are "trained and sensitized about the withdrawal of relief items from this place".[151]

5.3 Development and Globalization

Throughout the development community in Gulu there was an apparent division between tradition and modernity which manifested itself in several ways, as what could be done in the name of development, and at which costs tradition should be upheld varied among the respondents. In a way, all the development projects I was in contact with works in at least some part with social engineering, changing people and the society the live in. Of course this varied in both scope and in intentionality.

Town life was very clearly contrasted to village life, where one represents modernity and the other tradition. Promoting the return of IDPs indirectly promotes an urban-rural migration back to the traditional way of life, meaning that resettling in this sense also in some ways equals restructuring old structures.[152] With people uprooted and forcefully moved, local culture and activities have been altered or lost, which is something that has to be rejuvenated according to some.[153]

Respondents described that much of the development in the area took a form of developmentalism, transforming communities into modernity. One voiced that development should not be imposed, but instead be "on agreed terms, but not forcefully in the name of development".[154] Another respondent proposed that development projects should consult the communities and "deal with their traditional settings, what *they* think can develop them, but not what *you* think will develop them".[155]

Some see development as not bad in itself, but that it has to come to terms with the culture it is working in, and that a problem is that "they do not do it in ways that are sensitive to the culture".[156] Development should be done slowly, step by step, as "as a returnee, you cannot just transform in a certain period of time."[157]

Others were more positive to the impact of development on local culture, acknowledging that development is two-way and what it is bringing is also good.[158] While some point to the relation between modernity and materialistic wealth, others look to the influx of ideas as something positive:[159]

> Any organization that can come in, foreign partners from outside, everything is possible, we can change the life of the people from miserable life to happy life, if you can have support from the outside.[…] Not financially, but I prefer more to someone to come and share ideas, to help us how to achieve our goals. Ideas are the most important thing.[160]

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[151] Charlie, 23/11 2009
[152] Golf, 30/11 2009
[153] Delta, 26/11 2009
[154] India, 03/12 2009
[155] Golf, 30/11 2009
[156] Foxtrot, 30/11 2009
[157] Golf, 30/11 2009
[158] *Ibid.*
[159] Observation, 28/10 2009
[160] Alpha, 04/11 2009

One respondent commented on how globalization has led to that the local culture has been mixed up and diluted, admitting that this it is expected to happen. It is however positive in the way people come from elsewhere to inspire people as role models, to reconstruct their minds and empower them.[161]

Others take a more anti-modernistic stance, elevating the local and traditional through a conservative defense for traditionality. This promoting of tradition and degrading of development into eroding local culture was most evidently found was in its defense for patriarchality. Traditionality is connected to patriarchality, and Acholi societies of Northern Uganda have been very patriarchal in the past. As many development programs specifically have targeted women, gender roles have started to transform as the traditional male identity as breadwinner is contested.[162] Through the interviews I also found a patriarchal notion arguing that modernity is bad, in the sense that it is changing the power dimensions between the gender roles. The quote

> After staying in camps for many years...the traditional way of grinding is lost […] they are now
> used to town life […] The girls do not know how to grind using the local methods.[163]

points both to traditionalism, that newer ways of grinding is not as good as the old ways, and clarify an implicit notion of traditional gender roles as before. The women should go back to household-chores while the men are free for other activities. It is precisely this male-centrism that developmentalism is trying to change, and that traditionalists defend.

Connected to this, are the negative attitudes found among some of the respondents to the many projects that focus on gender-based violence (GBV). In traditional Acholi society divorce has not been possible, instead encouraging reconciliation between the spouses no matter what. With projects focusing on GBV things are changing, "they are trying to do things in a more western way".[164] This negative attitude was also found in relation to child rights, which was seen by some as contradicting local culture, where children "sensitize their own parents on how they should be treated".[165]

It is hard to single out the impact of development from other processes, such as globalization. One respondent acknowledge that there has been an introduction of capitalistic thinking, and that the local people "expect to get paid for something that before was their own responsibility" and unlike traditionally the society now is cash-based.[166] Another points to how "values have been turned upside down […] [they] do not like new lifestyle" as traditional power-bases has now been replaced with money.[167]

Culture is changeable and fleeting, and human beings are well-suited to quickly adapt to new contexts and realities. Just like the communities of Gulu got used to the IDP existence that they are now having resentments leaving, there is now anxiety and debates on what will follow. Culture is in this sense relative, with no better or worse, just different. Change is a natural element of culture, even as it is often perceived as the opposite. The people of Gulu are exposed to global processes as much as most other places of this world, but as they are most evident in the case of development programs, and therefore linked to this. The question of cultural sensitivity in

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[161] Juliet 04/12 2009
[162] Bannon *et al* 2005, p.91
[163] Golf, 30/11 2009
[164] Foxtrot, 30/11 2009
[165] Foxtrot, 30/11 2009; India, 03/12 2009
[166] Quebec, 10/12 2009
[167] Golf, 30/11 2009

development programs is relevant, but as cultures are far from static it is futile trying to stop them from evolving.

Globalization processes lead to enhanced possibilities and wealth, but only for those that can take advantage of the possibilities. Due to imbalances and poorly functioning governance and markets, some groups and regions are disadvantaged or left out when subject to competition from other parts of the world. With the return of order and stability to Gulu, people and products from the outside world are flooding in as well. The activity in Gulu attracts people for research, education, work and business.[168] This is portrayed especially negatively when related to the development sector;

> Every program that is coming here, they come with expatriates. We find that expatriates are
> payed expensively, of what would have been development funding.[169]

This leads to that even educated people in Northern Uganda are party to competition, in that the limited jobs available to them are taken by people from other regions.[170] Several respondents expressed a desire that basic economic opportunities was better left to local people, as a way to reach the bottom rung of the economic ladder.[171] In expressing that "some of them are even entering into very simple businesses who should be left to the locals […] that is better left t the locals" expressed a very explicit elitism.[172]

The frustration over globalization also shows itself as xenophobic attitudes. Especially Southern Asians becomes scapegoats for Ugandans losing out in globalization, as "this is because of the Indians […] For them, they can afford any amount of money":[173]

> Foreigners come and take over the businesses from local people […] for instance the Indians,
> there are too many here, and they are actually causing problems with the local people.[174]

Not only physical presence as competition, but also products in general has brought unemployment: "China and India everywhere, wholesalers and retailers, whole chain."[175] A clear discourse was that of Southern Asians 'bribing' landlords by paying double the rent in order to acquire a certain store.[176]

But the people of Gulu are not only facing competition internationally, but also internally from other parts of the country. The violent recent history has taken a hard toll on the education system and the even now the educational facilities are under-equipped:

> The biggest challenge here is that the war has cost a lot in terms of education, so our children
> have not even begun to go to school and have had a slow beginning, and because of this they
> cannot compete on the same terms.[177]

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[168] Golf, 30/11 2009
[169] Kilo, 04/12 2009
[170] *Ibid.*
[171] Golf, 30/11 2009
[172] November, 06/12 2009
[173] India, 03/12 2009
[174] November, 06/12 2009
[175] Observation, 05/11 2009
[176] November, 06/12 2009; India, 03/12 2009
[177] Juliet 04/12 2009

While the reality of local pupils differs for different parts of Uganda, the pupils in the Gulu district are badly off by comparison, sometimes even carrying their own chairs and desks for exams and still competing under the same terms as privileged pupils from Kampala.[178]

The frustration over internal and external competition in economic opportunities in the form of education, jobs and products is not exclusive to Gulu, but rather a common phenomenon in regions and among groups that feel that they are losing out in the global economic race. This frustration is channeled into xenophobic attitudes towards Southern Asians, due to that their physical presence as shop-keepers is very explicit. Similar attitudes were not found connected to for example China, which was not physically present beyond products, and although some complained about the quality of Chinese products most bought them anyway.

The expressed frustration over globalization is also an expression of the thin agency of most in Gulu. Globalization and the flood of products in its wake, mean that economic opportunities must be grabbed when they are there. If the locals "do not want to sell tomatoes" it will in some sense be their own fault.[179] Economic globalization in this sense fuels cultural globalization, as discussed above. However, dependent on hand-outs for decades, the inhabitants of Gulu has a long take-off.

5.4 Who speaks for whom?

The development community in Gulu in many ways acts as spokespersons for the non-privileged people they serve and in some arenas represents. The respondents would however not seldom express blatant elitism. When referring to local inhabitants they would often be presumed to have insufficient knowledge of how to handle themselves;

> They need the help of these organizations […] as some of them lack capacity to comprehend issues […] they need to be explained things in more simpler way, so that they understand.[180]

This elitism was very explicit when discussing activities for different groups, where some businesses were seen as too "minor" for foreigners, thus implicitly meaning that these should be left to locals.[181] Several respondents were negative to direct cash grants and other handouts. These were presumed to be too difficult to handle, and would spent on irrelevant activities as drinking and prostitution.[182] The organizations would therefore rather focus on training and sensitizing:

> This program doesn't really focus on giving out handouts, but from knowledge and prevention packages.[183]

> Give them skills rather than funding, aiding them to managing their own problems […] Direct money does not […] very much impact.[184]

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[178] Echo, 27/11 2009
[179] Golf, 30/11 2009
[180] November, 06/12 2009
[181] *Ibid.*
[182] Tango, 14/12
[183] Romeo, 11/12 2009
[184] Kilo, 04/12 2009

This attitude removes any agency from the individual client, who is presumed to act in a certain way. Instead the respondents expressed an attitude of knowing best:

> When I look at them, what I see, they just want to survive today, and that is a very, very bad mentality.[185]

The development community in this sense assumes that they know better what their clients want and what is best for them rather than the clients themselves. This elitist attitude is so prevalent that it shapes the way aid is given, shifting focus towards training and non-monetary interventions. Strengthening the individuals agency with grants becomes an impossibility, as the decision what the clients could use the grant for is already taken for them beforehand.

In referring to local denizens a strict causality was often presumed;

> Change in gender roles […] The men are now drunkards […] when most NGOs used to target women groups […] women now become heads of the home, and men became drunkards who go and beat the women […] they are used to sit and doing nothing.[186]

The earlier raised discourse of farmers selling their food directly to Sudanese traders is another direct example of this. When talking about local people and their choices, a strict causality is presumed which in this sense is built-into the programs and interventions. This is a form of deterministic agency, where the choices and options of individuals are predetermined for them. For example, regardless of the aims, needs and wishes of the clients, they are given training rather than grants. This deterministic attitude leads to that the better-knowing feel an obligation to take care of and guide the less knowing.

The results of these elitist presumptions also constrain the agency of the clients. One organization spoke of how they had to fence in their compound with barbed wires in order to keep people in as much as keep people in, to keep their clients from having sexual relations with outsiders.[187] The direct implications of these assumptions lead to an even thinner agency of the clients.

Even with this attitude of knowing what is best for local citizens, there is still a need for organizations to attract clients. To some activities and services the demand is so high that thousands turn up for a few positions. Other organizations attract clients by providing a chance to play volleyball, drink free sodas and by airing TV-shows.[188] By creating incentives for clients to come, the chances of clients joining in sensitization activities are increased. Even when providing basic infrastructure, organizations seize opportunity for sensitization and training.[189]

These attitudes lead to ignorance over the clients' integrity. Potential clients often has to accept what is offered, otherwise someone else will do it. The high demand for the services provided by development organizations leads to that the service given and even quality of development projects does not matter, they get clients anyway. There are no incentives to shape up and become more customer-friendly, as the programs will be full anyway. The lack of alternatives means that even organizations that are badly in touch with their clients can succeed. And as it is hard to compete with free services, it is hard for clients to demand a better treatment.

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[185] Echo, 27/11 2009
[186] Juliet 04/12 2009
[187] Observation, 06/11 2009
[188] Observation, 08/11 2009
[189] Charlie, 23/11 2009

This means that the treatment and service given to clients is often bad, with people having to wait endlessly and unexplainably.[190]

The development community in many ways acts as speakers for the non-privileged in Gulu. To a large extent, the role as speakers is self-proclaimed. It is also a necessity, as external actors and the government need someone to speak to, and in order to reach the voiceless there has to be some kind of organ to contact. However, the clients have not elected their spokespersons, and often have problems influencing them. The representation affects the dignity and integrity of the clients, but the presumptions acts as a filter hindering influence.

These presumptions and attitudes have led to that several organizations have been started by former clients themselves, in a way to reclaim ownership of dealing with their own issues. As an example, after feeling that "[…] they were being used to attract funding", one organization were started by former abductees while "we were still in school […] had our office in our bags, we always moved with our office in our bags".[191] Starting their organizations reclaims the agency for these groups, but also creates new advocates for the voiceless. Even as these are presumable more connected to the clients, it is still self-proclaimed agents speaking for the often voiceless.

Even if the notion that the development community knows better what is good for their clients than they do themselves, based on better knowledge or experience, is accepted, the issue of valuing contradictions of who knows what is best among them becomes evident. The respondents have very different priorities and answers to the impact of different measures. Where one respondent argues that too much emphasis is put on infrastructure and too little on psychosocial support, others think that more infrastructure is needed and links it as a foundation to working in other areas.[192] Many presumptions in development theory are taken for granted, as that microfinance is more effective when given to women and that doctors and basic health services important priorities. There is a need for critical reflection over the representation and priorities given by these representatives. The presumptions have to be critically reflected in their right context and constantly reevaluated. For example, as many development projects have targeted women specifically gender roles have changed and lead to a men feeling neglected, in extension fueling drunkenness, frustration and GBV.

5.5 Dependency and Expectations

A very clear discourse in the interviews was that of dependency. When describing their clients most respondents spoke in terms of dependency syndrome, handout mentality and the expectations connected to this. This dependency was fostered during the long period of time when local communities were forced to camps and had to rely on relief food for their subsistence. This "spoiled the communities and led to a relief culture", "people [got] lazy from the camps, there was nothing to do", and led to that "when the engine rumbles, they know that food is coming".[193] The dependency syndrome became an obvious problem when the relief aid coming to Gulu started scaling down, as many had gotten used to getting everything from NGOs.[194] Sprung out of relief aid over a long period of time, people have been changed:

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[190] Observations, 08/11 2009, 08/12 2009
[191] Mike, 05/12 2009
[192] Tango, 14/12 2009; Quebec, 10/12 2009, Delta, 26/11 2009; Kilo, 04/12 2009
[193] Tango, 14/12; Charlie, 23/11 2009; Juliet 04/12 2009
[194] Sierra, 11/12 2009

> Relief assistance and also development assistance has really affected people in Northern Uganda […] people are dependent, people are not hardworking like in the prewar era.[195]

> A lot of money flowing in Northern Uganda, especially in Gulu, has affected people and encouraged dependency.[196]

Now "some want to live in the camps, because of that dependency syndrome that has developed over the last 20 years" and ironically first "they had to fight to get the people into the camps, and now they have to fight to get them to leave."[197] The existence in camps has also led to lost knowledge. When people are joining villages from the camps "they have no knowledge of how to start with the village life".[198] After 15-20 years in the camps "they do not know what it means […] [to work in] a garden, to raise a chicken, to raise a pig […] used to be given for free".[199] This means that returnees need assistance and training "so they are able to get back into society in a sustainable way".[200]

The dependency does not even have to reflect a real need, but communities think that they still need assistance.[201] In how to counter the dependency syndrome the respondents were somewhat coherent:

> If you look at the conflict, everybody is a victim […] This war has destroyed the culture, and reduced people to something else, so everybody has to be […] we need to the reconstruct the minds of each and every person who has been involved in this conflict […] The biggest war now is not stopping [Joseph] Kony's war, but the biggest war is reconstruction of the minds of the people […] So they start thinking, yes we can, without the donors.[202]

Several respondents argue that in order to stop dependency and 'destroy' laziness, perceptions must change, otherwise poverty will increase.[203] Sensitization is seen as central in order to reach a change, as "mind-sets have to change, for development to go back on track".[204] Precisely changed mind-sets were a widely used discourse.[205] In order to achieve this, empowerment is seen as key, to "encourage people to become self-reliant, because this war has brought a lot of dependency-syndrome […] Try to get them to feel that they can also do on their own."[206]

The changed mentality and dependency caused by long-term relief aid has also altered people's perceptions of development aid. The shift towards more long-term development projects was "first hard, [people] used to get for free […] Coming from relief where you are getting handouts, and now someone is telling you, 'please, you have to work'".[207] Relief projects are having fantastic results, but long-term development projects face problems due to this now:

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[195] Foxtrot, 30/11 2009
[196] Quebec, 10/12 2009
[197] Echo, 27/11 2009; Bravo, 06/11 2009
[198] Kilo, 04/12 2009
[199] Charlie, 23/11 2009
[200] Bravo, 06/11 2009
[201] Quebec, 10/12 2009
[202] Juliet 04/12 2009
[203] Mike, 05/12 2009; Charlie, 23/11 2009
[204] Echo, 27/11 2009
[205] Echo, 27/11 2009; Charlie, 23/11 2009; Quebec, 10/12 2009
[206] Juliet, 04/12 2009
[207] Delta, 26/11 2009

> People [are] expecting a project, expecting a kit […] ingrained expectations, because you are a form of NGO, because you are not black, because you are not African […] they hope to get something.[208]

> The mentality here […] that NGOs are going to provide a lot for you, usually they think it is more than can actually be provided for. NGOs are generally seen as a positive thing.[209]

These perceptions that "we must use it, we must consume it, big problem for any projects who comes to Gulu right now".[210] This also hurt the goals and outcome of projects, as "when the program ends, and the NGO pulls out […] the community will sit and wait for another NGO to go and give them similar support."[211] The constant presence of development organizations and their assistance leads to an expectation that someone else will fix their problems, maybe even withholding their children from school deliberately in order for someone else to pay for their school fees.[212] It can also change the balance in and aspirations of the community:

> But some people in the community say that this organization is not good, as they claim that students in the schools are dropping out so that they can eventually join this program.[213]

The long-term presence of aid in Gulu has also eases the work of present organizations, as a basic understanding of how the organizations work and what their goals are. As an example, when selecting clients for a project, there is a form of understanding that not everyone can join;

> Especially in Gulu, but the North, because of the flood of NGOs and all of the programs here, people are very well-versed in how NGOs and the international community operate […] people know that they all cannot be selected.[214]

It can also help in getting in contact with vulnerable groups. One respondent described that "they come sometimes expecting grants, support in the form of aid", but are then introduce to them how our program runs.[215] And even as the stance towards development programs initially was rather negative, compared to direct relief handouts, this is slowly changing.[216]

The expectations of aid in the first place, and that aid will come in certain forms, lead to organizations to have to handle this in various ways. Once interacted with, the clients will want more and more. Managing expectations from the outset becomes vital, but as "human needs are never satisfied" the interventions will have to set a stop themselves, rather than their clients saying stop.[217]

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[208] Lima, 04/12 2009
[209] Bravo, 06/11 2009
[210] Charlie, 23/11 2009
[211] Quebec, 10/12 2009
[212] Foxtrot, 30/11 2009
[213] Bravo, 06/11 2009
[214] Lima, 04/12 2009
[215] Kilo, 04/12 2009
[216] Delta, 26/11 2009
[217] Quebec, 10/12 2009

5.6 Corruption and limited results

Speaking of successful and unsuccessful development projects, the issue of corruption was raised frequently. I had decided not to explicitly ask about it, but nonetheless the subject was discussed during almost all interviews. I was therefore surprised at how openly my respondents spoke about corruption, which I had expected to be, if not a non-subject at least veiled in concealed language. Instead it turned out to be a subject where several respondents spoke very explicitly;

> Our country is so rotten, that the moral sense of shame is lost, people are never ashamed. People wake up to go to office to steal money, from the President to the last person, we are rotten [...] The fish rots from the head.[218]

> I am just seeing the intense corruption that does go on, feel like the money that is coming in is just diverted every time, not given out to the people it is supposed to.[219]

When discussing corruption, it is often the disappearing funds that are mentioned, coupled with limited results. Especially the large-scale interventions get named when it comes to corruption, squandering money and not reaching expected results. When speaking of the 1,3 trillion Ugandan Shilling channeled through the PRDP, one respondent wondered "where did the money go?"[220] Another spoke of a project that "was a multi-million intervention, but the impact on the ground […] you only see signposts".[221]

These failed large-scale interventions were connected to a fear that the money does not reach the grassroots; that the decreased impact of misappropriated funds are made at the expense of beneficiaries.[222] There is a fear that aid "end up putting the right money in the wrong hands […] [that it] does not reach the grassroots, the people who are really in need."[223] The feeling is that through the misappropriation of funds "the people who really need the money" are left out, and the benefited are instead the already well-off in Kampala, and that "by the time it reaches the community, it will be like half of what was supposed to reach the community, because of the levels of corruption".[224]

When speaking of corruption, government programs especially were mentioned.[225] The development sector is seen as less corrupt, however not corruption-free, "I think NGOs are more transparent [than government], although I cannot rule out also issues of corruption".[226] The non-governmental actors are not seen as perfect, but are valued as better in terms of efficiency and with less corruption, as "[…] a lot of government programs which should have been in the lead in development have stagnated".[227] One respondent mentioned a successful intervention as successful just because that it was directly implementing without the district government, thus minimizing corruption.[228] Others were more negative, blaming the international system of aid channeling of fueling corruption:

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[218] Juliet 04/12 2009
[219] Bravo, 06/11 2009
[220] Foxtrot, 30/11 2009
[221] Echo, 27/11 2009
[222] Foxtrot, 30/11 2009; Echo, 27/11 2009
[223] Hotel, 01/12 2009
[224] Foxtrot, 30/11 2009; Quebec, 10/12 2009
[225] Quebec, 10/12 2009
[226] Foxtrot, 30/11 2009
[227] Romeo, 11/12 2009
[228] Charlie, 23/11 2009

> But at a wider note, looking at the money coming from the donor countries, as long as we still have a corrupt system, that money is useless, they are better kept in Europe than wasting it here. Because it is not benefiting the people seriously […] If the money is to become useful, then the donor community has to get serious […] get down here instead of just dumping to the government.[229]

Attitudes were often addressed, for example that corruption was prevalent as people thought of the money as "this is money that comes from the US, we *must* use it."[230] In order to avoid corruption attitudes have to be addressed, "the first thing is, people must be able to look at this money not as their money […] not use recklessly, I must use this money to the best, my responsibility".[231] But not only attitudes need to be addressed, also accountability has to be increased and monitoring and evaluation increased, as "accountability is now corruption. The priority areas are right, but we have smart thieves".[232] The current accountability is not enough, "putting in place proper accountability […] that is a weakness in some projects […] The project has a life span, so persons know that [there will be an] end of it."[233] Knowing that most programs are project-based and thus finite, accountability has to address post-project responsibility and possible over-financing.

The most palpable result connected to corruption is how the respondents talk of it as being very visible, while still very impersonal. Even as it is endemic, it seems like there is nobody doing it, and in this sense it is rather invisible. The development organizations blame government, but not themselves. Many respondents talk of corruption as if it is happening in other organizations, but not their own. As only one of my respondents worked directly in a government program, most of my respondents were part of the non-governmental community. This is reflected in the above results, as they tend to upgrade the work of their peer organizations, a form of in-group, and downplay the results of government, an out-group. It is also evident how smaller organizations accuse the larger organizations of inefficiency and corruption, and vice versa.

When it comes to corruption and aid expectations it might also be that when high expectations are not met, corruption is presumed. The respondents seem to expect a lot from development aid in a short time, as "if all the government programs were on course, Gulu would have been very far".[234] The aggregated funds arouse expectations of great impact; and it is seen as a contradiction that Northern Uganda remains poor despite the money coming here:[235]

> I hear that there is a lot of money coming here, but I do not see the money doing any good […] level of the people are not increasing, the poverty level is not lifted up.[236]

These expectations of impact are related to the aid funds coming to Gulu, but focus mostly on visual impact. Many respondents have very high expectations on the development aid, coupled with very low patience. It sometimes seems like they are expecting development to work as a

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[229] Juliet 04/12 2009
[230] Charlie, 23/11 2009
[231] *Ibid.*
[232] Juliet 04/12 2009
[233] Delta, 26/11 2009
[234] Romeo, 11/12 2009
[235] Papa, 09/12 2009; Charlie, 23/11 2009
[236] Hotel, 01/12 2009

magic wand, a smooth operation with instant results. The contradiction between expectations and impact are most evident in how visible results are valued as the most well-used money. This also contradicts the long-term development that most argue for.

These instant expectations expose a lack of comprehension of how organizations work, and to the scale and magnitude of problems facing the development community. They are also related to corruption in an "if only"-mentality, where people focus on how things would have been if only corruption or other problems had not existed. The invisible corruption might also been created from these unmet expectations; if there is not instant results, something must be wrong.

Expatriates coming to work in Gulu have a much thicker agency than its denizens, in terms of economic freedom, freedom of movement, citizenship, social benefits, opportunities and privileges. This included me as a researcher, with the same possibility to leave 'the field' at any given moment as they have. Among the respondents, many were well-educated and almost all could be seen as privileged in comparison to their clients. This privileged position is a dilemma for staff in the development community. The perception of development staff is also a question of availability and service offered:

> Others come with their start up their organizations here, but their organizations are not friendly to the community; you go there and the watchman asks where are you going, who do you want to meet?[237]

When expatriates are "coming and staying in expensive hotels, people see that extravagance".[238] When the director of an organization has a big car and is driving around town in it privately is seen very negatively.[239] Many cars in Gulu have an affiliated NGO sign painted on their side and it does not look very good when they are driving by fast; the NGO cars are notorious for driving recklessly and zooming on rural roads kicking up dust.[240] When employees is taking the organizations vehicles when going home, it sends an implicit ethical message to what is ok and not. When the organization provides free volleyball for its clients but provides the cheapest plastic volleyball for them to play with and keep the new balls for the staff parties, it sends a very explicit message.[241]

But in scrutinizing the role of development staff, it is also a question of what can be expected of a single individual. After working a full day in a development organization for the benefit of its clients, should the individual also be expected to give handouts to beggars in town out of office? Working in the development sector does not require superhuman qualities, but as in other sectors its workers are seen as representatives for his organization, with the added weight of representing the international development system as a whole as well. Even though this does not mean that staff is on duty at all times, it mean that their actions will be viewed in the light of development at all times, with the expectations that are connected to this. Working in a sector that is altruistic in its form, will bring about expectations of altruism on a personal level as well; and when individuals stray from this and other presumptions is often viewed negatively. This is the downside of working in a field that is normatively seen as doing good.

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[237] Alpha, 04/11 2009

[238] *Ibid.*

[239] Observation, 03/11 2009

[240] Observation, 08/11 2009

[241] Observation, 03/11 2009

5.7 Concentration and Coordination

That the capacity of the local government was not sufficient was evident early on, which has created the demand for NGOs to operate. One respondent acknowledged that "the government was unable to meet the need and demand of the people", but that they were at least trying.[242] The government's capacity of providing services was described as a challenge:[243]

> Not every day you should expect manna to fall from heaven, we need to have local capacity built to address some of these things […] People are closing, these people are going. […] When they go away, leave it all to the government? […] Which government? They cannot meet the demand of the people.[244]

Due to the lacking capacities of the local government, the organizations had to work in partnership with the government to back them up, as "the government is here to stay".[245] This capacity-building was aimed at creating conditions for workable long-term development, as without the government, "who will monitor the projects?"[246]

As the local government has such limited funds, much of the work is done by NGOs focusing on different sectors.[247] This also creates frees the government of responsibility;

> We have spoilt the local government […] NGOs are so many, and want to do everything […] want to do everything for them […] they have a budget, money allocated for local government, but where is that money going? […] we have even fueled corruption in local government.[248]

The development organizations in a way works as a form of outsourced government. With NGOs running local service-provision, there are no incentives for the government to 'take back' the responsibilities of certain sectors. By giving mandates to different actors, the government can focus on other things. In some sectors the overall control is given to a partner, as one respondent described how his IO had "a mandate to coordinate the work of the food security partners within the district".[249] In other activities the government retains the overall control and coordinates the direct implementation to different organizations, but the operation and funding is run by the organizations themselves.[250]

Development organizations expanded their activities when the IDPs started returning, as the services established in the camps did not follow them back to the villages.[251] Therefore the issue of lacking services became apparent, "before easy to address people, all in IDP camps […] an NGO just comes, and distributes handouts".[252] The services that people had had in the camps were not available before the conflict either, but the use for two decades had created a demand.[253]

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[242] November, 06/12 2009
[243] Quebec, 10/12 2009
[244] Romeo, 11/12 2009
[245] Romeo, 11/12 2009; Papa, 09/12 2009
[246] Papa, 09/12 2009
[247] Charlie, 23/11 2009
[248] Foxtrot, 30/11 2009
[249] Quebec, 10/12 2009
[250] Charlie, 23/11 2009; Delta, 26/11 2009
[251] Foxtrot, 30/11 2009; Quebec, 10/12 2009
[252] Echo, 27/11 2009
[253] Papa, 09/12 2009

An overarching question is how the work division between state and non-state actors should be and what responsibilities they have. Should NGOs do the same or different activities as the state? In Gulu, the NGOs in most cases act as alternatives to the state, where the state cannot or will not provide services. But it is also question of what activities should count as development and not, as it is also depending on unclear definitions. This is especially true of government activities. If a road is built by the government, it might not be counted as development, but if it is instead is built by a partner, does that change anything? What to count and what not to count blurs the statistics of interventions and makes overview of interventions hard.

The dire need and restored peace has created a very concentrated development community in Gulu. This concentration has led to a lot of duplications, as both government and different NGOs run similar programs.[254] "There are many players on the ground, many NGOs that are more or less doing similar kind of activities".[255] One respondent argued that there is too many actors in too few areas, and that there is a need to "sit down and look at the people's needs […] do not add a health center to a place that has it already!"[256] The concentration means that some interventions can be seen as obsolete, but there is still "a lot of NGOs [that] need to be here, whose mandate is relevant and appropriate".[257]

The many similar programs lead to reevaluation and that some organizations are looking to changing their mandate.[258] The concentration also implicates that there is a need for coordination, as it is hard to overview:

> It is really hard for me to understand, who is doing what for who? Cause we see a lot of humanitarian agencies in Gulu, everybody is moving to the field, but basically on the whole you find a little change.[259]

The difficulty of mapping out the areas of operation of different actors leads to a need for coordination and cooperation.[260] Some organizations look to how they best operate in the reigning environment and adapt accordingly, both in terms of area of operation and geographic area. These shifts are done in order to address current problems left out by others, "we address gaps, that have been left by other stakeholders" and "try to map interventions, so that we do not duplicate interventions".[261]

The lack of coordination leads to inefficiency, in that "we have a lot of money coming in, but also being wasted, because of poor coordination".[262] The coordinating efforts that are in place are twofold, a voluntary joint organization in the form of the Gulu NGO Forum, and monitoring through the district government.[263] Every humanitarian organization has to reregister through the government every year, presenting frameworks and work plans, sometimes leading to revoked licenses and closed organizations when their mandate are no longer relevant.[264] However, this is not enough according to one respondent, who would rather see that the government also tried to

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[254] Papa, 09/12 2009
[255] Quebec, 10/12 2009
[256] Delta, 26/11 2009
[257] Lima, 04/12 2009
[258] Juliet 04/12 2009
[259] Romeo, 11/12 2009
[260] November, 06/12 2009
[261] Romeo, 11/12 2009; Quebec, 10/12 2009
[262] Delta, 26/11 2009
[263] *Ibid.*
[264] Observation, 05/11 2009; Alpha, 04/11 2009

address the concentration on too few areas by "projects put on hold, or you push them to other sub-counties, that are not [addressed at the moment]".[265]

 The concentration of organizations in certain areas has also led to a flooded market especially apparent in vocational training, which is a popular intervention in post-conflict areas, as it quickly put people "back on track". There is a need for labor market analysis, which so far has lacked and instead flooded the market with tailors and bakers:

> All the NGOs in the international community here have been putting them through vocational training […] when all the NGOs are conducting or providing vocational training in the same four or five subject areas […] naturally flood the market with everyone having the same skills […] and training areas not even chosen based on market demand.[266]

> Why go and train people as tailors, yet the market is not there? […] Everybody has a tailoring machine if you go to the camps, where is the market? It is over-crowded.[267]

Training people in professions that are not demanded leads to unmet expectations and frustration, leading to that "sometimes they end up even selling what they have been given as they cannot compete in the market".[268] Un- and underemployment are larger issues than the development sector itself can address, as providing decent work especially for youth is one of the greatest contemporary global issues, for non-privileged countries especially. But there is a need for a more demand-driven approach, to look at which skills are relevant, especially as the informal sector which absorbs most.[269]

5.8 Implementation and Impact

When it comes to development work good intentions are not enough, as "the biggest challenge to any development is implementation".[270] In order for development projects to be successful, they need to be "based on the needs of people".[271] Implementation was a subject discussed vibrantly during the interviews, especially the opposites of community-driven and imposed projects.[272] Imposed projects were seen as something bad, and according to this unfortunately, widely prevalent:

> […] it becomes about the implementation […] the money is coming and it is being imposed toward a certain particular type of development.[273]

> This imposed development from outside […] this money from [organization], you will need to do this […] this is the type of development we want […] it end up failing, you cannot implement it as it is not a community-friendly development.[274]

[265] Delta, 26/11 2009
[266] Lima, 04/12 2009
[267] Echo, 27/11 2009
[268] Golf, 30/11 2009
[269] Echo, 27/11 2009, Golf, 30/11 2009
[270] Juliet 04/12 2009
[271] Foxtrot, 30/11 2009
[272] Papa, 09/12 2009
[273] Golf, 30/11 2009
[274] *Ibid.*

When talking about imposed projects, it is other organizations that are doing it, as opposed to themselves; "our kind of intervention, we do not impose activities on the community, we work according to their needs".[275]

When evaluating impact most programs compare before and after, either in terms of quantitative statistics or qualitative personal stories and success-stories.[276] For programs having an absolute impact it is easy to measure, for example the number of children attending school or the number of groups receiving a microloan, as the "figures speak for themselves".[277] When it comes to programs focusing on personal transformation in the form of sensitization and training, the impact is harder to measure.[278]

When addressing what is having an impact and not, it is very often numbers that seen as most significant. But numbers are not all, as some respondents pointed out:

> It also depends on what success means […] There is normally little attention to the quality. You can have quantity, you can have a hundred ex-combatants doing vocational skills training, but how is that skills training administered?[279]

The opinions on the impact of different activities varied a lot. How the respondents value something might have had a relation to how they valued what can be described as soft and hard impact. Playing football with local kids can create opposite reactions, "playing football is one of the ways of promoting peace, against other groups, afterwards eating lunch together" or "kicking football with people in a camp, what is the impact?"[280] Changing mind-sets can be seen as soft impact, while down-prioritizing this impact or seeing it as unnecessary when money could go to other things, shows a preference for hard impact.

When measuring the impact of development projects, several respondents mentioned the need to reflect reality. This is important in order to value how the implementation is faring, "if you sponsor a child, do not stop on paying the school fees, go and visit the school and see how the child is performing."[281] As most office workers only see the field under certain circumstances, they see the field in "black-and-white", it is important to have focal points reporting the day-to-day activities to give a more nuanced picture.[282]

The organizations often consult and/or liaise with local community leaders, in order to gain approval to work in the community, and to get help in selecting their target group.[283]

> Consult leaders before come in, to accept us into the community before we come […] otherwise can backfire […] if something goes wrong, do not have a fallback position […] and in any case, it creates ownership.[284]

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[275] Quebec, 10/12 2009
[276] Delta, 26/11 2009
[277] Alpha, 04/11 2009; Echo, 27/11 2009
[278] Papa, 09/12 2009
[279] Echo, 27/11 2009
[280] Observations, 04/11 2009; 05/11 2009
[281] Alpha, 04/11 2009
[282] Echo, 27/11 2009
[283] India, 03/12 2009; Golf, 30/11 2009; Alpha, 04/11 2009; November, 06/12 2009
[284] Delta, 26/11 2009

By knocking on the door before entering, the programs are linked to the communities under the banner of 'ownership'. This also is a way of starting off the intervention, as "we start with sensitizing local leaders […] then mobilize their own community".[285]

This selection through using the traditional structures can however be problematic. Some youth flee these structures deliberately, which can sometimes even be the reason why they willfully joined in the rebellion. It might also create opportunities for nepotism and corruption, as was the experience of one respondent, who described that if you request the local community leaders that "we want you to identify 10 most vulnerable in your village, they end up identifying their relatives and friends".[286]

The dialogue is as described above most often conducted with representatives of their clients, rather than the clients themselves. However, most programs do regular field visits, complete with direct communication with their clients in the form of interviews or forms; "once and a while, I get myself down to the grassroots […] we talk to each and everyone in the community".[287]

Many of the organizations label their targeted groups the same. The most common description was to target the "most vulnerable of the most vulnerable".[288] Another common description was to "prioritize according to their vulnerability level".[289] This is not a well-defined term, and Echo acknowledges that "vulnerability is a very complicated term, depending on your situation, it depends on how you work".[290] Some organizations had more explicit target groups. One respondent mentioned "disadvantaged", another stated that "we need the poorest of the poorest women", while one offered a closed circle in "those who should be supported".[291] Some organizations have a more universal approach, especially in an area such as infrastructure, focusing on whole villages and communities.[292] Others focus deliberately on women or children, "Communities? No, our focus is women".[293]

In all the interviews the issues of stigma, rejection and exclusion were brought up. The answer was very unison; clients come voluntarily, and when talking of stigma "they almost laugh when I ask, no-one will say no. [I] asked the same myself, but no, no-one will pass on this opportunity", and "I have never heard of anyone not wanting to come, again because of what we have to offer".[294] Jealousy and exclusion are however a reality which is hard to handle for the organizations.[295] With the groups targeted are very much the same, leading to that "specific groups of people, other groups are left out […] [They] see results, feel left out."[296] People excluded from programs are sometimes advised and directed to other programs, or told to "try next year".[297]

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[285] India, 03/12 2009
[286] Golf, 30/11 2009
[287] Juliet 04/12 2009; India, 03/12 2009
[288] Bravo, 06/11 2009
[289] Juliet 04/12 2009; Echo, 27/11 2009
[290] Echo, 27/11 2009
[291] Hotel, 01/12 2009; India, 03/12 2009; Juliet 04/12 2009
[292] Charlie, 23/11 2009
[293] Kilo, 04/12 2009; India, 03/12 2009
[294] Lima, 04/12 2009; Bravo, 06/11 2009
[295] Bravo, 06/11 2009
[296] Quebec, 10/12 2009
[297] Juliet 04/12 2009

5.9 Competition and Cooperation

The concentration of development organizations in Gulu has led to competition for limited funds. This is coinciding with external aid decreases, in a form of donor fatigue, where "you are dumping money on the same issues, the same mantras, the same slogans; child soldiers, LRA, help the IDPs, for the last 20 years", which is increases competition even further.[298] The resources are finite and even contracting, as "funders are also becoming kind of tired, there is apathy, you understand".[299]

Northern Uganda and Gulu in particular has become notorious internationally for the discourses of LRA, abductees, child soldiers and night-commuters. As most development organizations rely on external funding, it is natural that they tap into this notoriety when applying for funds. This also means that organizations hold on to symbolism that may no longer be the reality on the ground:

> A NGO wants to exist, they need a reason to exist, and if they perpetrating certain issues that are no longer issues just because they need funding to exist and be here […] that is not helping the country, that is not helping the north. […] It is effective because that is what people in America and Europe […] that is what catches people's attention. […] The more we promote child soldiers as being a problem […] a disservice to Northern Uganda […] no longer the main problem.[300]

By using these discourses the development community tap into the buzzwords funders are looking for, but it also hides the reality, as for example "when you talk of IDPs, basically everyone has been an IDP".[301] By using outdated symbolism some NGOs hurt the situation by "misprogramming funds away from areas that are really needing it".[302] But the name must not directly link to the activities of the organization either. Several organizations have the word "child" in their name, and explain that as the clients had been children during the conflict, it is still valid.[303]

Linked to the competition for funding is the question of visibility. The organizations operating in Gulu seemed very aware of their brands, promoting it through sign-posts and handing out t-shirts promoting mentioning their activities.[304] In the current aid structure of larger organizations supporting smaller projects, there is also a competition in supporting good projects. By providing goods or supporting in some way, larger organizations can include projects in their catalogues of interventions or even change the name of the projects.[305] This process of rebranding already existing projects is very similar to sponsorship, and is a quick way to build up a project catalogue, while letting others do the hard work.

Visibility is essential for the survival of smaller organizations, but some of the larger organizations actively give away the visibility of their projects, instead promoting local implementers:

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[298] Lima, 04/12 2009
[299] Juliet 04/12 2009
[300] Lima, 04/12 2009
[301] Delta, 26/11 2009
[302] Lima, 04/12 2009
[303] Mike, 05/12 2009
[304] Observation, 04/11 2009
[305] Observation, 07/11 2009

> We try to implement in a way where our brand is not at the forefront […] Do not seek visibility, does not help when promoting peace. Hand over visibility to get results.[306]

The development activity and the funding coming into Gulu are attracting both people and organizations. One respondent described how "I wanted to carry out research […] how much money has been poured into the north? […] then compare it to the impact", and in the words of a local "every door in town you move, there is a NGO".[307] The opportunities also attract scammers, and with the multitude of actors it becomes a problem to find the right partners:

> People come with a heart to help […] but big problem getting the right people to work with […] problem to identify right people to work with […] Intentions are ok, we appreciate [them], but how to reach grassroots?[308]

The development community is providing plenty of job opportunities, rather high salaries and status, making it popular to study development studies and to look for jobs in the sector.[309] Activities are created in the name of development, but can later be changed in their form, continuing to hide under the banner of development.[310] Not all see work in the sector as altruistic work, but some rather as a get-rich-quickly opportunity:

> Some projects are just used as a money-generating activity […] have I got my cut? Mentality has to be changed […] people really have to write projects with their hearts for the people who are supposed to benefit.[311]

Scammers attracted include brief-case organizations, or "internet-beggars", existing on paper but not on the ground.[312] Connected to this are the practices of forging receipts and taking false photos of the wrong things.[313] The scammers will "tell you stories, or make the work sub-standard".[314] The buzz of Gulu town is also attracting outright criminality and prostitution.[315]

In the cluster of development organizations, linkages and partnerships among the actors are plentiful. The partnerships are ever-changing; "an organization as [organization] relies on partnerships, and these partnerships come and go".[316] The partnerships mostly focus on complementing capacities, in providing organization X with the specific skills of the staff of organization Y and vice versa, and hierarchical parts of development projects, but the partnerships also range from co-funding, co-designing co-operating interventions.[317] A few organizations do not have any local partner organizations, other than local government, but these are an exception.[318]

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[306] Lima, 04/12 2009

[307] Observation, 08/11 2009

[308] Echo, 27/11 2009 ; Hotel, 01/12 2009

[309] Observation, 03/11 2009; Romeo, 11/12 2009

[310] Observation, 24/11 2009

[311] Delta, 26/11 2009

[312] Observation, 10/11 2009

[313] Observation, 08/11 2009; Alpha, 04/11 2009

[314] Hotel, 01/12 2009

[315] November, 06/12 2009

[316] Romeo, 11/12 2009

[317] Tango, 14/12 2009; November, 06/12 2009

[318] Interview with Oscar, 07/12 2009, 13 minutes, not recorded, INGO, office, 40, male, Bangladeshi

The partnerships essentially work as a form of outsourcing, facilitating slimmer organizations with less staff. The organizations "prefer to keep the organization lean, and then work with partners", being able to tap into a pool of common knowledge and skills when demanded.[319] When the organization is expanded some organizations creates an affiliate, rather than having the parent growing.[320]

Some organizations target the partnerships as an opportunity for capacity-building of their competitors. Through partnerships larger organizations can "improve the capacity of smaller organizations".[321] "We have a stage where we evaluate the capacity of the partner, train them in activities."[322] This capacity-building can also be the core focus of the organization, working with business-to-business activities as "a lot of organizations doing good work […] but they lack the expertise […] Help them do whatever they are doing better".[323]

The organizations also differ in their approach to the problems facing the communities of Gulu. Many of the organizations work in several fields, focusing on a range of developmental issues, while others work solely with one issue. This naturally has a strong connection to the size of the organization. For a small CBO, focusing on one area is enough; "I tried to explain […] you cannot help everyone, I am not god".[324]

Delta takes pride in how his organization has not strayed from the original focus area, as "one of few organizations that have done that".[325] Alpha indicates that focusing on one area is a matter of quality; as if the organization expands too quickly they cannot uphold quality.[326]

One respondent explained that the organization focused on one thing, but that the group lending was used as a platform to tackle other problems; as business skills, basic literacy and reproductive health was taught in connection to the gatherings.[327] Another thought that the discussion was irrelevant, instead reflecting that the organization should at all times strive to evaluate "are we still relevant […] what should be our mandate?"[328]

Many respondents preferred smaller organizations, as "it has been my experience that the smaller NGOs are more effective".[329] As the founder of a small CBO, Alpha pointed to how growth could pose a problem for the organization, "we really need to move on step by step, we cannot just rush in".[330] Another acknowledged that "there are poor women everywhere, but the problem is that we cannot reach everywhere […] We need to start somewhere and then we expand".[331] Others pointed to that the larger organizations were not as effective in development work as the small ones, with an advantage in giving relief, but also to that corruption was less of a problem in smaller NGOs, "my experience was [that] a lot of the failures that occurred, especially with larger NGOs that are not really all that effective".[332]

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[319] Delta, 26/11 2009

[320] *Ibid.*

[321] Delta, 26/11 2009; Echo, 27/11 2009

[322] Tango, 14/12 2009

[323] Foxtrot, 30/11 2009

[324] Observation, 22/11 2009

[325] Delta, 26/11 2009

[326] Alpha, 04/11 2009

[327] Kilo, 04/12 2009

[328] November, 06/12 2009

[329] Bravo, 06/11 2009

[330] Alpha, 04/11 2009

[331] India, 03/12 2009

[332] Bravo, 06/11 2009

On the other hand, all acknowledged that money mattered for development work, and that even for a big organization "the need of the communities are more than the resources that are there […] addressing that we can".[333] This problem is even more apparent when it comes to smaller organizations;

> Money obviously plays a big role, but as the same time, working in a small NGO having very little funding, very little money, yet we feel that we are still making a difference.[334]

Several projects in the Gulu area are faith-based, directly or indirectly connected to a certain church or confession. This is in part changed due to the NGO presence, altering the reality on the ground;

> Today, how you teach the gospel has changed, especially because our people here has been under the agony of war, so many other organizations came here […] changed perception about receiving has changed, thinks that the world should take care of them […] teach gospel empty handed, they will not understand what I am saying.[335]

By adapting to these changed perceptions and rebranding traditional missionary activities under the development banner, the former work can continue. Three of the organizations were in some way described as faith-based, and one respondent described his work as a springboard for apostolic work.[336] Another played down the missionary dimension, "by the world's standards they would not call it missionary per se […] missionaries is the ones who go out and evangelize", but explained that one goal of the organization was to "bring god's words in to the community as well".[337] While the missionaries of past times mostly have been replaced by international experts "on mission" in the "field", faith-based organizations are joining the trend and rebrands themselves. The core activity of socio-cultural transformation stays the same.[338]

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[333] Quebec, 10/12 2009
[334] Bravo, 06/11 2009
[335] Charlie, 23/11 2009
[336] Hotel, 01/12 2009
[337] Bravo, 06/11 2009
[338] de Senarclens, Pierre, 1997, *How the United Nations Promotes Development through Technical Assistance*. In: Rahnema & Bawtree (ed.), *The Post-Development Reader*, London: Zed, p.195

6. Conclusions

This study has examined how the development community in Gulu in Northern Uganda views itself and its clients. This has been studied through 20 semi-structured interviews and participant observations over two months on-site in Gulu. Through the analysis of the material several conclusions have been made, which will be presented here. The main research question for the study has been *How do the representatives from the Gulu development community perceive their own work and the relation to their clients?* This question has in turn been studied through three more defined questions, which will here be answered one by one below.

How is the development community organized and what are the internal relations of the organizations?

Gulu was a focal point for relief aid during the years of conflict, and since peace was restored in the North, even more development organizations have poured in. This has led to a very concentrated development community, with several duplications doing similar programs. This concentration of projects makes the development interventions hard to overview and leads to a need for coordination. More structured coordination is still halting, but the duplicity of projects lead to voluntary coordination as some organizations ask how they best can operate in the reigning environment and adapt accordingly.

The rapid expansion of development organizations was grounded in lacking government capacities for meeting the demand of certain services. The local government now coordinates interventions, either giving away mandates of overall control or retaining control and coordinating implementing partners. However, with NGOs running local service-provision in many sectors, there are no real incentives for the government to retake the control. This articulates the issue of what the responsibilities and work division between state and non-state actors should be. It also raises the issue of what development essentially is, as some interventions may be counted as development if done by NGOs, but not if it is government-run. Activities can thus be considered as different, depending on the actor, timing and context.

Many organizations have shifted to the next development hot-spot, as the peace has reduced Gulu somewhat to yesterday's news. This means that there are less funding now, but many problems prevail; they do not just go away as the quick-fix-minded relief organizations leave. To fix root causes long-term development are needed, and at the moment a shift towards this type of development is underway. This shift is however partly a shift of words, as both relief and long-term development actors has existed side by side both before and presently, but funding is shifting towards the latter. The shift has also been politicized, in that relief interventions are popular and therefore hard to remove. Introducing interventions is easy, but concluding them is hard as it makes clients upset.

In order to reach sustainability in projects there is a need to think ahead. Long-term development entails not only initiation, but also operation of the interventions. This leads many organizations to look for local partners in implementation, looking beyond the day when aid leaves. As funders and expatriates may change, the locals will still be there. In differentiating between organizations, local rootedness was therefore often stressed. Place matters in this sense, with local connections presumed to mean contextual knowledge and a strong commitment.

As external aid decreases due to donor fatigue, there is an increased competition for more scarce funds. In order to attract external funding development organizations tap into well-known symbols and buzzwords, taking advantage of the notoriety that LRA, IDPs and Gulu night

commuters have in the outside world. This also means that some organizations hold on to obsolete symbols, which might no longer reflect reality. The buzzwords also in a sense hide the reality, and branding and rebranding is a way to continue old activities. The competition also leads to an importance of visibility of projects, especially for smaller actors. As a continuation of this, sponsorships can be a way of building up a project catalogue quickly, with others doing the hard work.

All respondents agreed that implementation is the most important aspect of development projects, as good intentions are not enough. Important for projects are to be aware of their impact, and to make sure that their picture of the impact reflects reality. How to measure impact and what kind of impact counts as most valuable differed among the respondents, but all agreed that imposed projects were bad. There were different proponents for both hard and soft impact, and while numbers usually guides if a project is successful or not, many questioned the rationale behind this. In order to increase ownership of projects, local community leaders were often consulted, as a way to knock on the door before entering and gain approval for the project. Going through these traditional structures however has a risk of fueling nepotism and corruption.

An important choice for organizations is if they should focus on one problem area or run programs in several sectors. Scale is a big issue especially for smaller organization, as too rapid expansion means that they cannot uphold quality. This is also a question of finite resources, as money matters for the scale and scope of interventions, and is also a driving force behind partnerships. The concentration of development organizations not only lead to competition, but also to cooperation. These partnerships complements the capacities of organizations and makes slimmer organizations possible, with some organizations even solely concentrating on capacity-building and other services aimed at the development community itself.

Several respondents stressed the importance of interventions to be demand-driven. Many interventions have been rushed, without an analysis of the demand, flooding the market with similar products and trainings, creating unmet expectations and frustration. On the other hand, the development community in a way has created its own purpose and demand. By providing services that did not exist before the development organizations arrived, the demand is even higher now that the IDPs are returning home, where the services are non-existent.

With large external funding coming into the region many opportunities are created. These also attract scammers and briefcase NGOs, existing on paper but not in reality. Some see the development funds as a money-generating activity or an opportunity to get rich, escalating corruption. The respondents requested more rigorous accountability; as most development assistance is project-based and thus finite, there is a need for post-project responsibility and instruments handling over-financing. NGOs were perceived as being less corrupt, but especially international aid assistance without strings attached given through government programs was seen as only fueling corruption.

The respondents talked very openly about corruption, but the corruption discussed was always impersonal, it was out there without any explicit agents who did it. This invisible corruption points to how corruption works; what the individual is doing is not corruption, but what 'Others' are doing is. This means that the individual's own behavior is not perceived as corruption, but the same behavior by somebody else is seen as corruption. Through this behavior, corruption is understood but never seen, as actual visible cases of corruption are seen as something else, i.e. benefits or privileges.

It was evident that corruption and misappropriated funds was prevalent in Gulu, but some of the corruption perceived by some might be the result of unmet expectations. The respondents seemed to have very high expectations, together with a very short patience. The high expectations

seemed to believe in instant results, something that development cannot deliver no matter on what scale. These expectations saw aid funds as a magic wand, which would provide quick results through smooth operations. When these high expectations are not met, another solution has to be found, and therefore corruption is branded as the cause. The imagined corruption is strengthened by the way visible results were highly regarded, and a lack of understanding of administrative challenges.

In terms of corruption and inefficiency, both closely linked, the respondents often accused the government of performing worse than NGOs, but this blame-game also applied to smaller and larger organizations pointing fingers at each-other. This also applied to imposed projects, which always were seen as done by others, but never by their own organizations. It was very evident how others, outside the in-group, are accredited negative behavior, while there were seldom any recognition of own responsibilities or faults.

How do representatives of the Gulu development community view the impact of development on Gulu?

With peace restored, both people and products from the outside world are flooding into Gulu. A frustration among the respondents over globalization was noticeable, a feeling that local citizens are losing out economically as the market is flooded with products and people from the outside world. With the education system hit hard, there is also a risk for a future backlash, as more well-educated people from the outside may grab local opportunities. As Gulu has been dependent on hand-outs for a long time, the take off is longer. However, this means that its inhabitants have to take hold of the opportunities that are presented to them, as external funders will tire at some point. The competition both internally and externally leads to missed out opportunities and creates frustration. This frustration is among other things expressed in xenophobic attitudes, especially directed towards those with a visible physical presence. It was also expressed in skepticism against outsiders' motives, even other Ugandans.

The aid funds coming into Gulu also lead to a 'development disease', in the form of sharply increased prices and a balloon economy. This is a result of simple supply-demand, with too few services and too high demand, prevalent in most places in the Global South where aid money, NGOs and international expatriates are coming in. As these external actors have few choices other than the existing services, prices spike, with the locals most affected by the inflation. The trade with Southern Sudan adds to the phenomenon, as an area also hit hard by conflict and poverty. As Juba, the capital of Southern Sudan, is an even bigger aid hub, this works as a spill-over effect, as the food-shortages in Southern Sudan are exported across the border through the trade.

The economic globalization affects the culture in a cultural globalization as well. These processes are global in character and affecting all societies to some extent. Development is grounded in modernity and the underlying Eurocentric notions of universality and the development introduced in Gulu is closely linked both to globalization and modernity. Local culture is not unaffected but creolized with global cultural influences. However, globalization means that even without development programs, modern influences would reach Gulu anyway, and development therefore cannot be solely singled out.

Development interventions constitute a form of social engineering, varying in scope and intentionality, no matter how culturally sensitive it aspires to be. With development and other globalization processes external influences weight on the local culture. Even as change is natural element of culture, it is perceived as the opposite and fuels anxiety. It is here important to ask

people themselves what they want, and have understanding in that it takes time to accept cultural change.

Development interventions lead to a conflict between tradition and modernity, where development is closely linked to the latter in the form of developmentalism. When moving people to the IDP camps it was a form of forced urbanization and now the opposite is happening, with IDPs returning as an urban-rural migration. As town life is perceived as equivalent to modernity, and village life as traditionality, this causes friction when going back; as not all wish for a return to traditional structures. In addition to this, a shift towards a more cash-based society means that traditional power-bases are challenged. Traditional status-attributes are eroded as money and competence becomes more important. This means that groups that feel that they are losing out in the shift towards modernity are defending traditionality vividly. This was most evident when it came to projects focusing on GBV and child rights, which skeptically was seen as contradicting local culture by some. As these interventions challenges reigning power relations, this can be seen as a traditional defense for patriarchality and for a return to a more traditional, male-centered, society.

The conflict in Northern Uganda has torn apart society and many have lived an existence dependent on handouts for decades. With stability returned, the pseudo-worlds of IDP camps are scaling down, with people moving back changed. The relief aid coming in for two decades has created dependency-syndrome and hand-out mentality among the inhabitants of Gulu. After first fighting to get people into the camps, it is now hard to get them to move back. This dependency does not always have to reflect a real need, as many just expect assistance. The long-term interventions have created expectations of aid and help, in that if there is a problem someone else will fix it.

In order to change this, local development organizations try to change mindsets and encourage people to become self-reliant. But the constant presence of humanitarian assistance and development programs are adding to the expectations, no matter how much the organizations are trying to manage expectations. The interventions have to set a stop themselves, rather than waiting for their clients to say stop, as human needs are never satisfied and no one will say no to this type of assistance by their own free will.

What are the relations between the development community and their clients?

Development means an intrusion in others' lives, involuntarily due to thin agency. Staff working in development organizations have a much thicker agency and more power to affect their life than their clients. There is an asymmetrical power relation between the two groups and it is therefore important that the relations between the development community and their clients are scrutinized.

The clients are often presumed to act in a certain way by practitioners. This means that decisions are often taken beforehand for the clients, leaving them without a choice and having to accept the results. This is a form of deterministic agency, where choices and options of individuals are predetermined for them. For example, hand-outs and grants are seen as pariah by many organizations, as the clients are expected to squander the assistance. These assumptions lead to an even thinner agency of the clients, who most often already have a very limited power to shape their own lives. In order to strengthen the agency of the clients, projects must be more in tune with the demands and aspirations of their clients.

The respondents often expressed a blatant elitism, expressing indirectly that they knew what was best for their clients. These elitist attitudes are grounded in presumptions about their clients and the attitude of knowing better leads to a feeling of obligation to take care of the less

knowing. This is also true for both local government and partner organizations, which several organizations run capacity-building training for, as they are deemed to need their help. But this self-proclaimed know-it-all attitude also raises the issue of who knows best among them, as many organizations compete in the same sectors.

The organizations in reality act as spokespersons for their clients in many situations. This is partially because of a need of external actors for a local partner to talk to, but it is also a self-proclaimed role fueled by their know-it-all-attitudes. They are not elected spokespersons, which affects the dignity and integrity of clients, with the presumptions about the clients acting as a filter hindering influence. Development staff often have own experiences of the hardships Gulu has been and is going through, and several organizations have been started in order to reclaim ownership in dealing with their own issues, instead of being used to attract funding. This shift seems to reclaim the agency for these groups, but in reality it replaces the old advocates with new. These are presumably more connected to their clients, but are still self-proclaimed agents speaking on their behalf.

As the clients seldom have any alternatives to developmental assistance, they have to accept what is given; otherwise someone else will take it. This leads to that the individual agency is lost and that it hard for clients to influence the forms of assistance. Some organizations create incentives to make people come, but for most they get clients anyway, almost no matter how they act. This leads to that treatment becomes of lesser importance, as there are no incentives for upholding any particular level of service and availability.

The treatment also affects the way development staff is perceived by their clients. Through implicit ethical messages as driving organizational vehicles privately and disrespecting their clients' time, and explicit messages as staying in expensive hotels and having their compounds guarded by barbed wire, the two groups are distanced from each-other even more. This also adds to the Otherness of the respective groups to each-other. This is also related to the responsibilities and expectations on individuals working in development organizations. There are no requirements for altruism when off-duty, but it is important that they are mindful of that they are representatives not only of their organizations, but of development as a whole.

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So how do the representatives from the Gulu development community perceive their own work and the relation to their clients? In assessing their own work, the development sector was held as doing both positive and negative impact. The aid flows into Gulu has contributed to dependency and a form of development disease, as the local economy spirals out of control due to the influx of external funds. Together with economic globalization comes also cultural globalization, which creolizes local culture and leads to clashes between tradition and modernity.

At the moment there is a shift from relief aid to long-term development, happening just as external funding is decreased. In the development community, the concentration of organizations leads to both competition over limited resources and cooperation. The development community was also found to have high expectations on its own work, but with little patience to await the results. This is problematic as there is a lack of understanding of organizational and monetary realities; there are no instant results, only hard work. Related to the expectations is corruption, which is often presumed when expectations are not met. Corruption was always invisible, being prevalent everywhere but done by no one.

In regards to the relations to their clients, development interventions always entail an intrusion into other peoples' lives. The development organizations debate the implementation and impact of interventions, but seem ignorant to this. Most inhabitants in the Gulu district are too poor or too weak, lacking time and resources, to focus on questions of power. This thin agency makes it even more important to scrutinize the power relations in the Gulu development community. The development community was found to express an explicit elitism and their knows-best-attitude together with presumptions about their clients restrains the agency of their clients. The clients are subject to others' decisions and have to accept what is given. Development in this sense restrains its clients' agency, as decisions are made based on presumptions rather than dialogue.

For future research, it would be interesting to examine the views of clients' closer, thereby turning the research questions on their head in a study of how the clients view the development community. It would also be interesting to make comparisons with other geographical regions, both in Uganda and in other regions in the Global South. As Gulu is a very busy development hub, it would be interesting to study it in relation to a less prioritized and funded area. Most relevant would it be though to compare the results found here to other development hubs with very concentrated development clusters, in order to see how generally applicable the results are.

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Alpha, 04/11 2009, 44 minutes, CBO, field, 25, male, Acholi

Bravo, 06/11 2009, 45 minutes, LNGO, field, 24, female, American

Charlie, 23/11 2009, 70 minutes, LNGO, out-of-office (OOO), 30, male, Acholi

Delta, 26/11 2009, 69 minutes, NNGO, OOO, 33, male, Acholi

Echo, 27/11 2009, 90 minutes, government department, AOH, 28, male, Acholi

Foxtrot, 30/11 2009, 50 minutes, LNGO, office, 32, male, Acholi

Golf, 30/11 2009, 58 minutes, LNGO, OOO, 29, male, Acholi

Hotel, 01/12 2009, 35 minutes, LNGO, field, 46, male, Acholi

India, 03/12 2009, 43 minutes, LNGO, office, 26, female, Acholi

Juliet, 04/12 2009, 65 minutes, LNGO, office, 32, male, Acholi

Kilo, 04/12 2009, 40 minutes, LNGO, office, 28, male, Bagandan

Lima, 04/12 2009, 73 minutes, IO, OOO, 31, female, American

Mike, 05/12 2009, 49 minutes, LNGO, OOO, 27, male, Acholi

November, 06/12 2009, 65 minutes, LNGO, OOO, 33, male, Acholi

Oscar, 07/12 2009, 13 minutes, not recorded, INGO, office, 40, male, Bangladeshi

Papa, 09/12 2009, 52 minutes, not recorded, IO, office, 32, male, Acholi

Quebec, 10/12 2009, 71 minutes, IO, OOO, 32, male, Acholi

Romeo, 11/12 2009, 30 minutes, LNGO, office, 31, male, Acholi

Sierra, 11/12 2009, 32 minutes, INGO, field, 44, female, Acholi

Tango, 14/12, 40 minutes, INGO, office, 37, female, Acholi

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Appendices

Appendix 1 – Interview Guide

Introduction;
Independent study, not an aid effort, not official research. Masters in Human Geography. Study dev projects around Gulu.
Confidentality (anonymity. Also for org) but taping for transcription if ok?

About yourself – age, sex, name, nationality, position.
About organisation. Focus. Goals. Size. How long operating. Clients. Funding. Partners.
Any specific community links?

Why you doing this? Any specific motivation? How long at the organisation?

People you help; Who are they? Age, sex? How prioritized?
Why are they in the situation they are in? Why need help? Internal/external factors?
Some people hesitate to come here? Stigma? How do you handle this?
Exclusion, jealousy? How handle?
Voluntarily? Do they have a choice? Any alternatives/competitors?
How do you know what you do works? Evaluation? What targets? Measurable?
Long-term and sustainable approach? Conflictual impact considered?

Development:
How would you describe the current situation in Gulu in terms of development/poverty reduction? A transition from relief to long-term development? Positive or negative trend?
In terms of developmental interventions, what is successful and what is not?
Money coming in, impact on Gulu and the people here?
People coming in, both from central Uganda and abroad, impact?
Priorities here right? Does aid go to the right things?
Does the money around here go to what it is intended to?

Do you have anything to add or any questions?