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Conflict and the Intergenerational Transmission of Poverty in Northern Uganda

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*Escaping Poverty Traps:
Connecting the Chronically Poor to Economic Growth.
Washington
26-27 February 2009*



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Overview

- Introduction
 - The assumptions underpinning our research
 - Purpose, rationale and aim
- Context: conflict and insecurity in N Uganda
- Methodology
- Findings
- Policy implications
- How to respond to the challenge





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Introduction: Our assumptions.....

- Conflict and insecurity has driven people deep(er) into poverty
- Education may have supported resilience during conflict and may support bounce-back now
 - ‘Portability’ of human capital assets
- Govt and non govt education policies and programmes fail to address the needs of conflict and insecurity affected populations



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Introduction: Purpose, rationale and aim

- **Purpose:**
 - Explore the relationship between conflict, education and the intergenerational transmission (IGT) of poverty.
- **Rationale:**
 - Understand the long-run impact of conflict on chronic and IGT poverty.
- **Aim:**
 - Contribute to policy debates in Uganda and other post-conflict contexts.

Context: Northern Uganda

- Long-run poverty in N Uganda – lagging region
- Generalised opposition to NRM government
- Conflict = profound shocks
 - Covariant, long duration, sequenced (series, not one-off) and compound (one intersecting with another)
- Overlaid life-cycle, livelihood and other shocks
- Importance of insecurity (Karamajong raids)
- Adverse coping as households reach and pass crucial ‘tipping points’

Context: high poverty in N Uganda, increased Gini despite over decade of poverty reduction

Region	1992	1997	1999	2002	2005
Poverty					
National	56	44	34	38	31
Rural	60	49	37	41	34
Urban	28	17	10	12	14
Central	46	28	20	22	16
Western	53	43	26	31	21
Eastern	59	54	35	46	36
Northern	72	60	64	64	61
Gini					
	0.36	0.35	0.39	0.43	0.41



1997

GRASS THATCHED SCHOOL - COMMUNITY.



Oxfam road

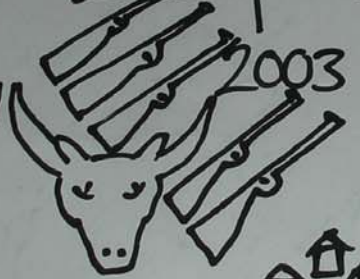
Kijong

1999



2000

2002



2003

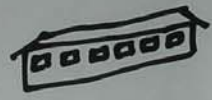
Kijong + LRA



LRA.

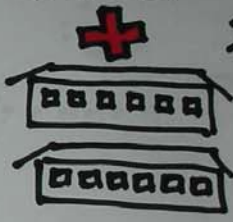
Move to camp

2004



School block

2006



Move to Ongalo

School blocks

CARE health clinic

2007



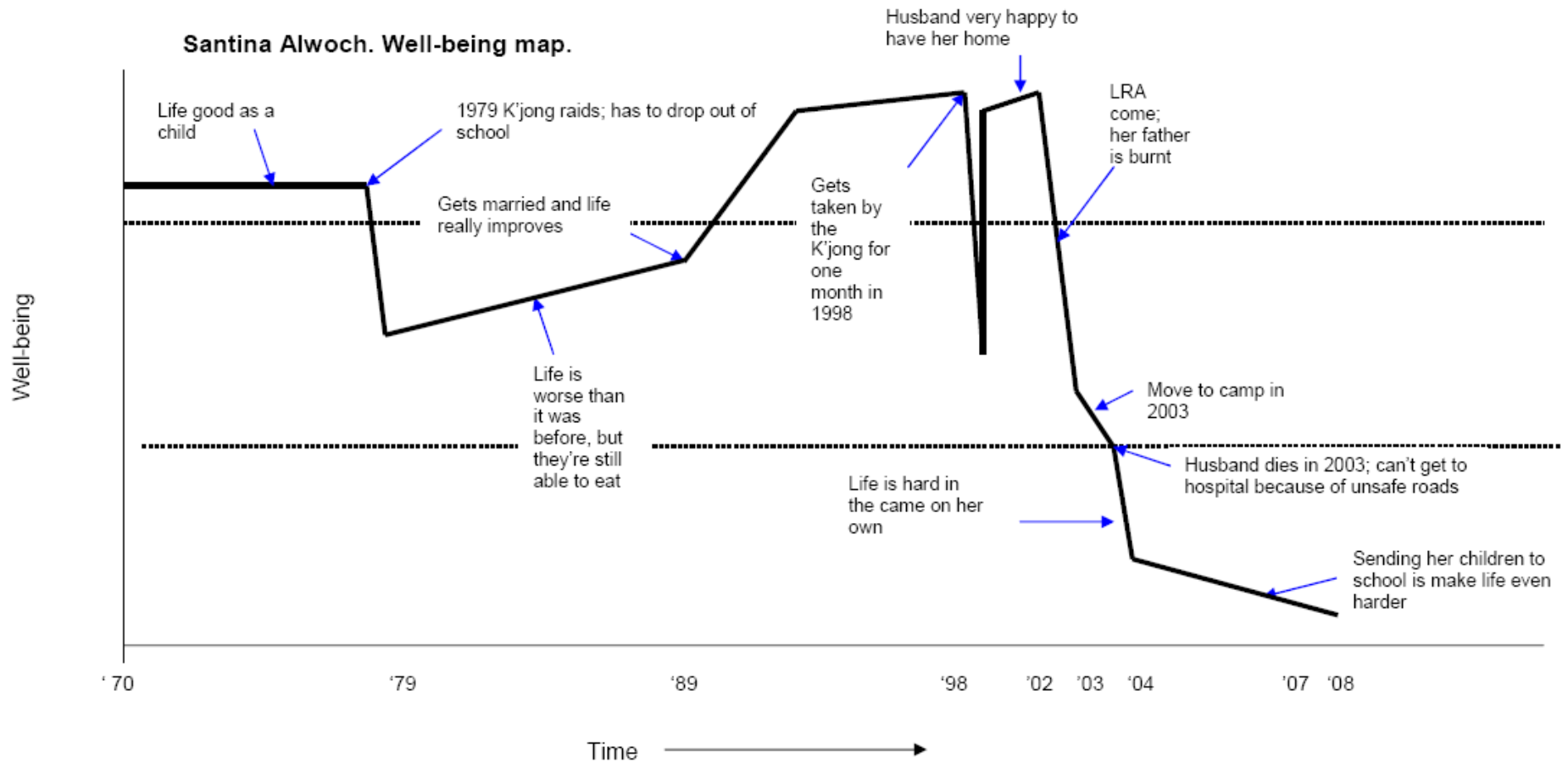
Floods

2008



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Santina Alwoch. Well-being map.







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Methodology

- Partnership approach – in context of 10 year funding stream and international network
- Q-squared methods
 - Qualitative research in Pader and Kaberamaido districts
 - Stakeholder consultation in Kampala, District, Sub-County & Village levels
 - PLA, key informant interviews, life histories
 - Quantitative analysis of Northern Uganda Baseline Survey (and subsequently the panel)



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Findings: poverty

- *Conflict and insecurity in Uganda has limited livelihood options & resulted in deep income poverty*
- Strong evidence to support this – from a range of sources



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Findings: Education and resilience

- *Education is a ‘portable’ asset which helps people stay out of poverty during conflict supports bounce-back post-conflict (resilience)*
- People with education had enhanced livelihood options
 - can diversify livelihoods – confidence to travel, trade (numeracy) and take on leadership roles (e.g. mobiliser for NGOs, LC etc.)
 - reduced risk aversion
 - greater confidence
 - higher incomes and saving
 - increased resilience
 - more able to interact with authorities (write letters)
 - can draw on social networks



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Education and resilience: Some illustrative quotes

- “My education gives me the courage to try new crops.”
- “The educated led an easier life because they were able to cope with the loss of livestock by opting for other businesses as well as adjusting to the use of hand hoes. While others found it hard to cope without their animals, with some resorting to committing suicide, the educated easily coped.”
- “When you are educated you can learn ways to improve your standard of living by having more projects such as buying livestock, easily adopting to new crop varieties, harvesting and marketing produce in Soroti – where you increase your profits by reducing middle men, unlike the uneducated who fear to explore most things.”



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Findings: Education and resilience (2)

- Supports behavioural change
 - value education, so educate their children
 - adopt health seeking behaviour
 - more able to plan
- Opens up employment opportunities and greater returns to labour
 - BUTlots of education is needed before you can get paid employment - depends on min. S4 completion



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Findings: Policies & programmes

- Govt and non govt education policies and programmes fail to address the needs of conflict and insecurity affected populations
- Demand
 - There is strong (unmet) demand for education from parents and youth – based on their observation of ‘winners’
- Access
 - Conflict affected communities have limited capability to pay (livelihoods disrupted, livestock stolen, assets destroyed)
 - Slow rebuilding of public infrastructure
 - Inadequate provision of pre-school/ nursery education
 - Importance of self provisioning and NGO/ UN interventions
 - How is the Peace Recovery & Development Plan changing this?



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Findings: Policies & programmes (2)

- **Quality**
 - UPE appreciated by poor parents – but quality and funding problems
 - Challenging to recruit and retain staff (particularly women)
- **Outcomes**
 - Inadequate provision, drop-out (poverty, quality, interruption), food insecurity and ill-health compromise learning outcomes





unicef



UNICEF
American Pl

10.20.2008



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Policy implications (1)

- Building and maintaining assets is essential to prevent poverty ‘irreversabilities’
 - Helping people be safe, alive and well is a necessary activity in humanitarian crises
 - Must be coupled with building and maintaining assets & capabilities
- ‘Irreversabilities’ mean a life lived in poverty for the individual – and a higher chance of their children being poor
- Education is a ‘portable’ asset
 - crucial for resilience and poverty exits
 - deliver effectively in insecure, conflict & post-conflict contexts



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Policy implications (2)

- Universality isn't enough
 - 'levelling the playing field' requires additional resources/ instruments
- Abrupt transition from relief to 'sustainable development' is difficult
 - Low levels of government capacity (and reach) in conflict-affected communities
 - Humanitarian 'pull-out'
 - E.g. Humanitarian focus on extremely vulnerable in post-conflict transition; little funding for education and early recovery activities



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How to respond to the challenge? (1)

- Good models to replicate (e.g. NRC), but limited coverage
 - Need for ‘catch-up’, basic, non-formal and technical education
- Support parents to keep children in primary school
 - Conditional (unconditional?) cash transfers
 - Maintain & strengthen school feeding programmes
 - Improve the quality primary education
 - Infrastructure (schools, teacher accommodation)
 - Teacher quality
 - Teaching materials
 - Support the rapid roll out of USE
 - Build more secondary schools
 - In the interim....provide merit-based bursaries
 - Enable people to rebuild their asset base, and livelihoods (without this they cannot keep their children in school)
- Provide demand led technical training, basic and non-formal education



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How to respond to the challenge? (2)

- Ensure security and peace-building
 - High perception of on-going risk – “the LRA are still in the bush and the Karamoja still have guns”
- Manage the tricky transition from the humanitarian to development phase
 - Rebuild/ strengthen government structures
 - Extend presence into communities (to replace humanitarian actors) “the community is not used to seeing us” LC5, Pader.
 - Care needed to avoid gaps in provision and falls in well-being
- Grasp window of opportunity
 - If missed, conflict could re-emerge, particularly if the North remains politically, economically and socially marginalised



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