Researching livelihoods and
services affected by conflict

School's out
Why northern Uganda's girls and
boys are not getting an education
and what to do about it

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Cover photo: School children, northern Uganda, Tim Ouillette/Munjoy Hill Media, 2019.

Preface

The Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium (SLRC) aims to generate a stronger evidence base on state-building, service delivery and livelihood recovery in fragile and conflict-affected situations. It began in 2011 with funding from the UK's Department for International Development (DFID), Irish Aid and the European Commission (EC).

Phase I: 2011– 2017
SLRC's research can be separated into two phases. Our first phase was based on three research questions on state legitimacy, state capacity and livelihoods, developed over the course of an intensive one-year inception phase. Findings from the first phase of research were summarised in five synthesis reports produced in 2017 that draw out broad lessons for policy-makers, practitioners and researchers.

Phase II: 2017–2019
Guided by our original research questions on state legitimacy, state capacity, and livelihoods, the second phase of SLRC answers the questions that remain, under three themes:

- Theme 1: What are the underlying reasons for continued livelihood instability in post-conflict recovery situations?
- Theme 2: How does the experience of conflict link to how people experience trust, fairness and expectations of the future as part of their recovery?
- Theme 3: How does service delivery influence the negotiation of state legitimacy?

Theme 1: Livelihoods instability
This paper is one of eight pieces of research from Theme 1 conducted in Afghanistan, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Uganda. The research was conducted by the Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit (AREU), Centre for Poverty Analysis (CEPA - Sri Lanka), Feinstein International Center (FIC, Tufts University - Uganda),

Nepal Institute for Social and Environmental Research (NISER), Overseas Development Institute (ODI) and the Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI - Pakistan). The research lead was Vagisha Gunasekara.

The studies under this theme question currently held assumptions about the nature of exchange and economic behaviour in rural economies. These studies demonstrate that livelihoods in conflict and post-conflict settings are in socially embedded economies - driven by patron-client relationship and noncontractual obligations.

In Afghanistan, we delve into the role of informal borrowing as a buffer in sustaining livelihoods. In Sri Lanka, we examine the suitability of 'entrepreneurship' promotion as a development intervention for people in war-affected areas. The study in Nepal looks at work and livelihood patterns of women in migrant households. The Pakistan study investigates how households access credit, the impact of indebtedness on families, and develops a framework that explains household indebtedness and its impacts. Lastly, the research in Uganda focuses on the internal migration of young people and their experiences with employment, the livelihoods realities of the war-wounded, and how livelihood trajectories of the war-affected influence decisions related to education of young people.

The evidence generated by the studies offers a number of insights into why people in conflict settings can no longer sustain their own lives through direct access to a living wage, why policies and aid interventions aimed at socio-economic recovery fail and the mechanisms people use in order to stay afloat within these economies.

For more information on who we are and what we do, visit: www.securelivelihoods.org/about-slrc

Acknowledgements

Acronyms
and glossary

DFID	Department for International Development
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IYF	International Youth Foundation
LRA	Lord's Resistance Army
ODI	Overseas Development Institute
SLRC	Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium
SWAY	Survey of War Affected Youth
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
UNHCHR	United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
UHRC	Uganda Human Rights Commission
Human capital accumulation	Skills, knowledge or other intangible assets of an individual accrued from education or training
Survival sex/sex for survival	Sexual exchange for money or gifts
Boda boda	A motor cycle taxi

Contents

Executive summary

This working paper is part of the Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium's (SLRC) Uganda research programme. SLRC Uganda explores livelihoods, post-conflict recovery and access to basic services, including education, health care and water, in the two most conflict affected sub-regions, Lango and Acholi, in northern Uganda.

In northern Uganda, active armed conflict disrupted children and young people's access to education from the early 1980s until 2007. Yet the damage done to the infrastructure and human resources that provide education - as well as the long-term harm to people's assets, livelihoods and physical, emotional and spiritual wellbeing - continues to be felt today. The available evidence shows that violent armed conflicts (even those of a lesser magnitude than in Uganda) can have long-lasting negative impacts on individual human capital accumulation, including educational attainment, health outcomes, and labour market opportunities.

This SLRC working paper presents findings from research examining the sharp decrease in girls and boys school attendance that was witnessed between 2013–2018 in northern Uganda. The paper explains why some households withdrew their children from school, while others were able to find ways to send their children to school. The data presented in this study is drawn from a large-scale representative panel survey across Lango and Acholi sub regions, northern Uganda. It also draws upon in-depth qualitative research with a sample of households drawn from the SLRC panel survey.

The study finds that:

- Between 2013 and 2018, primary school attendance declined for girls and boys by approximately 20%.
- Girls have the highest rates of school dropout and failure to regularly attend across upper primary, secondary and tertiary education.
- Levels of education and post-primary transition remain low overall, particularly for girls because of gender inequality and economic hardships.
- Enrolment and attendance decreased for girls after age eight and for boys after age 13.
- Individuals who experienced war injuries, abduction, forced recruitment by the rebels or suffered from other ill health were less likely to continue with their education or afford the schooling for their children.

Overall, we find several factors that explain why some boys and girls in northern Uganda do not attend school today: the multiple, lingering effects of the conflict; weak economic systems, changes to the social fabric, gender inequality, and consideration of the real gains a household can make to their livelihoods in the short-term versus education in the long-term.

1 Introduction

This working paper is part of the Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium (SLRC) Uganda project, which aims to better understand the processes of livelihood recovery, access to basic services and state building following over two decades of conflict in northern Uganda. Previous research conducted for SLRC in Uganda include a representative panel survey of households in Acholi and Lango, conducted in three waves in 2013, 2015 and 2018.

The 2015 panel survey found that early 2015 was a good year for harvests, increased food security, improved access to health care and water, improved satisfaction with educational services, and increased livelihood diversification. However, it was not a good year for children - especially girls - staying in school. When we compare data from wave one (2013) and wave two (2015), we find that there was a significant decline between waves in the proportion of boys and girls that were reported to attend school every day. In general, girls' education appears to be more precarious than boys: if a household increased its livelihood portfolio between the two waves, the frequency of girls' attendance significantly decreased, though the same did not hold true for boys. This finding suggests that households could be maximising girls' labour to take advantage of increased opportunities for livelihood diversification, while sacrificing long-term human capital development for short-term gains. Alternatively, households could be coping with post-conflict volatility by taking on many livelihood activities to fill gaps within the household, removing children from school to work.

Findings from the SLRC panel survey in Uganda on failing school attendance suggest that post-conflict recovery decreases access to education services despite policies that seem to suggest the contrary. Post-conflict development interventions are often driven by the belief that a relatively steady progression of recovery will follow from a growing economy and national and international development interventions. This belief is rooted in a misjudged assumption that overestimates the ability of post-conflict societies to take advantage of increased access to services, such as access to free primary and secondary education. Education is a particularly poignant example of this dilemma since it has a direct and measurable impact on how a society progresses in a post-conflict period. A post-conflict approach that simply focusses on strengthening access to services can have a huge detrimental impact on the ability of a society to recover from conflict. Importantly, the SLRC Uganda panel survey consistently finds a correlation

between higher levels of education attainment of the household head with better household outcomes (i.e., wealth, food security, and access to and quality of basic services, and likelihood of sending a girl to school). Failing to educate children - particularly girls - means that they are more likely to end up in households with low levels of education, perpetuating continued cycles of poverty, and increasing the likelihood that the next generation of children will be undereducated and have limited livelihood opportunities (Marshak et al., 2017).

This study was undertaken to better understand why some households withdrew their children from school, while others were able to keep their children in education, and the link this has with increased livelihood diversification in the post-conflict period. The study sought to highlight some of the necessary factors that make for a more holistic understanding of school access and attendance in Uganda and the long-term implications a lack of education can have on individuals, their households and society in post-conflict settings.

The working paper draws from interviews conducted with households who had withdrawn their children from school, households who kept their children in school and children who had dropped out of school in Acholi and Lango. These interviews highlight some of the factors that affect school attendance in the post-conflict period (from the perspective of the households), beyond increased access to education services. The paper presents findings from qualitative interviews as well as drawing on quantitative data from the three waves of the SLRC Uganda panel survey.

2   Methodology

The data presented in this working paper is drawn from a large-scale, representative panel survey and in-depth qualitative research with a purposefully drawn sample of households from the SLRC panel survey.

SLRC's panel survey was implemented in eight conflict-affected countries, generating sub-regional data with the goal of assessing the long-term impact of conflict on livelihoods and access to services. In Uganda, SLRC used a stratified clustered (sub-counties) sampling strategy to collect information across 80 sub-counties in the Acholi and Lango sub-regions of northern Uganda (Table 1). The sub-counties were randomly selected, and from each sub-county one village was also randomly chosen. In each village approximately 20 households were selected at random so that the results would be representative and statistically significant at the sub-regional level. The same households were surveyed every year with data collection carried out in between January and mid-February in 2013, 2015 and 2018. The analysis accounts for the research design effect. The findings are representative of the entire population of Acholi and Lango sub-regions in northern Uganda.

Table 1: Sample size by year

Wave	Year	Sample size
Wave 1	2013	1,756
Wave 2	2015	1,553
Wave 3	2018	1,506

This working paper also uses qualitative data generated through semi structured in-depth interviews, conducted between September and October 2018 with 40 people. These people were a sub-sample of men and women in households in Acholi and Lango who reported in the SLRC Uganda 2015 panel survey that they either:

- withdrew their older primary- or secondary-aged girls from school while also reporting an increase in livelihood diversification (22 respondents);
- kept their older primary- or secondary-aged girls in school while also reporting an increase in livelihood diversification (15 respondents);
- or were girls who themselves had dropped out of school (three respondents).

We also interviewed seven key informants: the chairperson of a local council, two district political representatives, two district technical staff from educational and community services, a teacher and a non-governmental organisation (NGO) representative.

3 Background

3.1 The conflict in northern Uganda

The conflict between the Government of Uganda and the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) lasted over two decades (1986–2006) in northern Uganda. The conflict resulted in numerous incidences of serious international human rights and humanitarian law violations, including abductions, forced recruitment into the LRA, sexual violence, forced displacement, maiming and killing of innocent civilians, and looting and pillaging. In the Acholi sub-region alone, it is conservatively estimated that 60,000 young people were abducted by the LRA (See Annan et al., 2008; Mazurana et al., 2014). Over 1.8 million people—about 90% of the region's population— were displaced. Displacement cut people off from their primary source of livelihoods – agricultural lands and traditional homesteads, which had a devastating impact on economic livelihoods as well as the physical, social and cultural wellbeing of citizens (UHRC and OHCHR, 2011).

Previous research on this subject has found that the war had a negative impact on children's education. At the height of the conflict, 90% of the schools in Acholi region had closed. To avoid LRA abductions and forced recruitment, more than 45,000 children left their homes each night to sleep in shelters in towns. At least 60,000 young people were abducted by the LRA in Acholi sub region alone. Over 90% of the population in Acholi and 30% of the population of Lango sub-regions were displaced into internally displaced persons' (IDP) camps. In IDP camps, children were taught in classes of over a hundred pupils, as teachers urgently tried to establish a sense of normalcy by offering basic forms of education (Annan and Blattman, 2008). Under such conditions, many young people missed out on education opportunities or failed to learn skills necessary for survival in the post-conflict period (UNHCHR and UHRC, 2011).

Following the failed Juba Peace Talks in 2006 and the subsequent movement of the LRA into the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of Congo and parts of Sudan and South Sudan, relative calm returned to northern Uganda. Camps for displaced people were dismantled and reconstruction efforts began and continue to this day.

Uganda as a whole continues to experience significant gains in poverty reduction, but the north lags behind the rest of the country. Poverty rates in the region, which are over 50%, are double those in the rest of Uganda.

Northern Uganda's Multidimensional Poverty Index,[1] at a staggering 87%, indicates a greater prevalence of acute poverty than any other region in the country (Smith, 2012). The region also has limited educational opportunities and weakened social structures, resulting in high rates of early marriage and childbirth (Schlecht et al., 2013). Northern Uganda has the highest population in the country with no formal education, with two-fifths of working age adults having no formal education (UNDP, 2015). The likelihood of a person not attending school at all remains highest in northern Uganda, especially among females. In 2016, the literacy level in northern Uganda was 48.2% compared to 65.5% on average for the rest of the country (Ibid.). While female youth literacy at the national level in 2012/13 was 71.9 % compared to 82.4 % for male youth, the gender gap in northern Uganda is much wider at 44.1 % for female youth to 73.4 % for male youth (Ibid.). Low levels of education have a significant impact on personal, societal and regional socio-economic development. Studies show that completion of secondary school education or higher, particularly for female headed households, corresponds with increased wealth and better food security (UBoS, 2016; see also Mazurana et al., 2014). Education is crucial for attaining household wealth, wellbeing, human development and human capital.

3.2 The long-term effects of war on young people's education

An emerging body of literature finds that armed conflict negatively impacts educational attainment, with subsequent negative effects on the economic and labour productivity of individuals and households. Conflict negatively impacts schooling for young people in many ways, including: closure or destruction of schools, absence of teachers, recruitment into fighting forces, physical injuries, fear of insecurity or being withdrawn from school to contribute to family livelihoods and income (Akbulut-Yuksel, 2009; Betancourt et al., 2010; Blattman and Annan, 2008; Farhood et al., 2006; Hoge et al., 2006; Justino, 2010; Humphreys and Weinstein, 2004, 2007; Ichino and Winter-Ebmer, 2004; Swiss et al., 1998). The cumulative impact of less and or poorer quality schooling affects young people's human capital accumulation and labour market participation later in life.

Studies of conflict's impact on educational attainment, especially in developed economies (see Ichino and

Winter-Ebmer, 2004; Akbulut-Yuksel, 2009), emphasise macro-level structural factors, including the destruction of school infrastructures, absence of teachers, limited access to school, fighting, and recruitment into fighting forces. While these factors are important, they do not tell us much about individual, family and broader social economic contexts prior, during and after conflict. They also do not say much about conflict's actual impact on educational attainment. Additionally, while we have an emerging understanding of conflict's impact at the micro-level, we lack understanding of the medium to long term impacts of conflict (Akresh and De Walque, 2008; Blattman and Annan, 2010; Justino, 2011; Swiss et al., 1998).

Akresh and de Walque's (2008) study of Rwanda found an 18.3% decline in the average years of education among children exposed to the genocide, with the worst effect being on non-poor male individuals (i.e. those who otherwise would have been most likely to access schooling). This result was because female schooling outcomes were lower initially and thus showed less of a decrease after the genocide (Arkesh and de Walque, 2008:11–12). In Guatemala, Chamarbagwala and Morán (2011) found a strong negative effect of the war on the education attainment of rural Mayan males and females. They found that the war in Guatemala reinforced poverty and social exclusion for the most vulnerable groups. Males and females who were of school-going age during the period reported the highest levels of human rights violations.

In northern Uganda, the Survey of War Affected Youth (SWAY) found that youth who were forcibly abducted into the LRA faced a larger gap in education outcomes, employment in skilled labour and wages compared to their counterparts who were not abducted. They were also less likely to return to school after being held captive. Longer periods of abduction had a more severe impact on education, but the impact decreased the longer someone had been free for, as some male youth eventually returned to school (Annan et al., 2011:13; Blattman, 2009).

The SWAY study also found that both non-abducted and formerly abducted female young people had worse educational outcomes compared to their male counterparts. Formerly abducted female youth were less likely to resume school after abduction due to the

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1 The Multidimensional Poverty Index seeks to measure acute poverty and complements income-based poverty measures by using indicators for health, education and living standards to investigate the multiple deprivations people face simultaneously.

lack of education and skills development opportunities available to them. Both formerly abducted and non-abducted female youth were more likely to marry at an early age, bear children, and drop out of school (Annan et al., 2011:15–16). Moreover, the research found that the combination of bearing children due to rape during abduction, being held captive for longer and being released after the age of 18 made it significantly (at 1%) less likely for formerly abducted female youth to return to school compared to those who returned from captivity without children. The research found that only about 10% of girls who became mothers because of rape while being held captive returned to school upon their release (Annan et al., 2011:17).

Research by Atim et al. (forthcoming) in northern Uganda found that armed conflict – and experiencing war crimes[2] – negatively impacts educational attainment and the subsequent economic and labour productivity of individuals. They find that male and female youth who experienced war crimes were significantly (at 1%) less likely to enroll in and complete school compared to other war-affected youth (Figure 1).

The greater the length of time a young person was held captive by rebel forces, the greater the likelihood they would not return to school. In contrast to Blattman

and Annan (2008), Atim et al. (forthcoming) finds that the length of time since being held captive does not correspond to youth regaining lost education. Instead, they find that female youth's education and post-primary school transition rate remains low overall, regardless of their experience of war crimes. The combination of gender and experience of war crimes presents unique challenges to educational attainment for girls in post-conflict periods.

Children in northern Uganda are out of school not solely because of wartime experiences. While it did not consider experiences of the war, a 2014 survey by UNICEF of children in northern Uganda who were out of school suggested several reasons why they were not in school: poverty, food insecurity and the need for the children's labour to contribute to the household (Mbabazi Mpyangu et al., 2014). Distance from school, having a disability and having to repeat grades were also important factors. For girls, menstruation, early marriage and domestic violence that led to parental separation also contributed to their removal from school. Teachers arriving late or not at all, overcrowding in classrooms, and abuse by teachers and peers were also cited as reasons children dropped out of school. Finally, both children and adults were unconvinced that, given the hardship and demands in their lives, school

Figure 1: Education and experience of war crimes among youth in northern Uganda
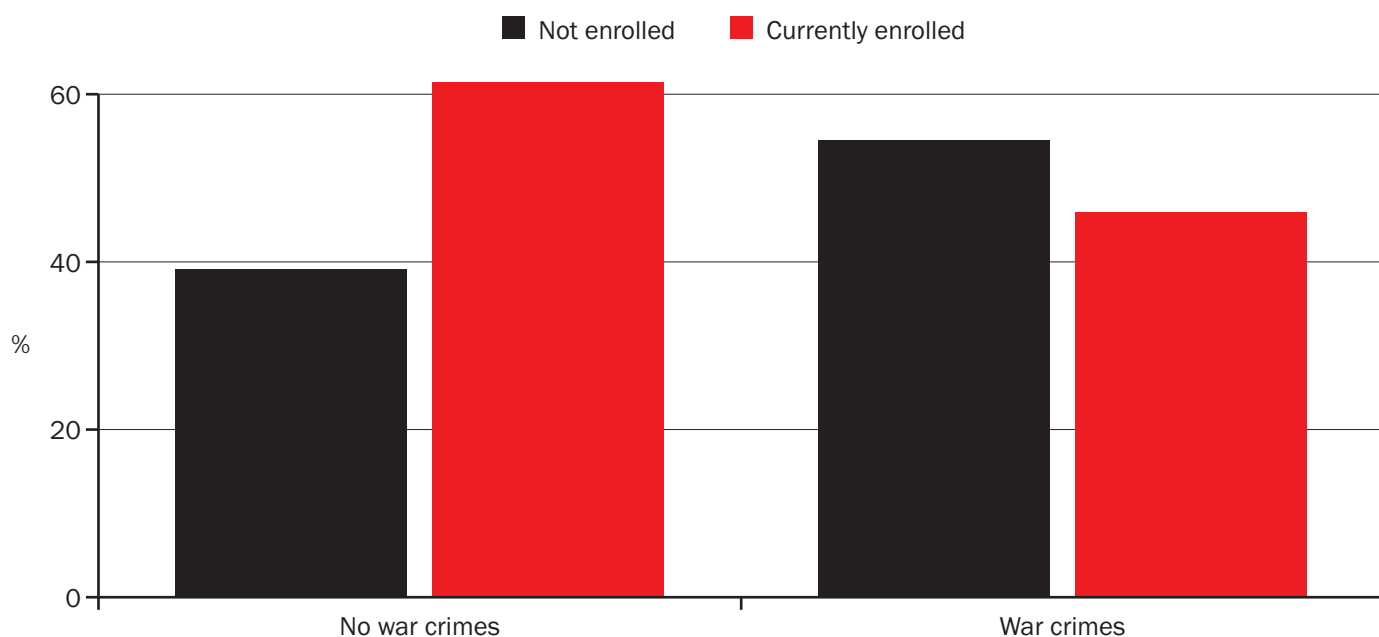
Source: author's own.

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2   The authors designed the SLRC Uganda survey to record the following as experiences of war crimes when perpetrated against civilians by belligerents: killing, attempted murder, abduction, forced recruitment, forced disappearance, severe beating or torture, deliberate immolation, sexual violence (which included rape, forced marriage, forced pregnancy and childbearing, sexual enslavement), being forced to kill or seriously injure another person, and destruction or looting of property.

was worth the resources it took to attend (Mbabazi Mpyangu et al., 2014). These reasons for children not attending school are common throughout developing countries (World Bank, 2018). Importantly, in locations like northern Uganda, they are compounded by the effects of armed conflict, as we discuss in this paper.

3.3   The state of education in northern Uganda

The SLRC Uganda research on children and education documented the prevalence of children enrolled and attending school between 2013–2018. All data was disaggregated by gender, which enabled the team to identify differences between girls and boys as well as in gender and age sets, and what correlated to these differences.

Notably, the research was undertaken in a context where most children currently in school are either directly war-affected or being raised in households that are war-affected. Young people born before 1999 or so would have childhood memories of the height of the war in 2002. But most young people in primary school today are likely to have been born after official cessation of hostilities in 2006. This means that young people at the time of the SRLC Uganda research project (2013–2018) may not have experienced the height of the conflict but continue to live with the long-term impacts that the conflict had on their households.

In 1997 the Government of Uganda introduced free primary education under the Universal Primary Education programme. This was followed by the introduction of the Universal Secondary Education programme in 2007, which increased the access and enrolment of secondary education across the country. Yet in northern Uganda, the war that raged until 2006 prevented most from accessing education. In 2007, the year the secondary education programme was introduced, many people were just returning home from displacement camps to find their houses destroyed and their farmland returned to bush.

Since then, gross primary school enrolment in northern Uganda has increased from 2.7 million in 2005/06 to 4.8 million in 2012–2013. In the same time-period, secondary school enrolment also increased by 11% in northern Uganda, albeit with many more males than females enrolled. The rise in enrolment is attributed to the increased number of government primary

and secondary schools in northern Uganda and the introduction of the Universal Secondary Education programme (UNDP, 2015).

While overall primary school enrolment has increased over the last eight years due to the universalisation of primary education across Uganda, the costs associated with attending school still result in irregular attendance and dropouts. Primary-to-secondary school transition rates remain low countrywide, and in northern Uganda this is exacerbated by the low coverage of public secondary schools in rural areas. At the same time, inferior quality education – reflected by poor outcomes in numeracy and literacy – lowers the level of family investment in education in northern Uganda (UNDP, 2015).

A 2014 UNICEF survey found that over one-third of children in northern Uganda said they had no interest in attending school. The children cited reasons for this such as the need to work in their households, the lack of money their parents had to send them to school and overcrowding in the schools as the main reasons that they no longer felt it was useful to attend school (Mbabazi Mpyangu et al., 2014).

The relevance of the school curriculum has also been criticised for placing a heavy emphasis on theory over the practical skills necessary to prepare students for adult life and entering the job market (IYF, 2011). While previously negative attitudes towards training for vocational skills are changing, with many young people enrolled in such courses, these pursuits are questioned by some as to their relevance to the job market (Bidwell et al., 2008; International Alert, 2013). Many of those who have undertaken vocational training are unable to utilise their skills because they are still not seen as employable and are not well-matched with the job market, in part, due to saturation of the labour market and poor-quality training that does not prepare them for the job market (IYF, 2011; Bidwell et al., 2008; Blattman et al. 2014).

Today, the Government of Uganda and its partners are attempting to rebuild northern Uganda's educational infrastructure, while at the same time the people are trying to rebuild their livelihoods and assets following 20 years of violence. Our research presents data and analysis on the state of educational attendance in northern Uganda and the factors that contribute to children's attendance and enrolment rates.

4 Key findings

4.1 School attendance dropped sharply between 2013–2018

The SLRC Uganda panel survey found that early 2015 was a good year for harvests, food security, access to healthcare, access to water, satisfaction with educational services and increased livelihood diversification. Yet it was not a good year for children, especially girls, remaining in school (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Girls and boys school attendance (every day) (2013, 2015, 2018)
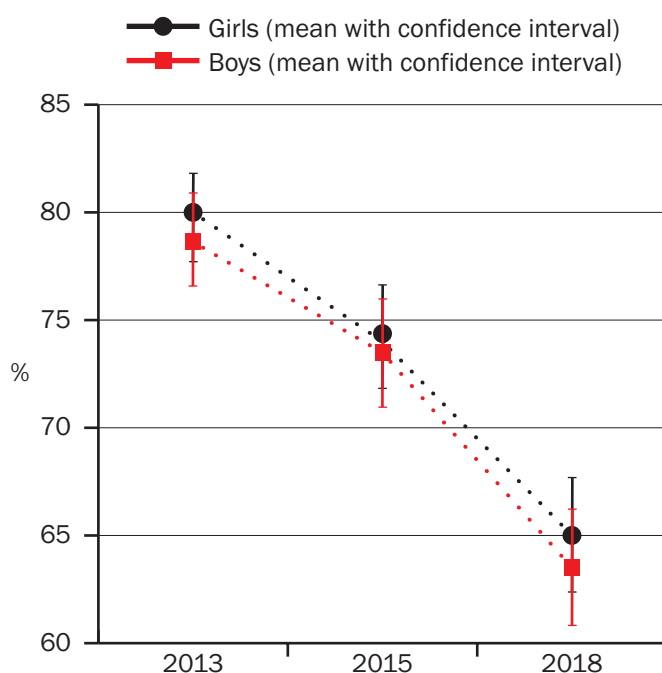
Source: author's own.

Comparing panel survey data from wave one (2013) and wave two (2015), there was a significant decline in the proportion of boys and girls that were reported to be attending school every day. In general, girls' education was more likely to be sacrificed. When a household took on more livelihood activities between 2013–2015, girls' school attendance significantly decreased.

Notably, the same did not hold true for boys. This finding contradicts the expectation that as families recover, rebuild and expand their livelihoods, their ability to support their children in attending school would increase. In 2018, we found that enrolment in school starts to rapidly drop off at around eight years of age for girls and 13 years of age for boys (Figure 3). Markedly, more girls than boys miss school or stop attending school at every point of data collection.

Figure 3: Child enrolment in school by age and gender in 2018

Male

Female
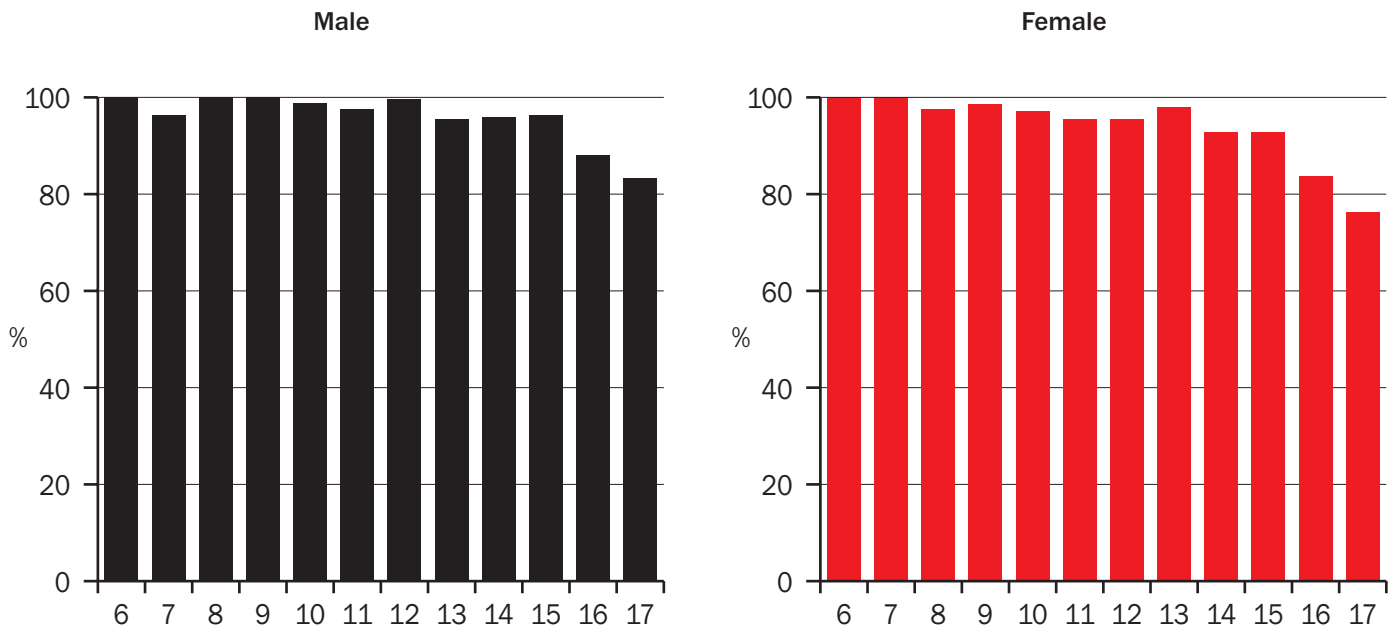
Source: author's own.

We found that the longer it took girls to travel to school, the less likely they were to attend. The impact of travel time did not influence school attendance for boys. This finding could partly be the result of local practice that confines young adolescent girls to the domestic realm, while boys are more involved in public life – increasing their opportunity and chances to attend school.

It is difficult to see what might change these trends. 2018 – a year with significantly better food security compared to 2015 – again witnessed a decrease in school attendance for both girls and boys (Figure 4). Also, school attendance for both boys and girls decreased as household livelihood diversification increased (Figure 3). This shows that the more

Figure 4: Percentage of children attending school (every day) by household livelihood diversification
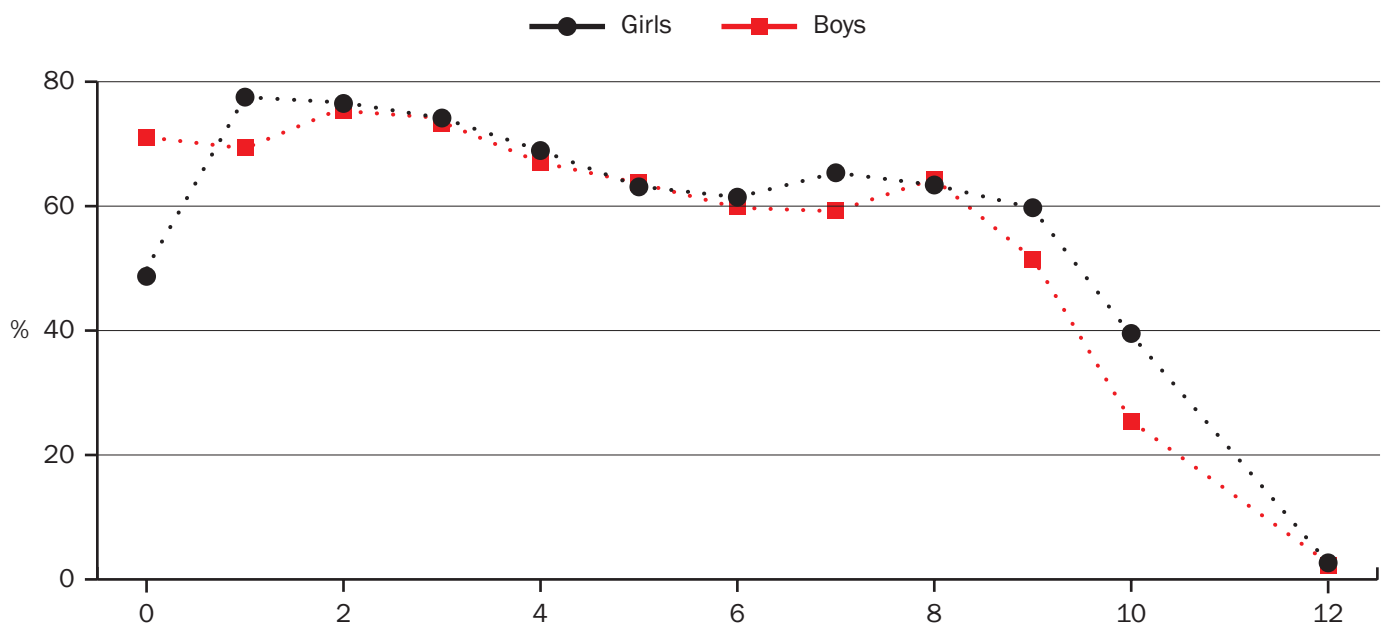
Source: author's own.

households diversified their incomes, the less likely they were able to send their children to school.

This points to a dramatic chain of consequences: failure to progress beyond primary school has detrimental effects on young people. Throughout our study, we found that higher education levels for the household head correlates with members of that household having more assets and increased wealth, better food security, better access to - and better quality of - educational services, improved access to healthcare and better access to clean water. For those households whose head had less education, the opposite correlation held true (Mazurana et al., 2014).

4.2 Why are households not keeping their girls and boys in school?

The qualitative research found that a range of factors contributed to girls and boys decreasing their attendance at school or dropping out altogether. The reductions in school attendance were driven by a combination of factors: individual, family, school and socioeconomic. These factors are all underpinned and influenced by more than 20 years of war as we discuss below.

4.2.1 The tension between income-levels and education fees

Even though government-aided primary and secondary education in Uganda are supposedly free, there are still associated costs that households must cover, including uniforms, examination fees, building funds (that go to the construction of housing for teachers), school materials, food that each child is required to donate to the school and school lunches. In schools with teachers who are not yet confirmed on the government's payroll, parents may also have to contribute towards teachers' pay. Primary school costs can be anywhere between UGX 15,000–100,000 ($4–$27)[3] per term, per child. Factoring in the cost of learning materials, these figures are even higher. UGX 100,000 per term could amount to a poor household's entire savings for that same period (Levine, 2016). The cost of secondary school is much higher than primary school, ranging from UGX 150,000–500,000 ($40–$135), which very few households can afford. This means that only a few respondents' children had managed to reach O-level education and

above; education levels that come with real benefits to livelihoods, food security, assets and access to basic services (Mazurana et al., 2014). These costs rendered it hard for households to afford to send their children to school, especially at secondary and tertiary levels.

Several factors emerged from the study that did affect the ability of households to keep their children in school. Many respondents from rural households, who are predominantly farmers (more than 80% of the population in Uganda), noted that income earned from the sale of crop produce each season is not enough to cover the costs of an entire year of schooling for all the household's children, while meeting other household needs. The loss of livestock and ploughs that would make large scale production possible —most often due to war-related looting or distress sales of assets—further complicates the ability of households to produce a surplus that could be sold to generate income to put towards their children's schooling. Additionally, weather variance and associated crop failure was another important factor that respondents noted. Even when harvests were good, the sales of crops often did not generate enough profit for poor parents to afford to send their children to school. With limited incomes, most families use their available resources to meet their immediate family needs and do not prioritise the education of their children.

In some cases, households resorted to the sale of the only remaining productive household assets such as land and livestock to finance the schooling of their children. The use of productive resources was especially common to fund secondary and tertiary education because of the high costs involved. This was used as a last resort in households that had no other sources of income to fall back on to support the schooling of their children. In one household, a grandmother looking after her six grandchildren had mortgaged four of her gardens and sold one piece of land to earn enough money to send her grandchildren to school. She explained:

I sold land for UGX 8,000,000 ($2,162) so that I could send one of them to university. But I have also mortgaged four of my gardens to get loans with the hope that I would repay them and get back my gardens. But I haven't recovered the gardens yet.[4]

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3   1 USD = UGX 3,700. All subsequent conversions in this paper use this exchange rate. https://www.bou.or.ug/bou/collateral/interback_forms/2018/Dec/MAJOR_31-Dec-2018.html. Accessed on 31st Dec 2018.

4   Interview, Lira District, 2 October 2018.

While selling off productive resources seems like a viable short-term strategy to enable households to send children to school, the long-term cost on the household are extremely heavy. By losing their main productive resource – land or livestock - such households become poorer in the long-term. Moreover, with the loss of vital resources, such households are unable to pass on resources as inheritance or to send their own children to school. The effects of these decisions can impact future generations of the same households.

Other factors that affected the schooling of children included the loss of one or both parents, coming from a single-parent household and large family size. Having a large family made it harder for households to afford to school all their children. In some cases, parents withdrew their children from school during part of the year until they secured enough money to enable them to attend again. Some children also spent a year out of school working to save enough money to attend school. One of the parents we interviewed explained:

> *One of my sons finished senior four and shouldn't be home right now. He wanted to train as a driver. But we have to wait for another son who is doing vocational skills training to finish his course in December 2018. We can't afford to have both of them in school at the same time.[5]*

Due to the high cost of paying school fees for several children at once, households prioritised which of their children should attend school. In most cases, boys' education was prioritised over girls' education.

In the event of the death of one or both parents, the surviving parent (in most cases the mother) was unable to fill the earning gap created by the death, increasing the likelihood that children would have to drop out of school. Respondents noted that the long period of conflict, resulting impoverishment (stripping of assets; land and livestock) and social/cultural changes weakened the extended social networks that cared for its vulnerable members as in the past - further compounding the situation (Mallet et al., 2016; Mazurana et al., 2014). Under such conditions, and in the absence of any government assistance, when immediate needs are barely (or not at all) met, it is nearly impossible for families to prioritise the education of their children and extended families. For example, in one of

the households we interviewed there were six children - four of whom had been enrolled in school. However, by the time we met them they had all dropped out because their mother, a widow, was unable to afford their school fees. As one of the children explained:

> *I stopped [attending school] in primary five in the second term of 2018 because there was no money to pay the fees. We are six children in the household, but two are still young and four of us were going to school. But right now, none of us are going to school because there is no money.[6]*

The children had dropped out of school to perform chores and agricultural work in support of their household. In some cases, young girls married at an early age, while young boys took over the head of their households – becoming responsible for bringing in the household's income.

It is likely that when households experience greater shocks and volatility to their livelihoods, the additional coping strategies that they employ in response negatively impact their children's school attendance - due both to lack of funds and the need to provide labour in support of the household. This contrasts with the expectation that most households engaged in diverse livelihood strategies are better off or secure, thus more likely to have their children stay in school. At the same time, we find that some households who managed to keep their children in school engaged in multiple livelihood activities, including; farming, petty trade, brewing, baking, causal labour, exploitation and sale of bush products (charcoal, firewood, building poles) and taking credit. Other households sold valuable household assets, including land and livestock, to pay for their children's education. While livelihood diversification remains an important way for some households to keep their children in school, in some households, such strategies affected the schooling of children.

Furthermore, we found that some parents negotiated with school administrators to give them a flexible timeframe within which to meet the required school tuition payments without disrupting their children's schooling. There were also some cases of extended family members supporting the schooling of younger relatives by paying school fees. In such situations, the household would provide the remaining school fees. In

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5   Interview, Kole District, 28 September 2018.

6   Interview, Kole District, 28 September 2018.

most cases, extended family support was often delayed, limited and not sustained. This negatively affected the regular schooling of children and once support stopped, sometimes led to children dropping out of school.

These finding suggest the need for a holistic understanding of household (and broader social) conditions, beyond increased access to services in the post-conflict period, to determine whether households can take advantage of the increased services and opportunities to send their children to school.

4.2.2 The link between the changing social fabric, norms and education

Changes to the social fabric[7] and norms were related to: the traditional role of men as household heads; the expected roles and responsibility of children within the households; the importance of communal parenting and guidance; living up to acceptable behaviours and values of the community. In the study, changes to the social fabric and link with education were related to: injuries and ill health of household head and/or their children, peer pressure and associated risks, loss of communal values of parenting and guidance, the inability of parents to fulfill their role within the household, in part, due to alcoholism, and deteriorating behaviors of children (from acceptable ways of life of their community) – which risks the future of their community.

In households in which the head of household experienced an injury (often related to the war), their ability to send their children to school was reduced. Earlier SLRC Uganda research found that over a third of all disabilities in northern Uganda are due to war violence (Mazurana et al., 2014). Children from these households are more likely to drop out of school. In Kitgum district, one of the households with a war-injured head had removed all three of their children from school to work. Their decision to do so was partly informed by their ill health, which had led to the household becoming poorer.[8] Most of these household heads expressed that, due to their poor physical health, their productivity had reduced. As a result, they are unable to farm enough land to sustain the household. In most cases, they spend months without engaging in any productive activity for the sustenance of their household. The

little money they do make is spent on pain medication and food. In such situations, children's schooling is suspended or altogether terminated.

The health of children themselves also affected their attendance. Some children dropped out of school due to poor health or were removed from school. In some cases, their withdrawal helped free up resources that the household then used to fund the schooling of their uninjured children. Children who were wounded in war-related violence, particularly those who had been burned, were more likely than their non-wounded counterparts to be out of school (Mazurana et al., 2014). They were also less likely to proceed to secondary school. Some children also reported suffering severe and constant headaches that affected their learning, causing them to miss school and in some cases to drop out. There were a few accounts of children dropping out because they were either epileptic or suffering from nodding syndrome, especially in Acholi sub-region. In all these cases, their parents couldn't afford or access the required medical treatment to enable their children to regain their health and continue with their schooling.

Negative peer pressure played a role in compromising the education of girls and boys. The desire to acquire status by acquiring things that their counterparts possessed, but which they would not be able to get in school drove some young people to leave school. Some respondents suggested that most young people today are impatient and prefer quick fixes, with immediate returns and improvements to their situation. They were perceived by such respondents to want work that is quick to pay, but not stable or sustainable. For example, some young people reportedly worked as *boda boda*[9] taxi operators or moved to find work in towns and cities in areas of work that they thought they could earn money quickly and as such, gain status amongst their peers. This behaviour can be linked to the rise in technology, globalisation and consumerism. It is increasingly easy for young people to communicate with each other and see what their friends own or are doing. Studies have shown that peer pressure drive young people to engage in informal work, including sexual transactions and sex work, to acquire luxury goods and to attain the symbols of modernity and class (Chatterij et al., 2005; Nyanzi et al., 2001).

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7   Social fabric is the relationship and connection that bonds people together as part of the common thread of society as a whole. The shared bond creates a culturally rich and socially cohesive community.

8   Interview, Kitgum District, 2 October 2018.

9   *Boba boda* is motor cycle taxi. They are mainly driven by young men in urban areas, although it is becoming common in most rural areas.

In nearly all villages where this study was conducted, most parents were concerned with the deteriorating behaviour of young people, which was linked to recreational activities like sports betting/gambling, discos and cinemas. These forms of entertainment were claimed to be contributing to a decline in school attendance. For example, some respondents reported that their older children would sneak out to discos late at night while their parents slept, which badly affected their school attendance and performance. Gambling and betting resulted in young people losing funds that they otherwise would have used to attend school.

In addition, nearly all parents interviewed noted the tensions and difficulties associated with parenting and disciplining their children. They attributed this to the loss of communal parenting and guidance that diminished with displacement, and to broader changes to the social and economic context of their communities during the war. They believe that the decline of these communal forms of guidance, coupled with impoverishment caused by the conflict, has rendered parents incapable of controlling, guiding and disciplining their children. At the same time, young people are unable to maintain their traditional responsibilities, moral obligations and dependence on familial social structures (Baines and Rosenoff Gauvin, 2014). The finding suggests that young people have lost the incentive to listen, respect and adhere to the authority and guidance of their elders, contributing to the levels of school dropout rates we see today and behaviours that will affect the future of young people, their households and society.

Most respondents also noted that a high level of alcohol consumption in the community has affected the schooling and dropout rates of girls and boys. In some cases, parents reportedly spent money meant for their children's schooling on alcohol. Similarly, some young boys and girls were reportedly heavily dependent on alcohol, which affected their ability to continue with school. Young people engaged in alcohol use were also reportedly unable to engage constructively in their families and communities. In conflict and post-conflict contexts, including northern Uganda, increased alcohol use, especially among men, is linked to their struggle to cope with emasculation and war trauma (Ahikire et al., 2012; Dolan, 2002; Carlson and Mazurana, 2006).

The changes to the social fabric have an impact on the education of boys and girls in northern Uganda, but what is more important, is the long-term implication that the current lack of education presents for the future. Without the requisite education level or skill (we know from previous SLRC study that level of education influences household wellbeing), they are likely to remain trapped in poverty, with possible generational effects.

4.2.3 The brakes that are being put on social and economic change by prioritising boys' education over girls'

We found that girls are more likely than boys to be absent from school and to drop out altogether. Boys' education continues to be valued more than educational opportunities for girls. Some parents even considered the education of girls to be 'a waste'. Some interviews felt that a married woman is only valuable to her marital house and thus her education would be a needless drain of household resources. Some argued that due to the increased bride price for educated girls, and the fact that educated girls are often less subservient and more aware of their rights, an educated girl was unlikely to be married. Having a daughter who is unmarried is widely believed to bring shame on a family. It can also lead to tensions between family members regarding the selection of rightful heirs to land and other assets, which are traditionally passed onto boys. Thus, some families saw it as beneficial to withdraw their daughters from school, using their labour at home and marrying them off at an earlier age. The choices and decisions households make point to the different ways in which they manage risk in the short- and long-term, and how they plan for their future.

Moreover, puberty, early sexual relations, high rates of early pregnancy, child birth and marriage are also driving factors for girls missing and leaving school (as discussed below). While the rates of girls' and boys' enrollment in primary school are almost equal, from the age of eight far fewer girls regularly attend school compared to boys of the same age.

For some girls, reaching puberty causes them to feel uncomfortable with the changes that occur to their bodies. This can lead them to miss school, fall behind and eventually drop out. One of the girls interviewed in the qualitative study who had dropped out of school following an early pregnancy, explained:

> *Girl: Some parents can't afford to provide for their girl children other requirements that can make them stay in school comfortably.*

> *Interviewer: Like what?*

Girl: Pads and knickers, because if you don't have them, then you have to stay at home during that time of the month and this can make you lag behind. So, some girls just stay out of school completely.[10]

Once out of school, difficult conditions such as lack of access to land, inability to provide for oneself, and harassments in the family forced some girls into early marriage, while others left home at an early age with the hope of a better life.

Prolonged displacement, the loss of livestock and the loss of access to land neutralised the control and power held by elders in northern Uganda. Previously, elders were able to exercise this authority to maintain roles as respected household heads and to guide and supervise young people, but their authority here has been diminished. Early and premarital sexual relationships have proliferated, with a corresponding increase in pregnancies and childbirth in the region, a result of the conflict's disruption of the social system (Baines and Rosenoff Gauvin, 2014; UNDP, 2015). According to Henrich and Ntenga (2016), northern Uganda has the highest rate of child marriage in the country, with 59% of women between the ages of 20 and 24 reporting that they were married before turning 18. Similarly, the International Youth Foundation (IYF) found that 46% of female youth were married by age 18 compared to only 7% of male youth (IYF, 2011). A study by UNDP (2015) shows that in northern Uganda, adolescent fertility rates for women aged 15–19 years were at their highest by the end of the conflict in 2006, with 183 births per 1,000 women compared to 163 per 1,000 women for the rest of the country. This situation is attributable to the impoverishment and disruption of social systems, parental oversight and guidance during the conflict, rendering it hard for parents to properly supervise children and impart morals and limits around sexual behavior. The study further notes that high rates of teenage pregnancy are the main cause of low school retention and completion among girls in northern Uganda (UNDP, 2015:57). In one household we interviewed, three of their daughters had dropped out at year six due to early pregnancy, marriage or elopement.

Girls become sexually active early in Uganda and often experience sex against their will. According to a national study on youth in Uganda carried out by the IYF, by 18 years of age 62% of female youth and 48% of male youth have had their first sexual encounter. Of these, 26% of female youth and 74% of male youth reported that they engaged in high-risk sexual behaviour including transactional sex, cross-generational sex, sex for survival, extra-marital sex, non-consensual sex and commercial sex for survival (IYF, 2011). IYF reports that 25% of young women's first sexual encounters were forced, while another 56% had experienced some form of physical violence during sex (IYF, 2011).

In 2015, UNDP reported that the HIV/AIDS prevalence among women in northern Uganda of 10.1% is both higher than that of their male counterparts and higher than the national average of 8.3%. The higher HIV/AIDS prevalence among northern Ugandan women is attributed to displacement during the conflict, where girls and young women were exposed to sexual and gender-based violence including rape, sexual exploitation, transactional sex and survival sex. IYF researchers also found that only 11% of female youth reported using modern contraception, exposing them to the risks of unwanted pregnancies and sexually-transmitted diseases including HIV/AIDs. The lack of youth-friendly and available reproductive health services further compounds the challenge of addressing the sexual and reproductive health needs of young people in the country (IYF, 2011). Little or no sex education and the lack of reproductive health services for young people in most of Uganda contribute to high rates of early pregnancy.

A 2013 study by UNICEF and the Ugandan Ministry of Education drew attention to the widespread problem of the sexual abuse of primary and secondary students by their teachers and peers. The study defined sexual abuse as sexual touching, kissing, and penetrative sex by either teachers or peers. In a study of 40 primary schools and 3,121 primary school students, 77.7% of the sample reported that they had experienced sexual abuse at school. In 575 students surveyed across ten secondary schools, 82% reported that they had experienced sexual abuse at school. The sexual abuse of female students in primary school, and into secondary school, is an important factor behind girls being absent from, and dropping out of, school (UNICEF, 2013) In our qualitative research, respondents also reported the use of harsh corporal punishment by teachers in most schools. They stated that violence by teachers against students was a big disincentive for children to attend school and was increasing dropout rates among older children.

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10   Interview, Lira District, 2 October 2018.

Importantly, women respondents argued that education has the potential to enhance the social and economic value of women. They believe that educated women are treated more equally within their household, as well as being more respected by their family and community. Furthermore, educated women were viewed as able to maintain their own independence - caring and providing for their own households in the absence of a male breadwinner. This is a common reality in northern Uganda, which has the highest number of female-headed households in the country (UBoS, 2016). The SLRC Uganda survey panel data clearly demonstrates the significant link between household heads' level of education and their wealth, assets, access to services and food security. Furthermore, female headed households require a higher level of education (A-level and above) to positively impact their household's wellbeing. Delaying girls' education in the present poses future social and economic consequences for these individuals, their households and the wider social fabric.

4.2.4   Weighing up the costs: short-term livelihoods gains versus long-term benefits of education

The study found that some parents were reluctant to, and even uninterested in, investing in the education of their children, including some respondents who could afford to send their children to school but chose not to. Instead, they prioritised using their resources and their children's labour to meet other needs. Respondents linked low interest in education with their lack of exposure to alternative ways of living and the fact that they saw few livelihood possibilities beyond life in the villages. Most villages have few, if any, residents who are highly educated and have well-paying jobs who can serve as role models for younger people. At the same time, many young people migrate to larger towns in northern Uganda or elsewhere in Uganda looking for economic opportunities. Most of the job opportunities these migrants find require minimal, if any, education (Stites et al., 2018).

Because of the high cost and heavy investment required for children's education, respondents also noted that the rate of return is very low. High rates of under-employment and unemployment in the country present challenges to realising the real value of education both for the individual and their household.

Even individuals with reasonable levels of education (O-level and above) often struggle to find decent work in urban areas and return to their villages with little to show for the investment that has been made to their education (Mallet and Atim, 2014). Consequently, some parents and young people no longer see the value of finishing school; coupled with the hardship and demands of everyday life, school was not seen as worth the resources and efforts required. Instead, limited resources are directed to short-term household gains, while education is delayed.

Even though some of the respondents were struggling economically, many wanted to give their children an education to improve both their children's lives and the wellbeing of their households. They perceived the education of their children as an opportunity to break out of poverty and find a more prosperous and brighter future. Some parents who were not successful in their education wanted their children to fulfill their unrealised dream of getting an education. These parents invested most in their children's education as compared with other respondents. They believed that an educated child could help to lift them out of poverty and bring status to the family.

An important finding from the qualitative data is that households who kept their children in school were motivated to do so by having a positive role model – most notably, another educated family member. Households in which a family member or household head was educated and working outside of agriculture were more likely to value the education of their children. One respondent noted that, because her husband is a teacher, 'It would look bad and be shameful if our own children were not educated.'[11] Most households with educated family or friends held similar opinions. A few households that could afford to had sent their children to private boarding schools, usually at great cost and located in urban areas, where they hoped their children would receive a better education.

Interaction with educated people was another important motivating factor for households to keep their children in school. Some respondents spoke fondly of successful distant neighbors or people from their village who hold high office in government or respected organisations. These individuals were educated and now serve as role models, motivating others to educate their children.

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11   Interview, Kole District, 28 September 2018.

One father we interviewed was inspired by the women leaders in his district. He used them as examples to inspire his girls to study hard at school. He explained:

We give the example of our woman member of parliament ... so my children say they must study to be like Santa Alum Ogwang, our woman member of parliament. Another example is that of the Resident District Commissioner for Oyam [district], Madam Gillian Akullu Omara. She likes coming to the village here to teach people. So we like giving her as an example that if a girl studies hard she can grow up and be like Madam Gillian who is leading Oyam [district] very well.[12]

There was also recognition of the important role social relationships could play in boosting individual aspirations -influencing the choices, behaviour and life outcomes of students. These social connections can also provide job opportunities in the future. Role models inspire parents and young people to work hard towards their life goals, encouraging them to make the necessary investments to achieve these goals. The presence of female role models is particularly important for boosting the self-esteem, determination and confidence of girls in northern Uganda, yet we also found it to be a rare thing among most rural households (Bezu, 2018; Pierson, 2013).

Respondents also discussed their perception that government-aided schools in rural areas were of poor quality. They noted that the schools had few teachers, lacked basic infrastructure, had high teacher-to-pupil ratios, and high rates of teacher absenteeism, all of which badly affected student performance. Additionally, schools are located further away from students in rural areas. As a result, parents are more likely to wait until their children are older before sending them to school so that they can walk to school unattended. The combination of these conditions results in some children starting school when they are much older than their classmates, which they may find embarrassing. Increased absenteeism means children end up repeating classes. As one parent explained, 'My girl wasn't performing well. She had repeated primary six three times. She got discouraged and gave up.'[13] Children find repeating classes frustrating and humiliating, because they become too old for their class and so they give up altogether.

Some respondents noted that the ability to keep their children in school was partly influenced by how early in life their children started school; those who start earlier have a stronger educational foundation. Families who live close to a school were more likely to have their children start school at the recommended age. Because of the long travel times, some families living further away from schools sent their children to private boarding schools. However, this was not a viable option for most households due to the high costs of private schooling. Households in which children started their education earlier were more likely to report consistency in their children's school attendance and performance. This contrasts with the experience of many poor, rural households where children start school at an older age because of the long distance they must travel to reach school. As noted earlier, the SLRC Uganda survey in 2018 found that the longer it took for girls to reach school, the significantly more likely they were to miss or drop out of school.

Having a good educational foundation helped children to continue to perform well in school. These children felt motivated and able to continue with their schooling for as long as their parents could afford to keep them in school. Overall, education at private schools was generally considered to be of a better standard compared to government-funded schools, but only very few households could afford to educate their children privately.

Despite the limited opportunities, some respondents remained optimistic that education was a path to improving individual and household wellbeing, a view strongly supported by other research in northern Uganda (Mazurana et al., 2014). Most respondents perceived educated people to be more disciplined, peaceful, civilised, respectful and in possession of better social skills. All these attributes were perceived as desirable, leading to a better life and future for the family. Almost all respondents reported several positive benefits that they believed education brings to a household, such as better housing, an improved standard of living, extended social networks and heightened status in the community and beyond. Overall, respondents thought that educated people are more likely to be heard and to have greater social influence than an uneducated person. They also believed that educated people are more likely to make decisions that will have a positive impact on the entire household.

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12 Interview, Oyam District, 29 September 2018.

13 Interview, Kole District, 2 October 2018.

5 Conclusions and implications

The decline in school attendance that was witnessed for boys and girls between 2013 and 2018 in northern Uganda was driven by a combination of factors at the individual, household and societal level. They include: broader socioeconomic conditions (partly due to the over two decades of conflict in northern Uganda), the prioritisation of boys' education over girls', and prioritising family resources and children's labour to meet short-term household livelihood needs - rather than investing in education. Some of these factors more negatively affected the schooling of girls compared to boys, in part, because of the unequal social, cultural context of northern Uganda.

Households who removed their children from school had done so because of the extreme economic hardship they faced, as well as broader changes to the social fabric such as: the decline in extended family support to its vulnerable members, increased impoverishment following displacement and the loss of livestock in northern Uganda and the loss of communal parenting and guidance for children among others. Most of these household lacked the resources necessary to afford education for their children. Our finding suggests that households prioritise meeting their short-term livelihoods needs over education, which was perceived by respondents as a long-term investment. Some of the households withdrew their children from school to provide labour to support their household by working. Without an adequate education, these children will not possess the skills required to join the labour force in the future. In doing so, parents who withdraw their children from school risk not being able to provide their children with an education and a secure livelihood.

However, some households managed to keep their children in school despite the difficulties they encountered in covering school fees. Such households were motivated by both the economic and social value that education provides to households. Women noted that they had earned more respect and social status in their families and communities since gaining an education. The households that were able to keep their children in school employed several different strategies to do so, including: engaging in multiple livelihoods, sale of family resources such as livestock and land, taking out credit, and making school payment in installments.

These findings have implications for post-conflict recovery and development practitioners working in this space:

1. While post-conflict recovery policies and programmes are often driven by a belief in steady progress, without a holistic understanding of the individual, household and societal factors that affect access to education services in the post-conflict period, these efforts are unlikely to yield the intended impact.

2. A lack of education in the short-term can affect households' livelihoods in the long-term. By postponing or stopping children's education, household risk remaining in a cycle of poverty. If broader recovery efforts are to be sustained, post-conflict recovery programmes need to target getting children - particularly girls - into school. Such efforts should address hidden cost to schooling, including the costs of examination fees, supply fees, and uniform fees, school development funds, teachers' pay and friendly school environment, to reduce the barriers that keep children out of school.

3. In cases where girls and boys have dropped of school or lack the appropriate level of education for their age, the state should provide them with skills and training programmes that increase their employability so that they are able to take advantage of post-conflict opportunities in Uganda.

4. Increases in household livelihood activities - either to take advantage of livelihood opportunities or to cope with volatility - was associated with children withdrawing from school. Any support to livelihood recovery in the post-conflict period should be mindful of the ways such interventions are designed in order not to unintentionally affect the schooling of children in the receiving household.

5. Having positive role models is important in influencing both parents and children on the merits of education. Promoting positive female and male role models from northern Uganda who are educated and successful could inspire parents and children to invest in education.

6. Access to sexual and reproductive health education and services for youth in school and in communities is still a challenge, as well as provisions for personal hygiene supplies and bathrooms for girls to wash and clean themselves during menstruation. Addressing these concerns would ensure more girls remain in school.

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