



**Institute of Social Studies**

GRADUATE SCHOOL OF DEVELOPMENT STUDIES

Working Mothers: Changes in the Family and Economy in Uganda

A RESEARCH PAPER PRESENTED BY

**Nyakana Joseph**

**(Uganda)**

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for obtaining the degree of

MASTERS OF ARTS IN DEVELOPMENT STUDIES  
SPECIALIZATION: POPULATION, POVERTY AND  
SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

MEMBERS OF THE EXAMINING COMMITTEE

Dr Linda Herrera  
Dr Auma Okwany

THE HAGUE, DECEMBER 2006

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**Enquiries:**

***Postal Address:***

**Institute of Social Studies  
PO Box 29776  
2502 LT, The Hague  
The Netherlands**

**Telephone: 31 70 4260 460  
Fax: 31 70 4260 799  
Email: [Bisessar@iss.nl](mailto:Bisessar@iss.nl)**

***Location:***

**Kortnaerkade 12  
2518 AX, The Hague  
The Netherlands**

### *Abstract*

Women in Uganda, who are now joining the workforce in progressively larger proportions, are burdened with triple roles: they have responsibilities to their employer, the society and the family. The challenge of balancing the responsibilities of the family and paid employment is largely borne by women and there are no comprehensive institutional mechanisms for resolving the tension created by these conflicting demands. As a result women are often disadvantaged when it comes to professional advancement and unfairly criticized by society for neglecting their family responsibilities. In particular, this study is concerned with investigating the challenges middle-class working mothers in paid employment face as they continue to shoulder a disparate proportion of the burden of childcare and home management concurrently with their functions in society and at the workplace. This study/way of thinking fits well with the literature on work and the family. While, women are struggling to re-delineate their social roles relative to their self identity, exchanging information and discourses characteristic of contemporary neo-liberal globalization is having a large impact not only on the family structure but also on economic relations.

In general the purpose of this study is to propose an appropriate policy framework for Government of Uganda and Civil Society Organizations in the area of child-care provisioning to improve the terms and conditions of work for working mothers as well as to provide documentation and information on the discourse of childcare provisioning in Uganda.

The study is based on two objectives:

- i) To examine the conditions that working mothers face in the workplace and in the family.

- ii) To investigate what role the husbands, relatives, friends, employers and the state play in child care provisioning.

The study is confined to Kampala city. The study population is derived from a range that includes the public service, United Nations, private sector, non-governmental organizations which included the 40 respondents representing employed mothers with pre-school children, male workers, policy makers, and husbands of working mothers. The findings suggest that women carry along their household responsibilities of discharging their roles as mothers and care providers to the workplace, which consigned an extra burden on them and affected their performance. The paper urges that this situation for many working mothers is made worse by the fact that they are not in managerial positions and recurrently have insignificant entitlements, in a labour saturated market where their services to employers can easily be given out. I find and contend that, whereas in many institutions there are no childcare facilities at the work place, with the implication that working mothers have had to leave their children under the care of domestic helpers; and yet the alternative is opted for at a greater sacrifice. Many employers were found to be reluctant to employ women as they are likely to demand time off which does not auger well with the economic principles of efficiency and effectiveness. Overall, the results suggest that women are disadvantaged in the workplace because they do not have enough support for child care services and if there were improved child care opportunities /facilities, women would have had chance to advance in their career. The aim of the study is to suggest ways in which working mothers can meet the responsibilities of both work and family. The study ends with a set of recommendations to enhance conditions for working mothers.



### *Abbreviations*

CA	Capabilities Approach
CCRs	Child Care Responsibilities
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
FHH	Female Headed Family
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FLS	Forward-Looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women
FSO	Foreign Service Officers
FUE	Federation of Uganda Employers
GoU	Government of Uganda
IMF	International Monetary Fund
LCs	Local Councils
MLGSD	Ministry of Labour Gender and Social Development
NGOs	Non Governmental Organisations
SAPs	Structural Adjustment Programs
SMEs	Small and Medium Enterprises
Ushs	Uganda Shillings
UN	United Nations
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WB	World Bank

## *Dedication*

I dedicate this work to all mothers who toil for their families and society so as a whole to make life better to live.

## *Foreword*

The author came to this topic through personal experiences with women in his own family system. This thesis is about the changes between the economy and family in relation to working mothers. These changes have had a profound effect on the traditional family life. Women now have fewer if any children. They are increasingly likely to have later marriage age and later first births, whose adequate care may not be guaranteed after retirement due to trends in the neo-liberal global economy.

This study on working mothers is organised into five chapters. The first chapter situates the study. It examines the nature of the problem, while justifying the need for a social scientific study. The second chapter presents the methods used. The Third chapter deals with existing literature about the main theme. It discusses the different thoughts of different scholarship. The Fourth chapter presents the findings and interpretations of data from the esteemed respondents in the study. The last section brings out the way forward for policy implications.

I am abundantly indebted and grateful to Dr. Linda Herrera, my supervisor for her excellent dedicated research assistance, intellectual guidance, and confidence she built in me during the several months I embarked on this study. I also recognise and acknowledge the advice and the comments of Dr. Auma Okwany (second reader) to my various drafts. Helpful comments were received that helped me put my research into perspective. I am deeply obliged and appreciative.

I particularly wish to acknowledge and appreciate enormously the contributions of my sponsor (NUFFIC), Staff Group 4 and course-mates (fondly referred to as PPSDs). To all my respondents, I owe thanks for your assistance and cooperation in my interviews and during data collection.

Finally many thanks to my beloved ones, who always kept me in their prayers and hearts! My spouse-Annet and my son- Hillary who bore with my absence. The unquantifiable affection, support and encouragement enabled me to concentrate on my studies. I found strength in their love and patience in me. Thanks also to Anthonie Emiru, Eddy Muteyajulwa, St. Stephen-Namasuba, my sisters, brothers and above all my dear mother- Abooki K. Florence, an epitome of womankind who has always been a source of brainwave. To you all, your love and words of encouragement enabled me to take the thesis in the right earnest.

I carry sole responsibility for the opinions set down in this document, which do not commit the Institute of Social Studies.

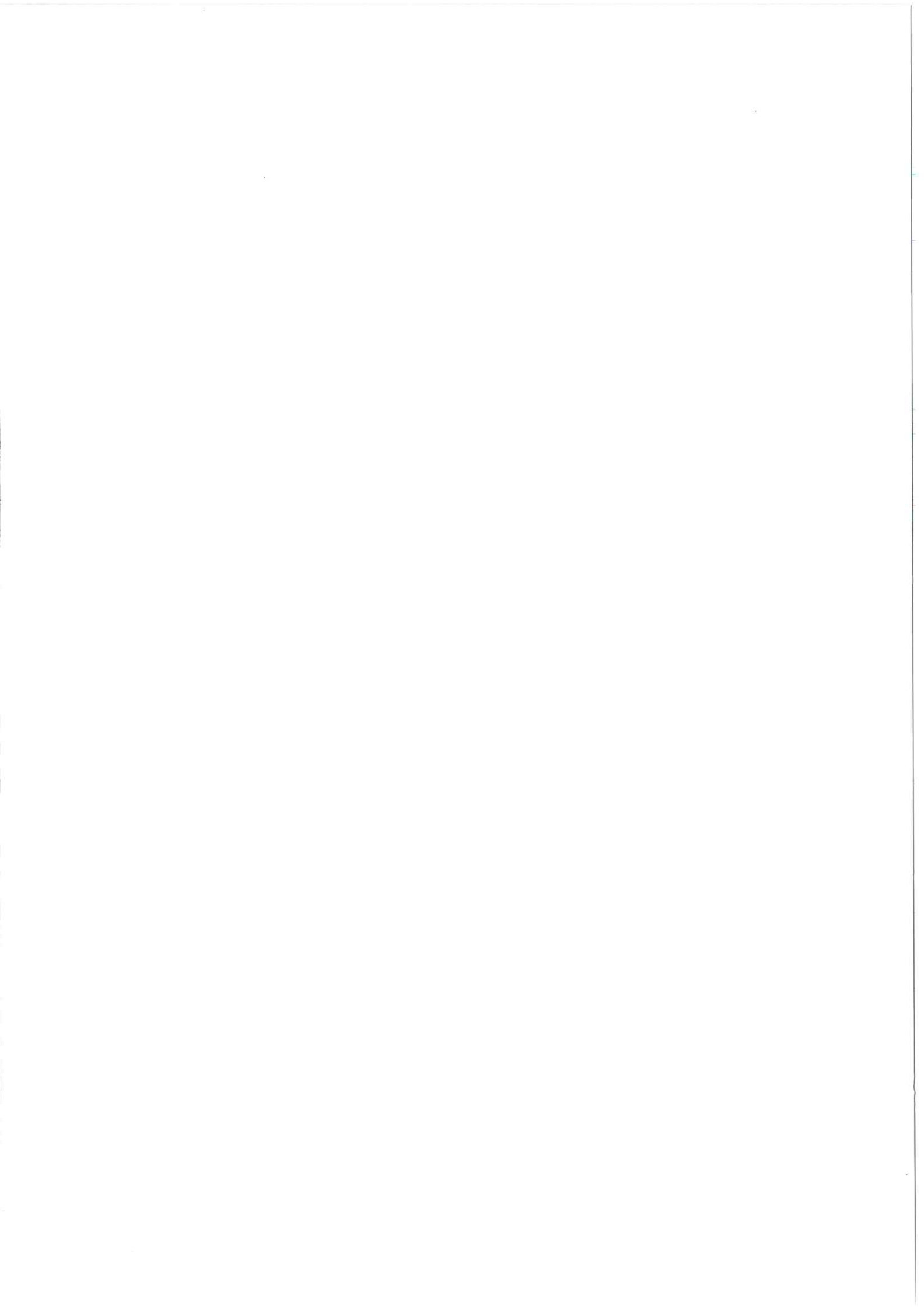
Nyakana Joseph  
Institute of Social Studies  
The Hague  
December, 2006.

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## *CHAPTER ONE*

### *INTRODUCTION*

#### **1.0 Introduction**

This chapter presents the background of the research problem and objectives of the study. Theoretical framework and analysis of gender regime in Uganda proceeds respectively.

#### **1.1 Nature of the research problem**

Women in Uganda are joining the workforce in progressively larger proportions and public Childcare is not keeping up with growing demands. Some enter it due to economic necessity, others to fulfill professional aspirations, and still others due to a combination of the above. Yet many women are struggling to support themselves and their families without access to the male breadwinner's wage (Fraser, 1994). With changes in the economy and lifestyles, women progressively require earnings for themselves and their families. Nonetheless, as women's needs and desire for income increases, their capabilities to earn are inhibited by the matching forces that propel them to seek paid work. Consequently, women with parental responsibilities are finding it hard to cope with the dual interests of paid employment and catering for family needs. This study identifies different, hitherto unexplored ways, how working mothers in Uganda negotiate the demands placed on them in the private sphere of home and the public domain of work and varying resources they draw on to do so. In particular, this research is rather theoretical and political in a broader sense, investigating the challenges middle-class working mothers *with Child Care Responsibilities (CCRs)* in formal paid employment face, the types of institutionalised support available to them and the types of programs that could improve their situations.

Despite the feminisation of the labour-force and increase in the proportion of women employed in a range of higher status occupations, equality of pay, prospects and conditions have not been achieved (Bradley et. al., 2000; UNIFEM, 2000). Whereas global trends in rights, participation, socio-economic and political empowerment have opened up opportunities for some women, it has closed them for others. The change in gender relations and increasing access of females to specialised-education-goals, paid



employment, and leadership have been partly in response to economic policy and program changes at international, national and local scenes (World Bank, 1994).

Women's working time is largely determined by their family situation. Eighty percent of women compared to 25 percent of men take responsibility for household duties (Kauppinen 2001). The percentage of Female Headed Households (FHHs) has increased worldwide since 1980s (Rosenhouse, cited in Tanski, 1994). In Western Europe for example, it grew from 24% in 1980 to 31% in 1990. In the developing world, it varies from less than 20% in certain Southern and East-Asian countries to almost 50% in certain African countries and the Caribbean (ILO, 2002). Globally women's rates of participation in the labour-force were 54% in 1950 and 66% in 1990 and are projected to reach 70% in 2010 (World Development Indicator, 2005), many of whom in their twenties which are fertile reproductive ages.

A major factor, both internationally and within Uganda, that has generated the commitment to promote gender equality and equity has been the sustained advocacy of the international women's movement. At the global level the UN Decade for Women (1975-1985) and the subsequent major UN conferences focusing on gender equality and equity, during the 1990's contributed to creating a more conducive environment for the political and socio-economic empowerment of women (UNIFEM, 2000). Charters from these conference recognizes that women, their children, and families have the best chance to thrive in societies that protect fundamental freedoms and human rights, and where politico-economic opportunities abound. For example, during the Cairo-1994 International Conference on Population and Development, promises were made for realising sexual and reproductive health and rights for men and women. Women's rights are now protected, taking a rightful place and fully contributing to the prosperity of their societies (Wichterich, 1999). Subsequently, women's organizations began to educate women of the repercussions and benefits they undertook with the new social role as workers and mothers. The adoption of a number of international human rights and labour instruments, conventions and laws has resulted in the establishment of basic standards of expectation at international level that place obligations on governments: to respect; protect; and promote all forms of human rights recognized therein.



The majority of women workers however, are still found among the low to middle class levels (UBOS, 2005). In this study *middle class* is used to describe that segment of the population with a higher education, and generally living urbanised lifestyles but still financially poor, for instance, a graduate in a government department earns the equivalent of €152<sup>1</sup> gross salary per month. Middle class in this sense is not used to describe working class. Therefore, it is different from the urban affluent class. Maintaining this strong middle class life-styles require maintaining atleast two incomes. However, it's difficult to achieve these lifestyles that middle class come to expect. Middle class have lean security, putting them in very precarious situations. Thus, the strata is both professional and political elite but socio-economically weak. This segment has been chosen because it is a strong political social group and change will potentially come from them.

In Uganda, middle class has gained political influence in the past two decades reinforced by education-system, urbanisation and rights. The entry of women into paid employment has come along with a number of challenges, where women have carried along their triple gender roles (reproductive, productive and community management). In general, women in paid employment continue to shoulder a disparate proportion of the burden of childcare and home management concurrently with their functions within society and at the workplace where they are expected to perform with utmost excellence.

## **1.2 Background to the Research Problem**

It is becoming increasingly difficult for households in Uganda of middle class groups (lower and upper) to sustain themselves on the earnings of a sole breadwinner who, until recently was considered to be a male family head (Daly, 2002). Generally, the cost of raising a child in terms of education, clothing, feeding, medical care, is exorbitant. Consequently middle class working-mothers with CCRs are finding it difficult to combine paid employment and the task of catering for the family needs. Their work, family or both are adversely affected by this new trend.

The strenuous socio-economic situation that has been dictated by the global economic order, coupled with persistence of poverty that stalks many households, women's

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<sup>1</sup> Uganda shilling (Uganda's currency) 2300 is equivalent to One euro.

increased educational opportunities and achievement, their wish for autonomy, and the necessity of a double income, has led to more women to seek paid employment outside their homes (Mason 2002). Mothers, even those with access to male wages through marriage or cohabitation, are increasingly experiencing one version or another of the “second shift” that housework constitute for employed women, the burden of care especially for the generation of adults sandwiched between their aging parents and minor children, (Brush, 2002).

In Uganda, economic liberalisation has come to dictate government policies since the early 1980s. Key arguments of this school among others are that families, rather than states, should provide care-giving for children and adults needing care, civil service restructuring, privatization, and so on. As part of the scheme to impress more of the costs of living onto individuals and their families, under assumptions that family labour can absorb all the costs of social reproduction<sup>2</sup>. Consequently, labour-market reform programme has led to greater job instability, higher incidence of exploitation and abuse of labour rights (Lapido and Wilkinson, 2002). Falls in real wages, declining purchasing power and greater inequality in the distribution of income have accompanied the move to greater labour-market elasticity (Razawi & Pearson, 2004). Fiscal-policy reforms, such as public expenditure cuts and imposition of user fees, have led to reduced access by the less-advantaged groups to quality health-care, housing, education and clean water.

Many employers continue to practice both written and unwritten codes that are discriminative against women and hence hinder both their personal and professional advancement. The challenge of balancing the responsibilities of the family and paid employment is largely borne by women and there are no comprehensive institutional mechanisms for resolving the tension created by the conflicting demands. It is common amongst employers to disregard the needs of their female employees with CCRs that would facilitate them to become better workers and at the same time effectively take care of their families. As a result women are often disadvantaged when it comes to professional advancement and unfairly criticized by society for neglecting their family traditional/normative responsibilities. This kind of position

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<sup>2</sup> Social reproduction refers to the daily and intergenerational renewal of human society ( Mutari & Figart, 2003).



may also be contributing to couples putting off to having first birth in their twenties (soon after college).

This study therefore, aims at analysing the working conditions of middle class working-mothers, identify different ways to negotiate both the private and public domain of work, discuss the challenges and opportunities they face and how these can be addressed. The study also explores individuals in the private realm such as husbands/fathers, family, friends, and on how they could improve the situation of working-mothers. Discussions from this study may assist practitioners working with parents who are struggling to reduce employment and Childcare predicaments, for policy change and setting up of appropriate institutional support mechanisms by both government and the domineering private sector to improve the working conditions of female employees. It is also important that citizens become more deeply informed and thoughtful about Childcare policy issues and press for public and private measures that are likely to support the well-being of families.

### **1.3 Research objectives**

#### **1.3.1 General objective**

To propose an appropriate policy framework for Government of Uganda (GoU) and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in the area of child-care provisioning to improve the terms and conditions of work for working-mothers as well as inform the discourse on Childcare provisioning in Uganda.

#### **1.3.2 Specific objectives**

- i) To examine the conditions that working mothers face in the workplace and in the family.
- ii) To investigate what role the husbands, relatives, friends, employers and the state play in childcare provisioning.

## 1.4 Research question

The central research question is: *What are the conditions for working mothers with children in paid employment and how can policy be improved by the stakeholders?*

### 1.4.1 Specific research-questions

- i) Are the terms and conditions of work conducive for working mothers with CCRs?
- ii) How does Childcare provisioning at the workplace affect women's participation in the labour-market? How do they manage given the triple challenge of production and reproduction and community management?
- iii) What are men's and women's views regarding Childcare provisioning in the workplace?
- iv) What institutional support mechanisms are in place for Childcare provisions at the workplace?
- v) What best practices exist that can be replicated?

### 1.4.2 Hypothesis

Middle class working mothers are a critically important force in the labour-force and political process, but remain at disadvantage in labour-market, particularly due to their child rearing responsibilities. Women therefore cannot achieve their full economic and political potential without sustained support, in the family, the workplace, and the state for child rearing.

## 1.5 Theoretical Premise

**The Universal Breadwinner model** (Fraser 1994). This is the vision inherent in contemporary political practice of most developed countries. It presents ambitious scenarios establishing new programs and policies that aim to achieve gender equity principally by promoting women's employment. It is aimed at enabling women support themselves and their families through their own wage-earning, enabling services such as childcare centers that aim at freeing women from unpaid responsibilities, and workplace reforms aimed at removing equal opportunity obstacles. The bulk of household work would be shifted from the family to the market



and the state, where it would be performed by other employees for pay. This model is used to link benefits to employment and distribute them through social insurance entitlements, with levels varying according to earnings.

The second theoretical underpinning this study applies is the **New Household Economics** (Becker, 1996), which extends the rational choice explanations of neo-classical economics to gendered divisions of labour. The theory proposes that gendered division of labour is an outcome of men and women within households specialising in the functions with which they can best capitalise their human capital, women in domestic work and childcare, and men in labour-market work. Becker urges that increase in mothers' labour-market participation does not negate rational economic trading between couples-they will still make cost-benefit decisions about the gendered division of labour inside and outside the home, but this time factoring in mothers' employment. Choosing Childcare becomes one part of this contemporary household economics, where the reality of availability and cost will be traded off against mothers' incomes from paid work.

**Capability Approach (CA)**, conceptualised by A.Sen and M.Nussbaum (1993), who have unambiguously tackled problems of gender equality and care. I urge that the stress placed on working mother's real freedom to choose something they consider to be sensible to do or to be, establishes centres for the recognition and valuing of care-work with a consequence of setting a benchmark for Childcare. The CA recognises that structural inequalities that exist between men and females can be rectified by acknowledging that entitlements required in choosing either care or work or both are diverse. The model is particularly relevant to this study, since working-mothers to choose therefore require either extra money to pay or affordable Childcare services. In sum the CA provides a universal equality model rooted in the recognition of human diversity.

### **1.5.1 Theoretical background**

Experiences of working-mothers are generally mutual, deeply substantial, potentially politicizing factors of both women's everyday lives and society. Changes in family and economy due to women's increasing involvement in labour participation have caught a wide range of scholarship world wide. Most notable among them, Crompton

et al, (2005); Elson, (1991); Sullivan, (2002). A considerable number others have specifically looked at the role of the state in women labour participation for example, in instances where the state has taken a “hands off position” in Childcare (Moss, 1991) as contrasted with Korpi, (2002) whose emphasis on Western European states in which state feminism systems pushed fathers into active fatherhood. In addition, there is a growing body of largely descriptive literature on women labour participation and gendered allocation of household tasks. The work of western scholars focuses on Childcare provisioning, effects of breast feeding, psychological and cognitive development of children, with others focusing on panel studies to establish effectiveness of mothers. In essence, Western European and US literature built on western models of family and employment, urged against by Bradith and Kvande, (2002).

When examined closely, the works of scholars from Africa tend to be less theorising and more descriptive for instance (Tamale, 1997). These particularly avoid applying concepts considered to be western and therefore foreign. This is rather insignificant to the Ugandan context as western models of social provisioning are transplanted to poor countries but not adapted to local realities leading to inappropriate priorities and approaches in designing and implementing social policy. The growing consensus is that scholars should provide a holistic impression for readers to draw meaningful interpretations and conclusions in the current normative discourse.

Different researchers place different emphasis on the term “working mother” as a political subject, some focus on the issue of waged labour. In particular, some feminist critics focus on women’s subordination in the workplace such as discrimination, gender and sexual harassment, and profound unfriendliness to family life in general and mother’s “double day” in particular (Brush, 2002). From the above, it can be urged that these political arguments that seek to empower women particularly as mothers eventually tend to substitute child welfare for women’s emancipation as their last resort grounds for making claims on public resources and respect. It is further urged that such positions are particularly vulnerable to co-optation by nativist, eugenic, and confessional forces with interest in women’s fertility, sexuality, caring work, and labour power orthogonal to feminism, (ibid, 36).



Several other recent studies find that mothers earn less than other women even when they are employed in similar positions (Budig and England, 2001; Harkness and Waldfogel, 1999; Lundberg and Rose 2000; Waldfogel, 1998a; 1998). The penalty occurs for married and single women, but is larger for the married (Budig and England, 2001). Men suffer no such penalty; their earnings remain unaffected (Loh, 1996) or go up with birth (Lundberg and Rose, 2000). Several explanations have been offered for this motherhood penalty for instance, that some mothers take months or years out of employment for child rearing, and earn lower wages as a result of their lower experience or seniority. Other explanations are more speculative. Some suggest that mothers are less productive than other workers because the demands of mothering at home make them more exhausted and hence less productive on the job (Becker, 1991). Still others suggest that the penalty may result from mothers trading off high wages for “mother-friendly” jobs. Budig and England (2001) found that being in part-time work had a significant effect. The penalty may also come from the demand side of the labour-market, if employers discriminate against mothers in making pay and promotion decisions. The motherhood penalty probably reflects a combination of several of these mechanisms. But, whatever the mechanism, this penalty lowers the earnings of those who do unpaid caring.

### **1.5.2 Gaps and limitations of literature and previous research**

In light of the above, this study attempts to provide a critical exposition by exploring some of the causes and consequences of the dominance of the working mother and by extension the conflicts between earning and caring. Therefore, it lays the foundation for remedying pre-conceived significant and troubling problems of working-mothers. It contrasts much of the literature, albeit reluctant to acknowledge their masculinist assumptions.

The western literature on child caring in Africa is rather theorising and analytical in a highly reductionist compartment-mostly applying concepts which have their origins in western academic genealogies of liberalism, civility and human rights.

There is little empirical analysis of working-mothers in formalised employment in western literature on Africa, almost inadequate on Uganda. Yet, hardly any research

which incorporates the perceptions of male spouses in regard to Childcare in the country under study.

On a supplementary idealistic note, the most contemporary intellectual conceptualisations of the economic issues of working-mothers are insufficient. Whether authors celebrate the movement of mothers to the market or bemoan it, the use of unexamined assumptions and outdated rhetoric is endemic to this study.

The primary focus and thrust of this study is on women's dilemma concerning Childcare and diverse, ways in which they negotiate the demands placed on them in the private sphere of home and the public domain of work and varying resources they draw on to do so. Women are still primarily responsible for Childcare yet there is increasing demand to supplement household requirements. Could it be possible to promote women's production work in paid employments without sacrificing Childcare or vice versa? Most women have to make choices along a continuum. Recommendations were derived from analysis of the root causes of the problem, primary data as well as literature survey about the dialogue on changes in family and economy.

### **1.6 The gender regime in Uganda**

According to my observation, the family and workplace are sites where gender predominantly stands out. The milieu of gender relations in Uganda varies rather from region to region, but commonly, strongly patrilineal and patriarchal structures predominate, with women's economic autonomy and independent access to resources being relatively more constrained than in greater African region.

Politically, the creation of Women's Councils, a parallel structure to the Local Councils (LCs) that form the base of the political and administrative structure, in which only women stand and vote. This represents an opportunity for women to enter the public realm and to pursue gender-specific interests, but there is also a risk that it has led to the marginalization of women within the LCs themselves (Mwaka, 1994). Another step was the creation of Ministry of Labour, Gender and Social Development (MGLSD), formerly, Women in Development Ministry-1988, which has been identified as a key turning point for gender awareness by government officials



(Kwesiga, 1994). GoU also has a fairly strong women's movement, with representatives found in NGOs, academia, and bilateral organizations. The combination of this movement with the existence of government's political will means that there are potential entry points and opportunities for influencing policy-making forums.

Socio-culturally, gendered division of labour in the household, women are responsible for cooking, cleaning and taking care of children and other members of the household. In productive work, women and men have assigned traditional roles, particularly in agricultural production and marketing, with men considered responsible for doing the majority of land clearing and women for doing the majority of weeding and post-harvest processing (Payne, 1998). However, the extent to which traditional gender divisions of labour are adhered to varies by region, socio-economic status, rural/urban and household categories. For instance, I urge that in more wealthy households, male or female labour may be hired to perform the tasks that the women or men perform in poorer households.

### **1.7 Analytical Framework**

The concepts crucial in this research are:

**Childcare:** Childcare is broadly defined as a process of attending to a child's basic needs of food, shelter, clothing, protection, and health. It includes a child's emotional welfare, cognitive and moral development (Joeke, 1989:61). Time spent with children is a much broader measurement of Childcare than active Childcare.

**Children's Needs:** These could stress emotional and development. Emotional issues centre on the need for a child to have a secure emotional tie with a carer, whilst development issues broadly include education, nutrition, health, child development and general socialization, consolidation of heritage, and practical care. Mothers themselves are regarded as best providers and they have a strong sense of necessity to 'be there' at home for your children (Duncan et al., 2003).

**Middle class:** These entail the professionals and political elites as a segment of the population with barely enough income to meet all the basic needs of their families. As

a country gradually become richer, more urban, and less agricultural, middle class tend to meld into more familiar (though almost vague) designations of “working class” and “lower middle class”(Nelson, 2003). In Uganda, middle class has gained political influence in the past two decades. This trend is reinforced by education, “Movement” governance, political-liberalism, and global fad of human rights. In short this stratum is more self-confident, better-informed, less-dependent, better-connected, politically active and articulate.

**Women’s triple roles.** Moser (1989 and 1993), represent the way in which the gender division of labour places a range of demands on women's time and affects their capability to partake in deliberate interventions. The productive role comprises market production and subsistence production, both of which generate an income and have an exchange value. The reproductive role refers to the childbearing/rearing responsibilities and domestic tasks done by women that are required to reproduce and maintain the labour-force. The community management role involves women's activities at the community level, as an extension of their reproductive role, in order to guarantee the provision and maintenance of collective consumption resources for instance water, health-care and education.

## *CHAPTER TWO*

### *METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS*

#### **2.0 Introduction**

In this chapter, details of the methodology are presented, which include the targeted institutions, sample size and actual respondents. Secondly, approaches to data collection and analysis are also presented.

#### **2.1 Research design**

In order to gather data on a spectrum of variables related to working-mothers with CCRs in the context of changing roles and challenges in the formal employment, the study was mainly a critical exploratory research design using non-random sampling techniques. The study utilised qualitative<sup>3</sup> and quantitative research methodologies allowing for in-depth analysis. This was supplemented by an exploratory survey which was not based on statistical representative samples to gather field explicit information on conditions and dilemmas of working mothers with CCRs.

#### **2.2 Study area**

The study was carried out in Kampala city (district<sup>4</sup>) within two out of seven divisions, that is central and Nakawa divisions, which were purposively selected. This was aimed at having within the limitations of the study design; urban and peri-urban locations, taken as the context in which the majority of employed workers outside the pre-dominant subsistence agricultural sector were found. Agreeing with Patton (1990), purposive sampling was used to help capture the principal themes, patterns and institutions by selecting the unit of sample on the basis of definite characteristics.

#### **2.3 Target group**

The study population was drawn from women with a minimum education of secondary school with children under five years (pre-school) working both in private and public sectors. The segment targeted was selected purposively from the service sectors of the economy purposely; Registered nurses and middle level administrators

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<sup>3</sup> A qualitative research relates mainly to interviews done on a small scale (Wimmer and Dominick 1997:85). A qualitative interview method is more than a set of skills; it is a philosophy and an approach to learning (Rubin and Rubin 1995).

<sup>4</sup> According to the 1995 Uganda Constitution, Kampala City under decentralisation is granted district status.



in non-governmental, private sector, government departments and the United Nations. The choice for under-five age group was desired because the infants demand auxiliary attention and yet cannot fit well within the universalised primary schooling. Secondly, these professional groups were selected because they have political awareness and participation but also Wolf (1996) has urged that one's positionality as a woman is crucial in gaining knowledge and understanding of other women. Lastly, Uganda, has no unified labour law, so different sectors were purposively chosen to solicit for different experiences.

#### **2.4 Study population**

Research on mothers and employment neither distinguishes between social group of mothers nor between different sorts of partner relationships. In contrast this research is focused on five different groups in which purposive sampling method was used for selection.

- a) Women respondents with CCRs (Parents of children under 5 years) from the political and service sectors. These were the key respondent of this study. The age grouping was selected based on a need to provide care for infants.
- b) Husbands to women in the above category. These were fathers of children under 5years. These respondents helped provide information on their wives' experiences more specifically their views on gender roles.
- c) Male respondents. These were men with or without CCRs. They provided experiences from another spectrum.
- d) Policy makers in the Federation of Uganda Employers (FUE), MLGSD, and Members of Parliament (MP). This category of respondents provides an input as people mandated to formulate and enforce work related policies on behalf of government.
- e) Workers with no CCRs who are colleagues of female workers. These respondents are a control group.

## 2.4.1 Sampling Frame

Table 1. Showing the Sampling size

	Category	Number
1	Working mother with CCRs	15
2	Fathers/Husbands of women with CCR	05
3	Men respondents with/out CCRs	05
4	Policy makers and MPs	10
5	Workers with <b>no</b> CCRs (colleagues of female workers)	05
	<b>Total respondent</b>	<b>40</b>

Source: Author, 2006.

Sampling of the study population was purposively selected, supplemented with snow-ball sampling<sup>5</sup> technique. Snow-ball strategies provided means of accessing the husbands and were effective in engaging with the “hard to reach” among urban elites. The sample took into account the nature of employment i.e. permanent and contractual.

## 2.5 Secondary data analysis

A desk study, including operationalisation of key concepts, analysing what and how studies on women employment within the paid sector was undertaken; and a literature review on provisioning and management of CCRs within the work situation and also identify comparative approaches. A historical approach was adopted in order to put the Ugandan situation into context focusing on the social and political economy while emphasising the post structural adjustment regime to-date. The sources included *inter alia*: books, journals, government policies, human-resources policies, International conventions and instruments, labour laws, and web surveys, on which document analysis is made.

## 2.6 Data collection

### 2.6.1 Introduction

Respondents determined the information needs of the study premised in the feminist standpoint methodologies, relating levels of consciousness regarding one’s social

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<sup>5</sup> It is a technique for finding research subjects. One subject gives the researcher the name of another subject, who in turn provides the name of a third, and so on (Vogt, 1999).

position and position's relation to one's lived experience (Harding, 1987). Both primary and secondary data was collected using mainly qualitative methods which consisted of semi-structured interviews, and focus group discussions<sup>6</sup> (FGD). Exploratory survey using structured interviews supplemented data collection. These methods were used basing on their abilities to enable the researcher understand the challenges and coping mechanisms of working-mothers with CCRs in the context of formal employment.

### **2.6.2 Qualitative methods**

**In-depth interviews** were conducted on key informants to get information that enhanced understanding of the phenomena. Interview<sup>7</sup> guides were useful due to flexibility, interaction with respondents, making it easy to supplement with observation. Telephone interviews helped access respondents hard to fix interviews during the day (office hours).

**FGD** was used with Nurses. Two FGD were held with help of a FGD guide and a recorder. Agreeing with Krueger (1994), the method was effective in collecting massive in-depth information, examining common ideas, invoking reactions and responses from large interviews in a relatively shorter time.

### **2.6.3 Quantitative methods**

Structured Interviews were used to collect information from purposively selected key-informants including MPs on session committees of social services, and Equal Opportunities, commissioner of labour, heads of departments/institutions. The study also used structured interview schedules, self administered questionnaire and structured content analysis. The researcher posted some questionnaires to respondents by e-mail.

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<sup>6</sup> FGDs are a form of group interview that capitalises on communication between research participants in order to generate data (Ketzinger, 1994)

<sup>7</sup> Frey and Oshi (1995:01) define an Interview as a purposeful; conversation in which one person asks prepared questions (Interviewer) and another answers them (respondent). This is done to gain information on a particular topic or area to be researched.



## **2.7 Data Management, Processing and Analysis.**

### **2.7.1 Introduction**

This section spells out how the data was analysed using two approaches; qualitative (non-numerical) and quantitative (numerical/statistical). Data analysis is reflective of the research objectives and research questions.

The completion of data collection exercise was followed by data cleaning and processing. These processes included *inter alia*; transcribing, editing of all research instrument and notes taken during discussions and interviews with various respondents. This exercise was done to iron out any inconsistencies elicited during data collection.

### **2.7.2 Data analysis.**

The data collected via the survey questionnaire, was analysed so as to provide answers to the study's research questions and to determine if the study's primary hypothesis should be accepted or rejected.

Information gathered through key semi structured and FGD was analysed qualitatively. Analysing FGD notes was essentially the same as analysing any other qualitative self report data. At the very best, the researcher drew together compared discussions of similar themes and examined how these relate to the variables within the sample population. Analytical techniques employed were at three levels: - descriptive, explanatory and predictive, where necessary.

## **2.8 Scope and limitations**

### **2.8.1 Study procedure**

Steps were taken to ensure that the data collection instrument used in this study are valid and that the overall design for this study is methodologically sound. The principal researcher got clearance and consent of respondents before hand so as to facilitate the research assistants in getting consent from the respondents.

### **2.8.2 Anticipated problems and solutions of the study**

These included:

- Unreliability of the instruments. Data collection instruments used in this study were not without error. Attempts to pre-test the instruments were done on colleagues here at the institute.

- Limited time for data collection. Two research assistants who were expected to be result oriented were hired.
- Unrepresentative samples. A combination of methods and past personal experiences both within CSOs and the Parliament was put to use, to maximise response rates.

### **2.8.3 Limitations of the study**

Even though this study does not have a large-scale representative sample, it offers important insights into actual realities of working mothers. It is a valuable study that has the potential to influence policy with regard to working mothers.

**CHAPTER THREE**  
**LITERATURE REVIEW**

**3.0 Introduction**

This section is designed to give a theoretical background to the concepts in the area of analysis. The chapter deals with relationships between reproduction and production functions of working-mothers in both private and public domains. It discusses the interaction between women, work and the state and the ways in which women enter market economy and shape the emerging care economy. This is followed by an analysis of the illusion from Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs), and a discourse on the sexual differences in the labour-market. The chapter ends with, a review of the Nairobi Forward-Looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women (FLS).

**3.1 Women, Market and State**

Over the last two decades women's contribution to the economy has grown, but governments and families continue to face unique challenges in their effort to ensure the well-being of children and other dependent members of society all exacerbated by a deteriorating world economy. By contrast, there has been little change in gendered allocation of household tasks, suggesting a slowing down of men's involvement in domestic work (Crompton et al, 2005; Sullivan, 2000). While governments may be conscious and sympathetic of the challenges of work-life balance, a rise in competitiveness and escalation at workplaces operate against more positive policy supports. This calls for a need to take into account changes in women's economic and domestic roles, strategies for Childcare and in the opportunities to derive a living.

In particular, though, the GOU has played a major role in reducing the social, economic and ideological processes that have continued to subordinate and subjugate women, for a very long time (Tamale, 1997), it has provided little, by way of Childcare and generally adopted a "hands-off" position in relation to family life and survival (Moss, 1991). The state treats women as dependants of men in administrative and legal procedures, both in private and public spheres. It endorses and sustains the patriarchal family where women do not have the same access to opportunities and resources as men. I observe that the market tries to treat women as individuals in their own right, by selling either their labour or products to get cash income on their own. This lessens their economic dependence upon men; elevate their economic value, and



bargaining power within the household. This access to income of their own is highly valued because it boosts their dignity and ability to make decisions at household and community levels. I further urge that as much as economic empowerment benefits women, many of them are forced to carry the double burden of unpaid work in the home as well as the additional paid work of producing goods and services.

According to Elson, (cited in Wallace and March, (eds), (1991), the equal pay and equal opportunities legislation, and the removing of the traditional barriers to women working outside the home, cannot by themselves free women from their domestic burdens and expectations because the benefits reaped from having access to markets are always limited by challenges of raising children and caring for family members. These roles are structured by unequal gender relations which cannot be directly and immediately responsive to market signals.

Women with higher incomes have tried to compete in the market by hiring domestic help, like employing maids, cleaners, and cooks; nevertheless, they largely have the responsibility of household management. Elson (1991) further observes that if most women are to gain from the access to markets, they also need access to public sector services, such as water supplies, electricity, public transport, health-care and education, to lighten the burden of unpaid work and acquisition of skills needed to enter the market. Many women would thus be interested in the restructuring of both the public sector and private sector so as to make them more responsive to women's needs.

Whereas more women are entering the labour-force through a facilitating "dual earner" model that encourages sharing of both domestic and paid work between men and women (Korpi, 2002), scholars like Brandth and Kvande (2002) have argued that, this policy:

*"May be considered an approach by which the state feminism system pushed fathers into active fatherhood" (p. 256).*

Women's employment in this case is seen and appreciated as a responsibility and in return the state provides universal networks of childcare facilities. However, this contrast in case of Uganda, where despite deliberate formulation of policies to encourage women into the labour-force, has not matched with opportunities to find decent job placement. As such, the internal competition between women and men for existing scarce jobs often disadvantage the former. In addition to responsibilities in paid work, women are charged with all household tasks in a shortage economy with constantly shrinking provisions for the so called non-productive, service amenities. Consequently, women have tended to carry a heavy burden all through their productive and reproductive lives.

### **3.1.1 Women in the market economy**

The market economy is principally defined in terms of marketed goods and services. Macro-economic trends and policies are usually presented in a gender-neutral language, with no specific mention of the gender or sexual division of labour and the work mainly done by women is excluded such as managing the household, childcare, nursing the sick, gathering fuel and water. Faced with such challenges, however, Channa (2004) has argued that women's quest to join formal employment has led to damaging the traditional respect women derived from their mothering position. Women are now viewed as commodities for exploitation in the market economy.

The attention of economists has always focused on the gross domestic product; trade, balance of payments, efficiency and productivity, hence hiding the deeper gender bias in the analysis and policy formulation. By excluding this work or the resources it requires, macro-economic analysis and policy have had a built-in conceptual bias against women and assumed that the unpaid process of raising children and caring for members of the labour-force carried out by women will continue regardless of the way in which resources are re-allocated. Women's unpaid labour is absolutely regarded as elastic (Bakker, 1994) – able to stretch to make up for any shortfall in other resources. It is through longer and harder working days for women that macro-economic policy achieves goal success. However, this cost is invisible to the policy makers because it is unpaid time (Grown and Sebstdads, 1989). Therefore, what economists regard 'economic efficiency' is simply a re-allocation of costs from paid economy to the unpaid economy (Payne 2001).



### **3.1.2 Human capital, the Care economy and Gender**

According to Parrenas (2000), globalisation of care, is correlated with a series of links between paid, unpaid care work and exploitations. For example, a migrant woman's daughter often stays behind to care for her siblings and other family members, whilst the mother takes care of the children of relatively well-off family away. A counter argument, is that, the sale of domestic care reflects value, despite lack of emotional, interpersonal and educational aspects of parenting that take place in the home that are rather missed by the migrants' children. Despite the changes in the family, it constitutes the primary framework within which the crucial rules for these struggles are set and therefore, the key position where the quest for gender equality and justice are fought, won/or lost (CODESRIA, 2004).

Literature on gender and development indicates that productive and reproductive roles of women are fundamental to understanding the well-being of individuals, households, communities and indeed nations (Elson, 1991; Folbre, 1994). Therefore, investments in human capital take place in the household sector, by women investing long hours of unpaid work in the care and socialization of children who constitute the next generation of workers. Whereas changes in the economy have affected the nature and tasks performed within the household, for-example, time spent on routine domestic work has tended to reduce. Nevertheless, it has not changed the important emotional, interpersonal and educational aspects of parenting that take place in the home. Feminist analysis of the supply side of the labour-market and the role of domestic labour in reproducing labour, acknowledge that the creation of human capital in the household complements parallel contemporary contestations about community networks and social capital. This is further recognised by some neoclassical economists who have appreciated the role of the household in the creation of human capital, stressing the implications of the household for long-run growth.

This belief of human capital is further used by feminists as both an analytical tool and policy advocacy in improving understanding of the interface between the market and household sectors, and improving women's socio-economic positions within households and workplace respectively. They attest that during the decade of SAPs



that was marked by drastic social sector cutbacks there is nothing natural about the household sector continuing to create human capital if there are no supportive social policies. In other words, it cannot be assumed that women will continue to supply all the labour and care that is needed to ensure the satisfactory reproduction of human beings, compensating for all the shortfalls in purchased inputs and state support to sustain human resources. Inevitably, a threshold can be reached when the household is no longer able to reproduce itself. Investments in infrastructure (including childcare facilities), parental leave, and workplace flexibility have all been cited as ways of making the dynamic relations between the household and market sectors work more effectively (Elson, 1991).

### **3.2 Women and economic restructuring**

The flexibility introduced in the privatized formal sector meant loss of security, loss of fringe benefits like sick pay, pensions, maternity leave, changes in the hours of work, and intensity of work. Professional women that remained in the public service had to do extra jobs after formal working hours in the informal sector like running snack shops/kiosks as a survival strategy to counter the falling incomes and the rising prices (Gilbert, 1994). The demands on women's time increased as government cutback on the public provision such as health services, education, energy, and water supplies. I reiterate that it is illogical for women's continued supply of labour and care that is needed to ensure the reproduction of human beings, recompense for the entire deficit in purchased inputs without state support to sustain human resources. Households thus risk being unable to replicate themselves as an opportunity cost.

In the 1980s, under the International Monetary Fund (IMF) stabilization programmes and the World Bank's SAPs, the focus was placed on economic policies that were aimed at cutting of demand, boosting supply and productivity by reducing the role of the state, but increasing the role of the market in resource allocation (Meagher, 1994; Mutari and Figart, 2003; Toye, 1995). Both institutions assumed that the major reason for poor economic performance in most developing countries was caused by distortions in resource allocation resulting from government policies like over-expansion of the public sector and the use of direct controls and subsidies.

The IMF stabilization and efficiency programmes prescribed deflation, devaluation and decontrol where governments were forced to cut public expenditure, including expenditure on social services and food subsidies; loosening of controls over imports and liberalisation of the foreign exchange market. On the other hand, the WB prescription of SAPs focused on the improvement of incentives for private producers, particularly of exports, through changes in prices, tariffs, subsidies and interest rates; and by reducing the resources allocated to the public sector so as to make more resources available to the private sector. According to Wuyts (1992), most major donors, particularly the United States and the United Kingdom welcomed these 'anti-people policies' and made them conditionalities for any form of assistance to developing countries, describing them as the 'magic of the market'. Consequently, cuts in public expenditures or the introduction of user charges by reducing the availability of state services, add to women's unpaid work, the cost of which is effectively treated as zero under SAP.

Under the restructuring of the public sector governments were forced to make substantial budgetary cuts in the social services sector; transport and energy; police; the legal system and armed forces; and stated-owned factories, farms and marketing and distribution facilities, often called parastatals. These sectors were not only strategic areas for development but were areas where women were most affected since the public sector had always provided most of the professional and managerial urban jobs for them, like teaching and nursing. Their elimination meant increasing the women's burden in the paid and unpaid work hence causing changes in their working conditions and cost sharing for social services. Many jobless women found themselves recruited in the expanding private sector, particularly in the export-oriented and labour intensive manufacturing sectors such as textile, and agro processing industries. Although the wages for these workers were relatively higher than those of others working in the private formal sector factories, they tended to enjoy fewer rights and lacked job security, (Payne, 2001). Over the years, SAPs have been criticised that in the short run they undermine long-term development prospects by weakening the legitimacy of the state, reducing social and physical investment, and worsening inequalities in income distribution that heighten conflict (Steward, 1994a and 1994b).



### **3.3 Sexual differentiation in the labour-market**

According to the Human Development Report (2005) the total population of Uganda is 26.9 million with women constituting 52%. The total labour-force participation of women is 63%. Out of the total of 1,109,257 employed 85.6% are self employed whilst only 14.4% are paid employees (UBOS 2003).

In the labour-market, women are usually in great need of work and are prepared to accept poor working conditions. They often cannot easily obtain other types of work because generally they lack adequate skills due to low literacy levels, poverty and the need to find a job that fits with their responsibilities at home. This means that the work such women get is usually temporary and likely to attract low pay. Fodor (2005) suggests that “not only are women more likely than men to be unemployed, they are likely to remain out of work longer, which suggests that they have more trouble finding jobs”, (ibid, 7). Many of them do not object to working after marriage and are even willing to work for very low wages in order to combine paid work with their family responsibilities. For instance, most women work in the industrial sector not because they have nimble fingers suitable for the clothing and electronic industries, but because their labour is usually cheaper than that of men.

With regard to domestic work, Blumberg (1991), observes that housework is the aspect of family life that is most resistant to changes in the woman’s economic and labour-force position. Regardless of economic activities outside the household, women remain responsible for domestic and Childcare responsibilities (Bianchi et al., 2000). Mothers, even those with access to male wages through marriage or cohabitation, are increasingly experiencing one version or another of the “second shift” that housework constitute for employed women, the burden of care especially for the generation of adults sandwiched between their aging parents and minor children, (Brush, 2002). While men in west, pick the nicest chores of housework (Blumberg, 1991; Korpi, 2002), in Uganda, this hardly happens, not even among the middle class, lest they get heckled, condemned or have their masculinity contested. This could be accounted to gender traditionalism amid the older generation. My study, thus attempts to explore and provide a dimension of men is CCR with an orientation to Uganda.



Generally, women normally remain in jobs at a lower level than their qualifications and experience would merit. Davidson and Burke (1994) have noted that the bulk of women in formal paid employment are concentrated in middle and lower management positions. It is also common to find that women and men performing the same tasks are paid less with an excuse that women's salary is supplementing that of their spouses who are taken to be the breadwinners of the family. In some instances being married has got a positive effect on the salaries of men while it is negative for women. According to (Arregui and Clara, 1991), a study carried out in Taiwan, married women were expected to take more time off work after marriage while the men were thought to be more likely to turn up regularly and be effective workers. However in the same study, when women's absenteeism was compared to that of men, there was very little difference and in some instances that of women was even lower.

#### **3.4 Women's marital status and work environment**

The Uganda 1995 Constitution, stand out as one of the most gender sensitive constitutions in the continent. It is further supplemented by the National Gender Policy (1997), National Employment Bill (2006), and the Local Government Act (Amended 2004). A critical question attracting discussion is whether or not traditional relations of power are being challenged by these legal instruments. Some scholars strongly argue in support, that women have been empowered and mobilised into political activity at all levels of decision making (Boyd, 1989; Ondoga, 1998). On the contrary (Tamale, 1992) has contested the position taken by the former, urging that attempts of empowering women have "confronted and emphasised the wrong enemy, leaving the real one intact" (ibid, 11).

Many working mothers are aged between 20 and 45 years, and are married, cohabiting, separated, widowed or single. Some employers prefer employing married women workers with a justification that given family responsibilities they will need more money and are therefore likely to be reliable workers and to accept less favourable working conditions. An increase in the tendency for employers to prefer the recruitment of female workers could have far-reaching changes in family and economy. Men may either assume more responsibilities for domestic tasks, care and education of children or women may even become more overburdened. It is also

likely that the economic independence of women workers may result in the number of FHHs.

#### **3.4.1 The Women's double working day: Lessons from Uganda**

Following the UN World Conference on the Advancement of Women in Nairobi in 1985 to review the achievements of the UN Decade for women (1975–1985), the employment of women was highlighted as one of the major issues of concern in the FLS (1985). Governments were called upon to pass legislation that would improve women's opportunities, particularly in enforcing women's right to paid employment and economic independence; laws that would enable women to choose their work; providing training where necessary; offering protection to part-time workers; encouraging flexi-time; changing tax laws so that married women are not discouraged from working and enforcing equal pay and conditions for equal work. It was argued that equal employment opportunities would lead to women attaining economic self-reliance. In addition the Nairobi-FLS and the UN Women's Conference in Beijing, 1995 proposed that facilities at work would have to be provided to women workers, together with proper occupational health-care, parental leave and supplementary services for women with children. The role of women and their contribution to the economy was further reinforced in Beijing during the Fourth UN Women's Conference and the governments were urged to facilitate women's participation in paid employment.

The current proclaimed women emancipation is line with the 1986 movement ideological conformity. This was further entrenched in the 1995, The Republic of Uganda Constitution as well as the National Gender Policy (1997). Women gained legal equality with men in all spheres of life, including education, employment, and political participation.

One of the most important sources of women's labour-market disadvantage is their disproportionate responsibility for household chores and Childcare. This is one area where relatively little change can be seen (Fodor, 2005). Certainly states have made fewer attempts to reform gendered division of Labour in the household or at least to encourage men to do more domestic work. Various studies (Bianchi et al 2000; Crompton et al, 2005; Sullivan, 2000) have shown that as women joined the paid jobs,



they carried along with them their triple roles. Their concern about the well-being of their children permeated every aspect of their lives. Many have had to leave their young children on their own or with the older children when they go out to work (Parrenas, 2001). Those from the poorest groups are discriminated against, overworked, tired and increasingly live vulnerable livelihoods. On average, the women's working days could stretch up to 14 hours and often rising up to 18 hours, leaving very little spare-time for themselves and their families (Carter and Canon, 1992; Channa, 2004; World Bank, 1993). This makes most women feel guilty about their parenting abilities and others are prevented from participating in community activities hence limiting their active involvement in decision-making and realizing their full potential. Given the patriarchal nature of the Ugandan society, men's involvement in the domestic work of the household is minimal which forces women to either reduce the hours they spend on paid work or bear the increased burden of child rearing and other activities related to their reproductive roles.

In conclusion, Uganda is a very nominal case of society, a typical model of a developing country where public facilities like crèches, baby-care centres, launderettes and communal kitchens, which would have alleviated the women's situation, are non-existent. The absence of such facilities is a problem or a constant worry for most working mothers and their stressful and exhausting working conditions subsequently affects children. This could have serious long-term effects on the physical and mental health of women, on their pregnancies and their ability to care for their offspring. The lack of policy and adequate alternative childcare provision for working-mothers could also result in an increase in levels of child malnutrition and the number of accidental injuries to children today.



**CHAPTER FOUR**  
**FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATIONS**

**4.0 Introduction**

The purpose of this study is to ascertain working mothers' experiences in the workplace and evaluate the effect of labour conditions on their ability to carry out both their responsibilities as parents and as wage-workers. In this respect, the researcher put different issues under consideration including: human-resources policies, hours of work, and leave of absence. This is ensued by ideas about Institutional support mechanisms and documentation of best practice that could be replicated. This paper is primarily about working mothers, however, it also attempts to give attention to the roles of working fathers/males.

**4.1 Human Resource Policies**

The study discovered that both government and UN institutions had formalized human-resources policies. For instance, in parliament and government departments, these are structured as legal regulations. However, whereas, the GoU standing orders govern all public servants, Parliament has the human-resources Policy Manual (2000), Administration of Parliament Act, and Parliamentary Service Staff Regulations (2001).

With NGOs, the more established ones had formal policies with established secretariats. The human-resources policies have been adapted as part of a broader organizational development and the internal process of professionalizing the NGO management. However, NGOs that were still striving for protractible establishment had fragile and inconsistent human-resources policies that were hardly in use.

On the other hand, issues concerning terms of service, basic rights, and duties of the UN agencies are set out within the UN Staff Regulations, which represent the broad principles of personnel policy for the staffing and administration of the secretariat.

Among the private sector, with the relatively larger firms such as banks and hospitality firms have formalized human-resources policies. In most cases, all unionized workers benefited from relatively better conditions of service than those

provided under the company's policies. However, most of the Small-Medium Enterprises (SMEs) do not have documented policies, with many of their workers depending on the top executives' patronage and leverage for the family protection. Either covertly or overtly, they do acknowledge the need to protect the family. For instance, in one SME, the manager was of a view that:

*“Every employer should know that once one marries, children will be got, who need caring parents. People must know that those roles have to be fulfilled and a nation can only build its human resource if her people are allowed to reproduce and take care of their off-springs”.*

Over 85% of respondents acknowledge existence of formalised policies in their work place which indicates deliberate effort to protect worker's rights and duties. However, there existed exceptions at awareness and implementation level, where there were cases of contravening. For instance, among government departments many workers often get to know about the Standing Orders when they become subject to disciplinary action. This is explained partly, by bureaucratic information flow in government institutions. Among the UN agencies staffs are not only informed of the policy but are given training in personnel and professional development, to facilitate them with skills to balance their work and personal life. In contrast, NGOs gave or advised their employees to read copies of the human-resources policies on engagement.

#### **4.2 Hours of work**

The hours of work in the organizations sampled ranged from 5 to 24 hours a day. However, the majority of respondents (80%) work hours fell within the range of 7 to 9 hours days, with most having an average of 8 work hours a day.

Within government departments, there are standardised workdays: Monday-Friday (8.00am to 5.00pm), save for few instances like field trips, and exclusive occupations (nursing and security). Among other autonomous government departments, workers at management level are expected to work extra hours without pay. There were noticeable cues indicating that informally, workers who wished to fulfill definite



parental responsibilities can negotiate with their immediate supervisors to take sometime off without any penalty.

Similarly, in Parliament the hours of work are specified under the Parliamentary Service Staff Regulations. These are not below forty and not exceeding fifty-five hours a week. Important to note is that provisos are made for lactating mothers to lodge their maternal duties. Under the regulations they are permitted to return home after six hours of duty each day to nurse their babies for up to six months after recommencement of work.

Among the NGOs sampled, official workdays for their staff are Monday to Friday, nine hours a day. There are variations in starting time and end of work day. Given the nature of NGOs activities, the frequency of overtime or weekend work is higher than in government departments. Thus, workers often work beyond 6.00pm and sometimes during weekends which are determined by the exigency of the activity. The situation is further intricate by the limited human and financial resources, consequently over working the few workers. There are no provisions for overtime allowances for staff, although informally there is an arrangement at the discretion of the Head of the NGO to give a worker time off, in case one works extra hours or weekends. The flexibility with which the organization uses the employees' time compromises the time spent with their families. This practice is justified by the NGO's management and administrative structure. For instance, they often recruit one individual responsible for specific office at any given time and where an urgent task arises in that portfolio the concerned officer would have to be on duty to carry out the required task.

Additionally, the UN Staff Rules charge the Secretary General to set the normal number of working hours per week for each duty station<sup>8</sup>. In Uganda, UN agencies all employees officially work for 8½ hours from Monday to Thursday and up to 2.00pm on Friday. The extra half an hour per day compensates for Friday afternoon when all staffs are given an off. In practice however, many staffs do work beyond the half day on Fridays and beyond the 8½ hours on the other days.

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<sup>8</sup> Rule 101.4, UN Staff Rules.



In conclusion, there is more regulation and standardisation of hours of work in public service than in other sectors, whereby organizations tend to demand more of employees time. Hours of work in private sector organizations tended to be longer than in government and NGOs, ranging from 8 to 14 hours. In banks, for instance, hours of work for all staff including managerial and professional staff averaged 11 to 14 hours. According to one worker:

*“There is hardly any free time for us to even do our own shopping, not even physically getting involved in caring for my children”.*

### **4.3 Leave from work**

There are various types of recognized leave in Uganda including: maternity, paternity, sick/compassionate and annual leave. Under the GoU Standing Orders, the calculation of any leave includes weekends and public holidays within the period. In this study the researcher, considered the diverse types of leave as important opportunities for workers with CCR to afford extra time with their children.

#### **4.3.1 Maternity leave**

This is the time off from work, given to female employees following pregnancy and childbirth. Pregnant women often fear to look for jobs for fear of being rejected. The study discovered that many employers were reluctant to engage pregnant women to avoid offering them maternity leave within a short time. Among the SMEs, there is a tendency for newly recruited employee’s salary to be withheld for the duration of her maternity leave, whilst other institutions have got policies that stipulate that maternity leave will only be given when an employee has served for sometime.

Effective mid 2006, women employees in both private and public institutions, maternity leave as an entitlement was raised from 45 to 60 working days with full salary pay. The policy is considered inclusive to all working-mothers irrespective of position. Any additional period taken for maternity purposes is taken against earned pay or as leave without pay. Absence from duty beyond the period stated is taken as absenteeism, which is subject to disciplinary action. The practice for many new mothers is to combine the maternity leave with the annual leave in order to increase the time spent with their newborn babies.

In parliament, unlike in other institutions, working-mothers are entitled to two months maternity leave of full pay. Firing of female employees on the basis of pregnancy or during maternity leave is prohibited. Maternity leave is included in calculating incremental and retirement awards, with the implication that having children is rewarded. In the same vein, respondents from one parastatal studied, indicated that there were proviso for maternity leave, for working-mothers who had served the institution for more than 365 days. Leave is granted on presenting a medical certificate. In line with the GOU Standing Order, their employees receive 60 working days of full pay. On resuming duty, mothers are given an hour off per day to breastfeed their new babies for three months but the arrangement about the timing must be agreed upon with the Head of Department, depending on urgent work being attended to first.

In the NGO setting, depending on the level of formalization, maternity leave is embedded within the human-resources policies. For instance, among the national NGO, the personnel policy there-in provides for all working-mothers to be entitled to 45 working days maternity leave with full pay. However, it is silent about the time it begins and assumes that an expectant mother will have to work up to time of delivery. For instance, in one NGO studied, in clause it states that:

*“An employee may be granted sick leave both before and after confinement, on presenting to the Network a certificate signed by a recognized Medical Practitioner that the employee is unfit to work due to her pregnancy or as a result of confinement”.*

Given such dilemmas of few days granted, working-mothers more often take their annual leave on top of their maternity leave as a coping strategy to stress and recovery following birth. However, it is also noted that it is common for mothers on maternity leave to be recalled back for duty when a need arises. The situation is further complicated if she is still nursing an older child or has had complications during delivery.



Among the UN agencies working mother's entitlement for maternity leave is up to sixteen weeks on full pay<sup>9</sup>. Part of this period may be taken six to two weeks prior to delivery up to the actual birth date for medical reasons. A minimum of six weeks is allowed following delivery.

Variations exist in the private sector on issues of maternity leave, still depending on the size of the institution. The period varied from thirty to sixty calendar days. Furthermore, a distinction is made between years of service and whether workers are unionised or not. For instance, in the hospitality firm, unionized workers, with three years of service are permitted an annual leave of 22 days annually, whilst, those that have served between 3–5 years have 25 days and those over 5 years have 30 days. The maternity leave can be extended without pay on request and it is granted after giving birth. However a common practice, in SMEs, for instance according to one supervisor, has been young working-mothers resuming their work only a week after birth, for fear of loosing their jobs during the period of leave.

In essence, it can be urged that whilst most working-mothers often combine their maternity leave with the annual leave, it may be a consequence of insufficient maternity leave provided. Yet, the practices of going on leave poses a risk to one's job security in such enterprises.

#### **4.3.2 Paternity leave**

Until recently, within the Public Service whilst there has not been separate provisions in the Standing Orders for paternity leave as such, there have been provisions for exceptional leave of absence for various reasons, including in the case of a male public officer the need to attend to his spouse who has given birth<sup>10</sup>. According to the parastatal studied, new fathers are entitled up to four working days leave a year when they have newborns and it is specific of the intention, that is to enable fathers spend time with their spouses, baby and to assist at home.

In the NGO sector, some had provisions for Paternity leave whilst others did not. However, within the NGO coalition, the human-resources policy states that male

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<sup>9</sup> UN Staff Rules and Regulations, Rule 106.3.

<sup>10</sup> GoU Standing Order, Part C – f. 1 (d).



workers are entitled to fourteen working days paternity leave with full pay where an officially recognized wife gives birth.

Furthermore, in the UN agencies, in instances where both partners are working within the UN, an unexploited fraction of maternity leave the mother is entitled to may be used as paternity leave by the father of a child. Then again paternity leave can be charged to the father's annual leave privilege<sup>11</sup>.

In most institutions within the private sector, there are no provisions for paternity leave. Varied responses ranging from extremism to more accommodating views were documented. There is a belief that this would be a superfluous policy. Whilst many respondents think that there are few men willing to sit home minimally because their wives have given birth. Some managers thought that granting of paternity leave would increase costs for the organisation and deter productivity by disrupting institutional programmes due to the absence of workers, urging that it is difficult to monitor and programme for male workers whose wives are pregnant and thus the granting of paternity leave could adversely affect the activities of the institution. The husbands of women were particularly, positive and desiring for paternity leave as they urged that it indeed provide them an opportunity to help their spouses and newborns.

In contrast female respondents expressed concern, citing most marriages in Uganda that consist of more than one spouse urging that:

*“Most African men by their traditions and culture may have up to four wives. This would imply that one man could request for paternity leave up to four times a year and this would cost the company a lot of money, given the fact that majority employees are male”*

In another interview, a male respondent urged that:

*“Paternity leave would mean that on average each man would have to take paternity leave more than once a year, unlike in maternity leave*

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<sup>11</sup> UN Staff Rules and Regulations, rule 106.3.

*where working mother in most cases would take maternity leave once in two years.'*

While another male respondent with a less convincing reason asserted that:

*“Paternity leave could certainly be a burden, and many such men who are given paternity leave will abandon their wives and go into hiding at drinking places, since they are not given money by the employer to cover the financial responsibilities that come with child-birth”.*

In sum, government has come up with new provisions on paternity leave in both public and private institutions granting four days. Pessimists view this as a compromise position to the increment from 45 to 60 working days for maternity leave. To the optimists, however, it is a deliberate effort by government to enhance the family institution.

#### **4.3.3. Annual Leave**

According to GoU Standing Orders annual leave is a right only for public officers on permanent employment terms. It ranges from two to three days per month, depending on seniority. A literature survey did indicate that Foreign Service Officers (FSOs), hardly benefited from annual leave as they have to meet their own transport to any destination outside posting station. Consequently, this provision on annual leave with respect to FSOs reduces their capacity to spend time with their children to meet their parental responsibilities.

In addition, public officers may be given special leave of absence of up to ten days annually under the GoU Standing Orders where the officer is going to another part of Uganda to collect or return children from or to school. This is specially to facilitate government workers to execute their parental duties and obligations to school-going children. The Parliamentary Regulations allow for compassionate leave to workers for any reason<sup>12</sup>. Similarly, workers in the parastatals are also entitled to ten working days special leave annually for unspecified compassionate reasons.

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<sup>12</sup>Regulation 40.

#### **4.3.4 Compassionate or Special Leave**

The UN Staff Rules have express provision for parental duties. They provide for special leave ordinarily without pay for, *inter-alia*, Childcare for a period determined by the Secretary General. UN staff are entitled to Annual leave of six weeks per year, the timing of which subject to the requirements of the service shall as far as possible be made in consideration of the personal circumstances and preferences of the individual staff member<sup>13</sup>.

Within the NGO sector, compassionate leave is catered for in the human-resources policies; irrespective of formalization. Most human-resources policies of the NGOs restrict it to death of immediate family members. The policy allows for compassionate leave of up to a maximum of five days when an employee loses a member of the immediate family. Other situations like illness of a child do not guarantee compassionate leave.

In the private sector, respondents indicated that workers can obtain compassionate leave of four days annually, for very severe incidences such as bereavement for an immediate family member like a mother, father or child. With the infiltration emergence of multi-nationals in Uganda's economy, it is alleged, that foreigners do not cherish Ugandan traditional values; whence viewing certain practices like attending burials and funeral-rites as unnecessary. As a consequence, compassionate leave is rarely given and in order to attend to family responsibilities including parental ones, workers have to use part of their annual leave if it is granted on application.

#### **4.3.5 Sick leave**

Sick leave refers to time given off to employees due to their own medical condition. It does not visualize time given off to a worker due to needs related with parenting, for instance, in the event of a child being sick. Therefore, sick leave entitlement does not facilitate workers with CCRs. However, the access to medical facilities, where available for family members, does alleviate workers from some of the financial costs associated with parental responsibilities with regard to health needs.

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<sup>13</sup> UN Staff Rules, Rule 105.1.



In the study, the researcher considered sick leave as an entitlement in relation to one's immediate family for instance a sick spouse and children. Literally all respondents indicated that sick leave is granted to workers to enable them recover from ailment. In all the institutions studied, sick leave is approved to only employees in active service to enable them recuperate from any ailment. Although the provision of medical treatment to workers and their families would go a long way in relieving the burden of the working-mothers, it is found not to be universally applicable in most institutions.

Within the GoU departments, Parliamentary service and UN agency, sick leave is only applicable in the case of illness of the public officer. Sick leave with full salary up to six months, on half salary for a further six months and without pay thereafter is proviso for a worker in Parliament. On the other hand, parastatal workers are granted up to equivalent to two months in each year as sick leave on presenting medical certificates. Beyond that period the employer may certainly terminate their services. In case of severe illness, paid sick leave of up to an additional two months, making a maximum of four months in total is granted on terms of medical certification. This entitlement only lasts during the workers' period of employment in the institution. When the maximum period of extended leave is expired, the employer terminates service on medical grounds.

On average, in the NGO sector, five days are granted in respect to short-lived illness. Thirty days and supporting evidence from a registered physician are granted for long-lasting sickness. Depending on the type of NGO, beyond the 30 days, an additional period of up to three months will be given on half pay and thereafter another 3 months of leave without pay may be granted. In case there is no recuperation after that period the organisation will terminate the services of that employee. It is worth noting that there is no uniform policy pertaining to sick leave within the NGO sector, but it depends on the uniqueness of any given NGO.

In addition, the private sector also does present different experiences. For instance workers from one processing plant in Nakawa-division, sick leave is not provided as an entitlement, but does extend medical treatment to their workers and registered immediate family members (spouse and five children below the age of 18years). In other SMEs, such as a hospitality firm, their workers received medical allowances

including hospitalisation of complicated cases in government and Faith based hospitals within Kampala. For working-mothers in instances where they are nursing their children, management extends time off and options to work flexi-hours so as to give extra care for the sick child. Further more, other SMEs did provide sick leave depending on the terms of employment and ailment. For permanent workers some receive up to 60 days with full pay while majority on short term contracts received neither sick leave nor medical allowances.

#### **4.4 Institutionalising childcare and working parenthood**

##### **4.4.1 Formalised policies**

Generally, documented policies in institutions under study indicate a framework for employers' accountability to their employees and assurance of their labour rights. Nevertheless, the study revealed that most organisations do not respect what is written down in their human-resources policies and several respondents contended that there are practically distinctive differences between what the policy say and actual practice.

In analysis, whereas it is a step forward for existence of documented policies, that define expectations and actions for employers and employees, the changes in the economy that have led to market determining social service provision, higher levels of unemployment and widening inequality, the prospect of compelling employers to implement sections in human-resources policies that are seemingly considered against them, remain a futile effort.

##### **4.4.2 Organisational cultural mind-sets and Childcare in the workplace**

The study also made effort to analyse the changes at the workplace and how organisational culture has evolved. Putting the New Household Economics model in perspective, there is a demographic shift with more women joining paid work; many of whom are married with young children and working spouses. Yet the traditional extended family support system is disappearing and child care is increasingly being borne by the nucleus family. Inevitably mothers have had to shoulder extra burden of caring for their family and all those that require care within the household. For instance one of the respondents said;



*“My husband and I work in the same factory but when we go home together in the evening, he takes a seat and listens to the radio and I begin my second job”.*

Consequently, workplace norms (that often shaped beliefs and practices), which related to the artificial situation where there is a dichotomy between work and family are no longer in sync with the requirements of workers.

In the public service, institutional change has not really transpired. However, there are variations in the organizational culture in various government institutions depending on the attitudes and experiences of heads and supervisors. Generally there is prominence on the separation between work and family duties and responsibilities. I observe that majority senior civil servants in supervisory positions are older, with grown up children in high school, tertiary institutions or working. There is often little appreciation for the needs of junior workers with younger families and the expectation is for them to put the organizational needs first at the expense of their children’s needs. While taking time off to carry out parental roles is tolerated, it is common to have strained relationships developing between junior employees and supervisors if the demands were persistent.

In Parliament, according to a female MP it is unheard of for MPs to bring in their young children and the environment is not family-friendly especially for parents of babies. The house is:

*“Geared to the interests of older, male politicians whose familial responsibilities are almost certainly taken care of by their wives in their homes. For instance whereas in parliament there is a large bar but no kindergarten”.*

Respondents working in the foreign ministry and in one of the parastatal indicated that there inconsistencies in the way the institutions are run. Whereas, they are flexible and supportive to employees with parental responsibilities and that workers are encouraged to meet their parental responsibilities, none the less, they are insensitive to family stability when it comes to transfers and relocation of its staff



within the organisation. In part the human-resources policy of the parastatal states that:

*“Job rotation, transfers and re-location are a reality of working in this organisation. In making such decisions, we are unable to consider most personal circumstances such as family issues or studies, as we need to consider what is in the best interest of the organisation. We will not try to move women with children under 2 years of age, unless this is unavoidable”.*

Reference to the NGO where one of the respondent works, it was found that while the NGO's cardinal objective is to advance human rights, its own workers' rights remain invisible in its program planning and implementation processes. Yet, the volunteers (a huge human resource) on which such NGOs depend on are not catered for at all. For instance one respondent relayed that:

*“Usually meetings for the steering committee begin at 4pm, which affect us young mothers who have to pick children from the kindergarten and also be at home in time to care for my husband”.*

In comparison to the private sector where the general view that family responsibility has no room in the work place, in the UN agencies on the other hand, work atmosphere is exceptionally family friendly. The agency has flexi-working time that parents can spend more time with their children and those of their colleagues. Annually there are end of year parties for children of staff members, there are on-going classes on sex education for adolescent children and psycho-social training for younger children, where they are taught social interaction skills that provide for mental stability and equilibrium. This was after a realization that while the mandate of the organization related to human rights and welfare of vulnerable groups like children, the members of staff had very little time to provide such skills to their own children.

#### 4.4.3 Children and Care

In the Ugandan perspective, childcare amenities are particularly unusual in workplaces. Frequently, working-mothers have had to make special arrangements to look after their children whilst away. The home, relatives' home (extended family) or friend are the most and immediate options.

However, in families where one of the spouses is not employed outside the home, in this case often a mother, she takes the responsibility of looking after the children. In contrast with families where both parents work outside the home, they will engage the services of either paid or unpaid domestic servants. This option has had hiccups regarding to availability and cost of a suitable helper. As a result, either, resources available for a household are drained in hiring a competent servant or their children are left in the hands of young girls whose unfortunate life pushes them into early exploitative employment, and deny children parental care and love.

As earlier noted, the social network of the extended family during the recent past is increasingly becoming unavailable for Childcare in both urban and rural establishments. This is may be attributed to increased poverty, social mobility across region, and mortality from HIV, which has strained many families and created gaps in the very age-groups which could have taken up such responsibilities.

According to the Ugandan Constitution, article (34), children have rights to care and protection from their parents and the state, whether socio-economic, educational, health and spiritual. It should be noted that in the study area, there were no Childcare facilities at workplace. However much there is flexibility, the absence of such facilities, thus meant that working-mothers have had to depend on the discretion of supervisors whose actions may not always be assured.

Findings further reveal that, whereas all respondents acknowledge the need for affordable and accessible childcare facilities, concern arose from where they could be located, fearing that children would get in their way, that of their colleagues and the employer. Whereas some preferred having an "enabling environment" to perform work without interruptions, others preferred childcare facilities to be established in schools. However, such views appeared narrow as whatever was being referred to as



enabling environment was a broader concept that involved a health status of workers as a system. Problems in homes often find their way to the workplaces. Secondly, with a facility at the workplace, mothers can nurse their children during break time without having to worry or walk long distances to check on their infants.

In the nutshell, with an increase in the number of both parents working outside the home (cognisant of the universalised bread winner model), and the increasing number of single parenthood, the saddle of childcare is increasingly devolving around the nucleus family. This calls for an urgent need for the formulation of innovative social policies and measures to respond to this emerging issue to enable parents to balance paid work and family commitments in a rapidly changing economy. For instance a crèche with a paid nanny to take care of young children while their parents are working is a cheaper social policy option.

#### **4.4.4 Elasticity, work and time**

In the study, respondents working with the UN were found to have a flexible work arrangement. For instance, alternative work schedules such as 7 o'clock to 10 o'clock and 4 o'clock to 7 o'clock in the evening exist in UNICEF to enable workers with child and family responsibilities to carry out their roles without affecting their input at work. Therefore, critical issues are handled between 10.00 a.m. and 4.00 p.m. when everybody is expected to be in office. For workers that have CCRs, the organisation provides for tele-working where one can post work on the Internet, have a compressed work programme where one either works full time for eight days, take some time off, opt for part-time work or job sharing with other members of staff. The management enters into contract with the worker who is expected to be held accountable to the time schedule. However, this is aimed at enabling workers sort out their personal and family challenges for maximum productivity at both individual level and at the workplace.

Some respondents working in the parastatal, given the nature of their work, it was difficult to introduce flexi-working time. The respondents said their work involves offering water related services, receiving clients concerns, and often they are expected to meet their clients in the field during the day.



Within the private sector, a greater section of respondents rejected flex-time urging that their survival is largely dependent on profits and operating time of the market. It is difficult to reconcile operating costs with opening time. Rather the objectives too be achieved in SMEs tend to be monetary, thus workers ought to maximise working time with less time left for leisure and other life requirements. A smaller proportion of respondents, however from the hospitality firm indicated existence of flex-time for part of their staff especially pregnant workers and those still nursing their babies, do not work during the night time.

Secondly, many of the workers have no concrete contracts or have contracts that leave the employer with a lot of options for exploiting the worker who is seen to be at the mercy of the former. The majority of private sector workers are still locked in the conventional 8am–5pm hour job, and they believe that one can only be seen to be working if seated on the desk. It is therefore imperative to sever such mind-set so that people can start to appreciate that quality work that involves profound consideration can best be done outside the office with fewer disruptions. The provision of elastic time enables workers to have space to perform to the best of their skill whence, become more productive.

#### **4.5 Challenges faced by working-mothers**

##### **4.5.1 Job performance and satisfaction**

Different respondents agreed that their CCRs enormously affected their job performance in that they were expected to work twice as hard to meet the demands both at home and in the workplace. Business enterprises and other employers demand the highest output from their workers, which forces most working-mothers to put in extra hours to prove themselves. For instance a female supervisor asserted that:

*“One can not leave work at 5.00pm when your desk is full simply because you have to go back home early to attend to your family. My terms of reference do stipulate that organisation’s work comes first before other things”.*

She added that:

*“Responsible managers can not leave their offices with undone work to go home and attend to CCRs. Given the work patterns and activities of most parents and the school calendar, there is hardly any time for parents to be with their children”.*

Whence Uganda’s school system is in part accountable for stressing children with lots of work all day long, that even when parents try creating time to be with their children, they are not available. They are released late from school with extra workload in form of homework. There is more emphasis on grades than other psychosocial needs of children.

Another revealing experience from a FGD was rather intriguing. For instance, one respondent who is caring for three children, confessed to have had challenging experiences of proving her worthiness as a good mother and achiever in her career. On a daily basis she sets her targets at work. Much as she loves staying with her children she decided to take what she calls painful decisions and exhaustedly working herself. According to her:

*“It is not written anywhere that we should work extra hours; the value of achieving goals motivates many of us. Quarterly, our superiors appraise our performance against goals set. Therefore, one cannot afford to be rated as a second-rate worker minimally because one has CCRs to accomplish. I decided to take my children to a day care center or for the older ones to boarding school so that I can have more time at the hospital and prove my productivity”.*

Lastly, to note, some respondents believed they had time to spend with their children but were facing a bigger challenge of poverty that hinders them from having quality time with their families.

*“We would desire to expend time with our families, but we can not meet their demands and needs when our pockets are empty. For instance during leave you do not want to take it up because children will tend to ask for more than when you do not stay at home during day time”.*

#### **4.5.2 Negative effect on career advancement**

Often, when people choose a career, they tend to consider a number of issues in particular proximity to families, wages earned against expenditures, future prospects among others. This research finds that many working-mothers sought and remained in jobs so as to look after their families. As a result they have to make painful choices to either stay at home and lose the job or leave a young baby home and continue with the job. Many of the respondents said that women were often pushed to make sacrifices and give up their jobs so as to look after their children whilst others even considered taking part-time jobs so as to create time for their families.

However, it was observed that given limited employment opportunities in Uganda, it was difficult for one to leave a job so as to rear children and later on get into the job market. One thus risks extinction and loosing relevance. The time often spent in childcare and the skills acquired are not taken into consideration when one is looking for a job.

Furthermore, the study revealed that working-mothers often sacrifice opportunities for associating beyond office settings, with a few affording to extend beyond evening hours because they are expected to be at home then. This means that they have to put in extra hours of work when they are extremely tired, so as to keep up with their social networks, profession and career.

#### **4.5.3 Psychological effects of working mothers**

Stressors such as sense of inadequacy, unworthiness, marital tension, social stigma, guilt for not nursing their children and so on, do affect many of the working-mothers creating a web of self-dissatisfaction and apathy when performing the triple roles. In the study, it was revealed that as mothers attempt to meet their gender roles, consequently their children tend to be exposed to unfavorable conditions at an early age. For instance, one respondent stated that:

*“I was forced to take my daughter of 3½ years to a boarding school because I was hardly available for her, yet at the same time I was uncertain about her safety at home in the hands of the maid. Whereas I could afford putting her in a day care center, I could not afford the daily*



*penalty I was paying for the delay in picking her every evening after work due to heavy work loads and traffic jam. You just keep praying that the child never gets sick”.*

While another respondent, said that:

*“When I realised that the house-girls I employ to take care of my children while at work were imparting values into them contrary to mine and the school they were attending had no component of moral upbringing or co-curricula activities in their programme, the only option available was a boarding school with a religious background and a paid two female domestic worker to look after them under the supervision of my aging mother”.*

According to the commissioner of labour, a husband and father of two lamented that:

*“The Public service reform that came with macroeconomic changes required us to down-size workers so we all had to pick up the slack. I’m doing the job of two to three people, which means more: travel, meetings, span of control – do you see what I am saying? Try that with two kids, a wife/husband, a house...I am always scalded out!”*

The study further revealed that, working-mothers felt guilt for not providing adequate time to their children. Often their work has been a source of tension within their family (husbands, and in-laws) who feel child rearing, is the main responsibility of the wife. Nonetheless, the mothers felt they were relatively more fortunate than their male-colleagues at work since they can juggle their responsibilities at the workplace and home.

All in all, the study established that women still carried the bigger burden in meeting most of the CCRs that required physical exertion akin to bathing the children, preparing meals and feeding, supervising take-home assignments, playing and entertaining the children. As mothers enter into paid employment their responsibilities then extend to the monetary obligations like the payment of school fees, purchasing of

food, providing medical care, clothing and housing. More men however, especially those under 40 years are increasingly beginning to share these responsibilities with their spouses.

#### **4.6 Coping strategies for working parents with CCRs**

Given the aforementioned stressors, working parents require coping strategies as a requirement if they are to subsist meaningful lives. Quite a few women engaged in paid employment outside the home use the services of day-care centres, kindergarten, or maids or to render a hand in caring of their families especially children. While those that can't afford paid domestic help resort to neighbours, family member and grandparents to help with child caring.

According to the study, majority respondents spent an average of 18.5hours daily on child caring including: preparations on how to leave their children at home and meals, laundry and cleaning, administering medications, breast feeding at lunch time and at night, monitoring whether their healthy, and playing with them after work. A variety of mechanisms are applied depending on the interests and affordability. For instance, some aim at seizing the weekend to recharge, exercise and strengthen their social contacts and networks, while others proposed the need to have enough sleep, urging that being well-rested (7-8 hours of sleep per night) helps with coping. Others still, de-clutter their offices because "an unorganized office can make one feel more stressed". Sharing parenting experiences with colleagues, parents and friend that can lend a supportive and sympathetic ear.

**CHAPTER FIVE**  
**THE WAY FORWARD**

**5.0 Introduction**

The aim of this study has been to examine the conditions that working mothers face in the workplace and in the family, and to investigate the role of husbands, relatives, friends, employers and the state play in childcare provisioning. The objectives of this chapter are twofold: to present a summary of major findings based on field work, and to provide recommendations to the GoU and CSOs in the area of childcare provisioning for working mothers.

**5.1 Overview**

Four main conclusions can be drawn from the focus group discussion, interviews and questionnaires. In general terms, working mothers expressed the need for:

- i) Childcare facilities
- ii) Good salary package
- iii) Non taxable child allowance
- iv) Enabling environment.

Whereas not all middle class working-mothers were in need of state support regarding their CCRs and employment arrangements, it was revealed that women, irrespective of their social class, experienced a double work shift in the formal place of employment and in the home. It was similarly shown that in the interests of equal opportunity for all women, irregardless of class, employers should provide childcare facilities. The state and individual employers should work towards legitimising opportunities for workers to not only raise the future generation but also contribute to the growth of the economy.

The majority of respondents from the public and other sectors expressed the view that when women experienced secure and comfortable conditions at home they were much more productive in the workplace. Some recommendations to ensure these conditions include a good salary package that would cater for their children's education, clothing and food; a non-taxable child allowance at least for four children of minority age; setting minimum wage and increasing the minimum tax threshold for pay as you earn



for working mothers. They maintained that if these basics of life were met, then parents could afford to pay for Childcare facilities, spend more time with their children, and at the same time be productive in the workplace. They similarly argued that a friendly working environment would contribute to a more stable home environment, for stress at the workplace is often transferred to children and spouses at home. Companies should for instance, recognise Childcare as a legitimate need. It is indeed in the best interest of employers to provide for Childcare as it would contribute to conditions of reduced absenteeism, reduced tardiness, satisfied workers and loyalty to the firm.

In all facets, the study noted that women carried along their household responsibilities of discharging their roles as mothers and care providers to the workplace, which consigned an extra burden on them and affected their performance. This situation for many working-mothers is made worse by the fact that they are not in managerial positions and recurrently have insignificant entitlements, in a labour saturated market where their services to employers can easily be given out. Covertly, a number of employers were found to be reluctant to employ women as they are likely to demand time off which does not auger well with effectiveness and efficiency principles. Finally, in many institutions, there are no Childcare facilities at the workplace, with the implication that working-mothers have had to leave their children under the care of domestic helpers; and a very small proportion of those who can pay, use day care services. However, the problem of cost is principally crucial to those who cannot afford outside services, or do so at significant sacrifice.

Thus when the environment is not enabling, women's capability to effectively participate in paid work is fraught. This inherent potential requires a favourable environment for expression. Using Sen and Nussbaum's capabilities approach, I contend that where women have freedoms they become agents of not only their own well-being but also that of the whole society.

#### **5.1.1 Labour Legislation to improve CCRs**

The study revealed a clear consensus on the need for institutional frameworks on labour legislation that takes into consideration the family situation of employees. Proponents of a free-trade/laissez faire economic policy feel that the GoU should not

interfere in determining the labour conditions or even the minimum wage, which they say should be left between the employer and the employee to negotiate. According to the FUE, workers should be able to negotiate their terms for work that are enforceable. FUE further urges that the provision of facilities like Childcare centres can be discussed between the employers and the workers' representatives and both parties must contribute to their maintenance.

The above position is widely contested by civil servants and workers in the private sector, who feel there is dire need for concrete legislations for decent work because the private sector is abusing and grossly exploiting the unemployment situation in Uganda. Currently there is a tendency to hire workers on short-term contracts, which compromises them to demand for decent work and securing savings and benefits during retirement. Until the recent past, workers are more vulnerable and powerless to demand for their rights than before which undermine their potential to meet CCR with a minimum cost.

It is therefore imperative that although there is no political will, the proposed labour law by the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development that is under discussion takes into account the grievances of the workers. Six years down, the bureaucrats have been working on the employment bill, which is aimed at integrating the existing labour laws in the different statutes. It is hoped employment conditions will be addressed, including handling labour disputes and arbitration and employers will have to comply with the law once it is enacted.

However, FUE agrees that the labour conditions in Uganda are lacking in many aspects and that many private sector employers do not have written down staff rules and regulations or terms and conditions of service, hence putting the welfare of the employees at the discretion of the employer. The study discovered that many Ugandans are ignorant of their labour rights, thus in proposing any form of labour legislation, there is need to seriously sensitize all stakeholders about their rights so that they are conscious when these rights are being violated. With the high levels of unemployment and the hard pressing economic conditions in Uganda, many workers are ready to settle for any minimum entitlement. On the other hand, the employers are struggling to survive in an environment that is highly competitive, with high



production costs and operating at marginal profits. Given such conditions, FUE warned that many employers may not welcome any form of regulation or legislation that they presume may increase their production costs.

## **5.2 Recommendations**

As Uganda's economy is increasingly opening up to global markets and resources, there is a need to protect local labour, especially working mothers. Policies need to be formulated around three critical areas: Incentives, Mass awareness, and advocacy.

1. **Incentives:** The government should try to provide incentives to employers that are implementing worker friendly policies so that they minimize their costs of production. Alternatively, government could subsidize and justify Childcare by denoting its benefits to society such as making mothers become financially self-sufficient. There is need for GoU to display that the implementation of any form of legislation that will enable workers fulfill their CCRs will not increase the costs for the employer but will widen the profit margin. This analysis should be compared to other economies to indicate that in economies where such policies exist the productivity of the workers has increased and the employer performance has been enhanced. If the additional cost of implementation is big then the private sector entrepreneurs will resist such legislation. There is also a fear that by enacting a legislation that requires employers to provide for workers with CCRs, many employers will avoid hiring people that come along with such costs. This will therefore reduce the chances for employing working mothers and fathers that may have CCRs. It should also be noted that, if employers realise that the employment of such workers is more costly, they are likely to replace them with machines or resort to hiring casual labourers.

2. **Mass awareness:** Some lobbyists especially the CSOs, on the proposed Labour-law, maintain that the sensitization of employers could be a better alternative instead of legislating on some of the labour conditions, in that employers could be shown the benefits of improving their employees' work conditions so as to have more time to meet their CCRs. They also assert that Ministerial guidelines are more convenient than laws because these can be easily changed with the changing economic situation in the country. They also argue that a general provision about



workers' condition can be put in the law, but the details like provision of Childcare facilities, flexi-working time or other benefits for working parents should be put in regulations or guidelines.

3. **Advocacy:** In formulating a strategy for advocacy a number of issues will have to be considered. A proper analysis of the problem will have to be done, so as to know how many people are like to be impacted by the proposed law and what parts of the economy will be affected. Who is going to benefit and who is going to lose? There is also need to decide right from the onset whether a law on such an issue is relevant or sensitization of both the employers and the employees on the benefits of having provisions that will facilitate better working conditions and enhance productivity. What is the cost of implementation or enforcement of such a law? For instance, if you advocate for the provision of Childcare facilities at the work place, are you going to ensure that there are capable inspectors to supervise the proper running of such facilities? Do we need to push for the enactment of the employment bill and include recommendations on recognizing the enforcement of the rights of workers with CCRs in the regulations or guidelines?

In sum, it is important to remember the testimonies and voices of working mothers, who make up the backbone of our families in many ways. Our labour laws, places of work and families should provide spaces where mothers enjoy maximum benefits and meaningful lives rather than leaving it to laissez faire economic policies. Given the trend, I assume there will be major changes in Uganda's economic and political processes. Thus there will be much reason to expect that working mothers will increase their participation and occupational diversity in the work force. Parents will have income jobs outside the home, and will have Childcare needs of various kinds depending on ages, number of children, income levels, and so on. Therefore, there is need for a Ugandan society where working mothers have access to opportunities and resources to actively participate in gainful employment. When the environment is enabling, women gain rights and freedoms which make them agents of not only their own well-being but also that of the whole society.

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## *APPENDIX I*

### **Kampala City at a Glance**

#### **Introduction**

The focus for this study was in the district of Kampala- Central Uganda. Kampala is the capital city of Uganda, located on latitude 0 degrees 19'N, Longitude 32degrees 35 E. It covers an area of 189 square Km. The Land area is 176 Square Km and lies 1180m above sea level. The average annual rainfall is 12-150cm, with mean annual temperatures of 17 degrees minimum and 21.9 degrees maximum respectively. Kampala altitude varies between 1189 and 1402 meters above sea level. It is in the equatorial climatic zone and cool breezes from Lake Victoria influence the climate.

#### **Geo-Political**

Kampala city has seven Divisions including, Makindye, Rubaga, Kawempe, Nakawa, Central, Makerere University and Kyambogo University. Kampala District Divisions are further Sub-divided into smaller units, from parish down to Village level. There are 99 wards (Parishes) and 998 Zones (Villages). This is done for administrative and political reasons. Kampala District is almost entirely surrounded by Mpigi and Wakiso District save for Lake Victoria, which forms its border in the south. It is approximately 238 Sq. Km including part of the lake. However, Greater Kampala is 325 Square KM.

The main languages spoken by the city residents are Luganda, English, and Swahili in that order. But all indigenous languages of Uganda are used in this cosmopolitan city.

#### **Economic**

The Central Business District (CBD) is Kampala's commercial heartland where most of the business activity takes place. Major hotels, banks, markets, shops, offices and leisure sports are located here. Many city residents live in the central area but the majority stays in the suburbs. Kampala District is mainly commercial and industrial, but its suburbs produce agricultural products such as potatoes, cassava, beans and green vegetables. Poultry and animal husbandry form part of the city's small scale cottage industries.

The industrial areas include the old industrial area between the 1<sup>st</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> street and is shared between Nakawa and Central Division in the east (actual study area); Nakawa and Ntinda industrial area, also in the east; Kawempe industrial area in the north and Nalukolongo industrial area in the west.

#### **Population and demographic indicators**

- Density is 4,581.3 people per Km.
- Distribution for Makindye, Rubaga, Kawempe, Makerere, Kyambogo, Nakawa, and Central is 24%, 23%, 20%, 18%, and 15% respectively.
- Sex Ratio: There are 98 men for every 100 females.

- Fertility Rate: Average number of children per woman is 5.21 (2002 National Population & Housing Census). Annual average infant girl pregnancies in Uganda is 4million.
- Mortality Rate
  - The infant mortality rate (IMR) is 81 for every 1000 live births.
  - Crude death rate is 9.8 per 1000 People.
  - Crude birth rate 52.9 per 1000 People.
  - Natural growth rate is 4.3%
- Education
  - Enrolment ratio in city primary schools is 84 %.
  - General illiteracy rate in the city is 52.4%.
- Incomes
  - 80% of the population is low-income.
  - Gross National Product (GNP): US\$2820(1990).
  - Income Per capita (IPC):US\$ 220-250 (1990).
  - 100,000 job seekers per year from other Districts come to Kampala.
- Housing
  - 54% of city residents live in tenements (muzigo).
  - 12% live in stores and garages.
  - 65% live in rented houses.
  - 71% of all families occupy rooms as opposed to houses.
  - 36% of city houses are built of mud and wattle.
  - 34% of city house require up grading or replacing.
  - About 80% of homes lack toilets/latrines.
  - Average population per household is 5 people.
- Slums
  - 10% of total area of Kampala District is Slum.
  - 27% of city population lives in slums.
  - Population Density in slums is 14.112 people per sq.km.
- Water
  - 50% of population has access to piped water.
  - 8% of population has running water in their homes.
  - 36% of population has protected spring water.
  - 11% of population uses unprotected spring water.
  - 65% of city spring water is contaminated.
- Sewerage
  - 9% of population uses a water-borne system
  - 5% uses septic Tanks.
  - 12% uses private latrines.
  - 72% uses shared pit Latrines.
  - About 80% of households lack latrines/toilets.
  - About 700 Pupils use one toilet in UPE schools.



- Solid waste
  - About 30,000 tones are generated every month.
  - About 45% are collected.
  - About shs.10m per day is spent on collection and disposal.
  
- Transportation
  - Kampala District has 450km of road network.
  - 270km of city roads are paved.
  - Feeder roads make up 600km.

**Source:**

1. Kampala City Guide (<http://www.kampala-city-guide.com>)
2. Kampala City Information  
(<http://www.mcgill.ca/mchg/projects/edible/kampala/kampalainfo>).
3. <http://www.kcc.go.ug>



7.

a) How long have you worked with this organisation/agency? Please indicate in years

.....

b) What are your working hours per week?

- i) Less than Eight Hours. Please indicate.....
- ii) Eight Hours
- iii) More than Eight Hours. Please indicate.....

c) How many days do you work per week?

- i) Less than Five days a week. Please indicate.....
- ii) Five days a week
- iii) More than Five days a week. Please indicate.....

8. **Occupation**

a) What is your occupation? .....

b) What are your work terms (Kindly, tick appropriately)

- i) Permanent and pension-able.....
- ii) Contract.....
- iii) Casual/Piece-meal Jobs.....
- iv) Others (Specify) .....

c) What is the occupation of your spouse? .....

d) What is your spouse's working schedule? Tick appropriately

- i) Full time work outside the home
- ii) Part time work outside the home
- iii) Does not work outside the home
- iv) Do not live with spouse

e) What is the work terms for your spouse (Kindly, tick appropriately)

- v) Permanent and pension-able.....
- vi) Contract.....
- vii) Casual/Piece-meal Jobs.....
- viii) Others (Specify) .....

9. **Income**

Would you please indicate to me under which of these categories you estimate that the total monthly income of your self fall).

**N.B.** The income we require is the gross cash monthly income deductions and excluding the value of fringe benefits like housing, loans, transport, etc.

*Please tick appropriately.*

- i) 100,000 or less
- ii) 100,000-150,000
- iii) 150,001-200,000
- iv) 200,001-250,000
- v) 250,001-300,000
- vi) 300,001-400,000
- vii) 400,001-600,000
- viii) 600,001-1,000,000
- ix) I don't know/Refused.

10. **Family background**

a) Do you have children? i) Yes ii) No

b) If yes, how many are below 5years.....



- c) Others, please specify.....
- d) Over the last 12 months, have you needed child care for any of your child(ren) while you work?
  - i) Yes                      ii) No
- e) How many of these are school going? .....
- f) What kind of care have your child(ren) needed over the last 12 months while you worked?.....  
.....  
.....

- g) Please indicate how care was provided for your child(ren). Check all the ways that care was provided.
  - i. Relative in our home
  - ii. Non-relative in our home
  - iii. In relative's home
  - iv. In Non-relative's home
  - v. Child care center
  - vi. Other (describe).....  
.....

- h) Did you get all the child care you needed during the period?
  - i) Yes
  - ii) No
  - iii) I got some

i) If you could not get all the child care needed, please indicate the reason. (Cost, special needs, unavailable, too far, could find any one, etc).  
.....  
.....  
.....

**11. Employment rights and awareness**

- a) Have you signed a contract specifying your terms of employment?
  - i) Yes    ii) No
- b) What are your employer's policies with regard to:
  - i) Annual leave.....  
.....
  - ii) Maternity/Paternity leave.....  
.....
  - iii) Child care facilitation/facilities.....  
.....
  - iv) Other benefits not listed above.....  
.....

- c) If you stay home from work to care for a sick a child(ren), what kind of leave do you take? Tick your response.
  - i) Sick leave
  - ii) Personal leave day
  - iii) Unpaid leave
  - iv) Vacation day
  - v) Other (explain) .....  
.....

d) When you need to be away from work for a short time for a child's appointment or a child care emergency, how does your supervisor manage your absence? Tick the answer of your response

- i) Allows personal leave time
- ii) Allows me to make up lost time
- iii) Reduces wages for missing time
- iv) Demerit or mark against work record
- v) Other, Please explain.....

.....

e) How does your supervisor respond to your family responsibilities that may occur during work time? Tick appropriately

- i) Supportive
- ii) Reluctant but allows necessary absence
- iii) Critical
- iv) Other? (explain).....

.....

f) What do you find uncomfortable with the specified policies within your work place?

.....  
.....  
.....

Give reasons

.....  
.....  
.....

g) Are the benefits adequate and why?

.....  
.....  
.....

h) Who cares for your child(ren) when schools close for holidays

.....

i) Do you have child care facilities at the place of work    i)Yes    ii) No

If yes, are they adequate, if no, how do you take care for your child or children below 5years while at work?

.....  
.....  
.....

h) What difficulties do you find/face with such options?

.....  
.....  
.....

## 12. Coping strategies

a) How do you feel having to work and also take care of a child?

.....  
.....  
.....

b) What is your attitude/view/opinion on establishing child care facilities for working parents?.....  
.....  
.....

c) What other kind of services would you like to have in place for child care?  
.....  
.....  
.....

d) What are the common problems that you face as working mother or parent with child care responsibilities?  
.....  
.....  
.....

e) What other specific occupational problems do you face as a working parent?  
.....  
.....  
.....

i) What is the attitude of your male colleague towards working mothers? Please explain.....  
.....  
.....

**13. Men and women's experiences (Socio-cultural attitudes)**

a) Should both men and women equally undertake child care responsibilities?

- i) Yes                      ii) No

Please give reasons for your position.....  
.....  
.....

b) Married women do not need to work outside their homes because husbands can not take care of their children. (Tick accordingly).

- i) Strongly agree
- ii) Agree
- iii) Not sure
- iv) Disagree
- v) Strongly disagree

Give reasons for your view.....  
.....

c) Women should work less hours compared to men because they should go back to their homes earlier so as to take care of their child care responsibilities.

(Tick appropriately).

- i) Strongly agree
- ii) Agree
- iii) Not sure
- iv) Disagree
- v) Strongly disagree

Give reasons for your view.....  
.....



d) Women should be given jobs that require much less time and energy to take care of their child care responsibilities (Tick appropriately).

- i) Strongly agree
- ii) Agree
- iii) Not sure
- iv) Disagree
- v) Strongly disagree

Give reasons for your view.....  
.....

e) Women's primary responsibilities is to take care of the home and not top executive decision making positions. (Tick appropriately).

- i) Strongly agree
- ii) Agree
- iii) Not sure
- iv) Disagree
- v) Strongly disagree

Give reasons for your view.....  
.....  
.....

**14. Advocacy issues/Recommendations**

a) What kind of services or amenities would you like such a facility to have?

.....  
.....

b) What should the following actors do in order to facilitate the needs of parents with Childcare responsibilities?

i) Your employer.....  
.....  
.....

ii) The Government.....  
.....  
.....

iii) The Parliament.....  
.....  
.....

iv) CSOs/Activists.....  
.....  
.....

v) The researcher.....  
.....  
.....

*Thank you very much for finding time to answer these questions.*

*Or*

*Please return your completed questionnaire to..... by this date.....*

## **A PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH INSTRUMENT (FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE)**

*Hello, my name is .....from ISS. I am part of a team of people who are carrying out a survey on study on **Working Mothers: Changes in the Family and Economy in Kampala city, Uganda**. We are talking to people working in this establishment to learn more about conditions affecting parents or guardians with child care responsibilities. This will last 20-25 minutes. Your answers will remain confidential and we will not take down your name or address if you don't care. May I ask you some questions so that we share your opinions and experiences?*

1. How do you find the job market?
2. How do you feel having to work and take care of your children or leaving them at home without your attention or on someone else's care?
3. What are the costs/difficulties associated with options available at your disposal?
4. How do you manage with such challenges?
5. What things would you want your employer to do about these challenges?
6. What do you propose as potential solutions to challenges facing working mothers or people with child care responsibilities?
7. What achievements would you talk about at your work place in provision of facilities/amenities/policies for workers with child care responsibilities?
8. Are there any best practices?
9. Any gaps?
10. What do you think would be the best way forward?

*Thank you very much for your participation and co-operation in this study..*



APPENDIX III

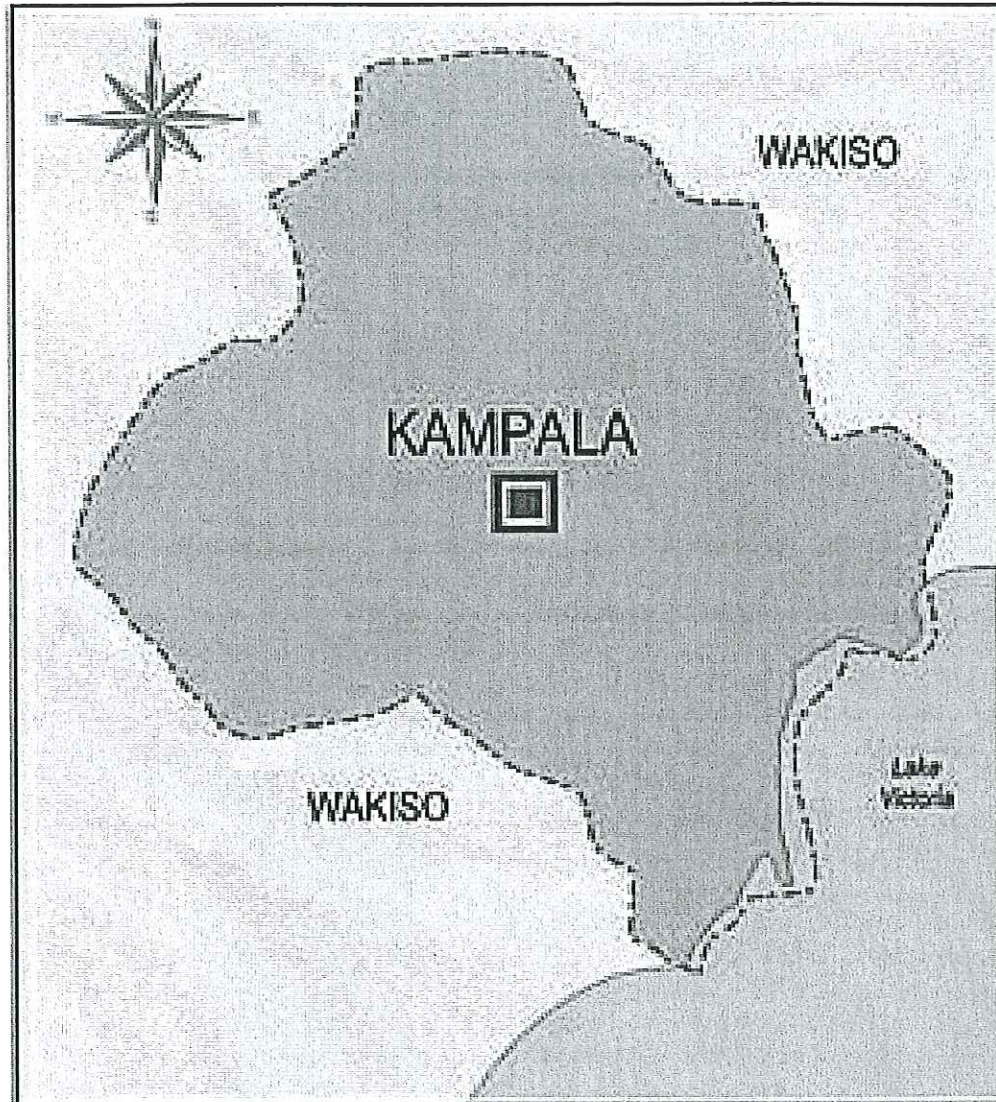
Map of Uganda Showing the location of Kampala





*APPENDIX IV*

**Map of Kampala showing the location of the study area**



Source: Kampala City: Map and General Information  
Published by Sekalala and Associates

## *APPENDIX V*

### **List of Visited Organisations:**

Barker's World Ltd.

CEEWA-Uganda; Council for Economic Empowerment for Women in Africa.

Centenary Rural Development Bank.

Federation of Uganda Employers

Hotel Africana, Kampala

ISIS-WICCE; Women's International Cross Cultural Exchange.

Kibuli Hospital, Kampala

Makerere University; Department of Women and Gender Studies, Faculty of Social Science.

Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development

Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development.

National Water and Sewerage Company.

Parliament of the Republic of Uganda.

Rwenzori Beverages Company Ltd

Uganda National NGO-Forum.

UNICEF Uganda; United Nations Children's Fund.

UWONET- Uganda Women's Network.

