Women’s vulnerability to poverty

An ethnographic study of the life of women participating in a Red Cross microfinance programme in Entebbe, Uganda

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In Luganda:

Twebaza abantu bona aba Red Cross abasobozesa okulambula kwaffe okwalimu eby'kuyiga okubeera okwangu.

Tusiima nnyo obuyambi bwonna, ebisera bye mwatuwa n'omukwano omulungi gwe mwatulaga.
Abstract

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This dissertation was made possible with a Minor Field Study scholarship, financed by SIDA (Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency). The study is based upon the life stories of women participating in a micro finance programme within the Red Cross in Uganda, Entebbe branch. A microfinance programme means giving financial services in the form of small loans for poor people in developing countries.

Our purpose is to examine why the women participating in the programme need support to start up their own businesses. Further our emphasis is to examine how the programme affects and changes the life situation of the women participating.

Our dissertation is an attempt to an ethnographic study. Empirical findings mainly consist of information gained through conversations with Red Cross workers and women participating in the programme and visits to villages and women groups. A qualitative strategy can further give a description of our methodological approach; we analysed how the women participants themselves described and interpreted their life situation.

The study’s results describe how the women’s subordination in relation to men affects to their limited access to resources and vulnerability to poverty. The women’s subordination in the villages is recognized through situations of exploitation, monopolisation and an acceptance of their marginalised position. Women are by men many times deprived from their benefits in work and excluded from important resources as for example education, because of their allotted labour. The women’s response to their subordination is acceptance, which preserves their situation.

The Red Cross micro finance programme improves the women’s life situation in many ways but do not focus on changing their subordination in relation to men, which is the main factor that limits their access to resources and keeps them from rupturing their marginalisation.
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1. Introduction

Today, about 1.2 billions of the earth population live in extreme poverty, which means that for this part of earth population living cost per day is less than seven Swedish crowns (SEK). Women and children are most vulnerable and affected by poverty. Of those living in extreme poverty over 70 percent are women.\(^1\) SIDA claims that the fight against poverty is directly connected with inequality between men and women. Women often lack power, material resources and traditions and norms hinder women’s development. To work for better equality between men and women is considered as one of the most important ways to fight poverty. It affects the total social change for a developing country both when it comes to economy and humanity.\(^2\) One way to improve life of women is by microfinance programmes. Microfinance is a term for the practice of providing economic aid in the form of small loans. Those loans will bring capital for starting and developing small businesses.

The Red Cross Entebbe Branch in Uganda is running such a microfinance programme as a mean to improve women’s life in Uganda against poverty. Through the Red Cross Sweden we got information about this programme and were also given the opportunity to take part of it during a field study in Uganda. Development programmes of aid and women’s situation in the third world are areas of great interest to both of us. The field studies made it possible for us to seek for answers to what affects women’s vulnerability in a developing country and study the factors working against better equality between men and women in this country.

1.1 The Red Cross microfinance programme

The last decennium Uganda showed a remarkably good economic growth. However, economic growth started from a low level and Uganda is still one of the poorest countries in the world. The economy improved considerably in the beginning of the 90’s, although the standard of living did not increase for the majority of the population. Improvements in living standard also strongly differ between rural and urban areas.

Red Cross, Entebbe branch, started their microfinance programme two years ago. The purpose of the programme is to empower the members of the women groups. It is not only about giving the women aid in form of small loans, the purpose is also to give skills and support that helps them in their daily life. For example some of the women are given courses in English, mathematics and

\(^1\) http://www.actionaid.se/omraden/utrota_fattigdom/ (2007-01-24)
business skills. The programme involves five women groups in villages around Entebbe town where economic aid and other support are given to the women in starting up their own businesses. If a woman participates in a women’s group it requires a membership in the Red Cross but besides that there are no strict rules of who is allowed to participate in the programme.

The number of women in the groups differs; some groups are up to 30 women and some have fifteen members only. Each group has its own group-leader. With the help from the loans the women practice activities as farming, growing bananas and vegetables, chicken railing, piggery, stock-raising and handcraft. The Red Cross Entebbe branch has no intention to stop the programme in a near future. The field-coordinator expresses that they mean to stay with the women as long as they can. They all refer to the vision and mission of Red Cross Uganda, when talking about the purpose of the micro-finance programme. The mission of Uganda is to mobilize the power of humanity for improving the life of the vulnerable in Uganda, in this case the women in the programme. The vision of Uganda Red Cross is formulated as: An empowered and healthy community that responds to the needs of the vulnerable.

1.2 The beginning of our journey
On the 7th of November in 2006 we started our long journey from Växjö/Sweden to Entebbe in Uganda. It was our first visit to Uganda but also to Africa. Our first impression of the country we got during the taxi drive from the airport to the guesthouse in Kampala, where we were going to stay. Coming direct from the Heathrow airport in London to Uganda gave us a minor chock. We saw a lot of poverty, people living under simple conditions in houses or sheds right beside the road. But our picture of Uganda changed just in a couple of days, instead of only poverty we saw a beautiful country with an amazing green landscape and wonderful warm-hearted people.

During our visit we lived outside the busy and loud city centre of Kampala in a guesthouse, with a quiet surrounding. The guesthouse staff took such good care of us that we decided to stay the whole period and in time we became one big happy family.

Staying in Kampala meant a lot of travelling back and forth to Entebbe town, where the Red Cross Entebbe has its office. Despite that we never found travelling boring, instead the journeys were daily adventures. We always had to travel via the taxi-park in Kampala city, a chaotic place with matatos (taxi cars), people, salesmen and boda-bodas (motor-cycles) all over the place. The smell of diesel, soil and dust was constant. This place was not only a taxi park but also a marketplace where you could buy everything; candy, underwear, fruit, jewellery, clothes, mosquito-nets and
umbrellas etc. When taking a matato from Kampala we never knew exactly what time we were going to reach Entebbe. The taxi stops whenever someone gives the signal that they want to get off, in other words the time for the journey varied a lot depending on the passengers. The first day we travelled to meet up with the field-coordinator at the Red Cross office in Entebbe we were really nervous to find the right place and to get the matato to stop where we wanted. But we did not have to worry, everyone sitting in the taxi was eager to help us and we found our way quite easy.

The Red Cross office is placed next to a hospital and when we arrived curious patients were looking at us while they waited on their turn to see the doctor. The office was not as big as we had expected. It was a small shed with two rooms, but it consisted of enough space for the field coordinator and the volunteers at the Red Cross. They all gave us a warm welcoming and during our first visit we were given information about their local work and about the microfinance programme. Our first days included many individual meetings with the people working in the microfinance programme. The field-coordinator gave us many answers to our questions about the programme and a good description of the Red Cross work. He also presented the most important issues that Red Cross Entebbe is involved with. A lot of their time and work revolves around fighting HIV/AIDS. The fight against HIV/AIDS is present wherever you go in Uganda, there are big posters everywhere reminding of the importance of protecting yourself from the disease. We also met with two women representatives, who are responsible for a lot of work with the women-groups in the microfinance programme, at a TASO clinic (The Aids Support Organisation) where they work as volunteers. Our visit to this clinic gave an insight into the meaning of HIV/AIDS, when passing through the waiting hall we met the eyes of many patients and at that moment it all became real. We had never before seen the effects of this disease with our own eyes. We really had a good conversation with the women representatives about the life of women in Uganda. Although it was hard for us to focus because of a drum-class that happened to have a session right outside the window at the same time as we had our meeting. Maybe a lot of important information was lost in the sound of drums but we sure got a feeling of African rhythms. Finally we got the opportunity to meet youth-volunteers. We talked with them about their experiences and understanding of the microfinance programme and the life of the women participating in the programme. This gave us a lot of information to our study.

1.3 Visits to villages with women groups participating in the programme
Our third week included visits to three villages outside Entebbe town, which all have women groups participating in the microfinance programme. The purpose with our visits was to meet and
interact with the women and to take part of their activities. A second aim was to get a picture of their daily life in the villages.

To start with, it is important to give a short general description of the Buganda area, where all villages are placed. Uganda is described as a multi-ethnic society with a population of 23 million and over 50 ethnic groups with their own languages, English is however the official language but spoken only by between ten and twenty percent of the population. The Buganda area is much more developed in relation to other parts of the country and therefore many different ethnic groups are represented here and this makes English language skills of much more importance than in other parts of Uganda.

All our village-visits started with quite a bumpy journey. The two women representatives, who joined us when we visited the villages, expressed that their cars were made for western and not for Ugandan roads. Fortunately the villages were placed right outside Entebbe town, close to urban areas, so the journeys did not take long. One of the youth volunteers and the women representatives had the responsibility of being our interpreters during our visits to the villages. Most of the women participating in the programme have low English language skills because they lack higher education.

In the first village we visited we met two women that are participating in the microfinance programme, one of them was the leader of the group and she invited us to her home. When walking on the path of red soil to her house we passed other village members waving at us. All of us greeted back and we were told it was really important to do so in the Ugandan culture when you visit someone in a village. Many of the houses we passed in the village were in our eyes of simple standards but all of them had the nicest well-organised gardens. The group leader’s home was a green stone house with a roof of aluminium sheets surrounded by a beautiful garden with banana- and vegetable plants in the backyard and jackfruit-trees in the front. During our visit we discussed a lot about their experiences of the programme and how it had changed their life but also we asked a lot of questions of their background and daily life. We talked of their childhood and teenage years, families and social life, work, traditions and future plans. In between conversations we were also given the opportunity to taste the local fruit, jackfruit, and everyone was exited to here whether we liked it or not. We both thought it was quite good, or sweet as they say in Uganda, which made our host most satisfied.

The main activities this group practise in the microfinance programme are piggery, poultry and cultivation. After our conversations we were taken to one of the women’s piggery farm to get a better understanding of their work, it was a small-scale farm with pigs of all sizes in fenced in areas. The women described their daily work with animals and cultivation, which often start very early in the morning. Most of their time is spent on “digging”, working with cultivation, and later to prepare the crops for food. If there was time left the women sometimes gathered around to socialize or do some handcraft work. One woman expressed that she wished for more strength to put into her work, she said she was constantly tired and we could both see the tiredness in her eyes. After a couple of hours it was time to continue to another village that was expecting us. We expressed our gratitude to the women for letting us come and visit them and as a final we all lined up for a group-photo in front of the group leader’s house.

The second village we visited was nearby and the whole group had gathered to welcome us. The meeting was set in a quite big house surrounded by a stonewall shutting the rest of the world out. The house was the home of the group leader. The group consists of women that are HIV infected and the leader started the women group to improve their lives and give them hope. The women do handcraft as activity in the Red Cross programme and had prepared an exhibition for us, showing how they make their jewellerys. The jewellerys are made of paper and go through five stages including for example varnishing and painting. After the show we were given the opportunity to buy the items to support their activity. The group meet every Tuesday to make jewellerys, socialize and to get education in English, writing and mathematic. After getting a good understanding of their activity we were invited into the house for a glass of papaya and mango juice. The leader told us about how hard life could be for a woman that is HIV infected and also that the women’s husbands often are to blame for their disease. It is acceptable for a man to be with other women but not the other way around and polygamy is common in Uganda. When the juice was finished it was already late afternoon and we had to hurry to get a matato back to Kampala, after seven o’clock it was pitch dark outside and hard to find your way walking on the roads.

The third village we visited was beautifully green and blossoming. The tree leaning over us, giving shade, consisted of big red flowers. We were placed in chairs upon a small stage in front of several benches standing in line, it was the place were all village meetings were held. The women participating in the programme had all gathered around to welcome us to their village and they even gave us a welcoming speech. The speech told us in short of their activities in the programme, they mostly practiced cultivation, farming and handcraft. They also expressed the importance of
their connection with Red Cross in getting in contact with markets for their craft items; whenever people visit from the Red Cross they often sell a lot of their products. Without Red Cross visitors it is hard for them to sell all their beautiful crafts. After the warm welcoming they took us for a walk around the village and showed us their animal farming and cultivation. They had animals as goats, pigs and chickens and when showing us their cultivation they pointed out a simple form of irrigation system that helped during the dry season. It consisted of a big whole in the ground next to their plantations where water was accumulated during rains. Uganda has very fertile earth and most of the population support on agriculture. Women mostly make the work of agriculture, they are said to contribute to as much as 80 percent of the traditional food crops and 60 percent of the export crops. Feminists in Uganda call attention to women’s contribution in production and states that women’s work is far away from being equivalent to their leverage in society.⁵

During our visit we were also taken to one of the women’s house and farm, which was a very impressive place. She seemed to be a very influential woman in the village and was also the one reading out the speech for us, which was written in English. The farm had a lot of animals; hundreds of chickens that were fenced in bigger houses but also pigs, cows and goats. During our visit to her house we also met with her husband, which was rather surprising, it was the only time we met with any of the women’s husbands. Usually their men were away daytime to earn money in the city of Kampala or Entebbe town. Our visit ended with a minor exhibition of the women groups handcraft work and we bought a lot of jewelleries and baskets they had made.

A week later we visited a forth women group in a village. This village consisted of houses of good standards compared to the other we had visited and between the houses there was a gravelled way instead of muddy paths. One of this group’s main activities in the Red Cross programme is catering so they had decided to show us how they make their national course matoke. Matoke is made of a special type of banana that is boiled in banana leaves into a yellow mash and it is not unusual for a Ugandan to eat matoke for breakfast, lunch and dinner! At the time the matoke was made we had the opportunity to talk about their Red Cross activities and daily life in the village. They talked a lot of how the meetings with the group had changed their social life. Being a married woman often includes a life at home, taking care of children and household and often there is not any time left for other activities. They said that they sometimes have the time to walk around in the village for a short while but not very often. However with their participation in the programme they tended to get out more. They described that their participation in the programme had made them more independent as women.

⁵ http://www.landguiden.se/ (2007-01-27)
All our meetings with the women groups included talks about the difference in life between men and women in the villages. On the time of our visits we almost never saw or met any of the women’s men, they were always away daytime hours trying to earn money to the household and the children’s school fees. Most of their husbands worked as salesmen or taxi drivers and bodaboda-drivers (motorcycles) and they often did not come home until late in the evenings. Men were also described to have a different social life than the women themselves, including visits to clubs or cinemas which are situated outside the villages. Many of our conversations with the women and Red Cross workers were about the fact that men drink a lot of alcohol. When we travelled around, passing places as local pubs in the area we only saw men and never any women.

We also talked about the women’s dreams and future plans and the answers were always the same, it was all about giving their children a good education. School fees are expensive in Uganda and most of the women in the programme have many children. The level of education is generally low among the women group members and they did not as children have the possibility to get an education themselves. The school system in Uganda includes seven years of primary school and six years of secondary school, but there is no law that regulates compulsory school attendance in Uganda. In 1997 a reform regarding children’s access to education was made and primary school became free of charge for a maximum of four children per family. However, fees for school supplies still remained. But, despite that the reform strongly increased the number of children attending primary school. In the beginning of the 21st century 75 percent of all children attended primary school, although many of them dropped off. Still, in the year of 2000, only one out of eight children continued to high school. The number of private schools has increased during the late years. One reason for this is that rich Ugandans consider governmental schools to be of low quality.6

A couple of weeks after our first visit to the forth village we returned for more structured interviews with three women participating in the programme. All three interviews took place outside and it was hard to keep the conversations with the women private. Sometimes we had other village members hanging around when interviewing and sometimes the women’s children were present, curious of whom we were. The majority of the women were honored and excited to be interviewed by us but at one time we were confronted by one of them. She expressed that she was tired of all the white people from Red Cross wanting to talk to her and asking questions about her life, it was steeling her time from work and she never gained anything from it. We felt a bit

6 http://www.landguiden.se/ (2007-01-27)
uncomfortable but understood her critique and realized that she probably wouldn’t gain anything from our study either. But we also got a positive reaction from one of the other women we interviewed. She said she was very grateful to our questions because they had made her think about her life in a different way, this interview we left with a light heart.

1.4 A meeting with the deputy mayor in Entebbe town
The Red Cross staff had also managed to set up a meeting with the deputy major in Entebbe town for us. The purpose with the interview was to get a further understanding about Uganda’s political work regarding women’s issues. The deputy mayor was a very busy woman and she told us she could only spare half an hour for a conversation with us and on the day for our meeting it was really important that we arrived exactly on time. Her statement regarding arriving exactly on time made us both quite nervous, especially because we were travelling with the taxi-matatos. They had no time-table what so ever and if we were to have bad luck on the morning for the meeting, ending up on a taxi stopping everywhere, we could miss our appointment with her. However we did manage to get there in time and even arrived ten minutes early. Her office was situated in a big grey stone building with four floors; it almost looked like an ordinary municipality building back home. She welcomed us into her office and we were seated in chairs in front of her desk. In the beginning it all felt very formal but after some minutes the ice was broken and we felt free to ask questions about all our wonderings regarding existing political work for improving the life of women in Uganda. She, herself, was involved with the Red Cross microfinance programme and therefore many questions also revolved around the work with the women group members. She tells that women in Uganda are not empowered; a woman’s job is in the kitchen, the house and in the garden. Women seldom have work of influence and power. Even if a woman’s work is generating money she will remain poor because her husband is the one responsible over the family incomes. That is why the micro finance is of such big importance. The aid in the programme is given in the form of loans to a whole group, they are together responsible for returning the money and therefore they help each other with their activities. The fact that the aid is given to women groups is the Red Cross security for getting the money back.

The deputy mayor says that the main focus regarding equality between men and women in Uganda is about education. She describes that education is directly connected with development; a country need a well-educated population to develop. In Uganda primary school is universal with the aim that everybody should go to school, although secondary school still charges a fee. Deputy mayor says that this often leads to a discrimination of women; if a family consists of many children they choose their boys to attend school and not the girls. Therefore they are working hard
to have a universal secondary school. She expresses that everybody should have the right to attend school, girls as well as boys.

Our meeting with the deputy mayor gave us a better understanding of the political work that is done for improving the life of women in Uganda. In the end of our meeting we also talked a lot about her background and how she had become a deputy mayor. It was really interesting to hear her own thoughts of equality, her life history and fight to get a job in her position.

All our conversations with the Red Cross field-coordinator, women representatives, Red Cross youth, women group members and the deputy mayor gave us a lot of information of the life of the women participating in the programme. After visiting four out of five women groups we also got a better understanding of their daily life in their villages. It was both fun and instructive to see how they lived and to take part in their activities within the programme. During our first weeks of our journey we got a better understanding of what questions we wanted to focus on in our study lying ahead.

1.5 Purpose and problem

The microfinance programme is intended for helping women start up businesses for self-sufficiency. We asked ourselves why the women in the programme need extra assistance in the form of loans. Further our emphasis was to examine how the programme affects and changes the life situation of the women participating in the programme.

The main questions of our study became:

- Why do the women participating in the Red Cross micro finance programme need help to start up their own businesses?
- How does the micro finance programme affect the life of these women?

1.6 Disposition

This work is structured in seven parts. The second (2) chapter, following this introductory chapter consist of the theoretical frame of reference for this study. It includes theoretical perspectives from Charles Tilly, Pierre Bourdieu and Max Weber. Part three (3) constitutes a description of our methodological procedure and course of action. The methodological framework is followed by the results (4), put in relation to our theoretical perspectives. Part five (5) includes the conclusions and remarks of this work and finally, part six (6), presents the references used in this study.
2. Theoretical frame of reference

This chapter presents the theoretical frame of our work and is a tool helping us to explain and understand why the women need assistance for starting up their own businesses in Entebbe, Uganda and how the programme is changing their lives. To achieve this we use theoretical perspectives from Pierre Bourdieu, Charles Tilly and Max Weber.

2.1 Charles Tilly about durable inequality

In the book “Durable inequality” Charles Tilly tries to explain how differences between groups of people are created and maintained. He suggests that inequality establishes because hierarchies in power and organisation structures are being imitated and spread into new environments and contexts. Subordinated groups also tend to adapt existing inequalities, which gives the affect that durable inequality is established. Various inequalities exist in all social relations but some inequalities consist from one social context to another. There are inequalities that consist over lifetimes and these are the ones that Tilly tries to explain.7

Tilly excludes differences in individuality in form of abilities, tendencies or performances in this theoretical perspective. Instead the cause of durable inequality is found in categorized differences. People draw boundaries between themselves and others, and form “categorical pairs”. Examples of categorical pairs are black/white, man/woman, citizen/foreigner and Muslim/Jew. Durable inequality and a categorization of differences between individuals are created and maintained because they are seen as solutions for people with access to resources. Categorized differences become solutions to other organisational problems by limiting access to valuable resources. More or less unconsciously powerful people create systems for social exclusion and control. All parts, even the submitted, then obtain an interest and try to take advantage in the solutions constructed in the system they are taking part in.8

2.1.1 The mechanisms of durable inequality

Tilly describes that humanity have used categorized inequality in social relations for more than thousands of years. This has been possible mainly through four mechanisms; Exploitation, Opportunity hording, Emulation and Adaptation. Exploitation and opportunity hording contributes to establishment of durable inequality and are mainly terms used in discussing organisations that create work and practices forced labour.9 The mechanism exploitation is,

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7 Tilly 1998:17
8 Ibid 1998:18ff
9 Ibid 1998:20f
according to Tilly, when powerful groups of people exclude less powerful individuals from the full benefit of united efforts of work. Opportunity hording is when a categorized network gains resources of value possible to monopolize, which are retained for own use. The concepts exploitation and opportunity hording can also relate to Weber’s notion of social closure. The notion social closure is, according to Weber, when powerful members of a group benefit from excluding less powerful individuals. However it is possible to make a distinction between the three of them. When a group is exposed to exploitation the exploiter depend on the exploited, without their efforts in work they wouldn’t have the power.\(^\text{10}\) This is not the case within a situation of social closure or opportunity hording; here the exploiters withhold their power even if there is no abuse of the less privileged group. Weber distinguishes what he describes as a social relation that is open and a social relation that is closed. A social relation is characterized as open if existing orders do not hinder outside members who want, and have the possibility, to join. A social relation that is characterized as closed, rules and hindrances limit or set conditions on outside members who wish to join. If a social relation expects to benefit from a monopoly position outside members are excluded and the social relation will remain closed. A social relation, closed or open, is governed by tradition. When a group of members expect that an admission of outsiders joining the group is beneficial for the whole group, it is characterized as open. A closed social relation gives its members guaranties that they don’t have to worry about competition from others outside of the group.\(^\text{11}\)

Adaptation and emulation generalize the effects of exploitation and opportunity hording and mainly include family-households, groups of relatives and local societies, where categorized distinctions are formed and changed according to the same type of principals. These generalized principals strongly effect the biological and social reproduction. Adaptation means that subordinated groups tend to accept and adapt existing inequalities. Therefore inequalities between men and women become a natural part of the daily life of women.\(^\text{12}\) Emulation is the explanation for how hierarchies in power, organisation structures and existing social relations are being imitated and spread into new environments and contexts. Organisational structures that function well will reproduce because they are the easy way to success; they do not demand a lot of investments and the process facilitate a combination with other forms of organisations.\(^\text{13}\) Tilly describes how inequalities may become durable because of emulation as the easy organisational

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\(^{10}\) Tilly 1998:98ff  
\(^{11}\) Weber 1983:31ff  
\(^{12}\) Ibid 1998:21f  
\(^{13}\) Tilly 1998:107
way. Tilly further says that women’s labour is often founding male-activities and represents the
ground on which all male dominated transactions rest upon.\textsuperscript{14}

In his book Tilly refers to many feminists that have the same kind of understanding of connections
between categorical differences, relations and exploitation as him. Gender, class, race, citizenship
and other categorized systems share the same type of characteristics and assemble with each
other. Though race, gender and age are all based on biological qualities they constitute boundaries
that are constructed from social conventions. However there is a difference in feminist’s and his
understanding of durable inequality. Feminists claim that there is only one script of inequality that
always gives the same exploiters advantages in life. Tilly thinks that categorical inequality
benefits all types of exploiters, sometimes even black lesbians, it all depends on their access to
valuable resources.\textsuperscript{15}

\textbf{2.2 Bourdieu’s theory of male dominance}

In the book \textquotedblleft Male dominance\textquotedblright{} Bourdieu tries to explain how patriarchal structures reproduce
without recognizing them as naturally given. What makes structures of dominance hard to find is
that both dominated and oppressed see them as natural.\textsuperscript{16} Bourdieu describes that biological
differences between the sexes exist, although our definitions of them are affected by arbitrary. Our
definitions are not only based on what is given by nature. Bourdieu explains this further when he
says that sex is understood as the biological sex and that gender instead describes sex as
something socially constructed.\textsuperscript{17} Differences between men and women are parts of a whole
system of dichotomised and connected diverse relations; for example active-passive, high-low,
dry-moist, where the first word represents the male-sex and the second word the female-sex.\textsuperscript{18} In
division of labour men are connected to the external, the official, the public, the straight, the dry,
and the upper and get tasks that rupture the common way of life. Women are linked to the
internal, the moist, the lower, the curved and the continuous and get all responsibility over
domestic work and all private and concealed labour, for example caring for children and
animals.\textsuperscript{19}

As the paragraphs above reveals, the division of labour is created by constructed roles for men
and women. Bourdieu further writes that these constructed roles are expressed even in all types of

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{14} Tilly 1998:100
\item \textsuperscript{15} Ibid 1998:95
\item \textsuperscript{16} Bourdieu 1998:11f
\item \textsuperscript{17} Ibid 1998:37
\item \textsuperscript{18} Ibid 1998:17
\item \textsuperscript{19} Ibid 1998:43
\end{itemize}
objects seen as masculine and feminine. The social order works as a machine of symbols that tend to establish male dominance. As example he discusses division of labour between men and women, a strict division is made between male and female activities, locations, time and tools.\textsuperscript{20}

\section*{2.2.1 Sex habitus and symbolic violence}
An important perspective within Bourdieu's sociological theories is the relationship between social and mental structures. The connection between them is the concept \textit{Habitus}. Habitus is described as a system of lasting and changeable orders through which individuals understand, judge and act in their lives. It is a system of practical hypothesis of which individuals are not aware. He gives the example of sex habitus and writes that women, through their sex habitus, have their own line of thinking, which make them, consider themselves as subordinated to men.\textsuperscript{21}

In the book “The male dominance” Bourdieu also writes about \textit{Symbolic violence}, which is an imperceptible violence invisible for its victims. It is mainly exercised in a pure symbolic way through communication and knowledge or clearly through distrust and acknowledgement, or in more extreme cases through feelings.\textsuperscript{22} Bourdieu says that this type of violence is practised when the subordinated groups’ pattern of thoughts is directly referred to on the basis of the dominants structure of thoughts.\textsuperscript{23} Rules and prohibits are written in our mind and bodies which makes us immune against questioning the hierarchic structure that we are in.\textsuperscript{24}

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item Bourdieu 1998:20
\item Andersen & Kaspersen 2000:410f
\item Bourdieu 1998:11
\item Ibid 1998:47f
\item Ibid 1998:38
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
3. Methodological framework

This chapter consists of a methodological discussion. It includes a description of our procedure including problems and issues we faced on the way.

3.1 Methodological approach

When we started the work with this dissertation we tried with assistance from different methodological approaches to give our work the form we assumed most appropriate for the study. We found that identifications of a Qualitative strategy can give a description of our methodological approach. Bryman writes that this is a strategy focusing more on words than quantity in the process of collecting and making an analysis of the data. A qualitative method can also be identified as interpretative with emphasis to understand the social reality on the basis of how participants in an environment interpret this reality.25 Within the qualitative approach our work is an attempt to an ethnographic study. Through village visits, discussions with Red Cross workers at Entebbe branch and conversations with women participating in the Red Cross programme we got an understanding of these women’s life situations.

To examine how women in an aid programme live and interact in a society the qualitative strategy is a relevant starting point. Uganda was a new country and culture for us and thereby we had many curious questions regarding women’s life. To illuminate factors affecting women into a subordinated situation we thought it was a necessity to analyse how women themselves described their daily life in relation to those people they interact with. We also found it important to see people in interplay among others. We concentrated on women’s daily life in relation to men and saw this as prerequisite to understand the roles of men and women in the villages in Entebbe.

As Howard Becker says in the book “Tricks of the trade”:

"The trick here is to place any term that seems to describe a trait of a person or group in the context of the system of relations it belongs to. That shows you that the trait is not just the “physical fact” of whatever-it-is, but rather an interpretation of the fact, a giving of meaning to it, that depends on what else it is connected to.”27

25 Bryman 2001:249f
26 “Ethnography is the genre of writing that presents varying degrees of qualitative and quantitative descriptions of human social phenomena, based on fieldwork. Ethnography presents the results of a holistic research method founded on the idea that a system's properties cannot necessarily be accurately understood independently of each other.” http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ethnography (2007-04-02)
27 Becker 1998:133f
Before entering the country of Uganda we had few ideas about our sociological problem and the context of Uganda. Literature about Uganda, information about the Red Cross finance programme and the minor field studies preparation course gave us both understanding of the culture and context we were going to face. We used all this information in the preparation of our journey to Uganda and especially of our first meetings with the Red Cross workers. We tried to create the theoretical framework and our problem on the basis of our empirical findings. We chose this method because our knowledge about Uganda and its culture was limited. Our ambition was therefore to be open in our way searching for determinant factors explaining the women’s situation in Entebbe.

To understand the women’s life further we focused on processes rather than structure. Becker writes that you can do this by considering the society as an organism. This is a general starting point and implies that social life is looked upon as the basis of different processes affecting each other, in relation to your interest in the study. In other words, you should consider looking at how social activities interact with each other. That is to see that every activity creates a relationship to another activity to act within.28 We focused on women and men’s daily and social activities to get a better understanding of its characters in relation to each other and thereby understand their differences. This gave us knowledge of how women and men get different access to resources in society.

3.2 Methodological procedure

3.2.1 Conversations
As explained in the chapter Introduction this study started with meetings with the Red Cross workers, all working with the micro finance programme. The first conversation was with the Entebbe Branch field coordinator, the second one with the voluntary women representatives, those working direct with the participating women and the last conversation was with voluntary youth people within Entebbe branch. These conversations had the purpose to give us a first apprehension about the women within the programme and the villages where it is situated. After our meetings with the Red Cross workers we did visit the villages ourselves. As described in the introduction this experience was important to give us a feeling of the surroundings, the atmospheres but also to get acknowledgements from the women for doing our research.

28 Becker 1998:41
3.2.2 Interviews

After conversations with Red Cross workers and visits to the villages we prepared and carried out our interviews with three different women group members (see Appendix 1, Interview guide). The interviews were carried out with assistance of an interpreter from the Red Cross. All respondents accordingly participate in the Red Cross finance programme. They have a Red Cross membership and did voluntarily apply for participation in the programme. All respondents and the people we met for conversations within the study have one common denominator; they are all connected with the Red Cross Entebbe Branch. Even the deputy mayor of Entebbe was a Red Cross member and also an old Red Cross board member.

Red Cross Entebbe Branch has assessed the women’s situation within the villages in need of the programme. We did not choose the women who participate in our main study, Red Cross volunteers selected respondents for the interviews. Within the unfamiliar surroundings we found it hard to demand and claim for specific interview respondents. In other words it was difficult to affect the circumstances and conditions in the context of the field studies. An example of this is when we interviewed one woman outside her home accompanied with two outside listeners. When we friendly ask them for privacy during the interview their response was that they thought we were Christian people trying to convert the respondent. As students we could not offer the respondents anything in return for giving us their time and engagement. Therefore we felt we could not claim for special types of interviews and respondents.

As mentioned before we examine women in interplay with men. Therefore men’s role constitutes a big part of this study. When we in the empirical findings refer to the man’s role in the villages it is information related to stories about the women group members’ husbands. Because of lack of interviews with their husbands’ it is furthermore important that our empirical material is supported with facts we found in the report, “Gender and Growth Assessment in Uganda: Unleashing the Power of Women” written by Amanda Ellis, and conversations with the Red Cross workers, giving a more general view of men in the villages and Uganda.

Our aim with the interviews was to make them totally unstructured\(^\text{29}\). Thereby we could perform the interviews as a free discussion with the respondents. During our visit to the first village the conversation with the two women group members although taught us the limitations of using an interpreter. It is more or less inconceivable for an interpreter to summarize and translate

\(^{29}\text{Definition: When a researcher uses a total unstructured interview he or she only get help from a memory schedule containing those themes the interview will consist of. In some cases the interviewer will ask only one question for the respondent to answer and associate freely. These interviews tend to resemble conversations. Bryman:1998:301}\)
everything the respondent reveals. The language barriers also created problems not knowing if the interpreter repeated the questions and the respondent’s answer correct, therefore this type of assistance involved obstacles for us. Since the interpreters’ were from the Red Cross Entebbe branch it is possible that their knowledge about the women groups affected their way of asking questions. However it is also likely that this gave the women a higher confidence in us and thereby a more relaxed feeling when answering questions.

As the language barrier created problems having a totally free and open conversation, we learned from these experiences to utilize semi-structured interviews. According to Bryman a semi-structured interview is when the researcher uses an interview guide, a list over those themes he or she wants to accomplish with the interview. This guide consists of questions that do not have to be asked in a special order. The researcher can also add questions to the interview guide during the interview, if he or she relates it to the respondent’s answer. However in most cases the questions will be asked in the same order as the guide reveals.\textsuperscript{30} During our interviews we were flexible to add questions related to the respondent’s answers and we sometimes discussed things not directly linked to the questions in the interview guide. Therefore a semi-structured interview was appropriate for the interviews.

3.2.3 Construction of interview questions

Our first visits and conversations in the villages revealed that men and women had different possibilities in life. The men in the villages are generally identified as providers and receivers of resources and all structures in society seemed to enforce men to sustain in this position. Women’s access to resources was limited, we found that they seldom owned property, had higher education or English language skills. They did not withhold an external social network outside the village, had monetized work or access to outside markets. Also they often lacked knowledge of their legal rights and ability to get credit in a bank, which requires land as security.

We thus found the resources above of relevance for a woman to start up her own business or to get a job for self-sufficiency. Property gives access to education, which leads to English language skills. To get higher education than primary level you need to pay school-fees, which require property. Both education and English language skills is important in getting access to monetized work. Education is also often needed when you apply for a monetized work requiring special skills. English is important and needed for communication. If you do not have skills in English it is hard to communicate with all parts of the population. This is especially important in the area of

\textsuperscript{30} Bryman:1998:301
Buganda, an area where most cultures are represented. English skills are also necessary regarding knowledge of legal rights. The Constitution of Uganda is for example written in English. Knowledge of legal rights gives possibilities to claim property in a case of inheritance and when you have property you can get access to education and a bank-loan. The resource social network is important when it comes to access to outside markets. An own business requires markets for selling goods and when it is located internally within the boundaries of the village it is hard to earn a living. An outside social network is therefore in this matter of great value. We saw the resources, accounted for above, as prime areas of interest for our study.

During our visits we also found that the resources were far away from equally divided between men and women. Therefore our purpose with the interviews was to examine the life of men and women in the aspect of their access to resources. This was the point of departure when designing our interview guide. The interview guide for the interviews includes accordingly not only questions about the life of the woman but also questions regarding the life of her husband. To illustrate how the questions were formed an example is given below.

*Regarding “monetized work” the following questions were asked:* Which activity are you practising in the micro finance programme? What did your husband think when you started up your own business? What did your parents do for a living when you were a child? How did an average day look like when you were ten years old? How does everyday life look like for you? How does everyday life look like for your husband? What do you (and your husband) do for a living (cultivation, piggery, employment)? Who is in charge of all the family incomes?

After the interviews our next step was to get an overview of the interviews’ outcomes and to reach a conclusion regarding what empirical areas seemed of relevance to understand women’s limited access to resources.

The following three areas were identified; division of labour, social activities and family structure.

*Division of labour* – This area takes into account differences between the daily work of men and women. It relates to the following questions; What activities are practiced? Where is work situated? Is the work monetized? How much time is required for the work?
**Social activities** – This area takes into account differences between men and women in the practice of social activities. It relates to the following questions; Which social activities are practiced? Where is social activities situated? How much time is given for social activities?

**Family structure** – This area takes into account the roles of men and women in existing family structures. It relates to the following questions; How is existing family structure described? What role do men and women in existing family structure possess?

3.2.4 Transcribing

We recorded all interviews and conversations within the study. To get the truest description of the interviews as possible we did transcribe them word-by-word. This is a process that demands a lot of time, although we saw this as a necessity. Without recording and transcribing, it is easy to interpret data only from your own values and prejudices. Bryman asserts that this method helps the writer to improve her/his memory, control your own almost unconsciously interpretation from the interviews and make an accurate analysis.31

3.2.5 Delimitations

The interviews included only women, it is therefore reasonable to discuss that it would have been appropriate to also include men. As discussed in the first paragraphs of this chapter, we saw it substantial to let the women themselves interpret their life situation. Within the process to treat and encode our material we however realised that interviews with the women’s husbands would have been interesting and maybe a prerequisite to truly express the men’s and the women’s life in relation to each other. The lack of interviews with men may accordingly have led to some wrong interpretations of the respondent’s descriptions of the men’s daily life.

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31 Bryman 1998:310
3.2.6 Our role as interviewers

As interviewers we had a role that may have affected the respondents. Robert G. Burgess writes in the book “In the field”:

In addition to issues of gender and personal experience, a number of other overt characteristics of the interviewer are involved in these situations – age, social status, race and ethnicity. Such characteristics create an immediate impression of the interviewer and will, in part, place limits on the roles that an interviewer may adopt.\(^\text{32}\)

To get to know the field and the actors is of course a primary value when you are doing research. Even if you are working in a well-known country there are always different socially produced codes and roles to figure out and adjust to. These can sometimes work as obstacles when you are doing your research. In Uganda it was not only their culture’s different codes we needed to be aware of, also our white skin created limitations and did symbolise a culture coming from the rich west. Both on the streets of Kampala and in the different villages there were always people calling us for Mzungo, a positive expression for a white person. The boundary of skin colour is sometimes hard to understand. To be a minority as white at the same time as you belong to the normative “race” is very complex and nothing we can sort out in this dissertation. In everyday situations within a research project these factors are although unavoidable and do of course affect the relations of power in the interview situations. Our identities as white Swedish women coming from the western world did probably affect the respondents. During an interview one respondent wondered why she should give her time to us without getting anything in return. This was a complicated situation, where we probably were seen as two white persons with money and wealth rather than students.

During our visits and interviews in the villages, Red Cross workers always accompanied us. The fact that we also were workers within Red Cross, which is a big aid organisation in Uganda, might have affected their impression of us even further. Red Cross is linked to economic support and in the eyes of the respondents often interpreted as a way out of poverty. We were during the interviews confronted with problems regarding the microfinance programme even if we repeatedly stated that we were not involved in the work of Entebbe branch.

We have earlier described that we were not directly involved in the selection of interview respondents. All together we visited four villages and met many participants of different women

\(^{32}\) Burgess 1984:105
groups. This constituted a problem regarding confidence between the respondents and us. We only met the women we interviewed at one occasion and this was at the time of the interview. The interviews took place in a village we had not visited before. The ideal situation would have been to repeatedly visit the same village and its inhabitants.

Bourdieu writes about the practice of interviewing and expresses the importance of focusing on the respondent during an interview. A successful interview situation is thereby that the respondent can express him/herself freely without to much impressions from the researcher. Bourdieu says further that the purpose of an interview is to create a moment of Socrates’ concept *Maieutik*, which means to encourage the respondent to speak about their personal things totally unrestrained.\(^33\) Of relevance here is to understand that the relation between the interviewer and the respondent creates obstacles. Bourdieu writes about the importance of a balanced distance between these two. A long distance may lead to a too scientific investigation and a short distance to an antiscientific situation during research. Too much distance can for example exist during a survey investigation or when the researcher and the respondent have totally different conceptions of the world. This creates problems for the researcher to understand the social reality for the respondent fully. A too short distance on the other hand can be negative because it could lead to an implied interpretation of the respondent’s life situation; the respondent and researcher have *too* common experiences of life.\(^34\)

We did an ethnographic study and thereby our physical distance to the respondents would not have been a problem. But, we experienced a distance in the form of our different age, class, language, cultural background and skin colour between our respondents and us. During our conversations and interviews with the participants we always felt a direct suspicion from them. We never reached a balanced and comfortable level in our interview sessions. We believe that one of the main obstacles that affected to a long distance between the respondents and us was the fact that we did not speak the same language as the women. During our interviews we used interpreters. Many times we had a well-educated male interpreter working for the Red Cross that probably affected the relation between him and the respondents. Because of their different life situations the distance between them may accordingly have been too long. If we instead have had a female interpreter with a similar background as the respondents and also someone who was not linked to the Red Cross the situation might have been better.

\(^{33}\) Bourdieu et al. 1999:614  
\(^{34}\) Ibid 1999:608f
4. Results

This chapter consists of empirical findings from our conversations with the Red Cross workers and women participants, visits to villages and women groups, interviews and Ellis report “Gender and Growth Assessment in Uganda: Unleashing the Power of Women”. To get a deeper understanding of the women’s marginalised situation we will also involve the theoretical perspectives presented in chapter 2.

4.1 Gender and Growth Assessment in Uganda

The report “Gender and Growth Assessment in Uganda: Unleashing the Power of Women” written by Amanda Ellis has helped us in understanding the life situation of the women in the Red Cross programme. We have carried information from the report with us through the whole study but also chosen to use some parts of it to support our empirical findings. Below a short description of the contents of the book:

The report points out the importance of the link between economic growth and gender and claims the necessity of helping women to overcome barriers to business creation and development. The main argument is that inequality between men and women is one of the premier impediments towards economic growth and welfare in Uganda. Ellis refers to a Ugandan lawyer, Sara Lubega, who suggests that traditions place women in an inferior position in relation to men. Ellis states that cultural attitudes can marginalise women as economic actors. Women often lack a voice in decision-making in the household as well as in the public sphere. They also lack control over income sometimes even in cases when they provide the labour that generates the income. This gives the effect that women may lack motives to start a business of their own. Despite the introduction of universal primary education in Uganda, girls in general seldom get the same educational opportunities as boys. Ellis further writes that justified practices as early marriage and the practise of taking property from widows and orphans can threat women’s access to justice. A way of solving this issue is to encourage women to alternative kinds of employment.

35 Ellis 2005:2
36 Ibid 2005:20
37 Ibid 2005:20
4.2 Are there situations of exploitation and opportunity hording?

4.2.1 Exploitation
Life stories told by the women participating in the programme included, according to us, clear situations of injustice. Most of these situations regarded difference in life between men and women and especially concerning women’s unpaid work. Women’s unpaid labour is not new findings when looking at inequality between men and women. But, in trying to find out the reason for why these women need help, when it comes to starting up their own businesses, we need to include this discussion. We asked our selves how these women’s position in work affected and hindered their lives and found signs of situations of exploitation. According to Charles Tilly exploitation is one mechanism that contributes to the establishment of durable inequality. He defines the concept as when powerful groups of people exclude less powerful individuals from the full benefit of united efforts of work. Also when a group is exposed to exploitation the exploiter depend on the exploited, without their efforts in work they wouldn’t have the power.38

In Uganda men almost exclusively own land. Few of all women we met owned the land they were living on. One of the women we interviewed described that her husband before they got married owned a house and land, where they started their life together. This was a common story referring to the life histories of the women in the programme. After a woman gets married she often moves to stay with her husband, within the area of his work and land and thereby most of the women leave their own villages. One woman expresses:

“The house and the land was my husband’s and he already got it himself. My husband already had this in his life when we got married and that is what we started from. I do not own land today, it is my husband’s.”

Why is this discussion important in relation to exploitation then? It has to be put in perspective of existing division of labour between men and women in the villages. We found that the division of labour between men and women are strict in the villages we visited outside Entebbe town. Women are at home, taking care of domestic labour and agriculture while men do their work outside the home, as employees or running their own businesses. The women we interviewed describe an average day in their life as a day filled with domestic responsibilities as cooking, cleaning, digging for vegetables in the garden and fetching water. Their income is non-existent or strictly limited. However because of the Red Cross micro finance programme they now

38 Tilly 1998:98ff
sometimes earn a small amount of money from their activities. They also describe that their husbands’ daily life is outside their home as employees for companies or organisations or as small-scale entrepreneurs. One women group member describes her day waking up really early in the morning; by six o’clock she is already working with the animals, feeding and cleaning them, and after she goes to the garden for digging. She further says that domestic work is her job only and not her husband’s. Summing up, the women spend their day doing unpaid domestic work and agriculture on land owned by their husbands. When Tilly describes the effects of his four mechanisms on durable inequality he writes that women’s labour often is funding male-activities and many times represents the ground on which all male dominated transactions rest upon.\(^{39}\)

Further we learned that resources in form of income generated from labour often end up with the husband even if the woman is responsible for the required work. When the women sometimes earned an amount of money their husbands were responsible for how it was going to be spent. Because when a man and wife share a household the man is responsible for the family incomes. Also we were told that a man’s money is his money and even though a man is married the money does not necessarily end up in the common household. This fact might lead to the problem that the women’s access to money is always limited, according to the Red Cross workers, because they need to fill in all the gaps for the family needs. In the same discussion we asked if the men pay for the children’s school fees more often than the women do and the answer was that men alone decide whether they want to or not, because it is their money. We were told that it is impossible to tell a husband how he should use his money. Some men use it all for just pleasure, as for drinking alcohol. Ellis writes about the same phenomenon in her report and suggests that when men control the family incomes this affects women’s will to raise money of their own. We find facts that indicate that situations of exploitation exist; men seem to exclude the women from their full benefits of work. Also men seem to be dependent on the women’s work, they need someone to take care of the domestic work and agriculture while they are away working daytime.

4.2.2 Opportunity hording and Social closure

We also found situations that could be characterized as a type of monopolisation prevailing. There are distinctions between what are suitable activities and objects for women versus men in these villages, leaving the men with far more benefits than women. Tilly would have called this opportunity hording and Weber would have named this social closure. These forms of monopolisation exclude the dependency that exist between the exploiters and exploited, included in the concept exploitation. Instead they only include situations where a powerful group exclude

\(^{39}\) Tilly 1998:100
less powerful individuals from benefits. Harshly expressed; men could in these cases obtain a better situation if the women did not exist. However we should not forget the existing dependency found in our examples of exploitation. Tilly’s mechanism opportunity hording occurs when a categorized network gains resources of value possible to monopolize for own use.\footnote{Tilly 1998:98ff} Social closure is when powerful members of a group benefit from excluding less powerful individuals. Weber further describes social closure explaining the difference between social relations that is characterized as open or closed. When a social relation is characterized as closed, it hinders outside members who wish to join. When instead a social relation is characterized as open it do not hinder outside members who want, and have the possibility, to join.

As mentioned earlier division of labour between men and women are strict and also questions about the women’s background suggest a sharp division in labour between men and women. All the women group members describe that they as children and teenagers helped their mothers with domestic work and spent most of their time at home. This information gives an indication that their parents followed the same pattern regarding division of labour between men and women. Their mothers were farmers, taking care of the household or had small local enterprises. Their fathers were employees or were running their own businesses.

During the interviews with the women group members we realised that the opinion of what is seen as male and female activities is very strong. The reaction to the question: “Are there any women that do typical “male-activities in the village?” during our interviews shows that clearly. All women, including the interpreter, were laughing every time this question was asked and the answer was always a strict no. Ellis discusses the affect of traditions on women and men in relation to division of labour in her report and refers to a Ugandan lawyer Sarah Lubega (2000) who claims that traditions place women in an inferior position in relation to men. Traditional customs and norms in Uganda entrenches the assumption that a woman cannot do what a man can do.\footnote{Ellis 2005:19}

We would also in this discussion like to refer to our meeting with the Deputy Mayor in Entebbe, which gave us an understanding of the political and cultural context of Uganda. During the meeting we discussed issues regarding equality between men and women and also these questions in relation to the constitution of Uganda. We asked her to comment a quote from the Uganda Constitution that says: “Laws, cultures, customs or traditions which are against the dignity, welfare or interest of women or which undermine their status are prohibited by this
Constitution.”⁴² On the basis of this quote she described that Ugandan culture in some aspects hinders women’s progress in for example the aspect of division of labour. Uganda is a multicultural society with a lot of different cultures and traditions and some of them consider women as not being able to do the things men do. She says that a number of cultures think that a woman should not sit on a chair, not talk in front of men, not ride a bicycle and not eat at the table at the same time as men. These discussions lead us to another question; the issue of whether it is right to enforce a change in cultural traditions with the aim of increasing equality between men and women. We therefore asked her if it is right to dissolve deep cultural patterns to fulfil equality. She answered that you cannot dissolve culture completely, although some cultures in Uganda, according to her, hinder women’s ability to improve their life situation. She asks herself why a girl should not ride a bicycle or study science. Boys and girls should have the same possibilities to become whatever they want, a woman should, she says, become a taxi-driver if she wants.

We asked ourselves if this strong general opinion, explained above, of what is male versus female activities and objects, could be a part of a monopolisation, which generate different access to resources, leaving the men with better possibilities in life. Are the men retaining resources for own use excluding women from these benefits? Stories told from the women describing their daily life, social activities and access to education could be of relevance in discussing situations of monopolisation. All these subjects point out men as the beneficial in relation to women.

During our meetings with the women participating in the programme we discussed differences in life between men and women and one constantly recurring subject was social activities. Videlicet activities that are performed after required work time. We understood from these conversations that the women’s time for social life outside the home and the family was limited. One of the women we interviewed said that she occasionally meets friends in the village, though this does not happen often because she spends most of her time at home. Women usually have the full responsibility of the household and our meetings with the women told us that domestic work takes a lot of time and requires women to stay at home.

⁴² Ellis 2005:16
One woman expressed: “A married woman is confined to be at home”. She further described that she is not able to stay out a lot because she always has domestic work to do;

"When you are at home you can always do something, but you can't if you are out, when you are married you can prepare the food for your husband and you can do this and that."

We further understood that men have a different life outside the family than women. One conversation with two members of a women group told that men more often than women tend to have their own free-time to go to clubs, cinema or bars. They also said that men spend more money on their social-activities than women; it costs money to go to clubs and cinemas but nothing to just gather around to socialize in the villages, as women do. As mentioned, a man’s money is his money and he decides what he wants to spend them.

Our meetings with the women also showed another example of the fact that men and women spend their free time differently. One of the women’s husbands was a Muslim and this constrains him to go for cinemas and bars; instead he socializes with others by going to the mosque. The Muslim men usually attend the mosque every day but women only go once a week. This shows that even though the way of life may be different for a Muslim family the social settings for men and women can be the same.

Our visits consequently indicated that men have much more time for their social life than women and also more money to spend on their own activities. Are then, the women also excluded from benefits in other parts of their lives?

Our empirical findings showed that the women, because of their labour, have a hard time starting up and running their own businesses. One type of activity in the Red Cross programme is to make handcraft like necklaces, bracelets and baskets. On this matter the women within the Red Cross programme express that they had problems finding outside markets for their handcraft. Ellis also brings this up and refers to the “Recommended Advocacy by the PSFU, Women’s Business Associations, and NGOs” which shows that women’s lack of markets is a problem for women regarding starting their own business. Ellis discusses the division of labour in her report and says that if a woman is married she usually has to ask for permission from her husband to run a business. When the business generates income she often has to give that up, for the husband, this

43 Ellis 2005:14
is particularly true in rural areas. Ellis also writes that men predominate in non-farm production in the formal economy in Uganda. Men represent 61 percent of employees, while most women workers are self-employed or work as unpaid family workers. She further writes that women businesses are more likely to be informal micro enterprises with a small number of employees, than those owned by men. If a woman wants to start a business it requires a lot of time because different meetings with institutions and banks can give rise to delays and long travels. Therefore it needs to fit their domestic schedule, which can constitute a heavy burden for women who usually have the full responsibility of the household.  

Our meetings with the women group members tell that domestic work takes a lot of time and requires women to stay at home. Ellis also writes that women own only 7 percent of all registered land in Uganda. Owning land gives access to credits in a bank in Uganda because the banks often require land as a security when somebody applies for a loan. Limited access to bank-loans also affects women’s ability to find business premises.

Facts thus indicate that women’s position in work hinders them from possibilities to start up their own businesses; they often lack initial capital, outside markets and time. If women owned land they could get a loan at the bank, if they had more time to spend outside the village they could gain information needed in the process of starting their own businesses and also if the women had the possibility to gain a social network and contacts outside the village it could be easier to find outside markets. Men have access to all these factors in much larger extent than women, because of their work is situated outside the village.

It could also be of relevance to mention girls’ restricted access to education in the discussion regarding if the women are exposed to opportunity hording and social closure. Uganda has a universal primal education. Despite that, many children go to private schools, which can be very expensive. The number of governmental schools is too small compared with the need. Also the higher status of private schools affects this matter. The field-coordinator of Red Cross Entebbe branch comment children’s access to education and says that many children go to private schools today. Because of expensive fees the children who go to private schools many times come from rich families. He further says that if parents can’t afford to pay for private schools their children go to governmental ones, which are free. One problem is that these schools often are located very far away from their homes; hence the children have to walk a long way to reach school. He further says that the number of governmental schools is few and many children have to quit school because their families cannot afford it.

44 Ellis 2005:29ff
Expensive school fees are a big issue for all the women in the programme we met. Our discussions about their dreams and fears especially reveal this; all women express their wish of higher education for their children in the future. When they were asked about their fears in life one of them answered that her strongest fear was not being able to pay school fees for her children.

School fees must be put in perspective of Uganda’s family structure norms. Most of the women in the programme have many children and are also brought up in big families. The women we interviewed all described a background with at least eight sisters and brothers and when talking about how they started their own families they express that giving birth to children is a way of producing. Polygamy is also found in many of the women’s background, which gives the result of big families.

One women’s answer to the question: “How many sisters and brothers do you have?” is:

“Five sisters and two brothers but we are really twelve. My father has twelve children. But with my mother we are seven all together. Then the other mother, they are five.”

Ellis writes, in her report, how polygamy generates more children; “Fertility rates are higher among women in polygamous families, who compete for male heirs.” She writes further that women in polygamy-marriages are more vulnerable than others because the resources from the husband often are limited; the husband’s income is then shared also with other families.46

During our conversations with the women it became clear that big families give consequences for the children, especially girls. A meeting with two members of a women group brought up an example of the consequences of polygamy. One of the women had a background of polygamy; her father had two wives. The father did not prioritise her mother but the other wife, which gave the consequence of a lower education for herself and her sisters and brothers. The quote below shows how she describes her and her brothers and sisters educational experiences.

So, we all went to school but unfortunately the one with highest education only went to senior five. It was a brother to me. The one that went second highest was also one of my brothers. My brothers went to the highest education.

46 Ellis 2005:21
Many of our meetings with the women tell that boys are prioritised in getting education. Ellis writes that Uganda has made a striking change when it comes to education and gender, linked to the universal primary education. The enrolment increased from 3 million in 1997 to 7.6 million in 2003. When it comes to secondary school the gender differences are big. The share of girls reduces the higher you are in the education system. In secondary 1-4, it is 20-35 percent more boys and in secondary 5-6, it is 60 percent more boys than girls.47

Our talks with the women in the programme and the workers of Red Cross also tell that it’s common for girls to get married at an early age and therefore girls often lack higher education. They explain it as; a girls’ family often get a dowry from a boy when they marry and this encourage the girls’ parents to lead her into marriage. When one of the women talks about her background she says:

Then because of the several problems at home, my mother was sick, I happened to get married at the age of sixteen. So because I got married I had to move to my husband’s place. And now I am responsible for the family. My husband paid dowry so that helped my mother with her situation.

Empirical findings, thus, show that men in higher extent than women have access to education. It all relates to Ugandan family structures and is by most, of those we met, motivated with the fact that girls don’t need an education for their future work. Ellis report gives examples of which negative effects low education have for women in Uganda. For example she brings up how limited education and low English skills influence women’s ability to assert their legal rights.

Ellis writes that, according to the law, women have inheritance rights to get access to land, however many women do not have knowledge of their legal rights. Women have inheritance rights over land by the formal succession laws, although the law does not take the unequal allocation of land between men and women or the ways of inheritance of land that preserve inequality, into consideration. Many women’s inability of asserting their legal rights often lead to a situation where law does not compile with reality.48 She further writes that women often by tradition are turned out of their rights to matrimonial land at a divorce or a death of a husband, they are not at all consulted about the disposition of family land.49 Evidence from the “Uganda Participatory Poverty Assessment” claims that women often don’t have a voice included in the

47 Ellis 2005:32
48 Ibid 2005:5f
49 Ibid 2005:10
decision-making within the family.\textsuperscript{50} The current succession act in Uganda says that the wife is entitled 15 percent of the material properties after a husband’s death and in case there is more than one widow they will share the entitlement. The wife’s relationship to the home during a marriage is also not monetized, which means that it does not have a legal value.\textsuperscript{51} As mentioned very few of all the women we met in the villages owned their own land.

The deputy mayor of Entebbe says that it is hard to practise the constitution of Uganda because people are “ignorant” of the laws. The reason for this is, according to her, found in people’s lack of education and English skills. Many of the women in the programme lack skills in the English language, which, as shown, is important when asserting your legal rights in Uganda.

Are women’s poor social life, difficulties in starting up their own businesses and lack of education and English skills, examples of the effects of opportunity hoarding and social closure, leaving the men as the more privileged group and the women as subordinated? We find that men benefit from the strict distinctions made between male and female activities in this respect. Thereby women are being excluded from privileges, which men monopolise and retain for own use. However it is hard to claim that men deliberately exclude women from these benefits, it is probably more a question of tradition. Traditional customs states what is male and female labour. They also tell what are proper activities to practice for men and women in for example their social life. So it is not only the men that exclude the women from benefits. The reaction to the question “Are any women practising male-activities in the village?” was as surprising for the women as for the men present.

4.2.3 Exploitation and monopolisation regulates access to property

The theories about exploitation and monopolisation are both based upon an antagonistic thought, that when two groups are situated in a contradictory position, one group benefit from the other group’s unfair situation. With regard to Uganda as an agricultural society, access to property is a prerequisite for reaching a high standard of living. Without property access to education is limited in Uganda, education that many times is a solution for reducing poverty and dissolving a marginalised life-situation. Also without the property land, it is not possible to get a bank loan, which could be used to start a business. The importance of property is thus recognized as the major factor for access to further resources. Without education it is hard to get a monetized job and without a bank-loan it is more or less impossible to start up a business. In the villages we

\textsuperscript{50} Ellis 2005:20
\textsuperscript{51} Ibid 2005: 17f
visited we saw situations where men exploit and exclude women and thereby have the power over property. Without property it is hard for the women to break their marginalised situation.

4.3 Socially constructed male and female roles

It is impossible to avoid the discussion about socially constructed roles when looking at the lives of men and women in the villages, included in the programme. We have earlier stated that women are not able to do male activities without being considered as different (or even crazy). For a better understanding of what affect this labelling of male versus female activities we use Bourdieu’s theory about male dominance. Bourdieu describes that biological differences between the sexes exist, although our definitions of them are affected by arbitrary thoughts and not only based on what is given by nature.\(^{52}\) He describes that differences between men and women are parts of a whole system of dichotomised and connected diverse relations. In division of labour, for example, men are connected to the external, the official and the public while women are linked to the internal, the lower and the continuous. The constructed social roles are expressed in all types of objects seen as masculine and feminine and when men’s activities and objects generate more benefits it gives consequences for women, giving them a subordinated position.\(^{53}\)

Our empirical findings show that women and men in the villages do work that can be seen as strongly connected to their sex, using Bourdieu’s examples of connected diverse relations. The women describe that their daily life is filled with domestic work as cooking, cleaning, digging for vegetables and fetching water; daily routine work situated inside the home. On the other hand the women describe that their men spend their lives outside the domestic sphere as employees or entrepreneurs. Our conversations with the women also reveal that none of the women spend time doing traditionally male activities. Again refereeing to the interview with the deputy mayor, she expresses that some cultures in Uganda thinks that a woman shall not sit on a chair, not ride a bicycle or not eat at the table with men. Her statement can easily relate to Bourdieu’s discussion of constructed roles, pointing out examples of objects seen as male and not female in certain cultures.

It is also clear that existing division of labour between the sexes generate in different access to resources. Women’s income from work is often limited or non-existent. Most of the women in the programme are self-employed or work as unpaid family workers. But, because of the Red Cross micro finance programme the women sometimes earn a small amount of money. However,

\(^{52}\) Bourdieu 1998:17

\(^{53}\) Ibid 1998:43
when the women are married, their men generate the dominant income for the household and are also responsible for the family incomes. The women do not have a monetized relationship to the home, which is their workplace. It is for some people surprising when a woman brings money to the household-finances. For instance one man’s reaction of his woman participating in the Red Cross programme was; “It is generating some money to the family and I never thought that could happen.” Could this be an example of how the programme starts to break the strict existing division of labour between men and women?

4.4 Signs of adaptation and emulation

Women’s acceptance of their subordinated position in relation to men is also important in the aspect of gaining further understanding of the women’s marginalised situation. During our visits to the women groups we did not hear any complaining pointing out men as responsible for the women’s poor life situations. Also we did not notice much questioning or reflexive thoughts of their marginalisation. Tilly describes that the two mechanisms adaptation and emulation generalize the effects of exploitation and opportunity hording, which leads to a situation of durable inequality. Adaptation means that subordinated groups tend to accept and adapt existing inequalities and therefore inequalities between men and women become a natural part of the daily life of women. When discussing women’s acceptance of their subordinated position it is also relevant to see to Bourdieu’s concept symbolic violence, which is an imperceptible violence invisible for its victims. Emulation is the explanation for how hierarchies in power, organisation structures and existing social relations are being imitated and spread into new environments and contexts.\textsuperscript{54}

4.4.1 Emulation

As stated before empirical findings show that existing labour roles of men and women have been practiced for generations. The women’s background stories also describe how the women tend to adjust themselves to where the husband’s work and property is situated. It is the women that follow the men after marriage and not the other way around. When Tilly describes the term emulation he explains that organisational structures that function well will reproduce because they are an easy way to success, they do not demand a lot of investments and they are easy to combine with other forms of organisations.\textsuperscript{55} Tilly further explains that women’s labour often is funding male-activities and represents the ground on which all male dominated transactions rest upon.\textsuperscript{56} Could this be seen as a sign of emulation; men and women follow existing labour roles that have

\textsuperscript{54} Tilly 1998:21f
\textsuperscript{55} Ibid 1998:107
\textsuperscript{56} Ibid 1998:100
been practiced for generations because it is the way it has always been and is according to them a well functioning dividing up of labour. We must set this in relation to Tilly’s mechanism adaptation and Bourdieus concept symbolic violence; if there is no questioning of existing structures the more probable it is that they are being spread and imitated into new environments and areas over time.

4.4.2 Adaptation and Symbolic violence

The women in the programme are seen as more vulnerable than men and is therefore receiving help through the Red Cross programme. Women in relation to men are subordinated when it comes to access to resources and benefits. Although the women do not seem to be aware of their marginalised status or at least they do not at all accuse men for their situation. The roles of men and women, including different benefits, are universal knowledge that is not being questioned. Using the terms of Tilly this could be seen as a situation of adaptation. Tilly asserts that subordinated groups tend to accept and adapt existing inequalities.57 If we instead look for an explanation in theories by Bourdieu it is relevant to add his discussion about sex habitus. Bourdieu says that women through sex habitus have their own line of thinking which make them consider themselves as subordinated to men.58 Acceptance can also be related to Bourdieus concept symbolic violence, a concept described as an imperceptible violence invisible for its victims.59 Symbolic violence is practised when subordinated groups’ pattern of thoughts is directly referred on the basis of the dominants structure of thoughts.60 It is a violence that keeps us immune against questioning the hierarchic structure that we are in.61

In discussions with the participants in the programme regarding difference in life between men and women it became clear that men posses more benefits in for example their social life. The women explain how men both have more money and time for their social activities than they themselves. However this is not pronounced to us as criticism, they instead express that this is natural and important because men and women need to have separate social lives and also their own talks. This “none questioning” of their subordinate life situation is found again and again in our empirical findings. For example one respondent expresses “If you are a married woman you are confined to be at home”, which by us is interpreted as more of a statement of how the situation is, than a questioning of the current conditions. Also the earlier mentioned laugh with regard to if

57 Tilly 1998:21
58 Andersen & Kaspersen 2000:411
59 Bourdieu 1998:11
60 Ibid. 1998:47
61 Ibid 1998:38
the women do male activities further shows a tendency of the women’s acceptance of the activities labelled as theirs.

4.5 Is it possible to change the women’s marginalised situation?

The main theoretical perspectives we have used trying to explain why the women participating in the Red Cross micro finance programme need help is Tilly’s theory about durable inequality and Bourdieu’s thoughts regarding male dominance and socially constructed roles. None of them, we must say, infuse much hope in changing a situation characterized as unequal. Tilly uses the term durable when speaking of his mechanisms and Bourdieu ground his theories on the preferences that our social behaviour is written in our mind and bodies. However our experiences from meeting the women groups show indications that their participation in the programme improves their daily life.

One example of change is that their involvement has given them the opportunity to contribute to household incomes. The reaction to the women’s possibility to add money to family incomes is often surprising. One woman mentions her husband’s comment on the matter and that he was utterly surprised that she could generate money to their household. During conversations when this was brought up we could tell by their expressions that it also contributed to an increase of the women’s self-confidence. When the woman talked of her husband’s reaction on the matter she herself looked as much surprised of her own ability and contribution. This shows an example of how the programme helps the women to enter ground labelled as men’s.

The women’s participation also seems to have changed their social life. Before the programme they spent most of their time at home but because of the Red Cross meetings and activities, they now spend more time outside, yet still within the boundaries of the village. One woman expresses: “life has changed, before I was so much at home, sitting at home, but since, I am more out in the village than before.” Another one of the respondents says: “Most of my time, I spend at home, except from Thursdays when I meet with the women group, we meet at four in the evening.” Despite signs of the women’s acceptation we can discern a more reflexive and questioning approach of their life situation. They all talk about the programme’s changes very positively, realising that being situated within the home all day is not always necessary. So the participation itself also seem to be an incentive for questioning their situation. One of the women we interviewed said she was very grateful for her Red Cross membership and for her opportunity to meet us. She expressed that our questions had made her think about her life in a different way.
We found small changes in the women’s daily lives, if using a wider perspective when discussing if the women could break their marginalized and subordinated position it all becomes more complex. Surely the programme improves the women’s lives but changing their situation in relation to men is a much bigger challenge. Our theoretical perspectives suggest that their subordination to men is their biggest problem, keeping them from access to resources. But, could access to valuable resources guaranty a position in power in relation to men? Tilly writes that durable inequality can benefit all types of exploiters; it all depends on their access to valuable resources. Bourdieu gives another input, whose discussion about male dominance suggests that women’s subordination to men is too hard to break. When again looking at the programme with the perspective of breaking the women’s subordination to men it is hard to find such improvements. As mentioned we can see signs that the women is beginning to break ground that is labelled as men’s, regarding their ability to contribute to household incomes. A more questioning attitude was also found among the women regarding their life situation in relation to men. However, the women are being helped to start activities labelled as female, which usually do not require or generate resources. They are encouraged to start up activities as farming, cultivating and chicken-railing, work situated internal within the home. Also their work does not guaranty that they could keep the money it is generating, if a woman is married their husbands are often responsible over household-incomes. In relation to our theoretical framework, the division of labour is in this sense an important question to discuss. Our study suggests that the pattern of inequality found in the villages in this study cannot be changed only with increasing access to valuable resources for the women; the system of gender has to be changed.

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62 Tilly 1998:95
5. Conclusions and remarks

This final chapter presents conclusions drawn from the results and our answers to this study’s main questions; Why do the women participating in the Red Cross micro finance programme need help to start up their own businesses? How does the micro finance programme affect the life of these women?

5.1 Why do the women participating in the Red Cross micro finance programme need help to start up their own businesses?

Our theoretical perspectives have helped us in trying to answer the question why the women participating in the programme need help. Tilly describes how exploitation, opportunity hording, emulation and adaptation lead to durable inequality, which could constitute a probable explanation of these women’s marginalised position. We found situations of exploitation that clearly affect the women’s life, the men in the villages many times exploit women by excluding them from the full benefit of efforts of work. For instance incomes often end up with a man even if a woman is responsible for the required work. It is also common that women do agricultural work on land owned by their husbands. Cases of opportunity hording, monopolisation, was also found in our understanding of their daily life situations. When opinions of what are male versus female activities are strict, women are generally excluded from work that generates access to resources that could improve their poor situation. Because of existing division of labour, which is an effect of monopolisation, the women are less prioritized in getting education and inheritance of property in relation to men.

Based on Bourdieu’s theory we could conclude that strong socially constructed male and female roles in the villages result in the women’s subordination. Our experiences from meeting the women in the Red Cross programme is that they cannot see themselves doing male activities, for instance driving boda-boda or taxi. It is taboo in the societies they live in. The strong traditional opinions of what is seen as male versus female seem to give the effect of a monopolisation on which men benefit. It cannot be concluded from our study that men in the villages consciously exclude women and monopolise activities and objects that generate valuable resources, but rather that traditional values make both men and women accept men’s monopolisation.

It can be concluded that both of Tilly’s mechanisms emulation and adaptation affect to the women’s marginalisation. Existing labour roles between men and women in the villages have been practiced for generations and also women’s labour have always been funding men’s activities. We hardly ever came across any questioning or discontentment of these structures by
the women; they saw this as an only alternative. The women’s acceptance of their subordination to men is also explained by the concept symbolic violence, they seem to withhold an unconscious acceptance of existing labour roles. The women’s thoughts can be referred to and support a society dominated by men. However we found indications that the micro finance programme helps to make the unjust situation visible for the women, which thereby is a proof that the women now start to question their subordinated position. So finally we can state that all of Tilly’s mechanisms are found in the life situations of the women.

5.2 How does the micro finance programme affect the life of these women?
The Red Cross programme has affected the women’s lives positively in many ways. For example the women’s participation gives them more opportunities to spend time outside their home, working with activities and socialising with friends and neighbours. Thereby the programme helps the women to break their isolated internal position within the family and village. Also the women are able to contribute to the household incomes. This can bring confidence necessary for running a business. It shows their capability to be self-supporting. When a woman herself brings money to the family, it shows that the programme helps the women to enter ground labelled as men’s. However we must not forget the situations of exploitation found in the women’s lives, many times the women are forced to give the money to their husbands. The improvements made by the programme are many times challenged by the traditional roles of men and women, this indicates that it is not enough only to give the participants access to resources. The micro finance programme needs to question the system of gender.

The biggest problem found in our empirical study regarding the women’s marginalisation is the existing division of labour between men and women. The issue is a result of women’s subordination to men and keeps them from access to resources. To change women’s marginalised situation, the existing division of labour in the villages need to be changed. It is not an easy task, the socially constructed roles of men and women affect the division of labour and when these gender roles originate from men’s and women’s biologically differences, the way of rupture the women’s subordination is hard.

The Red Cross microfinance programme helps the participants to start traditionally female activities situated internal within the home. They still lack time and possibilities to leave home and develop their own businesses further. Starting, running and developing a business are time-consuming and not always easy to combine with a full responsibility of domestic work in a family. One main issue regarding their limited abilities to evolve their activities within the
programme is that they lack outside markets. Their internal position within the home and village constrains them to create external social networks that could lead to markets outside the boundaries of the village.

To understand the women’s life situation we must take into account the importance of owning land in Uganda. If you own land you have the possibility to be self-sufficient and at the same time withhold an independent position and avoid situations of exploitation. The programme gives loans to women who do not own land and thereby lack ability to apply for a bank loan themselves. We found that the Red Cross underestimate the importance for the women to own land they use for cultivation and other activities within the programme. If a woman participating in the programme lives with her husband on his land and property, existing division of labour in the villages leads to a relationship where she is exploited, thereby she will maintain in her subordinated and marginalised position.

We have earlier referred to Tilly’s discussion how any person with access to resources could withhold a position in power. He gives the example that a black lesbian woman could possess higher status if only having access to resources. We question this statement; rather we think that women’s subordination is a part of an overall system hard to break. Our main conclusion regarding what is the premier factor for the subordination of the women in the programme is that when existing division of labour is based on socially constructed roles it hinders women’s abilities in life. If using Sweden as an example it shows that even if women have access to education and monetized work they are subordinated in relation to men. Sweden is seemed as a developed and modern society having one of the highest equality rates in the world. Even though, the division of labour between men and women generate into different access to resources. Women dominate the health care sector, which includes low wages and low status, while the spheres of production, which include higher wages and high status, consist of men.

It is important not to forget that Uganda works with questions regarding equality between men and women, for example the Constitution of Uganda withholds a chapter that specifically includes and gives rise to these questions. Changes have also been done in the legal system. In 1997 a reform regarding children’s access to education was made and primary school became free of charge, today there is an ongoing work to make secondary school universal as well. Laws are changed but implementation of new regulations takes a long time. Lack of education and English skills also hinder the Ugandan population to take part of the constitution and legislation.
6. References

6.1 Literature

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6.2 Internet

www.landguiden.se/pubCountryText.asp?country_id=178&subject_id=0 (2006-09-05)


6.3 Interviews

*Interview with one women group member, 1/12-2006*

*Interview with one women group member, 14/12-2006*

*Interview with one women group member, 14/12-2006*

6.4 Appendix

*Appendix 1 Interview guide*

*Appendix 2 Photographs*
Appendix 1 Interview guide

Background

- Age, marital status, children, family?
- Where and how do you live?

Red Cross

- When and how did you become a member of the Red Cross?
- Which activity are you practising in the micro finance programme?
- How has your situation changed during your participation in the programme?
- Have you met any difficulties starting up your own activity?
- What did your husband think when you started up your own business?

Life story

- Where were you born?
- How many sisters and brothers do you have?
- What did your parents do for a living when you were a child?
- How did your life look like when you were a child and lived with your parents?
- Did you get any education, on which level?
- Did your sisters and brothers get any education, on which level?
- How did an average day look like when you were ten years old?
- How was your life as a teenager? (friends, domestic work, school, love)
- When and how did you move from your parents’ house to get a life of your own?
- When did you get married?
- How did you start your life together with your husband?
- When did you get your first child?
- Are you practising family planning? How many children do you want to have?
• How many times have you moved in your life? How come that you live in this village?

**Social life**

• How does everyday life look like for you?
• How do you meet other people in the village?
• Who are you closest friends? What do you do when you meet each other, and how often?
• Do you have any male friends?
• How does everyday life look like for your husband?
• How does he socialize with his friends and how often?
• Are there any women doing male activities?

**Income**

• What do you (and your husband) do for a living?
• Which income activities generate money for school fees, clothes, food and amusements?
• Do all your children go to school? In which level? Are all your children able to attend the same level of education in the future?
• Who is in charge of all the family incomes?

**Future and hope**

• What are your joys and sorrows?
• What are your fears?
• What are your dreams for the future?
• What are your future plans for your children?

Anything to add?
Appendix 2 Photographs

Matoke

Preparing Matoke

Ready to serve
Activities within the programme

A pig farm outside one participant’s house

Water arrangement for the cultivation
The Red Cross Office, Entebbe branch

A poster at the office presenting one of the Red Cross’s main principles