Front cover

A GROUNDED THEORY EXPLORATION OF WELLBEING FOR WOMEN WHO HAVE BEEN FORCIBLY DISPLACED AS A RESULT OF TRAUMA CAUSED BY CONFLICT, BASED ON THE EXPERIENCE OF PARTICIPANTS LIVING IN UGANDA

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Thesis title page

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Author's Declaration

I declare that the work in this thesis was carried out in accordance with the regulations of the University of Gloucestershire and is original except where indicated by specific reference in the text. No part of the thesis has been submitted as part of any other academic award. The thesis has not been presented to any other education institution in the United Kingdom or overseas.

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Abstract

This study is a grounded theory exploration of wellbeing for women who have been forcibly displaced by war and focuses on the experiences of two groups of women, both living in resettlement communities in Uganda. One group are South Sudanese refugees living in the Palabek settlement in northern Uganda, the other are Acholi people living as internally displaced citizens in an informal settlement in Kampala. The methodology employed in this study is that of a feminist standpoint combined with a constructive grounded theory approach, using unstructured in-person interviews as the main data collection technique.

Key questions that are explored include how the women understand and experience wellbeing within their life context and what can be learned from female displaced participants in the global south relating to gendered perspectives of wellbeing and liveable space. The theoretical code that emerges from this data is that of reimagining liveable space over time, with its four key categories of wellbeing, liveableness, temporariness, and community. Within the discussion of these categories, reference is made to other relevant theories. The final outcome of this study is an emergent theory that is grounded in the data and, through reduction and refinement, gives a voice to women who represent those who experience marginalisation and subjugation, both within the communities that they come from, and due to the positioning of those communities within the international hierarchy.

This research is an innovative and novel piece of work that weaves together feminist standpoint grounded theory with other key theoretical paradigms and demonstrates how the research can hold its own within a greater body of study than just that with which it is immediately related. It also has its uniqueness in the way in which it draws the four categories together and demonstrates their important relationship to each other in a relevant and pertinent way.

Acknowledgements

At the heart of this research are some wonderful women who I have had the privilege to sit alongside as they did me the honour of sharing their stories. That the resultant grounded theory has emerged from their lives means that those women have also been inextricably bound into the journey of this research. At every stage, this research has sought to honour each of them. It has sought to honour what they have endured and survived and then had the courage to relive as they shared their memories with me of their horrific experiences of displacement and war. It has sought to honour their daily strength as they carve out a new life for themselves and their loved ones, despite the backstory of why they are where they are. And through them it has sought to honour so many more women who have endured similar experiences, whilst each having their own unique story. The emergent theory that is grounded in their lives takes the experiences, knowledge, and perspectives of these women to a much wider arena. It has the potential to speak into discourses relating to other women who are enduring displacement and violence. For the women of this study, that aspect of being part of a wider discourse, was incredibly important to them. When I explained to the women that what they say in the interview will be used to create a theory that people around the world can read, they each sat up a bit taller, and appeared to feel a little less forgotten. For a woman living in a refugee camp or informal settlement, who has not been to school and who might never be able to return home, it clearly means a lot.

Before I started this research, I had knowledge of and compassion for the suffering of the women, but I did not know what response to give or what to do with that knowledge. Through this research, I have found a means of giving a legitimate voice to their suffering and I have developed my own compassionate voice that comes from being able to identify with the suffering of displaced women in a much deeper way. In producing this research, I have created something that I can give my voice to on behalf of those who have suffered. This can be through spoken and written words, and it can be on behalf of those who contributed directly to this research. But it can be greater than that. I can also use this research to speak into the public discourse on behalf of others who suffer from forcible displacement because of external violence beyond their control. I am so pleased to have the opportunity to honour these women in this way, and to create this theory as a legacy to them. I will be forever grateful to these women.

There are many other people without whom this research would not exist, and to them I am grateful. First of all, I thank Dr Liz Berragan and Dr Stephen Cowden, my supervisory team who

between them sifted through the chaff of my early plans, saw the gems of a good proposal, and helped me transition from an activist to a theorist when needed. Thank you both for all of your time, wisdom, and supervisory support, and for guiding me through the maze of academia.

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Acronyms

AQ – Acholi Quarters

CA – Capabilities Approach

CGT – Constructive Grounded Theory

CRRRE – Culturally Responsive, Relational, Reflexive Ethics

GTM – Grounded Theory Method

GUREC – Gulu University Research Ethics Committee

IAT – Institutional Anomie Theory

ICF – Informed Consent Form

IDP – Internally Displaced People/ Person

ILA – I Live Again Uganda

LRA – Lord's Resistance Army

OPM – Office of the Prime Minister

PSOC – Psychological Sense of Community

SSR – South Sudanese Refugees

UGX – Ugandan Shillings

UNCST – Uganda National Council for Science and Technology

UNHCR – United Nations High Commission for Refugees

UOG – University of Gloucestershire

UPE – Universal Primary Education

WFP – World Food Programme

Maps relating to the context of the participants

Map 1:

to show position of South Sudan and Uganda, within wider context of sub-Saharan Africa

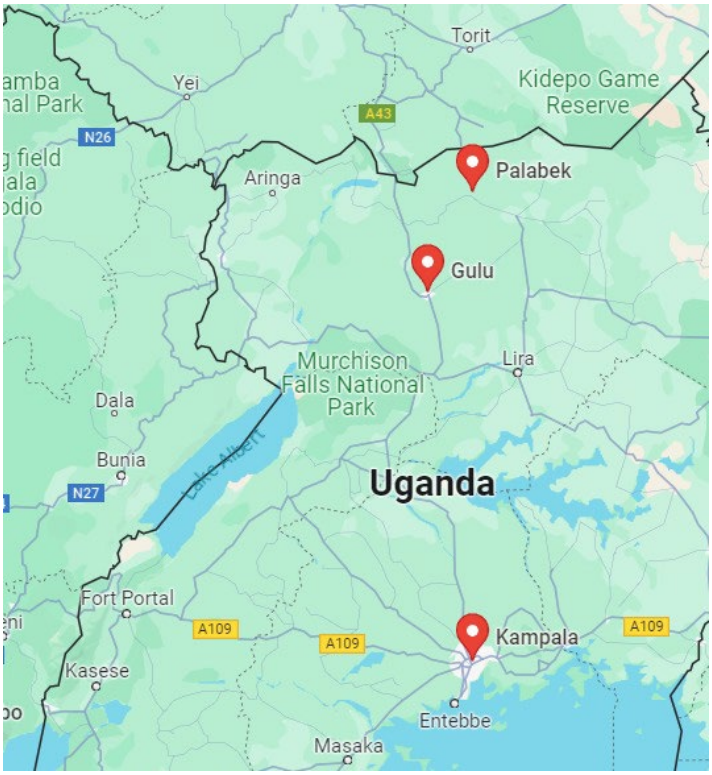
Map 2:

to show positions of:

- Palabek refugee camp,

- Gulu, heart of Acholiland, and headquarters of ILA-Uganda

- Kampala, capital city of Uganda, and within which Acholi Quarters informal settlement is situated



Map 3:

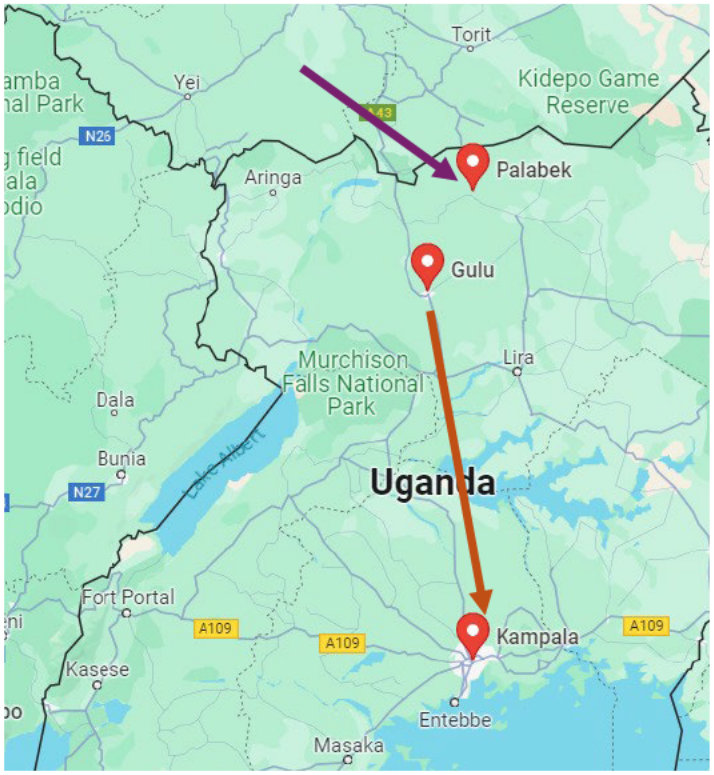
to show Palabek relative to Kitgum-Labongo and Gulu. These are the main administrative centres that can provide access to vocational training centres and higher-level education, and to which the Palabek residents would have to travel if they wished to pursue that level of education.

Map 4:

to show direction of displacement for Acholi women and South Sudanese women

Direction of displacement for Acholi women, from northern Uganda to Kampala

Direction of displacement for South Sudanese women, from South Sudan to Palabek refugee camp



CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

In writing this thesis, I picture myself taking the reader on a journey. Along the way, we will meet some incredible women who are at the centre of this research, and to whom I am hugely indebted. The journey for the reader starts in this chapter with an explanation about the research and how it came about. It then goes on to introduce the primary personnel: myself as the researcher, the South Sudanese refugee and Acholi internally-displaced women who so graciously shared their stories with me, and the non-profit organisation 'I Live Again Uganda', who acted as facilitators for the data collection component of the research. This chapter closes with a summary introduction to the structure of the rest of the thesis.

Throughout this thesis, three fonts have been used to demonstrate the three different voices that are speaking at different points in the narrative.

- The overall narrative voice is in standard font,
- *the voice of the participants is in italic font,*
- and reflective pieces from myself are in an alternative font.

My intention is that the use of three fonts will help the reader to understand which voice they are hearing at any given time.

And now, without further preamble, may the journey of this research thesis begin.

1.1 Introducing the research, and how it came about.

For the past twenty years, my professional work has been within the international development and humanitarian sector, supporting several indigenous grassroots organisations based predominantly, but not exclusively, in sub-Saharan Africa. Over that time, I have delivered training on a range of topics to a range of audiences who represent programmes working with low- income groups including refugees, orphans, street-children, informal-settlement dwellers, and rural-poor i.e. those who cannot afford to access training themselves due to limited financial and technical resources. The topics have been varied and included simple business-skills for women's co-operatives in Uganda and India, an introduction to collaborative learning and to neurodiversity for primary teachers in Kenya, Malawi and Rwanda, and strategic development workshops for projects in Ethiopia and Tanzania. In each instance the training delivered resulted from discussions regarding the needs of the project staff and the beneficiaries of their programmes including urban

communities based in informal settlements, prison officers and inmates, refugees, families of children with disabilities, and people living in situations of rural poverty. The materials delivered were developed through web-based research, personal knowledge gained through participation in relevant training programmes, and conversations with friends, family and colleagues who have relevant specialist knowledge.

The training is seen as an opportunity to build the individual knowledge of participants as well as capacity building for the various organisations and institutions that had invited me. These include Nkuru Vocational College in Uganda; Spurgeons Academy in Kibera, Nairobi, Kenya; The Voice School in Tanzania; Gulu Churches Together in Uganda; and non-profit organisations including Good News Jail Ministries in Rwanda; Ellilta in Ethiopia; and I Live Again Uganda. Wherever possible I have used a collaborative and participative approach to delivering the training, encouraging the participants to contextualise the concept to their situation. This approach is an indication of my social constructionist worldview, whereby the subject and object work together to interpret the world and co-construct knowledge rather than the emphasis being on one or the other only (Crotty, 1998). This paradigm is also the epistemological framework that my research will be set against, and to which I will return in chapter 2.

Throughout my years of delivering training, I have felt an increasing awareness that the training could be more effective and accessible if it was delivered in a more contextually relevant way. Sometimes my explanatory anecdotes used were not sufficiently relevant, or the language did not translate. At other times there were aspects of the training that were too far removed from the daily life of the participants to feel acceptable to be delivered. For example, is it acceptable to be advising mothers living in poverty on the benefits of a balanced diet when they are struggling to find enough food to keep hunger pangs at bay? Is it appropriate to be advising teachers of the benefit of small group and differentiated work when they are trying to educate classes of 45-50 pupils who only have textbooks sufficient for 10 – 15 pupils? Is it relevant to be discussing the ideal counselling environment with counsellors who are meeting the needs of refugees in a refugee camp? In each situation, the training was on topics requested by the participants, but the material conditions for those I was training was very different and I had an ongoing awareness of the need for the training to be relevant to the real needs of the people with whom I was working.

More recently the training has been focused on the '360Life' programme of materials that I have developed. It includes teaching about the anatomy of the brain and its role in areas such

as learning, interpersonal relationships and problem solving – both generically and through individual preferences. It also looks at trauma, and the impact of trauma on the functioning of the brain, before considering how a deeper understanding of this can reduce shame, and lead to healing, identity, and wellbeing. The drivers for the development of this training were several conversations that I had with staff from projects that I was supporting, and particularly their questions and concerns regarding increasing numbers of people that they were aware of, and trying to support, who were struggling with mental ill-health. A rise in suicide rates, particularly cited as seen within prison and police staff, was also being given as an indication that mental health issues in their countries was not being adequately addressed. It became clear from the conversations that there was a significant lack of knowledge about the links between trauma and mental health, and the impact of trauma on the functioning of the brain. From those conversations, I put together a training programme to help address some of these gaps in knowledge, and with the aim of equipping the project staff to better support their service users in day-to-day life. This training has been, and continues to be delivered to church leaders, teachers, community leaders, trauma counsellors and prison chaplains in many projects across the Africa, and the anecdotal feedback from participants has been very good.

Having spoken of my increasing awareness of the importance of being contextually and culturally relevant in the training that I delivered, it is pertinent here to draw attention to the concept of cultural competence as a tool of the researcher working in cross-cultural contexts. Cultural competence is a self-reflective process that acknowledge the role of culture in developing cultural identity, ways of thinking and behaviours, for self and for other, and considers that impact in any cross-cultural environment (Mews, *et al.*, 2018). At face value it is a useful discipline to pursue, particularly for those who are engaging with a community from another heritage and background. However, use of the term 'culture' brings with it a multitude of challenges, not least in determining exactly what is meant by the term (Jaroszyński, 2023). The definition of culture has changed over the years, and it can also vary depending on the discipline in which it is being studied. For example, an anthropological definition might be more bound to a geographical place or religion compared to a sociological definition which might be more related to a wider range of social constructs (Birukou, *et al*, 2013). The danger of using the term 'culture' as a catch-all phrase for the multiple facets that it can incorporate, and the multiple contexts in which it is used is that other important dimensions of societal life such as gender, power and representation can get ignored. Therefore, I suggest that the self-reflective process that is required by the researcher, and therefore myself, is one of contextual competence, whereby the roles of all facets of relevance are considered regarding the context

of the community in which the research is being carried out. As well as facets relating to the heritage of the community, these will also include questions regarding gender, power, representation and who it is who defines which issues are important. The inclusion of reflexive pieces throughout the thesis will help to provide further evidence of my recognition of contextual competence.

Attention to these additional issues is even more important in African societies, many of which are steeped in traditions that stem from assumptions relating to patriarchy and the domination of women (Okafor, 2020). Over the years, I have become increasingly able to adapt the presentation of materials and training to be more relevant to the context in which I find myself. However, on my part, I was very aware that the sources I was drawing on to put together the training were very Western-centric, and the voice of those from the global South was lacking. From personal experience I was also very conscious that women tended to be in the minority at any training sessions, and if I was to ask for local representation to give a contextualised view on a concept, it would usually be the men who came forwards. Therefore, carrying out this research included two important personal aims. Firstly, was the desire to carry out research that is, in some small way, a push-back against the voices of the global North that are the dominant narrative in the concepts that I have been delivering training on. Secondly, the research seeks to be a push-back against the patriarchal dominance and gender-based power that exists to varying degrees in the communities in which I have been working. In so doing, representation of women from communities that have a patriarchal heritage is being brought to the fore.

As I began to explore the possibility of carrying out some research that related in some way to the training materials that I had developed, I knew very much that I wanted the research to have the voice of marginalised women at its centre. This is a key driver for me, and my wish is to enable their voices to be heard, and to be honoured as voices that represent legitimate and important sources of knowledge that can be centralised through academic study. For various reasons, not least the conflicts that they have fled from, these women are very unlikely to be able to gain access to formalised higher education for themselves. Through participating in this piece of research, their perspectives and their knowledge will be acknowledged, respected, and incorporated into a body of academic literature. I have already witnessed in the data collection process just what that means to the participants, and what a sense of validation it has given to them as individuals.

I chose to focus my research on the substantive area of women who have experienced forced

displacement because of conflict and explore their perspectives of wellbeing. It is an area that some of the groups with which I have been working have very personal experiences and is an area that is not well represented by those groups in the literature. Therefore, it is an area to which I can bring new knowledge, and which can be a vehicle for the women with whom I have been working over the years to be positioned at the centre.

1.2 Introducing the researcher and her positionality

According to Qin (2016), positionality is the reflexive practice of a researcher considering what their personal position is and how it relates to the design, nature and processes of the study, including what influence it might have on the collection and interpretation of data. It is inextricably linked to the personal history of the researcher, and includes reference to gender, race, ethnicity, class, educational status, professional status, geopolitical locale, and cultural background (Lu and Hodge, 2019; Ozkazanc-Pan, 2012). Positionality and personal history of the researcher therefore play a central role in all parts of the research process. Personal characteristics and life experiences will lead to certain qualities and insights into their area of study, and can result in how well, or not, a researcher grasps certain phenomena, especially when the researcher comes from outside of the research participants community (Kimani and Vanner, 2021). It is therefore imperative that, in order to ensure robustness and transparency of the research, the researcher sets out their positionality and ensures an ongoing reflexive process.

Setting out my positionality as a researcher has been a reflexive process that also helps me to consider how I might be viewed by those with whom I am working in the field. Reflexivity is 'self-critical, sympathetic introspection' (England, 1994, p7), and requires the researcher to scrutinise themselves in an analytical way within their role. Here follow some insights that have resulted from this reflexive analysis of how I position myself as a researcher:

I am a white, middle class, educated, straight woman. I am married and the mother of twin adult daughters. I adhere to the Christian faith, and I have a professional history of working in small development agencies that, whilst UK-based, focus their work on supporting grassroots overseas partners. I consider reality to be a relative concept. Over the years I have seen many examples of how different ethnic heritages have their own interpretations and nuances of a concept. This can also be true for people of different genders and hierarchical statuses. I believe that a collaborative approach to developing a narrative is a much stronger and more robust approach

and my personal view is that variations to concepts should be respected and acknowledged, rather than one dominant and powerful narrative imposing its view on others, irrespective of the representation of those others.

From the perspective of those whom I am interviewing, coming from UK automatically positions me as coming from a wealthier and more developed nation. It also brings with it historical connotations regarding colonialisation and the associated power dynamics. The fact that I am carrying out research also positions me as person of higher academic standing, which may equate to being more learned in the eyes of the participants, some of whom have not experienced education at all in a formal setting.

My country of birth, and its inherent links to power, racism and colonialism, and my educational attainments are unchangeable. What impact they have on the researcher – participant relationship is, in part, affected by the level of contextual competence that I, as the researcher, demonstrate regarding these issues. The level of contextual competence will in part be affected by the degree of reflexivity that the researcher has undergone, and the subsequent recognition and acknowledgement of the various issues that can have a bearing on the power dynamics between the different parties. The issue of power dynamics will be considered further in a subsequent chapter, but at this point it is important to acknowledge the role of positionality and the impact it can have on what is an important aspect on the outcome of the research.

Regarding specific nuances of my positionality, there are aspects of it that can help to reduce the potential and perceived power imbalance between researcher and participants. For example, the faith issue is very important in the values system of those with whom I am working. Both the South Sudanese women and the Ugandan women who I interviewed raised the issue of faith as one of the areas of importance to them. For them to know that I am a practising, praying, church-attending Christian, helped to build a bridge between myself and them, and enabled them to talk more openly about their faith perspective. In some circumstances, the sharing of a faith perspective might lead to a sense of feeling restricted in what can be shared, for example issues relating to an abuse of power from religious institutions or individuals within. Thus, it should not be assumed that a shared faith perspective always opens the way for greater conversation. However, within this project, there was no evidence picked up by myself or the interpreter regarding any hesitancy to include references to the role of their faith within their values and decision-making processes.

Another aspect of my positionality that can break down potential barriers is that of being a married woman and mother of twins. I can show that I can identify with them from a woman's

perspective, as well as regarding issues around motherhood and being a wife. In the Ugandan tradition, to be a mother of twins is seen as a sign of God's blessing, and so this additional aspect of my positionality enabled some further opportunities for conversation and sharing of parenting experiences. However, whilst this created conditions for a bond, I am aware that the context in which we each parent is very different, and so any conversations relating to possible shared parenting experiences require much sensitivity.

My professional history of working in and with the communities where the participants now reside (whether temporarily or more permanently), also helps to break down barriers. That I can cite ten years of visits to Acholi Quarters, and six years of visiting Northern Uganda, helps the women to see that I have some sensitivity and insight into their lives, and that I am not a total outsider to their communities. It also demonstrates commitment to them, and that I am not a researcher who is just passing through and sees them simply as a means of providing data. Much has been written about both the challenges and the benefits of being either an insider or an outsider regarding social research (Manohar, *et al.*, 2019; Ganga and Scott, 2006), and it has been noted that the insider / outsider definition is not a strict binary one, but has a degree of fluidity to it (Lu and Hodge, 2019). Certainly, as one who has been involved for several years with the ethnic groups that my research participants identify as their heritage, I am not a complete outsider. But equally, as that heritage is not my own, I am not a complete insider. I therefore sit somewhere along the spectrum that spans these two extremes.

As a western woman, coming from a previously colonising country, it is important that I consider carefully the accusation given by Mishra that 'when Western women speak for the others, they only displace them, replacing their voices with their own' (Mishra, 2013, p132). This infers the question as to whether a western woman can speak on behalf of women from another race, country and particularly when there is a postcolonial dynamic between the researcher and the researched. My response to this question comprises part of my positional reflexive process, as follows:

One response to Mishra's accusation, and the inferred question, is to decide that I cannot speak on behalf of others, as it could be deemed arrogant and imperialistic to presume that I have the knowledge and information to do otherwise, even if I have been hearing their voice and seeking to represent them (Vanner, 2015). The other option is to acknowledge and respect the accusation and perspective of Mishra, but at the same time recognise that the way the world is structured means that these women are very unlikely to have the opportunity for their voices to be heard in the wider world unless they are teamed with a person / people who can help them

access that opportunity. By accident of birth, I am one such person who can help them access the wider world and find a platform from which their voices can be heard. The privilege of that position brings with it a responsibility, to use it for the good of others. In this instance the 'others' are the South Sudanese women at Palabek refugee community, and the Acholi internally displaced women living in an informal settlement in Kampala. Surely it would be self-indulgent piety to ignore that responsibility and choose the first response. I therefore choose the second response, to provide a platform for the voices of the women to be heard, and to do this in a culturally and contextually sensitive, reflexive, and highly respectful way.

Bricolage describes a phenomenon of drawing on a hybridity and cross-disciplinarity of research perspectives in order to explore 'intersecting determinants of social location' (Vanner, 2015, p2). Rogers, (2012) outlines five different types of bricoleur: methodological, theoretical, interpretive, political, and critical. I position myself as an interpretive and critical bricoleur. The interpretive component recognises that research is a process that requires interaction between researcher and participants and is also shaped in part by the personal history of the researcher. The critical bricoleur is "dedicated to questioning and learning from the excluded" (Kincheloe, 2004, p. 48) and seeks knowledge that is usually silenced in dominant research narratives (Rogers, 2012). I am seeking to better understand the worldviews of people outside the dominant norm, and through them to play a part in removing the power of knowledge production from the control of the elite; I have already discussed how my personal history is interwoven into the background shaping of this research. Together, these components help position me as an interpretive, critical bricoleur. Ontologically, the position is one of subtle constructive realism, with a social constructionism epistemology. Methodologically, I am using a constructive grounded theory approach with an underlying feminist standpoint perspective. These paradigms will be further discussed in a subsequent section.

1.3 Introducing the research participants

1.3.1 Some statistics to set the global scene.

The 1951 Refugee Convention defines a refugee as "someone who is unable or unwilling to return to their country of origin owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion." (UNHCR, 1951) By comparison, an internally displaced person is 'A person or groups of persons who has been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in

particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalised violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognised State border (UNHCR, 2001)

According to the UNHCR, at the end of 2021, 89.3 million people were living in a state of having been forcibly displaced as a result of conflict, violence, persecution, events resulting in a serious disturbance of public order, or violation of human rights. Of these, 27.1 million people are refugees, and 53.2 are internally displaced people. The remaining 9 million people comprise asylum seekers, Palestinian refugees, and Venezuelans displaced abroad. 83% of those who are forcibly displaced are being hosted in low- and middle-income countries, and 72% are being hosted in a neighbouring country. Of the countries who are hosting refugees, Uganda has the third highest population of refugees after Turkey and Colombia. Of the countries from which the refugees are fleeing, South Sudan is the fourth highest source country for refugees after Syria (6.8m), Venezuela (4.6m), Afghanistan (2.7m). South Sudanese refugees numbered 2.4m (UNHCR, 2022)

1.3.2 Some statistics to set the Ugandan scene.

As of April 2023, Uganda was hosting 1,491,825 refugees. Of these, 91% were living in refugee settlements. Women and children totalled 80% of the refugee population, and 57% of the refugees were from South Sudan. Uganda has 13 refugee settlements within its borders, and Palabek, where this research was conducted, is 10th by merit of population with a population of 76,579 (UNHCR, 2023). In 2006, the Ugandan government approved the Refugee Law which set the pace for Uganda's participation in addressing the global refugee crisis. This law promotes inclusion over marginalisation, and has at its heart, a 'progressive refugee integration and self-reliance policy whereby refugees are allowed access to land and other productive resources (Bashaasha, Emegu and Yamashita, 2021). However, due to the prohibition of naturalisation of any offspring to refugees, even if they are born in Uganda, many refugees end up living in a state of protracted displacement rather than being able to fully settle. (World Bank Group, 2016)

1.3.3 South Sudan refugees: background context

In 2011, independence was granted to the people of South Sudan and a new nation was born (Pinaud, 2021). This followed decades of hostilities, ever since Sudan gained independence in 1956 and the retreating powers instituted systems that ultimately gave the ruling power to

northern Sudan and the city of Khartoum (O'Ballance, 2000). The hostilities prior to the formation of South Sudan were rooted in political, religious, and cultural grievances between the government in the north of the country and the people in the south of the country (Lomoro, 2010). Sadly, the birth of South Sudan did not result in a cessation of hostilities. The establishment of the new country resulted in a power struggle between the president and his ex-deputy. These men have different tribal heritages which therefore brings an associated potential for ethnic violence between their tribes to exacerbate the troubles, and this is often given as the reason for the ongoing hostilities (Alderman, 2016). However, to imply that the hostilities are binary in nation might be too simplistic. Over the duration of the conflict, ethnic attacks have taken place in a phased, genocidal manner, as the majority tribe, which themselves were still a minority group, targeted one minority group after another (Pinaud, 2021). Whatever the finer complexities of their causation, these ongoing hostilities have resulted in huge numbers of deaths, dislocation of people, and occupation of land. In 2019, an estimated 7.1million South Sudanese required some sort of humanitarian assistance, whether as refugees, internally displaced people, or those living with severe food insecurity (IMF, 2019). As of March 2023, South Sudanese refugees totalled 2,304,431 people, with 37.6% of them fleeing to Uganda (UNHCR, 2023) (see map 4).

It should be considered that for some of the women fleeing from the war, the prevalence of gender-based violence within South Sudan might be an additional push factor for them to escape from their land of birth. Hove considers the impact that the war has had on the violation of women's rights in South Sudan (Hove, 2017). Whilst oppression of women, and associated examples of gender-based violence, are tolerated within the customs, traditions and culture of the South Sudanese, the prevalence has increased as a result of the war (Tol, *et al.*, 2020). It is therefore not unreasonable to wonder whether the flight of women to refugee camps outside of their country might lead to new opportunities that were not afforded to them in the stricter and more controlling environment of their homeland.

1.3.4 Acholi internally displaced people: background context

Unlike the war in South Sudan, which is still taking place and continues to result in a steady flow of refugees seeking a new, safe space to live, the war that resulted in Acholi people living as internally displaced citizens, ended in 2006. The conflict that led to the displacement of so many was one that lasted twenty years and was between the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) and the Ugandan government army. It was a war that was marked by the high number of children

being abducted by the LRA to serve as child soldiers, and at its height, it is estimated that 85% of the LRA were children (Amone-P'Olak, *et al*, 2014). These children were subjected to heinous crimes including torture, sexual assault, rape, being used as human shields, being forced into combat, and made to witness awful examples of mass slaughter and other atrocious acts. As a result of the atrocities that the children have experienced and the trauma that they have been through, many have felt unable to return to their families or their villages. This is in part a self-inflicted segregation caused by shame and misplaced guilt (Klasen, *et al*, 2015), but also it can be due to the experience of being ostracized by friends and family, and educationally marginalised when they have tried to return home (Russell and Gozdziak, 2006).

Approximately 90% of the Acholi population are recorded as having been displaced (Amone-P'Olak, *et al*, 2014) from affected parts of northern Uganda. Some remained in government-controlled camps in the nearby townships which have since been disbanded and residents moved back to their homes where possible. However, of the almost 1.6million who were internally displaced, it is estimated that between 300,000 and 600,000 fled to different urban areas of Uganda, including to Kampala, the capital city (Mallet, 2010) (see map 4). Within the city, the strongest density of people from the Acholi ethnic group are found in the area colloquially known as Acholi Quarters. Initially, the UNHCR provided humanitarian assistance to the IDP communities in Uganda, but this ended in 2012. Since that time, the status of IDP in Uganda has not been recognised, and the result is a lack of government recognition or support (Monteith & Lwasa, 2017). Life in Acholi Quarters was very challenging for the residents even before the withdrawal of UNHCR support. Interviews carried out in 2008 with some of the Acholi IDPs cited the cost of all basic commodities, the lack of security regarding tenancy with its associated sense of temporariness, and the lack of any land on which to build as major concerns (Mallett, 2010). These challenges continue to plight the Acholi Quarters residents and are like many of the other informal settlement residents within Kampala all of whom struggle with poor access to water, minimal sanitation, and badly-resourced and costly health provision (Monteith & Lwasa, 2017).

As a means of coping with and adapting to their ongoing life in the urban environment, many still retain links with their home villages (Mallett, 2010). However, whilst some from Acholi Quarters have returned to their tribal homeland, many others have not, for a variety of reasons. Shame and guilt of the past, fear of what might happen if they do return, years of land-grabbing in their homelands (Quinn, 2009), the perception that education opportunities are better in the city, relationships that have been developed with those from outside of the Acholi tribe, or even just the perception that they cannot return to their home unless they have the finances and

resources to be able to rebuild their lives (Mallett, 2010); these are just some of the reasons why so many Acholi people continue to live in Acholi Quarters, despite the aforementioned challenges.

1.4 Introducing the research in-country facilitators

I Live Again Uganda (ILA) is a Ugandan non-profit organisation that is headquartered in Gulu, northern Uganda. It was founded by Benson Ocen, an Acholi Ugandan whose childhood was spent living through the horrors and traumas of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) war. In 2006, Benson was trained in trauma counselling by Dr Robi Sonderegger, a clinical psychologist from Australia. Through this, Benson then gained opportunity to provide counselling in the internal displacement camps in northern Uganda during the latter years of the LRA insurgency.

Following this experience, Benson founded ILA in 2008. The organisation provides individuals, families and communities the opportunity to find healing, hope and restored identity after war. It achieves these goals through their four programs of trauma counselling, faith-based support, resettlement, and community development activities. The programs are delivered in both urban and village settings, and currently include communities affected by the LRA war, the community of South Sudanese refugees living in Palabek refugee settlement, and the community of internally displaced people living in Acholi Quarters in Kampala. ILA currently has 28 Ugandan staff, and 1 overseas volunteer worker.

1.5 Introducing the research title, questions and objective

As will be discussed in later chapters, the research methodology for this study uses a Grounded Theory Approach. A key aspect of Grounded Theory is that, whilst the substantive area of research is predetermined, the specific focus of the study is developed as the research progresses (Glaser, 1992) and comes from the data given by the participants. Research questions designed at the start of research using Grounded Theory Approach should therefore be held lightly, as there is no guarantee that the data given by the participants will tie in with these questions, but instead might highlight a different area of focus to be explored instead.

The research title for this study is 'A grounded theory exploration of wellbeing for women who have been forcibly displaced as a result of trauma caused by conflict, based on the experience of participants living in Uganda'.

The research questions that were designed during the research planning stage are:

1. How do each of the groups understand and make meaning of the concept of wellbeing, within their life context?
2. What can be learnt from the findings relating to wellbeing for women in a context of trauma caused by conflict?
3. How can the findings benefit the working practices of organisations delivering trauma counselling?

The research objective is: 'to explore the subjective perspectives of the experiences of two groups of women, currently residing in Uganda, who have been displaced by war and are now creating new lives for themselves in refugee and displacement communities.'

As will become evident, the outcome of this grounded theory study, which has at its heart the voice and priorities of the participants, does not fully align with the research questions, but it does remain within the substantive area of study, and it does achieve the research objective.

1.6 Introducing the structure of the Thesis

The main body of the thesis is structured as follows. In chapter 2, the ontological and epistemological paradigms that underpin the study are considered, before exploring the methodological components that are the basis from which the research plan was developed. The ethical considerations for the research are discussed in chapter 3, followed by an explanation of the theory and process of research design in chapter 4, with a particular focus on interviews as the primary data collection tool. It should be noted that, in line with the chosen methodological approach of Grounded Theory, there is no chapter given to a pre-data-collection literature review, and the reasons for this will be explained within chapter 2. In chapter 5, the realities of carrying out the research are discussed, with attention being given to the real-time changes that had to be made to the research design, and the justification for those changes. Also in this chapter, there is a discussion about overcoming the challenge of how to translate a word that has no direct translation, and real-time ethical moments are highlighted. The journey through the research continues in chapter 6, where the initial findings from the analysis of data are revealed through to the disclosure of the emergent theoretical code, as well as the four categories that make up that code. Chapter 6 ends with a reflective piece that considers aspects of the interviews that did not feature so heavily in the extracts used to justify

the exploration of the four categories. The reason for them not featuring was that the content of those sections of the interviews did not tie in with the categories of emergent theoretical code. However, as is explained, it was felt that it was contextually important to acknowledge this content that was shared, and thus it has been included as a bridge between chapters 6 and 7.

Chapters 7 through 10 each take one of those four categories and explore them in more detail. These chapters include reviews of the relevant literature and theoretical concepts. Chapter 11 explores the identified theoretical code in more detail, and, in Chapter 12, the journey culminates with the revealing of the grounded theory that has emerged. As the name suggests, this theory is grounded in the data collected from the participants, and in so doing achieves one of my key drivers: to give a voice to women who represent those who experience marginalisation and subjugation, both within the communities that they come from, and due to the positioning of those communities within the international hierarchy. The chapter closes by addressing the research questions, making suggestions regarding possible further implementations of this research conclusions are drawn, and acknowledging research limitations.

Concluding remarks

In this opening chapter of the thesis, the various elements of the research have been introduced. The background to the research has been explained, as well as my positionality as researcher. The participants have been introduced, along with some contextual background to help clarify their positionality more objectively, and the facilitators have also been introduced. Finally, the research objectives and key questions have been given along with an explanation regarding how the rest of the thesis is structured. And so, without further ado or introduction, the journey now progresses to an exploration of the methodology that underpins this research.

CHAPTER 2: METHODOLOGY – THE UNDERLYING PARADIGMS

Introduction

A research inquiry is underpinned by three essential paradigmatic components. These are ontology i.e. assumptions about the nature of reality and knowledge; epistemology i.e. the

researcher's approach to knowledge and their values system; and methodology i.e. the chosen strategy and theoretical framework for carrying out the research. For each of these paradigms, there are a range of positions that the researcher could take. Which are chosen, and how they integrate with each other is influenced by the inherent worldview or set of beliefs of the researcher. In this chapter, those components will be explored in turn and the specific nature of each component in relation to this research study will be discussed. The chapter also includes two reflexive pieces. The first explains the relationship between the worldview of myself as the researcher and the positioning of this research from an ontological and epistemological perspective. The second piece consider the methodological approach for this research and how that resonates with my worldview.

2.1 An ontological perspective: realism and relativism

The nature of knowledge is essentially distilled down into two positions: realism and relativism. Realism holds that knowledge, both observable and unobservable, and reality are independent of the way in which humans perceive them (Chakravartty, 2017). From a research perspective, the realist position to theories and knowledge would be to have a strong belief in those truths, and research would seek to strengthen that knowledge and use those theories to unlock further aspects of associated knowledge (Chakravartty, 2017). However, opponents of the realist position reason that if belief is a single, unequivocal entity, then it is independent of human intervention, which leads to the inference that it cannot be influenced by the research process (Duncan and Nicol, 2004).

Critical realists hold that our thoughts and ideas are part of the world, but that they exist from a world that is outside of human control and that language has developed as part of a natural evolutionary process. Thus, there is still a focus on the separation between knowledge and the influence of human agency (Pilgrim, 2020). Other realists propose that, through conversation and shared meaning, modification and development of concepts, themselves a component of reality, take place on an ongoing and subjective basis (Andrews, 2012). This perspective of realism incorporates the role of social interaction into the modification of knowledge. It also moves the discourse towards a more centre ground that acknowledges the reality that human thought and experience can bring to the existence of knowledge.

The opposing ontological view of relativism holds that knowledge is constructed through the perception of individuals and society, and so there can be multiple versions of reality (O'Grady,

2002). Within this approach, the role of researcher and participants is very much at the heart of the research process and acknowledges the likelihood that different people will have different perspectives and understandings of the world, based on their individual experiences of it (Lincoln and Guba, 2005). For a relativist 'understandings are held lightly and tentatively, seeing them as historical and culturally-effected interpretations rather than eternal truths' (Crotty, 1998, p64). Therefore, through a relativist lens, comparisons can naturally be made, both historically and cross-culturally, to demonstrate and draw attention to the fact that across time and geography, the same phenomena might have been interpreted very differently.

However, whilst this position is more accommodating for the multiplicity of subjective views and perspectives that can be found for concepts and themes, it can also lead to a questioning of the validity of such findings, if the multiplicity of views all claim equal legitimacy. This argument can be further extended to question the value of the research itself, as the multiple perspectives can lead to multiple definitions of the world, which can reduce the value of all and any of those definitions (Murphy, *et al.*, 1998).

2.1.1 Subtle and Constructivist realisms: Midway on the spectrum

Within the philosophy of research, realism and relativism sit at opposite ends of a spectrum. Both acknowledge that human agency does play a part in the construction and acceptance of knowledge, but beyond that, the extreme views of realism and relativism have little common ground. However, there are two particular stances that sit more centrally along the spectrum, and that have drawn my attention with regard to identifying the ontological paradigm for this study. Each of these will now be considered.

Subtle realism describes a position that is neither fully realist nor fully relativist (Andrews, 2012). This position acknowledges that whilst reality is an independent entity, it cannot be separated from subjective perspectives and observations, which will have a bearing on how individuals access that reality. Thus, social phenomena play a role in our view of reality, including relationships and societal experiences (Duncan and Nicol, 2004). Hammersley (2004, p244) concedes that all phenomena have numerous descriptions attached to them, however, unlike relativists, he disagrees with the possibility of 'multiple, *contradictory*, yet valid accounts of the same phenomenon'.

Constructivist realism seeks to accommodate both quantitative and qualitative research methods. It acknowledges the existence of real and social phenomena within communities, and

notes that these phenomena exist independent of researchers and will be identified, named and modified within and by members of the community. Thus, this stance recognises the importance of collaborative and societal engagement with the phenomena when it comes to constructing knowledge associated with it. This engagement is an ongoing, evolving process that happens within the community, and thus knowledge is real but, over time, will be modified. The involvement of a researcher in this process, particularly one from outside the community, is, according to Cupchik (2001) most sensitively done through participant-centred, qualitative studies.

2.2 Epistemological considerations

Epistemology is an investigation into the relationship between researcher and the knowledge being discovered (Killam, 2013). There is a strong link between the ontological and epistemological perspectives, and these will often both go on to influence the methodology chosen.

The epistemological perspective for this research study is social constructionism. Here follows a description and discussion regarding this orientation, after which will come an explanation regarding the link between ontological and epistemological perspectives for this study, and the worldview of the author.

2.2.1 Social constructionism.

Social constructionism is a multi-disciplinary, theoretical orientation that underpins several different perspectives which share similar methodologies and theoretical foundations (O'Reilly and Lester, 2017). It defies a single definition, and instead is described through its inclusion of some key principles (Burr, 1995). At the heart of these principles is the overarching focus on the relationship between human activities and how they understand and create meaning for knowledge. The principles include maintaining a critical stance towards taken-for-granted knowledge, acknowledgement of historical and cultural specificity, an assumption that knowledge is sustained by social processes, and a belief that knowledge and social action go together (Burr, 2015). A social constructionist stance would challenge assumptions that are made about the way things appear to be, and the categories that human beings use to make sense of the world and to divide it up. An example of this could be the binary categorisation of gender and sex. Social constructionists would question whether this is a correct division, or

whether it is a ‘taken-for-granted’ categorisation that has been accepted over the centuries, but that does not fully represent the increasingly visible range of genders and sexual identities (Burr 2015).

The role of culture and historical influence on knowledge are important principles for social constructionists (Lock and Strong, 2010). Culture and context are key influences in how individuals, and groups of people, view and interact with the world through thoughts, behaviours, and functioning. They are also the context to the many symbols and signs that are used consciously and subconsciously when designing, delivering, and interpreting the life around. History also influences how meaning and understanding are developed. This can include small, locally focused historical moments that might lead a community to link their understanding of meaning to a particular experience, for example the Welsh community of Aberfan, whose history is split into ‘before’ and ‘after’ the landslide disaster (Morgan, *et al.*, 2003). It can also include periods of time that resonated more globally, for example the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on the development and understanding of socio-economic knowledge (Delardas, *et al.*, 2022).

Another key principle for social constructionism refers to the relationship between social processes and the sustaining of knowledge. Social interaction leads to understanding and meaning which then leads to the creation of shared agreements about a phenomenon or concept. Social constructionists therefore infer that there is no single, valid interpretation or meaning to be attributed to something. Instead, there are multiple interpretations that can be considered useful, enlightening, and or culturally influenced (Crotty, 1998).

Social constructionism and constructivism have, in some cases, been used interchangeably and subsumed into the singular title of constructivism (Andrews, 2012). However, despite both coming from the constructivist-interpretative branch of epistemology (Denzin and Lincoln, 2018), there are differences. Whilst social constructionism has a social and collaborative focus on the construction of knowledge, constructivism considers how the individual engages in the process of knowledge construction (Young and Collin, 2004) and is often seen as an important educational theory (Lowenthal and Muth, 2008). Epistemologically, social constructivism sits closest to social constructionism. It recognizes that how an individual constructs reality is influenced by, and preceded by, social relationships (Huitt, 2009). Thus, there are correlations regarding role of social relationships, although still the constructivist focus on individualism remains.

Like all schools of thought, social constructionism has criticisms levelled at it. One such is the accusation of being pro-relativist and anti-realist due to the claim that knowledge is created by the interactions of individuals within society rather than being a direct view of reality (Schwandt, 2003). Taking a subtle or constructive realism stance, which recognises the role of human agency within the creation of meaning, enables this criticism to be countered.

Another criticism has been the lack of conceptualisation of the relationship between individual and society, and whether individuals influence society or whether society influences individuals. In response to this criticism, Burr (2015) discusses the work of Berger and Luckmann who observed that the higher the symmetry between subjective and objective reality i.e. between individual and society, the greater the success of socialisation (Berger and Luckmann, 2011). They further propose that the relationship between individual and society be seen as a process of dialogue, reasoning and mutual influence rather than conflict. The individual can then take on both a state of agent constructing the social world, and a state of constraint in which life has societally-imposed, inherited limitations and frameworks of meaning.

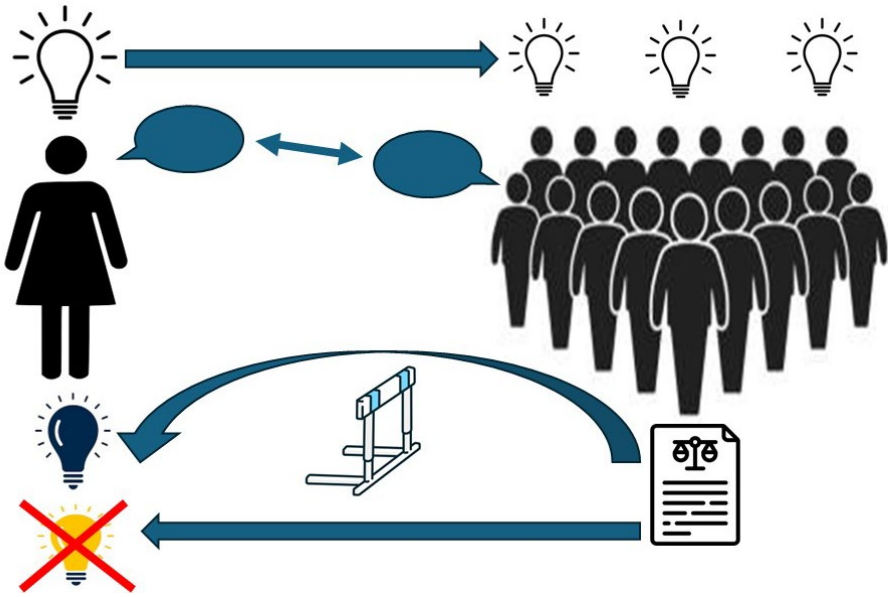


Figure 1 visual representation of the mutual influence of social constructionism

The above image was developed as a visual representation of the mutual influence link between individual and society. The individual has a good idea (the single light bulb) that can then be a positive agent of change for the benefit of building up society (the arrow leading to light bulbs above the group of people). However, society has frameworks and regulations (the legal document) that must be abided by. These can act as a constraint (the arrow that has to go over a hurdle) or limitation (the lightbulb that is crossed out) on the ability of an individual to act as an agent of change. Through ensuring that dialogue is maintained between the individual and

society (the speech bubbles and two-way arrow), the ongoing process of social construction can be pursued and enhanced. This explanation of the link between individual and society as being one of mutual influence, rather than hierarchical, provides a helpful conceptualisation of the relationship and counters the corresponding criticism.

Personal reflection from the author regarding my worldview and its links to the ontological and epistemological perspectives:

When I embarked on the process of determining which ontological perspective would be most appropriate for this research, my preference was to identify one that resonated with my worldview and would therefore fit comfortably with my natural approach to research. Initially, faced with a choice between realism and relativism, my tendency was to lean towards relativism, as I found that the notion of knowledge and reality being completely independent of human intervention was not something that I could relate to. For me, societal and cultural influences have always been integral to the different perspectives that individuals and communities take on a particular phenomenon, and so relativism seemed more attuned to this view.

However, the relativist view that knowledge can have an innumerable multiplicity of views, based on the numerous perspectives from across humanity, both at any one time and also down through the passing of time, also proved to be a stumbling block in my quest for my ontological position. The implication that there is no absolute truth at all, but merely an inordinate number of variations on that truth did not sit comfortably, as I do believe that, underneath cultural interpretations and temporal modifications, most phenomena are made up of some inherent undisputable truths.

This discomfort with the extreme notions of both realism and relativism was solved when I read about subtle realism and constructive realism. Regarding subtle realism, the recognition that no phenomenon has only one description that can be attributed to it resonates with my worldview, especially when accompanied by the statement that a phenomenon can have multiple descriptions that acknowledge the influence of multiple cultures and agencies. As Hammersley (2004) noted, these multiple descriptions cannot be contradictory, so by inference they must complement each other and together enhance the overall understanding of that phenomenon. The constructive realism focus on societal influence and collaborative aspect of knowledge and phenomena creation and development ties in with this perspective. Development and modification of knowledge can come about in the absence of human interaction, for example a solo scientist working alone in a laboratory can still make advances in science. But for most research in the social sciences arena, wherein this study sits, that construction and modification of knowledge

happens more organically and naturally in a societal context. Thus, I find myself sitting comfortably with both the subtle and constructive realism notions and conclude that my ontological perspective is one of subtle constructive realism.

Social constructionism with its key attributes of cultural impact, collaboration and social interaction is the epistemological perspective that mostly closely aligns with my worldview. One of the driving factors for carrying out this research was to conduct it in a way that placed the voice of the participants at the centre of the study. It was their knowledge that I wished to highlight, and so the concept of co-construction was very important to me. Also important was the acknowledgement and reinforcement of the influence of context and ethnic heritage in the creation and understanding of knowledge. Whilst there are many similarities between social constructivism and social constructionism, it is the primary focus of the latter on societal relevance and co-operative and collaborative construction of knowledge that most closely resonates with my worldview.

The links between subtle constructive realism, and social constructionism, and the overlaps in their foci, make them natural companions as the ontological and epistemological perspectives for this research study. They closely align with my worldview which is the one that underpins my role as a researcher; for me to conduct the research from any other perspective would result in a reduction in the degree of authenticity that I would be able to bring to the study.

2.3 Methodological design

Having considered the ontological and epistemological paradigms, attention will now be given to the methodological approach that has been chosen and influenced by those components.

The methodological design for this study takes a Grounded Theory and Feminist Standpoint approach. This is based out of a determination to follow a research approach that maximised the voice and empowerment of the research participants, and allows flexibility which could, in turn, reduce the negative effects of power on those same. Having observed, and personally experienced, the dominance of the male narrative, particularly in the ethnic communities from which the research participants would be drawn, there was also a strong desire to ensure that the voices being heard in this research study would be those of women only. In so doing, the voice of women, which is usually a silenced and disempowered voice, would be at the centre of this study and would provide the dominant narrative for this study.

2.3.1 The Grounded Theory Method

The Grounded Theory Method (GTM) was pioneered by Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss and is now a frequently used qualitative research method (Stough and Lee, 2021; Birks, Hoare and Mills, 2019). It first appeared in the public domain in 1965, and since then has undergone a series of evolutions and iterations as researchers were influenced by particular social and philosophical discussions taking place at the time. GTM takes an inductive, comparative and systematic approach to conducting research with the aim of generating a theory that is grounded in the data (Glaser, 1992). It is non-hypothetical, and it seeks to produce a theory that fits the substantive area being investigated and works when it is put into practice. It therefore must be relevant and meaningful to the area being considered (Glaser and Strauss, 2017).

There are now considered to be three dominant genres of Grounded Theory (Chun Tie, Birks and Francis, 2019), each of which is a variant of the original GTM put forward by Glaser and Strauss. Each genre has its own distinctive components, including philosophical position of the researcher, use of literature, and the particular way in which the researcher approaches coding, analysis and development of theory. However, they still contain the essence of GTM as first put forward by Glaser and Strauss: 'the discovery of theory from data systematically obtained from social research' (Glaser and Strauss, 1967, p2). Classic Grounded Theory is the genre ascribed to Glaser, as set out in his numerous publications and key texts, (for example Glaser, 1998, 1992, 1978). Evolved GTM is founded on the work of Strauss, Corbin and Clarke and the sociological perspective of symbolic interactionism had a significant influence on the development of this genre (Strauss and Corbin, 1997). The third genre of GTM is that of Constructive Grounded Theory, as put forward by Charmaz (Charmaz, 2014). As its name suggests, this takes a constructivist standpoint and acknowledges that the researcher does not come to research with a completely open mind. Instead, one comes with previous knowledge and life experiences which will, in some way, shape and influence their thoughts and reflections. Rather than trying to quash these thoughts and insights, Charmaz stresses the importance of reflexivity on the part of the researcher, and the writing of regular memos in order to capture thoughts and reflections, and in so doing maintain integrity and transparency (Charmaz, 2021).

Key elements of GTM include the production of codes and categories, the use of a constant comparative approach to analysis, the implementation of theoretical saturation and sensitivity, and the writing of memos throughout (Birks and Mills, 2023). The position of literature reviews

within GTM is a topic of considerable discussion, especially pertaining to when the review should take place within the Grounded Theory process. Some argue for delaying the literature review until after the data collection and analysis has taken place in order to avoid biasing the findings through having preconceived assumptions or ideas as a result of too much background reading (Nathaniel 2006, Holton 2007, Walls, *et al* 2010). This was the rationale given by Glaser and Strauss in the early days of GTM, although it is now considered to be somewhat purist in aspiration and often not practical due to the recognition that many institutions require a literature review to be carried out as part of the pre-research application phase (Dunne, 2011). Others argue that there is a place for having the review earlier, in order to have a more informed approach to the data collection process, and to locate the research within the wider academic field (Giles, *et al,* 2013. El Hussein, *et al* 2017). In this instance, the discipline of reflexivity can ensure that the data takes prominence over literature during the analysis process (Ramalho, *et al,* 2015). Charmaz (2014) proposes that to rigidly adhere to one rule or another can miss a crucial point that the final version of the literature review should be tailored to 'fit the specific purpose and argument of the research report' (p307). Within the process of this research study, a more pragmatic approach has been taken. Thus, thematic literature reviews have been conducted at various stages and can be found situated across the thesis rather than in one specific chapter. The principal chapters that contain those reviews are chapters 7 to 12 which look at the theoretical code, its four identified categories, and the emerging theory in situ against the wider academic discourse of those fields.

A distinctive aspect of the CGT genre of grounded theory is that it places the participants at the heart of the research process as co-constructors of the phenomenon being studied. Thus, researchers following this approach recognise the intersubjective nature of the relationship between the researcher and the research participants, and maintain that the data and its analysis should be contextualised to the situation of those participants (Birks, Hoare and Mills, 2019). My background experience of interacting with the Acholi Quarters community and the Palabek refugee camp means that I come to this research with a significant amount of insight and knowledge. CGT best accommodates that knowledge and provides an opportunity to utilise it rather than try to deny its existence, and for that reason this research inquiry will be following a Constructivist Grounded Theory approach. Further consideration of the stages and components of a CGT study will be given in chapter 6 when discussing the analysis and findings of this research.

2.3.2 What is theory?

Developing a theory is a key component of GTM, and it is therefore important that a sound understanding of the term is established. Bacharach (1989) states that a theory is 'a statement of relations among concepts within a set of boundary assumptions and constraints' (p496). Homans (2006) similarly proposes that a theory is deduced from the relationship between at least two of an identified set of propositions. Thus, a theory must include relationships, domain limitations regarding the conceptual context, and predictions. In his attempt to define theory, Wacker (1998) lists criteria for a good theory including uniqueness, simplicity, generalizability through abstraction, internal consistency, and the ability to produce new ideas. These criteria fit well with the process of developing a grounded theory, especially when the process reaches the stage of solidifying the theory, reducing it to its underlying uniformity, and writing it up, to demonstrate fit, work, relevance and flexibility.

Charmaz (2006), draws attention to the fact that there are positivist and interpretive definitions of theory. Her positivist definition is very similar to that of Bacharach given above. It aims to systematise knowledge, specify and verify relationships between concepts, and make use of hypotheses as a research tool for predicting and explaining the area being theorised. The interpretive theory, however, places an emphasis on understanding rather than explanation, and acknowledges that nuances of the understanding are determined in part by the researcher's interpretation of the research findings. Thus, the interpretive definition of theory allows truth to be provisional, and influenced by social processes, with more attention given to connections and patterns than to binary and linear assumptions.

It is the interpretive form of theory that sits within the constructivist grounded theory. CGT sees data and analysis as being co-created through shared experiences and relationships with the participants. The resultant theory is therefore an interpretation of the findings based on the researcher's view and cannot be completely disassociated from that. The role of reflexivity is very important within the development of an interpretive theory to reduce the possibility of researcher bias, given the acknowledgement of researcher influence in the construction of that theory.

2.3.3 Feminist Standpoint

The positioning of female participants at the heart of the research underpins the feminist standpoint as the other major methodological component of this research. Feminist theory has

evolved over the years from the original premise that all women shared a common woman's standpoint, and feminist standpoint theory, of which Hartsock, Rose and Smith were three of the main contributors, is a key outcome from that evolution (Harding 2001). There is now a strong recognition and appreciation of the fact that race, class, and cultural diversity complicate and produce an array of different standpoints (Piedalue and Rishi, 2017). Thus, standpoint theory requires that feminist research comes from the lives and voices of the women themselves, and their articulations of social relations, perspectives and participatory politics (Harding, 2001). In so doing, standpoint theory proposes that knowledge is not just produced through relations influenced by the dynamics of power, but instead is an outcome of explanations and interpretations of the relations in which lives are embedded (Smith, 1996). In this way, feminist research does not just describe the situation of the woman, but considers how factors such as race, age, ethnicity, class, sexual orientation, and access to material resources impact the substantive area of research in such a way as to move toward social justice (Olesen, 2007). In short, feminist research adheres to the notion that 'knowledge derives from experience' (Plummer and Young, 2010, p309) and in order to fully understand a woman's experience, research must take a participatory and subjective approach. This allows women to construct and relate personal narratives that can inform understandings of gendered experiences, rather than being subjected to sociological explanations as have traditionally been put forward by men (Smith, 2004). Bifurcated consciousness, as described by Smith (2004) within standpoint theory, helps to draw attention to the double existence that women inhabit as they juggle the worlds of work and home. This is as compared to men who, thanks to gendered and power-related assumptions and expectations, are able to create a clear division between these worlds (Newcomb, 2020). Research with a feminist standpoint should therefore create space and opportunity for female participants to express their own contextualised and diverse understandings of gendered power imbalances (Jenkins, Narayanaswamy and Sweetman, 2019).

Post-colonial feminism is an additional consideration for feminist researchers from a previously colonizing country. Postcolonial theory considers how knowledge production in the West is inherently imbued with layers of colonial and imperialist power and history. It purports that a Western dominance of knowledge is subsequently created and sustained, and that knowledge created anywhere else in the world is considered as an object created by the Rest, or Other, which in turn furthers the coloniality of knowledge (Manning, 2016). Thus, postcolonial theory draws attention to the binary nature that was created in the past regarding concepts such as ethnicity, race and culture, whereby non-European peoples were homogenised as 'Other'. In a

push-back against this, a central aim of postcolonial theory is to create alternative discourses that challenge the dominant narratives of the past, and bring to centre-stage voices that were previously consigned to the margins (Khan, *et al.*, 2007)

In this post-colonial feminist context, Tyagi refers to the relationship between a White feminist and her indigenous counterpart (Tyagi, 2014). She claims that the former is so keen to promote the voice of the latter, that issues relating to race, culture and historical specificities can get overlooked, and instead the colonized women are portrayed through a White feminist lens. This can lead to a homogenizing of the 'third-world woman' model which in turn can be seen as a form of oppression (Gandhi, 2018). Therefore, when research is carried out by feminist researchers from well-resourced institutions located in high-income countries, by default they will likely bring with them privileges that must be acknowledged and considered in a reflexive manner in order to guard against engendering unconscious bias and furthering power imbalances (Kimani and Vanner, 2021).

Some postcolonial feminists question whether it is possible for a western feminist to represent the standpoint of women living in once-colonised countries. Mishra challenges the idea that a western feminist can speak on behalf of others stating that instead 'when Western women speak for the others, they only displace them, replacing their voices with their own' (Mishra, 2013, p132). 'The West' and 'the Rest' are relational concepts and it is naive to assume that any researcher can remain neutral either to their inherent positionality, or to the research process in which they are engaged (Ozkazanc-Pan, 2012). Thus, a critical element of feminist research is that the researcher engages in an ongoing process of reflection regarding their positioning relative to that of their research participants (Jenkins, *et al,* 2019). However, feminist research has the potential to challenge power inequalities, particularly in patriarchal societies and, when combined with a post-colonial / neo-colonial context, western feminist researchers also have the potential to reproduce power inequalities (Vanner, 2015).

2.3.4 Constructive Grounded theory and Feminist Standpoint

A search of the literature reveals a range of studies that have been undertaken using a feminist grounded theory methodology (for example Watson, *et al.*, 2018; Alston, 2014; Hall, 2014; Allen, 2011), with the implication that both GTM and feminist standpoint can sit together as a combined methodological paradigm; this issue of compatibility will now be considered further.

The overarching goal of feminist research is to create spaces where lived experiences of gendered power inequalities are explored and then used to challenge the ongoing marginalisation of women and girls from decision-making processes (Tyagi, 2014). Thus, if research, albeit from a Western institution, is conducted such as to ensure that the voices of marginalised women are at the centre, and that their voices are not displaced from that position, this could be seen positively from a feminist perspective.

Grounded Theory, as previously discussed, is a method whereby theory grounded in the data is created (Charmaz 2014). Where that data is the output of interviews and articulation of lived experiences by participants, space must be created for that data to be shared and captured. That creation of space to articulate and explore lived experiences is in line with the goal of a feminist standpoint approach, which adheres to a participatory, subjective and contextualised approach in order to recognise and consider how different factors influence experience and inform knowledge. A correlation between the two approaches of CGT and feminist standpoint therefore is evident.

Plummer and Young (2010) suggest that the main divergence between Grounded Theory and Feminist research relates to the priorities underpinning each methodology. Feminist research is driven by an overarching focus on gender, power and social transformation, and is not allied to any specific research method. By contrast, Grounded Theory is non-specific in its subject focus but offers a very specific approach to achieve its aims. I believe that the synthesis of these two methodologies is the most effective way to capture the truth of my female research participants. Reflexivity is an important aspect of feminist research (Wilkinson, 1988). However, depending on the branch of Grounded Theory being used, this is not always so evident in that methodology, so could be considered a divergence from feminist research. Classical grounded theory is clear about its rejection of reflexivity, claiming that it could be a distraction from focusing on the data (Neill, 2006). Evolved grounded theorists do acknowledge that researchers need to have some awareness of how their life experiences will impact the way that data is viewed and analysed (Mruck and Mey, 2007). However, CGTM is the most accepting of the role of researcher reflexivity, as seen through the emphasis on the ongoing process of memo-ing as a key facet of the methodology, and the recognition of reflexivity in its own right (Charmaz, 2020). The CGTM branch of GTM is therefore the iteration that best complements and overlaps with feminist research as research methodologies.

Feminist research and CGTM also show congruence in their underlying principles of both recognising the social processes involved in generating knowledge. Feminist inquiry has a focus

of engaging in social exchange to shape and be shaped (McHugh, 2014; Griffin, 2013), and the roots of GTM can also be traced back to the social aspects of experience (Plummer and Young, 2014). Further, both approaches utilise language and symbol interpretation as a central tool. Generating theory in GTM draws on the development of codes, categories and concepts, all of which require language to be interpreted (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). Similarly, feminist researchers also derive meaning through the use of language and symbols, both to construct new meaning, and to deconstruct existing, oppressive meaning (Letherby, 2003).

In conclusion, there are several areas in which Grounded Theory, and in particular Constructive Grounded Theory, can be seen to align and overlap with a feminist standpoint in research. CGTM and feminist inquiry both have at their centre the voice of the participant, and the theory that emerges from CGTM is fully grounded in those voices and the societal demographic that they represent. Together CGTM and feminist standpoint can respond positively to the expectations that might justifiably be aimed at Western-based research conducted on female participants in a post-colonial environment.

Personal reflection from the author:

GTM creates an open space in which to construct a theory based on a substantive area. It does not seek to explore a pre-conceived idea or hypothesis, and for this reason steers away from carrying out an in-depth literature review prior to the study, to reduce inducing bias on the part of the researcher. This approach to research resonates with my natural style of interacting with phenomena resulting in an affinity to GTM. More importantly for me, however, is the fact that the theory is grounded in the data. In my research, the women who take part in the interviews are my primary data source, and therefore the emerging theory will be grounded in what they say, and in their knowledge and personal perspectives. These women, and the demographic that they represent, have been present in aspects of my professional work for many years, and so to be able to carry out research that has them at the centre of it is very important to me.

Within the context of this research study, I am acutely aware that my positionality sets me apart from the participants that I am working with in many ways. I am from the colonizer country, am well educated and financially secure. I do not speak their language, I have never been forcibly displaced, and I am from a culture where women are able to speak out and hold positions of power and responsibility. Thus, it might be said that I am too much of an outsider and not able to genuinely represent the women who are participating in my study.

However, at the level of identity categories, I identify with the participants as regards age, gender, faith, and motherhood. I also have been interacting with the Acholi community for the past ten years, and with the South Sudanese community for the past five years. From that perspective, compared to a researcher who has no previous experience with these women, I am not fully an outsider, and so am better able to represent them than some might be able to. But more fundamentally than this, through the time that I have spent with these communities, I have developed a deeper identification with these women. My initial compassion for them and the suffering that they have endured was a response of silent compassion, as I took on their suffering but felt unable to formulate a response. Over time, my compassion has moved to becoming more expressive (Reich, 1989) and I sought to find a way to give voice to the suffering experienced by these women. This research is an outworking of that effort and that level of compassion.

If research relating to any ethnic groups was only considered as authentic when carried out by members of those groups, there might be a considerable time delay before such research took place due to financial, educational, cultural, environmental and access challenges on the part of the potential researcher. Thus, I would suggest that, in the meantime, it is better for the research to be progressed by someone who is adequately resourced, contextually sensitive, and suitably positioned to be able to challenge the power inequalities on behalf of the participants. I consider myself to be suitably equipped to take on this role. Further, through utilizing members of the local community as part of the research team, authenticity is increased, and the voices of those communities will start to be heard. In turn, this will play a part in readdressing the power imbalances and increasing the visibility of those previously living in the perceived global margins.

Concluding remarks

In this chapter, the theoretical underpinnings of this research have been explored. From an ontological perspective, the realist and relativist stances regarding the nature of knowledge have both been considered, including two positions that sit more centrally on the realist-relativist spectrum, those of subtle and constructivist realism. Having explored each in turn, the conclusion reached regarding the ontological stance for this research is that a combined subtle constructivist realism is the most natural choice, as explained in the reflexive piece. From an epistemological perspective, the focus has been on social constructionism as that is the orientation that this research follows. A visual representation has been included to help explain

the relationship between individual and society as one of mutual influence in the process of co-construction and societal change.

The methodological paradigms that are pertinent to this research are those of constructive grounded theory and feminist standpoint. The constructive grounded theory has been addressed within the wider discussion of grounded theory generally, and feminist standpoint has been explored with the additional post-colonial considerations that are pertinent to a researcher from a colonizer country of the past. Having considered each paradigm in turn, the compatibility of a combined methodological approach of feminist standpoint and grounded theory was addressed before the chapter ended with a piece reflecting the personal views of myself as the researcher as relating to my positionality within the context of the research.

CHAPTER 3: ETHICS

Introduction

This chapter explores the ethical aspects of research through a philosophical lens and also through consideration of the practical dimensions as relating to this study. Ethics refers to the philosophical ideals of right and wrong, good and bad. It includes the study of conduct, character and motive, which, if approached ethically would do no harm. According to Graham, there are eight theories of ethics, each of which has its own position and set of guiding principles (Graham, 2004). Standing between these theories, and the practical actions taken to ensure that a research study is carried out in an ethically sound manner, can be found the four principles of ethics (Beauchamp and Childress, 2001, p13). These principles are autonomy, beneficence, non-maleficence, and justice. Consideration of the four principles through the lens of ethical theory can lead to actions that are carried out with good ethical behaviour i.e. in ways that not only help to protect humankind at individual, community and global levels, but that also help to increase the amount of good being done in the world (Israel and Hay, 2006).

In this chapter, those principles of ethics will be explored in line with the research plan that was created for this study. In each section, the general ethical principles will be discussed before focussing on the specific steps taken in this research study to ensure that those principles were applied in ethically and contextually relevant ways. The areas being considered include avoiding

harm, participants who are vulnerable adults, confidentiality, informed consent, the ethics of interpreted interviews, and power and positionality of interviews. The chapter closes with a discussion on procedural versus real-time, or situated, ethics. This chapter begins with a consideration of ethics in cross-cultural research including a comparative look at the ethical regulatory processes of universities in UK and Uganda, both of which had to be adhered to for the purpose of completing this piece of research, and a section on ethical reflexivity.

3.1 Ethics in research: UK v Uganda regulatory processes

Ethics as a philosophical topic has been in existence for millennia, but the role of ethics within research is more recent, with the formulation of the Nuremberg Code in 1948 being a major milestone (Roth and von Unger, 2018}. Ethical behaviour in research is that which intends to ensure that respect, dignity and safety are provided to the research participants (Silverman, 2022), as well as promoting the integrity of the research and those involved in its pursuits (Israel and Hay, 2006). The Research Ethics Framework, as set out by the UK-based Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) in 2005, gives six principles of ethical research which together constitute good practice for all social science research (ESRC, 2021). In the UK, the Research Ethics Committee (REC) of the institution overseeing any such research, is tasked to ensure that these principles are considered and incorporated into all stages of the research project.

Uganda's research regulatory process is overseen by the Uganda National Council for Science and Technology (UNCST) which provides accreditation for the twenty-six Ugandan university RECs. These RECs are mandated to review the science and ethics of research proposals, approve research protocols and oversee the conduct of clinical research 'with the aim of promoting high quality scientific research while minimizing risk to humans and ensuring respect for the research participant's rights, values and interests' (UNCST, 2014). The Ugandan REC accreditation is valid for three years and is subject to continuing compliance with all relevant standards and any additional stipulations that may be provided by the REC that the researcher is registered with or by UNCST (Ainembabazi, *et al,* 2021).

Thus, to carry out research on human participants who are resident in Uganda, a researcher from a UK university must seek ethics approval from their own university REC and from a Ugandan university REC. This has the potential for some aspects of the ethical guidelines to be contextually misaligned, and raises the philosophical question of how much ethics are universal (Ryen, 2007), and how much they are socially and locally constructed, especially

when viewed through a social constructionist lens. Lahman, *et al* (2011) recognise the reality for researchers of not being able to fully comprehend the nuances of the varied contexts present in a research study, and the impact of those on ethical decisions. In response to this dilemma, they propose an ethical stance of Culturally Responsive Relational Reflexive Ethics (CRRRE). In this, they call for an ethical stance that responds sensitively to the different worldviews, heritages and identities of research participants. It also places high value on relational concerns with the participants and is reflexive in nature. Within this chapter, and chapter 5, the efforts to adhere to these principles within this research will be demonstrated.

The role of a local institution such as UNCST as gatekeeper for all international researchers wishing to enter that country can ensure contextual relevance to the ethical approval process. However, this also raises a potential dilemma for the western research institution if their application were rejected by the host ethics committee. Thankfully, within the context of this research and its location within Uganda, that dilemma did not arise as the application was accepted by Gulu University REC (GUREC), and through them UNCST, although some slight amendments to the original research process were required. One of these amendments required the inclusion on the informed consent forms of a thumbprint signature option for participants if they were unable to write their name. This had to be accompanied by a witness signature to confirm legitimacy of the thumbprint. Another amendment was for the informed consent form to be available in English, Acholi and Arabic (see appendices 5-7). English was available as the copy for the researcher, and Acholi and Arabic were identified as the two vernacular languages of the participants. The third amendment required by GUREC was the inclusion of a specified financial compensation for all participants in respect of any potential transportation costs incurred. It was made clear that, even if the participant did not incur travel expenses, they should still be given the payment, in line with local expectations. The amount recommended was 5,000 UGX per person (approximately £1), although when this was discussed with the camp leaders at Palabek it was agreed that 10,000 UGX was a more acceptable amount, in line with that given by other agencies.

One significant difference of note between the two applications for ethics approval related to the amount of information required for the Ugandan application. This difference is understandable when one considers that the Ugandan REC had no previous knowledge of the applicant or their supporting institution, but at the time of making the application the difference was quite stressful, especially as there was no pre-application check list of what documents to prepare. Thus, as well as the expected ethics form and templates of data collection tools, also required was a full project application, including literature review, justification of research,

research plan, curriculum vitae of researcher and supervisor, outline budget, workplan, data sharing protocol, and Covid risk management document. It was only on submission of all these documents that the ethical approval was granted with the required amendments as outlined above (see appendices 1 – 8).

3.2 Ethical reflexivity

Ethical reflexivity was identified by Lahman, *et al* (2011) as one of the three facets of CRRRE mentioned above. It is a means of researcher accountability and transparency that enables the researcher to question their motivations, reasonings, and assumptions regarding any in-situ ethical decisions that are made (Reid, *et al*, 2018). Epistemologically, it has a constructivist approach whereby knowledge is constructed and can be influenced by, and linked to, the local culture and context in which that knowledge is being lived out (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009). An ethically reflexive researcher considers any implications of the research process on the participants at personal, social, and political levels (von Unger, 2021). Ethical reflexivity is particularly applicable where the research is being carried out in a setting with more limited resources, and where the participants have needs specific to that setting and global location, such as is the case in this study. There is a responsibility on the researcher to demonstrate nuanced ethics that are delivered in a culturally and contextually respectful way. This requirement can be better navigated by a researcher who has an ongoing practice of ethical reflexivity as they will be better able to address tensions that might be found between procedural and real-life ethics (Mac-Seing, *et al,* 2021).

The practice of ethical reflexivity should be in place throughout the research process, from the planning stage through the fieldwork stage to the post-fieldwork stage. It therefore should feature within the application for research ethics approval, both on the part of the applicant, and also on the part of the REC members. Reflexive researchers are better placed to respond sensitively and respectfully to ethically important moments as they occur during the fieldwork stage and are more likely to make ethically appropriate decisions. The reflexive researcher will also be better equipped to cope with any emotional personal response to the research experience (Shaw, *et al.*, 2020), and will continue to demonstrate good ethical behaviour regarding the representation of research participants and the context in which they are situated.

3.3 Ethical considerations in this research study

Researchers should take care not to homogenize research participants at any time. However, regarding the implementation of ethical principles, and the contextual nuances that might affect this process, the ethical behaviour of the researcher should always be above reproach. Here follows an exploration of ethical considerations particular to this research. In chapter 5 (Research in Practice), attention will be given to how and why there were occasions in which the real-time ethical practices deviated from the planned processes, and what actions were taken to mitigate any risk to the participants.

3.3.1 Avoiding harm

Researchers have an ethical responsibility to make sure that they protect the rights of their research participants (Oates, *et al,* 2021). This involves minimizing the risk for harm to the participants i.e. the principle of non-maleficence and maximizing their potential for benefit i.e. the principle of beneficence (Cheraghi, *et al*, 2023; Bifarin & Stonehouse, 2022).

In the field of trauma-associated research, a category into which this study sits, whilst researchers will always seek to avoid harm for their participants, there can be a tension between fulfilling that ethical obligation and still achieving the aims of the research (Griffin, *et al,* 2003). Potential harm of retraumatisation can be avoided by not subjecting participants to a process that requires them to relive a traumatic experience. However, the non-participation route could lead to a loss of beneficence to the wider good which could come from that research.

Some would question if there is a collective failure amongst researchers to acknowledge the potential pain and retraumatisation that can come because of participation (Bosworth, *et al.*, 2005), whilst others consider that trauma survivors are not categorically so fragile that they cannot participate in research. This is discussed by Griffin, *et al.*, (2003) regarding participation by sexual and physical assault survivors in extensive psychological and psychophysiological assessments without inducing detrimental effects. On the contrary, the experience was generally rated by the participants as a very positive and interesting one.

Other areas in which potential threats to harm can occur due to research include actions that may result in damage to the reputation or status of an organisation associated with the research (Traianou, 2020). Further, it should be considered that avoiding harm applies not only to the research participants, but also to the researchers, and steps should be taken to minimize the

risk of secondary trauma and burnout, particularly in situations where the nature of the research is of a sensitive and traumatic nature.

Regarding this research study, efforts taken to reduce potential harm included making it very clear from the outset that participation might involve reflecting on and sharing about potentially traumatic episodes in the life of the participant. Thus, when the participants voluntarily chose to be involved in the interviews, they knew that it was a process that had retraumatisation potential. This was restated through the pre-interview discussion and again when reviewing the informed consent form. Another step taken to reduce harm was the involvement of a trauma counsellor as interpreter. The presence of this person throughout the interview, whom the participants knew and felt safe with, gave the participants reassurance that there was someone with whom they could talk outside of the interviews if there were any negative effects.

3.3.2 Participants who are vulnerable adults.

Avoiding harm applies to all research participants but is especially important for participants who are vulnerable adults. Vulnerable adults are 'categories of people [who] are presumed to be more likely than others to be misled, mistreated, or otherwise taken advantage of as participants in research.' (Levine, *et al.*, 2004, p44). Within research, these persons present an extra challenge for the researcher, as there is an increased potential for a power imbalance to be present between the researcher and the participants, which could have an impact on the outcomes of the fieldwork.

However, some would argue that it is important not to ascribe generic responses or assumptions to participants, no matter how similar their background. Perry (2011) suggests that 'If all human participants are potentially vulnerable, a more appropriate assessment of vulnerability would be a qualitative description of all of the potential research participants targeted by the study, the ways in which those participants may be vulnerable, and what the researcher(s) will do to address and mitigate those potential vulnerabilities' (p909).

Conducting research in an ethical way involves ensuring that the consent of the women to participate in the research is fully informed and voluntary, with no coercion from others. It also involves ensuring that their participation is as confidential as they wish it to be, and that all possible steps are taken to avoid causing any harm to the participants. In short, the research should be conducted in a way that enables the participants to retain their dignity at all times,

and in which they feel that they, and the knowledge which they are voluntarily choosing to share, are being treated with the utmost respect.

For this research study, ethical issues pertained to the involvement of female participants who classify as vulnerable adults. This vulnerability comes from the fact that they are living in a state of displacement, have fled from violence and trauma, in many cases are illiterate, and do not have the same first language as the researcher, which in turn makes them vulnerable to coercion and being subjected to misinformation.

Another potential factor that increases their vulnerability pertains to the question of gender-related power within their heritages. Both South Sudanese and, to a lesser extent, northern Ugandan tribal groups have a tradition of patriarchal dominance, rendering the women vulnerable to a lack of social power (Lacey, 2013; Owinho, *et al*, 2022). As a result, the women may not have much experience of being able to express their own opinions or make their own decisions, rendering them more vulnerable to having others speak allegedly on their behalf.

Ways in which these vulnerabilities were addressed and mitigated against were incorporated into the research design from the outset, and as in line with the recommendations of GUREC. The use of an interpreter at all stages of the interview process was a key aspect of this. Whenever the researcher was present with the participants, both sides were able to communicate as they wished, and have all conversations interpreted, so that there were no concerns about missing out on vital information or being coerced. The interpreter had experience of working in the field of trauma that the participants had gone through, and thus was alert to the possibility of retraumatisation, and sensitive to any verbal and non-verbal responses that the participants might demonstrate due to inadvertent triggering. In this way, the possibility of the researcher missing any signs of any level of retraumatisation through the interview due to language incompatibility were mitigated against.

No information was given in purely written form. A copy of the informed consent form was given to each participant in their language of choice (English, Acholi or Arabic) so that, even if they were illiterate, they could share it with a literate friend or family member. But the form was fully discussed before the interviews took place so that no information was omitted to be given to them.

The issue of the possible impact of gender-related power inequalities and a lack of social power on the confidence of the women to express themselves was addressed through the use of female only interpreters and facilitators. In so doing it was felt that the participants would feel

more at ease and able to speak openly, as well as more willing to volunteer to take part in the interviews. It is hard to assess if this was the case. Certainly, there were no participants who appeared to be feeling disempowered about sharing their story, and all articulated themselves well, but whether they would have shared less, or been more reticent to volunteer had a male interpreter or facilitator been present is impossible to say. However, based on my previous observations and analysis, it is highly likely that this would have made a big difference.

3.3.3 Confidentiality

It is the ethical responsibility of all researchers to ensure that participation in a research study remains confidential. This refers to the identity of participants, to the nature of their participation, and to the information that they divulge during the field work. Observing confidentiality is an ongoing process, from enlisting the participants, through carrying out the field work, recording and storage of data, to publishing the findings. Allmark, *et al* (2009) suggest that the most common stage within the research lifetime where confidentiality might be breached is in the writing up of reports and the use of quotes. In cross-cultural research, care must be taken to ensure that this is done in a way that maintains as much confidentiality for the participant as they want, but also respects the expectations of the local culture, and does not lead to any later repercussions on the participants. For example, the expectations of male leaders from a patriarchal culture to be given a full report on the outcomes of the research must be balanced against the wishes for confidentiality of the female participants. This can require the researcher to demonstrate wisdom, cultural sensitivity, and to seek advice from a trusted advisor who is cognisant with the nuances of the local culture. This challenge can be lessened through careful contextually-sensitive planning of the research programme, and ensuring that the community leaders understand the reasons behind what information will or will not be shared after the fieldwork, and the importance of maintaining confidentiality.

Some participants may prefer not to remain confidential about their involvement, but instead might be choosing to participate in order to make a public statement (Guillemin and Gillan, 2004). In these instances, it is the responsibility of the researcher to ensure that the participant has thought through the full implications of their choice, and also to determine exactly what aspects of their participation they wish to forego confidentiality on. It is one thing to want their name to be publicly available as having taken part in the research, but it is another thing to have the named transcript of their interview on public record. Once this has been determined, the

researcher is then required to balance the preferences of the participant with the obligation for confidentiality as imposed by research ethics expectations.

In this study, confidentiality was addressed in several ways. Within the writing up of the research, all participants were assigned a numeric code rather than using their names. The code did give reference to whether they were Acholi or South Sudanese, as it was deemed useful information to identify the ethnic and locational context relating to that participant. But the numeric element of the code ensured confidentiality and anonymity of individual participants.

Addressing the potential challenge of expectations of male leaders versus confidentiality and non-coerciveness of participants was achieved by not giving the male leaders advance information about the study or the requirement for participants. Instead, they were given the information about the study at the same time as the rest of the community, which was also the time when female members of the community were invited to volunteer to participate. As this took place at a public meeting, it could be seen whether any coercion took place to persuade women to come forwards. If coercion had been seen, this would have been discussed on an individual basis with those women before they committed to taking part in an interview. As it happened, no coercive behaviour was seen to take place, and all the participants readily agreed that they were participating out of their own free will.

Location and timing of the interviews also ensured confidentiality. This is discussed in more detail in chapter 5 regarding how attempts were made to ensure confidentiality, and also the preference of some of the participants to forego that confidentiality through their choice of location. Suffice to say, the ethical issue of confidentiality was recognised, addressed, and mitigated against as much as was reasonably possible.

3.3.4 Informed consent

Ethical practice requires that participants agree to research before it commences. Informed consent implies that participants need to comprehend the research and that they need to agree voluntarily to the nature of the research and their role within it. How this is done is specific to the research study, and a tailored approach should be used (Morain, *et al.*, 2017). Aspects of informed consent to be considered include ensuring that the participant has easy access to all of the information that is material or important to the decision to grant consent. This includes the purpose of the research, duration and nature of participation, voluntary nature of

participation, and any foreseeable risks or benefits (Bazzano, *et al*, 2021). It may be hard to predict what a particular participant might want to know and so Faden, *et al* (2010) suggest that researchers should invite participants to actively engage in the exchange of information in order to enable all reasonable questions by the participant to be answered.

Research in a cross-cultural context raises a number of considerations relating to the area of informed consent. Beneficence should be carefully considered to ensure that participants, and their wider community, do not have any expectations of material gain as a consequence of engaging with the research (Nyambedha, 2008). However, there is an argument that it would be unethical to expect participants, who have no income and are living in conditions of relative or absolute poverty, to take time out of their working day for participation in interviews for no financial reimbursement (Molyneux, *et al.*, 2009), and it is therefore acceptable to compensate participants for any travel expenses incurred and to provide a token contribution to cover time missed from seeking casual labour that day.

Coercion is another issue to be aware of to ensure voluntary engagement by the participant without influence or coercive pressure of others (Manti & Licari, 2018). This is particularly so where the prevailing culture is a patriarchal one and women are expected to defer to their husband or male community leader, rather than being completely independent in their decision making around voluntary participation (Marshall, *et al,* 2006). However, Akpa-Inyang and Chima (2021) explored the potential challenge of gaining informed consent in an African culture where the basis of sought consent is derived from a Western approach to rights-based autonomy. They argue that ethics from an African perspective is much more focussed on the interests of the community than on individual rights, and thus collective processes take precedence over individualism. Taking these two perspectives together, one can ask whether a woman who, from an individualistic and Western viewpoint, appears to be potentially coerced into participation might actually be participating as a response to her cultural deference to the benefit of the community.

Informed consent should be given in the mother tongue. However, in some cases, the vernacular language has not kept pace and modern words do not have a direct translation into that language. In this situation, and or where the participant does not understand the definition of the terminology, the validity of the informed consent could be affected, unless there is an interpreter available to assist with explaining and clarifying any unknown terms (Odhiambo and Mars, 2018).

The process of gaining consent, including signing the form, highlight some further issues. Riesmann (2005) and Nakkash, *et al* (2017) both give the example of suspicion being giving by participants when asked to sign the Informed Consent Form (ICF). The concern of the participants related to being asked to sign an official form, that they thought could link back to the government of that country, thereby exposing personal details to government officials. For those who have low or no levels of literacy, an important concern relates to the potential loss of dignity on the part of the participant when they have to admit their level of illiteracy, the need for a thumbprint signature, and the additional vulnerability that this brings if a local, literate witness is required to confirm the thumbprint signature (Ssali, *et al*, 2016).

Finally, one must consider the power dynamics at play in the research process, including that of gaining consent. This is not only the power dynamic between researcher and participant but also between gatekeeper and participant (Roth and von Unger, 2018). The researcher should consider the role that these different dynamics might have on the viability of a completed ICF. For example, would an uneducated female refugee, living a subsistence lifestyle in a refugee camp, within a patriarchal culture, feel empowered to decline a request from a western, educated, researcher to sign a form that she cannot read, whilst knowing that the male leaders might be in conversation with the research team afterwards? It is highly likely that societal norms would constrain her and lead her to feel compelled to sign the form, even if she is unsure of its implications, resulting in a questionable level of credibility for the form.

Addressing these aspects of gaining informed consent within the context of this study can be shown through the following reflections taken from a memo written during the interview process.

Prior to the interview, I sat with each participant and the interpreter, and we discussed the purpose of the interview. I didn't give any indication of the information that I was wanting to gain from the participant, as I did not want to unduly influence her sharing, but we did discuss the background to the research, and she had the opportunity to ask questions as she wished. Some of the participants did not have any questions, but most did have some queries either relating to the interview itself or relating to me and my life story. It was a good time of 'ice-breaking' and building trust between the participant and myself. As stated above, no coercion was identified during the recruitment of the participants, but still the voluntary nature of the participation was reinforced.

The informed consent explanation and form were given in the mother tongue, where the words existed. Where the words did not exist, the interpreter used a descriptive approach to ensure

that the participant understood the concept. Discussion about this had taken place between me and the interpreter prior to meeting with the participants, so that we had agreed a plan on how the interpreter was going to tackle the challenge of interpreting words with no direct equivalent. By giving the form in the mother tongue, the participant could take her copy away and, even if she was unable to read it herself, have the option of asking a neighbour or family member to read it for her. The forms also included the option for thumbprint signatures if the participant was unable to sign their name. However, although many of the participants said that they had never been to school, each of them was proud to demonstrate that they could write their name, even if some needed a reminder of the order of the letters. This was another small demonstration of the way in which the participants were benefiting from taking part in this study. The seemingly small gesture of having an official piece of paper, that they had signed, to accompany the experience of being able to speak out on behalf of their community was something that made them stand out from everyone else and gave them a sense of inner pride and recognition.

I recognise that the power imbalance between myself and the participants might result in her feeling compelled to sign the form come what may. However, at the end of the interviews, when the forms were actually signed to confirm that the participant was happy for the contents of that interview to be used, there was no indication of any hesitation. Instead, several of the participants commented on how grateful they were to have been given the opportunity to speak about their experiences, and to represent others in their community. Combine that with the smiles of pride when they wrote their own names and took their copy of the form, and the earlier moments of kinship relating to the shared identity of being mothers, and I got the sense that the whole process had been a positive one for these women, and not one that they had any regrets over.

3.4 Ethics of interpreted interviews - unpredictability

In this research study, the primary method of data collection was through face-to-face interviews, many of which were interpreted in situ by an interpreter. A key characteristic of interviews is their unpredictability. Unlike most research where unpredictability is an aim, with interviews unpredictability is a consequence, and efforts must be made to account for this. However, the researcher does not know what will be said by the participant, and therefore does not know what might arise as a result of what is said. It is therefore very difficult to prepare for,

and mitigate against, any risks that might come about for the participant or the researcher, and this poses an ethical challenge (Kostovicova & Knott, 2022).

Indeed, the interview process is full of ethical challenges relating to the unpredictability of the knowledge being shared as well as the response of the participant and the researcher during and after the interview, including any possible retraumatisation or secondary trauma. During the interview the researcher needs to navigate what the participant might consider to be sensitive based on cultural norms, for example regarding questions about gender, identity, and ethnicity (Kostovicova & Knott, 2022). Whilst there were no unexpected revelations of a sensitive nature in this research, there was certainly some secondary trauma experienced by the researcher, and some potential retraumatisation of the participants occurred as a result of knowledge that was unexpectedly graphic in nature being shared. These occurrences, and how they were responded to, will be considered further in a later section. Suffice to say that ethical reflexivity and cultural sensitivity are paramount as tools in the armoury of the researcher to respond appropriately and adequately in such situations.

When the interview is of a personal and sensitive nature, the researcher should be aware that the participant might view the exchange as having two outcomes, those of information sharing, and of gaining some degree of therapeutic benefit. Thus, the researcher should be alert to participant expectations relating to the researcher fulfilling the dual role of researcher and therapist (Allmark, *et al*, 2009).

In this study, the potential challenge of being viewed as researcher and therapist was overcome through the involvement of ILA staff as interpreters. As ILA is known by the participants as an agency providing trauma counselling services, it was very natural for the participants to receive signposting from the interpreters for additional counselling at another time if it became evident that they would benefit from it. No expectation was therefore placed on the researcher to provide this service.

3.5 Power and positionality of interviews

The power dynamics within the interview process are very fluid and ever-changing, especially when there is the added presence of an interpreter. A more in-depth consideration of this will be given in chapter 4.2.1, but it would be remiss not to include some discussion here in light of the ethical component.

A misuse of power always has the potential to cause harm to the victim. Within the interview process this can also be the case, and the researcher is ethically bound to guard against it. Sensitivity to the perception of positionality for each of the parties will help with reducing the potential for mis-interpreted power, particularly in cross-cultural situations.

During the interview, both the researcher and the participant will variably have more power than the other regarding what information is sought and what knowledge is made available. The researcher has power over the nature of the questions being asked, and the subjective area under discussion, but it is the participant who has the power to decide what and how much information to share, which in turn can have a bearing on subsequent lines of questioning (Allmark, *et al*, 2009)

When the interviews are being interpreted, the interpreter also has a significant amount of power. The accuracy of their interpreting, which might or might not be in their power to influence depending on their fluency in both languages, has a bearing on how well the participant understands the question being asked, and then on how accurately they are represented in their answer. The role of the interpreter is covered in more detail in the next chapter, but suffice to say, in this study, pre-interview meetings were held with the interpreter in order to address a number of issues, including that of the shifting power dynamic. In so doing, the researcher and the interpreter both knew that the other was aware of these issues, and alert to any misuse of that power.

After the interview, the power shifts to the researcher as they decide how and what information to use, how it will be interpreted and how the participants will be represented. This can lead to the potential for participants to feel vulnerable during the apparent silence of the analysis process when the researcher is no longer present in the field, and then potential to feel misrepresented when they see the outcome of the research. To mitigate against this, the interview could conclude with a review of the informed consent form, to ensure that the participant is still in agreement with providing their consent and allowing their interview material to be used. Providing feedback to the participants on the findings of the research can also help to mitigate against feelings of vulnerability by those interviewed (Anyan, 2013). In so doing, this also reduces the potential accusation of researchers coming to the field and taking the knowledge of participants for their own gain, with no further opportunity for the participants to feel acknowledged and informed of the outcome. The use of reflexive note taking throughout the process can ensure that the researcher remains accountable and transparent regarding the analysis of the interviews and the conclusions reached.

Finally, attention should be given to whether there is any post-interview impact on the participant. Some participants may be left with feelings of insecurity due to the knowledge that they have shared with the researcher. This can be particularly so in regard to interviews that have a traumatic or sensitive nature. It can also be due to perceived differences in positionality between researcher and participant. Thus, participants who perceive that they are subordinate to the researcher due to ethnicity, race, gender, age, class, nationality and or educational level might have the potential to feel a sense of vulnerability after the research process (Kostovicova & Knott, 2022). Sensitivity to this on the part of the researcher can help to ensure that the interview ends well, with appropriate assurances in place regarding access to support if required. In this study, once the interview had ended, the interpreter chatted with the participant to discuss how they were feeling and if there were any issues that had arisen during the interview that needed immediate attention. The interpreter, in her joint role as an ILA -staff member, was also able to check in with the participants in the following days and weeks after I had left, in order to see if there was anything troubling the participants as a result of the interviews that they had not felt able to share about in my presence. I am pleased to report that no issues were raised by any of the participants.

3.6 Procedural versus real-time / situated ethics

For a researcher to proceed to the point of being able to carry out fieldwork, they must first gain approval of the relevant REC(s). This requires completion of an in-depth review of possible risks and ethical dilemmas, as exampled in the previous sections of this chapter, and evidence of how the researcher will mitigate against those risks and put into place good ethical behaviour. Data collection tools are usually submitted at this stage, along with any protocols for pre- and post- data collection activities. This perspective of ethics, sometimes termed as procedural ethics, or explicit ethics, could be seen as primarily a legalistic exercise where researchers deal with hypothetical situations, and use suitable discourse and phraseology to appease the REC, gain approval and yet still remain true to their research integrity (Guillemin and Gillam, 2004; Pascoe Leahy, 2022).

By contrast, there is a second perspective of ethics which encompasses the everyday ethical issues that arise in doing the research, and could be termed 'ethics in practice' or real-time ethics (Guillemin and Gillam, 2004). This perspective moves the researcher from the abstract principles considered in the procedural ethics process, and instead highlights that, for research decisions to be made ethically, they must be taken in the context of the fieldwork situation.

Thus, the ethical decisions made by the researcher are situated within the culture and context of the moment and are particular to that situation (Ebrahim, 2010). In the healthcare field of research, this is often termed as the ethics of care framework (Pascoe Leahy, 2022), but the principles are the same for all research that includes human participants, whether it falls within or outside the umbrella of 'healthcare'.

To help recognise the continuum of ethics consideration that must be applied throughout a research programme, Tracy, (2010) puts forward a four-domain view of ethics. As well as the procedural ethics of gaining ethics approval, and the situational ethics which pertains to the research fieldwork, there is also the ethical relationships domain which considers the issues surrounding relationship between researcher and participant, and there is the domain of ethical issues pertaining to completion and dissemination of the findings, i.e. exiting the study. Together, these domains help the researcher to ensure that they are considering ethical issues at every stage of the research, and they reinforce that a researcher can never stop considering the ethical perspective of their work.

Addressing real-time ethical dilemmas, or 'ethically important moments' (Guillemin and Gillam, 2004, p262) whilst doing research, requires the researcher to be able to address unexpected, often difficult, and sometimes unpredictable and subtle quandaries. Avoiding harm through taking a precautionary approach to research is a recognised method of fulfilling the ethical responsibilities of the researcher. However, research by its nature contains a high degree of unpredictability, especially with qualitative research. This unpredictability should be acknowledged and taken account of, to avoid rigid and non-relevant processes and protocols. Thus, Kostovicova & Knott (2022) propose that unpredictability should be placed at the foreground of ethical deliberations so that a 'better-informed version of the precautionary principle' (p59) can be developed.

Guillemin and Gillam (2004) cite some examples of ethically important moments: 'when participants indicate discomfort with their answer, or reveal a vulnerability; when a research participant states that he or she does not want to be assigned a pseudonym in the writing up of the research but wants to have his or her real name reported' (p265). Another example of an ethically important moment is given by Orb, *et al* (2001) where they discuss the decision that the researcher must take regarding how far to probe interviewees about difficult and distressing experiences. The degree of success in how appropriately the quandary is addressed will in part relate to the level of prior knowledge that the researcher has regarding the contextual setting in which the research is situated. This level of knowledge is potentially more important than

simply having a strong understanding of the general ethical principles and norms that are set out in generic documents and the official requirements of REC's (Mac-Seing, *et al,* 2021).

In carrying out this research, there were a number of real-time ethical decisions that had to be made in the course of the fieldwork, and these will be discussed within chapter 5 'Research in Practice'.

Concluding remarks

The philosophy of ethics is that which considers the overarching ideals of right and wrong, and good and bad. The study of human ethics includes the areas of conduct, character and motive with regard to actions, speech and thoughts as pertaining to inter- and intra-personal interactions. Within the arena of research, there are four principles of ethics that must be adhered to at all times, and these are autonomy, beneficence, non-maleficence, and justice. The focus of this chapter has been to explore these principles in greater depth, and also to demonstrate how they were incorporated into the design of the research. Before a research programme can be carried out, the design of the programme must be approved by the relevant research ethics committee. When the research programme is being carried out in a country other than the one that the researcher is affiliated with, there is an added complication of having to get ethics approval from a REC situated in the overseas country. This additional step in the ethics approval process has been outlined in this chapter, including reference to requirements that had to be implemented in order to gain that approval.

Aspects of ethical consideration that have been explored in this chapter include the principles of avoiding harm, and ensuring confidentiality, as well as steps that should be taken to mitigate against possible harm when the research includes participants who are classed as vulnerable. The process of gaining informed consent was also addressed, both in general and with regard to participants whose positionality is so different to the researcher. Thus, positionality and power dynamics were considered, alongside issues relating to literacy levels, language differences, and the inclusion of an interpreter. Another important dynamic attended to was gender-based, and the potential implications for women who are invited to participate in research in a patriarchal society. Where there is a possibility of harm because of patriarchal traditions and values, steps should be taken to mitigate against it. In relation to this, the research was shown to be designed to ensure that the outcome for the women who do participate was only positive, with no negative repercussions. The chapter concluded with an exploration of the general

principles of real-time versus procedural ethics although, as stated at the end of that section, the real-time ethical decisions that had to be made within this research study will be discussed in chapter 5.

Having concluded this chapter on ethical principles within the research design process, attention will turn to wider principles of research and interview design in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH AND INTERVIEW DESIGN

Introduction

Having explored the philosophical and ethical considerations that underpin this research, this chapter will discuss the design of the study. It will begin with an overview of the planned research, including reference to the components that were included at the instigation of the Gulu University REC (GUREC) and the planned interview schedule. The chapter will then go on to consider interviews as the primary data collection method and the issues that must be addressed as pertaining to this research. Those issues include the shifting power dynamics that occur during the interview process, how to conduct contextually responsive interviews, particular considerations regarding the involvement of an interpreter, and positionality perspectives. The nuances of group interviews as compared to individual interviews will then be explored, before a consideration of the reflexivity of interpreting interviews. The chapter will end with a section focussing on the process of designing the interviews, both regarding the questions that were asked, and also how to address the challenge of translating a word when there is no direct translation for it in the vernacular language. How those issues were addressed within the context of this study is woven throughout the chapter at the relevant places including some pieces written in a reflective style by the author, as distinguished by the different font.

4.1 Overview of the research design

The research objective from the outset has been to explore how women, with lived experience of conflict-affected trauma, understand and experience wellbeing. Whilst there was recognition that, by using a grounded theory approach, the final outcome might show some deviation from

this, the substantive area for research has remained 'wellbeing in a context of conflict-affected trauma.

A strong incentive behind the research was to gather data from participants who represent ethnic and demographic groups less frequently involved in research, in order to broaden the range of voices speaking into the discourse relating to this substantive area. The participants were therefore to be drawn from two specific groups that I have links to through my involvement with the Ugandan NGO I Live Again Uganda (ILA). These groups were South Sudanese refugee women living in Palabek refugee settlement in Lamwo district of northern Uganda, and Acholi internally displaced women living in Acholi Quarters, Kampala.

The traditional heritage of the communities from which the participants were drawn is a patriarchal one. This would ordinarily result in male members speaking on behalf of the community, with little consultation given to female members, even for matters that primarily affect them. The voice of the woman is therefore significantly reduced, and her perspective rarely heard, especially when in conversation with external agencies. This has certainly been my experience when seeking to engage with these communities in the past, particularly the South Sudanese community where the male leaders are always those to whom the initial introductions and communications are made. The research was therefore specifically focused on hearing from women in order to counter this and place the female voice at the heart of the research.

The final research design complied with the requirements of both University of Gloucestershire and Gulu University research ethics committees. However, as will be shown in chapter 5, the reality of putting the design into practice led to some further adaptations and modifications.

In line with the grounded theory approach, the broad research design comprised:

- Individual interviews to gain initial data that was used in initial coding.
- Subsequent interviews to further explore the key categories that emerged from the initial coding and gain focussed data for selective coding.
- Further interviews as required, to achieve saturation on the theoretical code that was at the heart of the emerging theory.

All the interviews were carried out in-country, but due to other commitments of the researcher they were planned to take place during two or three separate visits to the country. This variability depended in part on whether two or three sets of interviews were required, and also allowed time for analysis and review between the visits. All the interviews were conducted with an

interpreter present. This ensured that language did not act as a barrier to the women who wished to participate in the interviews, and it also allowed all interviewees to speak more freely and in greater depth than was possible if conducted in English. Due to the transient nature of the lives of the participants there was no pre-requisite for the participants to be the same across all stages of interviews. Some of the initial participants were re-interviewed for subsequent stages, but other participants were also included in later interviews in order to collect extra data. Throughout, the participants came from the two communities earlier identified.

The Uganda-based components of the approved research design were as follows for both communities where the interviews would take place:

- A pre-interview information meeting with community leaders outlining the research plan, plus time for questions to address any concerns.
- A pre-interview information meeting with community members, both male and female, to include an endorsement from the community leaders, covering the same issues addressed in the leaders' meeting.
- Voluntary self-nomination for participation by female community members.
- In the event of an excess of volunteers, a final selection of participants would be made in conjunction with community leaders to ensure that a cross-section of ages was captured in the participants.
- A one-on-one pre-interview meeting with each participant in turn to discuss all aspects of the informed consent form and gain their signed approval of the form and its contents therein.
- Same interpreter to be used for all interviews.
- Interview locations to be chosen by the participants to ensure that it is a space they are comfortable with.

The schedule for these components was designed to fit within a week, and was as follows:

Day 1	Information and orientation meeting with community leaders (morning) and community members (afternoon).
Day 2	Volunteers self-nominate, and participants identified. One-on-one meetings with participants to consider details of participation and the informed consent form. Participants sign the form.

Day 3	Interviews – up to 4 in a day.
Day 4	Interviews – up to 4 in a day.
Day 5	Review of interviews with local facilitator regarding any clarifications of memos and notes made prior to transcription.

It was also stipulated by GUREC that clearance to carry out the research would be required from the Office of the Prime Minister of Uganda (OPM) which acts on behalf of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees within Uganda. This clearance pertained to interviews carried out in the Palabek refugee settlement. No such clearance was required for interviews carried out in Acholi Quarters.

Practicalities relating to the ethical consideration of confidentiality and anonymity as pertaining to the storage of personal information and files relating to the interviews was agreed as per the following protocols:

- The completed ICF's were stored in a locked cupboard in the office of the researcher. No electronic copies were made and the paper documents to be destroyed upon completion of the doctoral studies.
- Copies of the audio files were stored in a password protected file on the University internet storage with a backup copy of the password protected file stored on a removable hard drive.
- Copies of the anonymised transcripts, and the document containing names and participant reference codes were stored in a password protected file on the University internet storage with a backup copy of the password protected file stored on a removable hard drive.

4.2 Designing the interviews and interview process: issues to consider

Given that the primary means of collecting data was via interviews which included a strong cross-cultural element and the involvement of an interpreter, it is important at this stage to give attention to issues that must be considered when designing the interviews and the interview process.

4.2.1 The interview process: shifting power dynamics

As already mentioned in chapter 3.5, the interview process contains within it a shifting dynamic of power between the researcher and the participant. Whilst the researcher may initially appear to have most of the control within the interview process, the participant also has a significant amount of power.

The researcher has control over the subject area being researched, the questions being asked, and how the data gained from the interview is used in the analysis and research outcome. But the participant has power over the knowledge that is imparted via the interview process, regarding the quantity, quality, and 'direction of travel' of that knowledge. By nature, an interview is a dialogical interaction. The less structured the interview is, the more flexibility it contains regarding the nature of knowledge shared, as the questions become less directive and the participant has more opportunity, and therefore power, to share what they feel are the important issues. This style of interview is in line with grounded theory which uses an iterative approach to determine what topics to focus on, both within a particular interview, and as the researcher moves from one interview to another, based on the coding from the previous interview (Charmaz, 2006). As will be shown in section 4.5, the development of the interview process for this study utilised the iterative approach for the initial interviews to enable the participants to control the direction of conversation.

As the interview proceeds, the researcher and the participant together engage in a process that demonstrates the fluid nature of the balance of power (England, 1994). For example, the researcher opens the process by asking a question relating to the substantive area. In so doing, the researcher has the power of choosing where to do the initial directing of the interview. The participant then takes the power baton by choosing how to answer the question, what information to divulge and what depth and breadth of information to part with. The power then reverts to the researcher as they choose what aspects of the participant's response to follow up on and pursue through their next questions. Thus, the power dynamic shifts back and forth between researcher and participant as the interview progresses.

However, the shifting of power in an interview is not as binary as the previous explanation implies. An additional important consideration relates to the positionality of each party, and how one perceives the other. Socioeconomic status, educational attainment, professional background, gender, age and ethnic identity of each of the individuals involved will have a bearing on how one party perceives the other, which in turn will lead to a subconscious power dynamic within the interview (Anyan, 2013). Some suggest that educational attainment could

be one of the most impacting characteristics of the positionality of the researcher, especially when interviewing participants who have received much less education (Randall, *et al,* 2013). It is important that the researcher is aware of this, through an ongoing process of self-reflection and reflexivity, and uses strategies to try and reduce the perceived power imbalance between researcher and participant based on positionality. Woman-to-woman interviews can help reduce gender aspects of positionality-related power, especially when the substantive area is of a sensitive and gender-specific nature. However, other personality characteristics can still impact how the female researcher and the female interviewee perceive each other, and the related power dynamic (Tang, 2002), and it is not always possible to predict what impact this will have on the outcome of the research (Padfield & Procter, 1996). It is also not to be assumed that female interviewers are better suited to interviewing women than male interviewers, but instead the important factors, particularly when pertaining to sensitive and traumatic material, include warmth, professionalism and sensitivity (Jordan, 2002).

For this study, ice-breaker conversations about issues common to both myself as researcher and to the participant were found to be very useful in reducing the reality of power imbalance. These included family life – especially discussion of number of children, and references to faith-based activities that we could each relate to. I also drew attention to the fact that the I did not have personal experience of the substantive area of the study, and so was reliant on them as the one with the knowledge. This was another step towards reducing the power imbalance.

4.2.2 Contextually responsive interviews

An important additional consideration within the cross-cultural context, relates to demonstrating contextual sensitivity regarding positionality, and the methodology of interviews generally (Nguyen, 2015). Through self-reflection, the researcher can identify and critique their position within the research process, in relation to the subject, the participants and the research process (Manohar, *et al*, 2019). This will then enable the researcher to practice a much higher degree of sensitivity. Without contextual sensitivity, issues relating to the participant's perception of the positionality and power of a westerner could be misunderstood and misinterpreted (Bayeck, 2021), and vice versa for the researcher's perception of the participant. Thus, when designing the interview process, attention must be given to the role of issues such as gender, power and education in constructing knowledge.

A key factor in how knowledge is constructed relates to which voice is dominant, and ultimately the way in which particular epistemologies are privileged (Rodriguez, *et al,* 2011). Therefore, from a feminist standpoint perspective, in order to allow the participant's voice to play the dominant role in the construction of that knowledge, the interview design should ensure that the researcher's voice is non-dominant, and that the possibility of researcher bias or imposition of assumptions and preconceived hypotheses are reduced. In this study, this was achieved in part through using open-ended and unstructured interviews as the primary data gathering tool. This approach allowed the women to direct the discourse as felt most important to their personal context. Reduction of researcher dominance is also evidenced in section 4.6 regarding the challenge of using words that have no local translation.

4.2.3 The interview process: when an interpreter is required.

The presence of an interpreter in the interview process brings an additional input to the power dynamics. The role of the interpreter is to provide an immediate, oral interpretation of the words spoken by one party so that the other party can understand and respond (Gibb & Good, 2014). This is a two-directional role, with the interpreter enabling both the participant to understand the questions posed by the researcher and the researcher to understand the answers given by the participant. The interpreter must give not just word-for-word linguistic translation, but also cultural and contextual interpretation, to ensure that the ideas being imparted are fully explained (Koksal and Yuruk, 2020). From a power perspective, the interpreter has the power to determine what knowledge imparted by the participant is shared with the researcher, and how accurately it is shared. They also have power over the precision by which the researcher's questions are put to the participant.

It is important to ensure that the interpreter understands, respects and abides by the parameters of their role. In some instances, the interpreter has been seen to take on more roles, which have the potential to create more power opportunities for themselves (Suurmond, *et al,* 2016). These can include the interpreter instigating supplementary questions, replying on behalf of the participant, taking control of the interview, and performing the role of editor about information being shared (Suurmond, *et al,* 2016; Hseih, 2007). Whilst these strategies might be carried out by the interpreter with the positive intention to assist the researcher in filling contextual knowledge gaps, especially where the researcher is an 'outsider', the impact of these activities may affect the interview process (Wiederhold, 2015).

Two examples of this issue occurred in this study. During one of the Acholi interviews, the interviewer started to share a supplementary anecdote with me that she thought would provide additional insight and illustration to the information that the participant was sharing. At this point I had to remind the interviewer that her role was to share what the participant was actually saying, but not to include supplementary information. On another occasion, during an interview with an SSR participant, the interviewer had a fairly long conversation with the participant, and then gave me a short translation. It was clear that a lot more had been said, and that a significant amount of editing had taken place. When I pointed this out, the full extent of the dialogue was shared, which included details on some clarifications that had been sought during the longer conversation.

Conversely, by taking an integrated collaborative approach to working with the interpreter, their role can be extended to include participant recruitment, interview facilitation, and communication with local leaders, through to translation, transcription and review of interviews (Shimpuku and Norr, 2012). In the case of this study, both interpreters assisted in some of these additional roles, especially the first three listed and whilst they were not directly involved in transcribing and reviewing interviews, they were available if I had any queries or needed to clarify anything that cropped up during that stage.

When reviewing the involvement of the interpreter within the research study, attention should therefore be given not only to the role of the interpreter but also how they might impact the process. This includes their competence, style (word-for-word, sentence-by-sentence, or using a summarising style) and seating position during the interviews (Wallin and Ahlström, 2006). In this study, the interpretation was carried out using a mix of sentence-by-sentence and paragraph-by-paragraph, depending on the length of the answer being given. The use of a summarising style was not encouraged, as there was the danger that this would lead to editing out information that might otherwise be useful. The seating arrangement took a broadly triangular layout, with the participant positioned such that she could look at myself as I asked the questions, at the interpreter as she gave the translation of the questions. She could then address either myself, or the interpreter, or the middle distance as she gave her answer, but all without having to reposition herself. This positioning was not deeply planned, but came naturally on the first interviews, and was then adopted once the success of it was noted.

4.2.4 Interviews: positionality perspectives

Attention has already been drawn to the effect of positionality characteristics on real and perceived power dynamics between researcher and interviewee, including gender and educational status. Some other aspects of positionality that may have an impact on the research outcomes include gender of the interpreter, implications of class differences, and the different challenges and benefits of being considered an insider or outsider.

The issue of gender matching or mismatching is relevant not just between researcher and interviewee, but also regarding the gender of the interpreter. When the interviews relate to a sensitive and or gender-specific topic, the degree of knowledge imparted by the interviewee might be affected if the interpreter is of the opposite gender. This can be particularly so in patriarchal cultures where the woman might be reluctant to share intimate information in front of a man, and in situations where the topic being discussed pertains to trauma caused by men. Through having an all-female interviewing team in this study, impacts relating to gender mismatching were mitigated against.

Class is a positionality characteristic that has received increasing attention and pertains to the interview process. In light of an assumed challenge relating to a researcher interviewing someone from a different class, and the resultant obstacles that might occur regarding full comprehension of the findings, class matching can be proposed as a possible solution (Mellor, *et al*, 2014). However, research that categorically states that class mismatching negatively impacts research findings enough to insist on class matching is very hard to come by. In this study, the issue of class mismatching could be suggested but would more likely be attributed to other positionality differences between myself and the participants, than specifically to class difference.

The insider / outsider characteristic of positionality is one that can unsatisfactorily oversimplify 'the complex and multi-faceted experiences of some researchers … who find themselves neither total "insiders" nor "outsiders" in relation to the individuals they interview' (Song & Parker, 1995, p243). To simply define a researcher as an insider or an outsider does not give acknowledgement to the multiplicity of ways in which a researcher can be positioned somewhere between those two absolutes through personal experiences, life circumstances and the power and representation that is attributed to them (Merriam, *et al*, 2001; Wiederhold, 2015). Just as the class matching or mismatching question has yet to be resolved, so the discussion regarding the relative merits of being an 'insider' or an 'outsider' researcher is similarly ambiguous in its recommendations. Reducing the difference in positionality through

being an insider might be seen as a potential advantage, especially in contexts where women talking to strangers is unusual (Reinharz and Chase, 2002). However, insider research can have a negative impact on the degree of researcher objectivity as well as affecting how the interview is shaped through the impact it has on the social dynamics (Ganga & Scott, 2006). Conversely, being seen as an outsider could suggest a position of neutrality, and an increased measure of objectivity (Mullins, 1999) although others might claim that the position of outsider can bring challenges in relating to the interviewees. According to Kimani, (2021) power dynamics are more strongly evident when the researcher is perceived as an outsider to the community in which the research is taking place, and they should be carefully considered to try and minimize their effect.

My personal experiences relating to the insider / outsider positioning certainly adhere with Wiederhold's critique that many people would situate themselves somewhere between the two absolutes. My numerous previous visits to, and engagement with the communities of the participants, plus several years of working with programmes located in the region, mean that I am not a complete outsider. And yet my nationality, mother-tongue, heritage, and base-line positionality means that I am certainly not an insider. I position myself as somewhere between the two.

To try and reduce the power dynamics between insider and outsider, when I met with the participants I shared about my previous involvement in their communities, to help reduce any assumptions that I was ignorant about their lives and their heritage. I did not get the sense that the women were reticent to talk to me as a 'stranger', and conversely did have some participants share information that they admitted they had not shared before, because they had not felt able to share it with others from their community.

On balance, I feel that the data collection was not hindered by my position as a relative outsider, and indeed in some instances, it was enhanced. However, I do feel that the data collection might have been less successful if I had been a total outsider, with no ability to relate to, and demonstrate understanding and empathy with the participants.

4.3 Individual interviews v group interviews

There is much discussion about the use of focus groups (Powell & Single,1996; Mansell, *et al* 2004; Lane, *et al*, 2001), and group interviews (Coreil,1994; Gibbs 2012) as research methods, and at times the terms are blended to become focus group interviews (McLafferty, 2004;

Overlien, *et al*, 2005; Adler, *et al*, 2019). In group interviews the researcher can control the questions asked and also, to a certain extent, the group dynamics. Participants give their answers in turn, and through using a more investigative approach, the researcher can intercede and pursue particular points as they occur. Focus groups are less controlled and their primary objectives are the stimulation and facilitation of a discourse between participants to consider a particular topic (Parker & Tritter, 2006). In this study, whilst individual interviews were the primary data collection method used, group interviews were also used.

Both focus groups and group interviews offer the benefits of group interaction including the relevance to construction of knowledge, whereby group dynamics can lead to conversation that reveals the 'participants' perceptions, attitudes, thinking, and framework of understanding, as well as identifying group norms, sub-cultural and cultural values' (Grønkjær, *et al*, 2011, p1). Thus, group interviews can reflect more clearly the cultural and social realities of the participant group (McLafferty, 2004) which plays a part in how knowledge is constructed by them.

Where the participants feel safe and comfortable with each other, the group dynamic can help quieter and less confident participants feel empowered to speak out, compared to the individual interview where they might feel more reticent about opening up to the researcher who is perceived as a stranger. However, group dynamics can lead to the possibility of a sense of intimidation on the part of inarticulate, shy, or dissenting members of the group, especially if there are some strong voices present (Gibbs,1997; McLafferty, 2004). In the case of a group interview, the overshadowing by a few can be reduced through inviting each participant in turn to give their own answer. This can then be followed by opening the floor to allow further discussion between the participants and so lead to a greater depth of responses. By carefully observing participants for any apparent hesitancy to engage in parts of the conversation, the researcher can also focus their attention to the less vocal to ensure that they have opportunity to speak.

Group interviews, like individual interviews, must be contextually responsive, and in so doing ensure that their design intentionally includes strategies which centralise the social power of the participants (Rodriguez, *et al*, 2011). It is also important to consider how the group discourse and participation in the group interviews might be influenced by the cross-lingual and cross-cultural communication, between participants, interpreter and researcher, and in turn what bearing this might have on the findings from the group interviews (Quintanilha, *et al*. 2015).

It was interesting to observe the interpersonal dynamics that took place during the group interviews with the Acholi women. Because they knew each other prior to the interviews, there was a strong sense of being supportive of each other, and no sense of some feeling overshadowed by the others, or reticent to speak in front of them. In both groups, there were some women who tended to speak first, and then others who would give their thoughts later, although this was not a hard and fast rule. To avoid any participant feeling pressed to give an answer earlier than she felt happy, I did not stipulate the order in which they were to speak, although I did make sure that all were given the opportunity to give their answer if they wished. On some occasions there were also conversations that took place between the women as they discussed an issue, and each formulated their response.

In this research, contextual responsivity was enhanced through enabling all participant discussion to take place in the local language to ensure maximum participation of the participants, and to allow access to the widest pool of possible participants. The inclusion of opportunities for discussion prior to giving answers also tied in with their normal practice of being community-focused regarding decision-making rather than individualistic, and allowed the participants to feel more relaxed, with the presence of the interviewer moving more into the background. This is not to infer that the group interviews were more suitable than the individual interviews. Information was shared in the individual interviews that might not have been shared in the group interviews, as previously alluded to. The individual interviews also enabled personal stories to be heard in depth, and for each participant to share what she felt was important, which is a key aspect of the initial interviews in grounded theory. However, regarding the data collection relating to focused codes and achieving saturation, group interviews were very suitable.

4.4 Reflexivity in interpreting interviews

Reflexivity in interpreting interviews includes the role of the interpreter in linguistically interpreting the interview, and also how the researcher interprets the data. That is, interpretation of interviews involves cultural reflexivity and linguistic reflexivity. Regarding the linguistic interpretation by the interpreter, Kadiu (2019) considers different perspectives on the reflexivity of translating. Whilst they are focussed particularly on the process of written translation rather than verbal interpretation, still there are useful insights to be gleaned.

One perspective given is that of Bassnet who uses a creativity metaphor to articulate her approach to reflexivity in translation. For her, 'reflexivity is a dialogic process through which the author and the translator interact' (Kadiu 2019, p45). When this is transposed to the real-time interpreting of an interview, the dialogic process of reflexivity will be two-fold, depending on whether it is the researcher or the participant that the interpreter is interacting with. Through the reflexive process, the interpreter and the speaker ensure that the correct interpretation is given so that the responder receives a suitable translation from which to respond.

For Meschonnic, translation has a poetic element and involves a 'thinking process, a form of decision-making, which manifests in return the translator's own perception of language and of translation' (Kadiu 2019, p72). This perspective draws attention to the role of the interpreter in reflecting how to articulate any unsaid cultural nuances which might result in not giving a literal interpretation of what was said. In so doing, the interview interpretation will be done in a way that can be understood not just by the speaker but also by the receiver of that interpretation. An example of this from the interviews relates to the way in which a participant would refer to the same person in a few ways, for example uncle, man, him, brother. They all refer to the same person, but if taken literally could become confusing, unless clarification is given by the interpreter.

In a similar vein, Bermann takes the unspoken-ness of translated texts and considers it the role of the translator to 'make visible hidden or latent aspects of the original' (Kadiu, 2019, p95). This equates to the interpreter reflexively considering whether there are any unsaid assumptions or inferences being made by the speaker that require additional articulation to ensure that the responder can speak from a place of informed knowledge. For example, in the SSR interviews it was often the interpreter who confirmed if the participant had gone to school or not, as the participant tended to assume that it was obvious that she would not have gone due to ethnic norms, and so did not refer to this. However, the interpreter knew that I came from a background where education of girls was assumed, and so she ensured that this difference in assumptions was articulated.

Regarding data interpretation by the researcher, it is important for the researcher to consider their positionality and to maintain a reflexive stance throughout. Blumenthal (1999) speaks of the divided self and posits an alternative view to the conventional one person = one identity = one story equation. By taking a 'divided self' approach, one person could have multiple autonomous identities and therefore multiple stories. This applies to both the researcher and to the participants. Thus, when interpreting the data, the researcher should be mindful that they

might have different 'selves' simultaneously influencing the interpretation process, which can result in different outcomes when making sense of the interview. Equally, the participants might have been representing different selves at various points through the interview, and whilst this cannot be confirmed as an absolute, it should be minded as a potential additional insight into the data gleaned, and the different narratives that one person can be concurrently living out.

Through maintaining a reflexive stance during the interpreting of the interview data, the researcher can be more attuned not only to how their own narratives, attitudes and biases might be speaking into the interpretation process, but also to the possibility of multiple layers of meaning in what the participants have shared. This relates not just to the influence of participant positionality and divided self, but also to perceived power differences as previously discussed. It also relates to the unspoken parts of an interview, to the silences, and to apparent gaps in information. Contextual sensitivity and reflexivity by the researcher regarding interview interpretation is vital to achieving a strong level of rigour and credibility.

4.5 Designing the interviews

4.5.1 Semi-structured or unstructured interviews

The pre-study interviews with ILA staff members were designed to be semi-structured, with the same questions being asked to all participants, whilst also having flexibility to follow particular lines of enquiry if they arose. The purpose of these interviews was to carry out some initial exploration of the substantive area, whilst gaining interview practice which could then feed into a consideration regarding the preferred interview style for the main interviews. It also allowed provided information relating to translation of the word 'wellbeing', as will be discussed in section 4.6.1. The questions asked were designed to focus on wellbeing, against the backdrop of a lived experience of conflict. They were as follows:

Q1: When have you heard of the English word 'wellbeing' and what do you think it means?

Q2: Based on the description you've just given me of what you think wellbeing is, how do you go about finding wellbeing in your life?

Q3: What other words would you use to describe 'wellbeing', including in your mother tongue, and how would you explain those words to me?

Q4: We are encouraged to aspire towards wellbeing in our lives, but it doesn't always feel very easy to achieve. What do you think can prevent people from achieving a sense of wellbeing?

Q5: I know that you have been through some tough times in your life, especially when you had to leave your home because of the war. Do you think it is possible to find wellbeing when life is feeling so tough, and if so, how do you manage to find that sense of wellbeing?

Q6: is there anything else that you would like to tell me relating to the topic of wellbeing, and how to find it in difficult circumstances? Please feel free to share your thoughts with me.

Following discussions at a webinar with other Grounded Theory practitioners, it was decided that a better style of interview for GTM is the 'blank-paper interview' style. This phrase, used by Prof T Andrews (2023) (Dublin University) in the webinar, suggests an open and unstructured interview style whereby the interviewer has no pre-determined questions. Instead, the interviewer sets out the substantive area being studied and then simply asks the interviewee to share any information relating to this area that they feel it is important for the researcher to know. In this way, the interviewee takes control of the direction of the conversation and makes the decisions on what information is deemed most important to share.

The use of open interviews also ensures that the researcher's context remains non-dominant, without any researcher bias. The researcher simply sets out the substantive area, with no indication regarding the direction or nature of content to be shared. Thus, no bias is shown, and no leading questions are given. The background of the researcher might become evident when seeking clarification for a contextually-specific reference shared by the interviewee which requires further explanation for full comprehension. In this research, an example of this related to the Acholi cultural understanding of 'home', which is quite different to the more Westernised understanding of the term. This is discussed more fully in chapter 9.

The unstructured interview style was therefore chosen for the interviews with the South Sudanese and Acholi participants and the general explanation given as an invitation to the interviewee to share what they wished was as follows:

> *'In my research I am interested to understand how women who have fled from the war, how they experience, or how they understand, wellbeing. And whether they can find wellbeing. I haven't fled from a war myself, so I need women like yourself, who have had*

that experience, to help me understand – can you find wellbeing when you have fled from the war. So, what do you think I need to know about that subject?'

As no script was being followed, every explanation was slightly different, but they all followed a similar overall style and came after some initial, warm-up conversation relating to the interviewee and her personal circumstances and backstory, plus confirming whether the interviewee had heard of the English word 'wellbeing' and if they knew what it meant.

4.6 When a word has no direct translation

4.6.1 The term 'Wellbeing'

One of the outcomes of the pre-study interviews was the provision of useful information regarding how best to translate the term 'Wellbeing' for all subsequent interviews.

The pre-study interviews were conducted in English, as all the participants had a good command of the language. One notable outcome of those interviews was that, despite all six participants coming from the same ethnic group and speaking the same Acholi language, when asked what Acholi word or phrase they would use to translate the English word 'wellbeing', six different answers were given. Each response incorporated its own nuance of the concept of wellbeing, as revealed by the literal translation of the Acholi phrase.

The six Acholi phrases that were given, plus their literal translations, are as follows:

Acholi phrase	**Literal translation into English**
Ber bedo	Good stay
Kwo ma ti	Life in its fulness
Kwo ma yots	My life is easy
Kwo ma ber	Living a good life
Ber pa kwo kit ma tye kwede	How good life is
Bedo ma ber	Living a good way

Table 1: Acholi phrases for 'wellbeing' and their translations

Having seen that one English word can be translated numerous ways, an additional ethical challenge arises of how to do the translation without implying that the Acholi word given by the

interviewee is right or wrong. For example, one Acholi word is pre-determined to be used in all the interviews for the sake of uniformity. The interviewee is then asked how she would translate wellbeing into her language, and she chooses a different Acholi word or phrase. If the interpreter continues to use the pre-determined word, that could imply to the interviewee that her response was incorrect. This could then have implications regarding trust between the interviewee and interviewer, and can also reinforce perceptions of a power imbalance, whereby the non-Acholi-speaking interviewer has the power to decide which is the correct Acholi translation to use, and the Acholi-speaking interviewee has no power.

To avoid this possibility, and to give the power to the interviewee, it was decided that if the interviewee knew of the English word 'wellbeing', their Acholi translation would be the one used throughout the rest of that interview. In so doing, the interviewer and interpreter validate the interviewee's answer. If, as the interview progresses, the interviewee comes up with an alternative Acholi phrase that they prefer, then that can be used instead. But the important point is to not imply that their answer, and by implication their knowledge and positionality is sub-standard.

If the interviewee had not heard of the English term wellbeing, then it was agreed with the interpreter that the Acholi phrases 'Kwo ma ber' and 'Kwo ma ti' would be used as it was felt that between them, they gave a useful initial representation of the term, on which the interviewee could then build her response. These Acholi phrases were also used in the group interviews when the translations were to several people together rather than one at a time.

4.6.2 The terms 'liveableness' and 'temporariness'

Regarding how to translate the terms 'liveableness' and 'temporariness', a different approach had to be taken. Both terms emerged from the analysis of the initial interviews, rather than being terms that were included the pre-study interviews. Consequently, there was not a bank of Acholi terms from which to draw as there had been for the term 'wellbeing'.

When discussing the terms with the interpreter, an explanation of each term was given to enable her to understand its meaning in context, and then propose an Acholi translation. It was therefore decided that in a similar way, an explanation would be given to the interviewees when discussing those concepts, and then their chosen Acholi translation of the word would be used as agreed with the interpreter.

The explanation of liveableness given was that it is the opposite of unliveableness. If unliveableness describes reaching a point in life that is so awful that the woman was forced to flee from her home, then liveableness is that state where the woman feels that she can stop running and start to live again.

Four different Acholi translations for 'liveableness', plus their literal translations, were identified – one per group per interview for each of the two sets of group interviews. They were:

Acholi phrase	**Literal translation into English**
Kwone twere	It is possible for living
Opore me kwo iye	It's good for living
Nyom ma opore	Place worthy of married life
Bedo yot ma mon	A comfortable life for women

Table 2: Acholi phrases for 'liveableness' and their translations

The explanation of temporariness given was 'when you feel like you don't belong permanently to the place where you are living, but that somewhere else is actually where your soul longs to be'.

The interpreter proposed that there is one simple Acholi translation for this term which is 'pi tutunu'. Tutunu means temporary, and Pi is the prefix added for grammatical correctness. It was suggested that this could be the Acholi phrase that would consistently be used for temporariness, and on its first use would be accompanied by the explanation given above. At the group interviews, each of the groups agreed that Pi Tutunu was a good translation for temporariness, and none of them wanted to use an alternative translation.

Having identified equivalent Acholi words and phrases for each of these two concepts, the interpreter then used them consistently throughout the interviews in order to provide robust data, and to ensure that the participants felt that their knowledge was being acknowledged and utilised rather than ignored.

Concluding remarks

In this chapter, the design of the research has been considered both from a theoretical perspective and regarding the specifics of this research study. The use of interviews as the

primary data collection method utilised has received much of the attention. The first area of consideration looked at the shifting power dynamics of an interview, including in the presence of an interpreter, as was the case in this study. There followed an exploration regarding the practice of contextually-responsive interviews, and then attention was given to further issues relating to the effect that interpreters can have on the interview outcome if clear parameters are not stipulated from the outset. A personal reflection was then given regarding the positioning of myself as the researcher, and in particular the challenge of locating oneself against the insider-outsider categorisation, the binariness of which does not give space for the multi-faceted reality that the accumulation of life experiences can bring.

The interviews in this study included both individual and group interviews, and an exploration of the shared aspects and different nuances of each was undertaken. Following this, three perspectives on the process of interpreting interviews were given. These perspectives, which draw on the works of Bassnet, Meschonnic and Bermann, all gave useful insights into the role of the interpreter, and the diverse ways in which the interpretation can draw out deeper meanings to the spoken word.

Having looked at the general principles of the interview process, attention shifted to the design of the interviews, including the development of the interview questions in this study. Initially the interviews were to have a semi-structured style, but as was outlined, the final outcome was that of unstructured interviews. In retrospect, this was the right choice as it gave the participants the ability to direct the course of the conversations rather than having to follow a pre-determined course as set out in a semi-structured interview. The chapter finished with an explanation of how, in this study, the challenge of translating a word that had no translation was overcome, and what the outcome was for the words ‘wellbeing,’ ‘liveableness,’ and ‘temporariness.’

The next chapter of this study comprises a discussion regarding the reality of putting the research plan into practice. This will include giving attention to ethical and practical challenges that occurred, and how they were overcome.

CHAPTER 5: RESEARCH IN PRACTICE

Introduction

Having outlined the approved research design in chapter 4, this chapter considers the research process as it happened. The chapter starts with a summary overview of the participants. A discussion about the ways in which the research process deviated from the plans are then outlined, including explanations for the rationale behind those deviations. The areas in which deviations occurred include gaining permission from the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM), and the different pre-interview components, proposed community meetings, and process of recruiting the participants. Attention is then given to the reality of carrying out the interviews, including procedural elements, location, and timing of the initial individual interviews. The subsequent group interviews are considered including the nuances of each set of interviews, and how they differed from each other in process. Copies of the images used in the interviews are also included to help illustrate the way in which information on the development of the findings from the interviews was passed on to the participants. This chapter concludes with a consideration of the real-time ethical decisions that were made during the course of the research process, and also a reflective piece (in italics) on the secondary trauma that I experienced as a result of the interviews.

5.1 The participants:

Thirteen female participants comprised the initial sources of data. Six are South Sudanese refugee women (SSR) residing in Palabek refugee settlement in Lamwo district of northern Uganda. The remaining seven are Acholi internally-displaced women who live in Acholi Quarters, Kampala. As a result of subsequent rounds of data collection, nine additional Acholi women were included in the overall list of participants. No additional SSR women were included due to the single-visit nature of the permission granted by the OPM, which prevented subsequent camp visits.

In the identification coding of the participants, the South Sudanese refugee participants are coded SSR1 – SSR6. The Acholi participants are coded AQ1 – AQ16. Ages of the participants ranged from 23 years to mid-60's. All of them are a biological mother of at least one child, apart from one SSR participant who is the oldest sibling and carrying out the role of mother for her younger siblings. Many of the Acholi women have additional responsibility for nieces, nephews and grandchildren from their wider family. Some also care for informally-fostered orphans from

within the community following the death or disappearance of the parents of those children. Five of the participants are married to a husband who is present in their life to some degree, eleven are widowed, and six are unmarried single mothers.

Six female staff members from ILA were interviewed in pre-study interviews as part of the development of the research plan and they are coded ILA1 – 6.

The interviews with the SSR women were carried out in Palabek refugee settlement, the interviews with the Acholi women were carried out in Acholi Quarters, and the pre-study interviews with the ILA staff were carried out at their office in Gulu (see map 2). Information regarding the finer details of the individual interview settings is given later in the text.

NB I am aware that there is the potential for criticism in that I have revealed identifying features of the participants and risked jeopardising their anonymity. However, the number of adult females in Palabek refugee camp is 15,534, out of a total population of 79,476 (Office of the Prime Minister (Uganda) 2024). Therefore, to state that six took part in the research, even with the additional descriptions of their roles as mothers, is not divulging anything that could result in identifying a particular woman. Similarly, the population of Acholi Quarters is approximately 10,000. Of those, 120 are associated with ILA, and so again, the participants are drawn from a pool from which is sufficiently large that anonymity is not compromised. The information about the demographics of the participants is shared to demonstrate that, between them, they cover a range of attributes. Therefore, together they represent a cross-section of female society within their communities, rather than just focussing on one sector. In so doing, the research outcome can be said to represent the voices of women from across their societies, and not be limited to a particular age-group, marital status or standing within the community. The ILA staff members are more identifiable from their transcripts, but their interviews were not used as part of the initial interviews, and their transcripts do not feature in the body of this work so anonymity for these participants is retained.

5.2 The reality of carrying out the research: deviations from the plan

5.2.1 Gaining permission from the Office of the Prime Minister

As mentioned in chapter 4, GUREC advised that clearance was required from the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) to carry out research within the Palabek refugee settlement. This clearance transpired to be time limited to just one visiting period per application. The process

for gaining the clearance had to be carried out in person in Kampala and based on conversations with members of the OPM staff, the timeline for gaining approval was arbitrary, with one staff member citing 'weeks' as the amount of time it might take. Due to constraints affecting the amount of time that I could spend in country on any one visit, and the logistics of physically getting to and from the camp as well as gaining the ongoing services of the interpreter, it was decided to limit the SSR interviews to just one session. Any subsequent data gathering would be carried out in Acholi Quarters, where no such ongoing clearance was required, and where the availability of the interpreter was more flexible and accessible.

5.2.2 Community leaders' meetings

Meetings with the community leaders in both Palabek and Acholi Quarters did take place but not in the format outlined in the original research plans.

The meetings with Community Leaders at Palabek refugee settlement took place through one-on-one meetings with the Camp Commandant, the Deputy Commandant, and the Camp Welfare Officer rather than a group meeting, due to the lack of a time when all leaders were available. The Camp Commandant and the Camp Welfare Officer were women of Ugandan nationality, the Deputy Commandant was a Ugandan male. Each of these personnel is appointed by the OPM's UNHCR representative, and they have the power to decide which agencies and individuals can gain access to the camp. In the two weeks prior to my arrival, my interpreter met with these leaders to give some introductory information about the research. I had already briefed the interpreter about the research aims, design and plan via previous information-sharing meetings that we had had during the research design phase. She was therefore well acquainted with the research plans to enable her to accurately carry out these introductory conversations. Consequently, when I arrived at Palabek, the leaders already had a good insight into the research, and my role was to confirm accuracy and to answer any questions. No refugee leaders were made available for a pre-research meeting as it was felt by the Camp Leaders that they might unduly influence the process of participation nomination through encouraging some women to participate and discouraging others. The Camp Leaders therefore felt that I would get a better cross-section of female residents from the camp if the refugee leaders were not involved in the pre-interview meetings.

The key outcomes from the interactions with the Community leaders included their approval and support for the research to go ahead. Gaining this was crucial, because without it my

access to the camp and residents therein would have been denied. It was also an opportunity to affirm that they had a good understanding of the research process. Another key outcome was their decision that it would not be wise to proceed with the community meetings or refugee leader meetings that had been part of the research plan and the mandate was given that the meetings were not held. The timings relating to this mandate, and the limited time available to carry out the research once this been imposed were such that there was not the opportunity to review this with GUREC at the time, but it was included in the annual update submitted to them.

Within Acholi Quarters I met with the ILA leader for Acholi Quarters four days prior to the date identified for interviews to discuss the research plan and to consider how best to implement it in AQ. Prior to this, the ILA interpreter from Palabek and the ILA director had both been in contact with her to give initial information on the research and the need for interviewees. Therefore, my meeting was also to ensure that she had full insight into the research when seeking volunteer participants. Following this meeting, it was the ILA Acholi leader who decided that a meeting with community leaders was unnecessary as it might lead to a complicating of community dynamics. ILA have an ongoing permission to carry out activities in the community and the interviews were deemed to be part of that. It was also decided that the community meetings were not necessary, but instead recruitment would be through word-of-mouth connections with Acholi women who already had links with the ILA work in Acholi quarters, and who fulfilled the criteria of being internally-displaced from the conflict in the north.

5.2.3 Community meetings

The community information meetings planned for Palabek and Acholi Quarters did not take place, and the reasons put forward by the leaders who mandated this change to the plan were as follows:

- Potential for the research to take on a high profile in ways that might draw the wrong attention to those chosen to participate, as well as lead to negative tensions with those who did not get chosen to participate.
- Potential for large numbers of volunteers wishing to participate, leading to expectations that could not be met due to the small number of women who would be chosen to participate.
- Potential for pressure to be placed on individual women by refugee leaders and elders regarding their participation. For example, it was suggested that refugee leaders might encourage female relatives and other 'women of good standing' to participate, and they

might discourage participation by women for whom they have little respect or with whom they have had less positive experiences.

- The interviewed women might subsequently be suspected of having special links with 'rich westerners' which could lead to undue pressure and coercion placed on them after the research team had departed.
- Increased opportunity for anonymity if there was less publicity around the research.
- Increased opportunity for women to feel able to speak for themselves rather than having the expectations of others placed upon them which might occur because of the public focus caused by a community meeting.
- Potential for the community meeting to get large and result in unrealistic expectations for finance and refreshments.

The cancellation of the community meetings was slightly disappointing, but the reasons given resonated with concerns expressed by the ILA facilitating team when I had first shared the research design and plans with them, and so I was not totally surprised. The main reason that the community meetings had remained in the plan was that their inclusion had been a stipulation by GUREC, as a means of ensuring transparency and equity of participation. However, the reasons given for not holding the meetings were very compelling, with ethical implications as outlined later in this chapter. On balance, I feel that the right decision was made in not proceeding with the community meetings, and I can confirm that GUREC were happy with this alteration to the research plan.

5.2.4 The revised call for voluntary participation

With the cancellation of the community meetings, it was important to ensure that the participants were still taking part voluntarily. To achieve this, a call for volunteers was still made rather than individuals being specifically chosen, but in each location that call was made to a more select group of individuals who were taking part in a larger-focused ILA-related meeting, rather than in a community-wide meeting that was purely focused on the interviews. At Palabek, the meeting where the call for volunteers was made came at the end of a group session of the Empower programme led by the ILA staff. This session was for residents of a particular block within the Palabek community, and therefore the call went out to all members of that block rather than to the wider community. In Acholi Quarters, the call for volunteers was made at the end of a general ILA support group meeting which was attended by many of the women who are

registered with ILA. In this way, the profile of the research and interviewees was reduced, leading to less potential for negative outcomes.

Participants self-nominated after a call for volunteers was made by the relevant ILA staff members. Each of these ILA staff members were acting as an interpreter in their location and were known to the members of those communities. This increased the level of trust that the potential participants had and as the ILA staff had prior knowledge about the research plan they were able to give an informed explanation to any women who were interested in participating.

Palabek refugee settlement is divided into zones and blocks for administrative purposes, and for this research the call was made to the members of the block in which ILA was already delivering training. Thus, the members were naturally coming together each afternoon for training, enabling a low-profile call for participants. Six women subsequently expressed an interest in being involved in the research. As this number was within the parameters previously set out of between five and eight participants, all were invited to return on the interview days. That there were no potential participants being turned away was a positive factor in helping to ensure that there was no negativity amongst the community members relating to the research.

In Acholi Quarters, many small community co-operative groups have developed over the years which tend to be a primary focal point regarding who they call their neighbours, and their community. Two of these groups were targeted for accessing residents of the Acholi Quarters, and both had links with the ILA leader within AQ. I have also had previous positive interactions with these groups, which added a level of trust and credibility when the call for participants was made. Whilst the original group of Acholi women numbered seven, when it came to subsequent interview stages, some additional members from the co-operatives volunteered themselves to replace initial members who were not able to attend. Two reasons were given for non-attendance: attendance at a funeral which takes place in their traditional homeland and so mourners are gone for several days, and work engagements where casual temporary work had been secured and the participant did not want to have a no-show against their name.

5.2.5 Pre-interview meetings, and Informed Consent

The initial plan was to hold the pre-interview meetings on the day prior to the interviews, so that if any women changed their mind about participating there would be time to find alternative participants. However, due to logistics, availability of participants, and, in the case of the SSR participants a last-minute meeting convened by the World Food Programme that all refugees

were required to attend, the interview schedule had to be altered with the pre-interview meetings being conducted immediately prior to each interview.

Prior to the individual and group interviews, all components of the informed consent forms (ICFs) were explained to the participants in order to ensure that they were fully aware of their ethical rights. The ICFs were signed on completion of the interviews, so that the participants were signing in the full knowledge of what information they had imparted, and were confirming that they were happy for that information to be used as data. An advantage of this alteration in schedule meant that participation only required being present on a single day, and, through its lower profile, reduced the risk of unwanted attention from other community members.

The forms were filled out in both English and Acholi, as directed by GUREC. As researcher, I kept the English version, and the interviewee kept the Acholi version. Although some of the interviewees had very low levels of literacy, all of them knew how to write at least one of their names, and they proudly did so. Consequently, no thumbprint signatures were required.

5.3 The interviews in practice

The interviews were all carried out by me. The interviews with the South Sudanese participants all had one interpreter. The interviews with the Acholi participants all had another interpreter. For logistical reasons the two interpreters were not the same person. Prior to conducting the interviews, I met with each interpreter to discuss their role. During this meeting an overview of the research was given to ensure that they were fully au fait with the process. Other topics covered were acknowledgement of the power of the interpreter, the importance of trust, the challenges of interpreting a word that has no direct translation, interpreting without leading, literal versus contextual interpretation, sentence versus summary interpretation, and the importance of allowing silence to exist if the participants choose it.

5.3.1 Initial individual interviews

As previously outlined, the initial interview participants comprised 6 female South Sudanese refugees and 7 female Acholi displaced people. Three of the interviews with the South Sudanese participants were carried out on one day, and the other three interviews were carried out the following day; this schedule was due to travel logistics in reaching the refugee settlement from our accommodation. Three of the interviews with the Acholi participants were

carried out one day, and the other four were carried out three days later. The reason for the gap between the interview days was to find dates that were convenient to the participants and that fitted in with their working routine.

In both Palabek and Acholi Quarters, the location was suggested by the ILA staff member who was acting as interpreter. In part this was because it was felt that participants might find it easier if they were given a specific location and time to attend the interview, rather than place the emphasis on them to choose the interview site. Also, for the Palabek participants, the issue of zone boundaries and hierarchical structures within the camp were seen as a challenge which ILA staff were more able to navigate than the participants. For the Acholi participants, the ILA leader chose the site based on accessibility and privacy. However, in the pre-interview discussion, the participants were each asked if they felt safe and happy for the interview to be conducted in that location, and they were told that an alternative site could be found if they preferred. None of the participants expressed a desire to alter the interview location.

Figure 2: location of interviews in Palabek refugee settlement

Figure 3: 'interview room' for Acholi Quarters

The timing of the SSR interviews overlapped with a teaching session by ILA which ensured that the other members of the community were engaged in an activity elsewhere. The interviews could thus be located away from the gaze of the community, but close enough to allow the interviewee to attend the meeting before and afterwards as appropriate. The location was in a neutral area of the camp just off a track that ran between two settlement blocks, and in the shade of a large tree. As the community were in the meeting, there was no movement along the track by adults, and the location was not in view from either block.

The timing of the Acholi interviews was chosen to be convenient to participants who undertook casual labour in the mornings as well as those who were available at any time of day. The location was in the meeting room at the ILA office in Acholi Quarters which is a place with which

all the participants are familiar, and which offers privacy due to its position at the back of the building.

The interviews were carried out one at a time, and were audio recorded only. This allowed me to transcribe the interviews later and not have to make copious field notes during the interview. In so doing, eye contact could be maintained with the participant, and there was no distraction by my notetaking. I also felt that, given the potentially painful nature of the information being shared, it would be more sensitive to not have to ask the participant to pause in their recounting, or to reshare details if I was struggling to keep up on the notetaking. Memos were written immediately after each interview to capture reflections by myself and the interpreter relating to that particular participant and interview. Glaser (1978) suggests that interviews do not need to be transcribed, but instead that field notes made soon after the interview is complete are used as the data source. However, Charmaz (2014) suggests that there is merit in transcribing the interviews and coding the full interview. In this study, the initial one-to-one interviews were fully transcribed and coded. This allowed me to engage more deeply with the data and ensure that there was no confusion regarding information given by a particular participant.

In line with the grounded theory approach of only setting the substantive area of study and keeping an open mind regarding the direction that the interview might take, the interviews were kept very unstructured with minimal questions. The role of the interviewer in a grounded theory interview is to go on a dialogical journey with the interviewee, where the interviewee is leading the journey and the interviewer is merely accompanying and affirming (Wiesner, 2021). To do anything other than affirm what the interviewee says would be to imply that their knowledge and information is not correct or have any value. In turn that would imply predetermination of the material being sought by the researcher and would not recognise that it is the interviewee's prerogative to determine the direction of the conversation to be taken (Roberts, 2020).

Some of the participants needed little encouragement to share their thoughts on the theme that had been outlined to them, whilst others required more coaxing. This was one way in which questions were used – to help the participant get started on relating their narrative and the issues that felt most important to them. Another way in which questions were used was in an affirming way, to clarify and confirm something that had been said. Further information regarding the interview design was given in chapter 4.5.

5.3.2 Subsequent group interviews

Following analysis of the individual interviews, a conceptual model was developed, and some key categories were identified as appearing to represent a possible emerging theory. The nature of this model will be discussed in chapter 6, 'Analysis and Findings'. In line with GTM, these categories required further exploration through the collection of focused data so that selective coding could be carried. As previously explained, the single-visit nature of the OPM permission prevented a return to the refugee settlement. Therefore, it was decided to return to Uganda and carry out small group interviews with the Acholi women previously interviewed, to explore these categories more deeply.

Group interviews were the chosen method for this section of the fieldwork to allow the participants space to discuss the concepts between themselves in the process of giving their thoughts and perspectives. They did not need to reach a consensus on their thoughts but as the categories being explored (those of liveableness and wellbeing) do not have a single direct translation in the vernacular, it was felt that it might help the participants to explore the ideas more deeply if the process included space for discussion.

The information from these group interviews was gathered in a more visual way using sticky-notes and sheets of paper (see appendix 9). The participants enjoyed this style of engagement, in part due to the visual nature, and through the production of a tangible outcome to the discussion which could then be coded. The dialogue style of the group interviews did not lend itself to audio recording and transcribing, so field notes were made instead to capture comments, key points, and other salient information. Memos were then written immediately after the group interviews to provide additional data for coding.

Ongoing comparative analysis and selective coding resulted in the identification of a need for a final set of data gathering. This also took place in Acholi Quarters resulting in theoretical saturation being achieved for the theoretical codes identified in the emerging theory. The interview style for this stage of data collection was again group interviews, but individual responses were noted and attributed to the individual participants rather than using the sticky-notes approach of stage 2 which did not allow for quotes to be captured in the same way.

For the final set of data gathering, two visual images were used as part of the pre-interview explanation to help illustrate the findings thus far and give context to the focus of that piece of data collection. This was partly in recognition that the use of visual images can help overcome language barriers, and also in recognition that some people find it easier to take in information

visually through images rather than aurally through words. The images remained visible throughout the duration of the group conversations in order to allow the women to refer to them

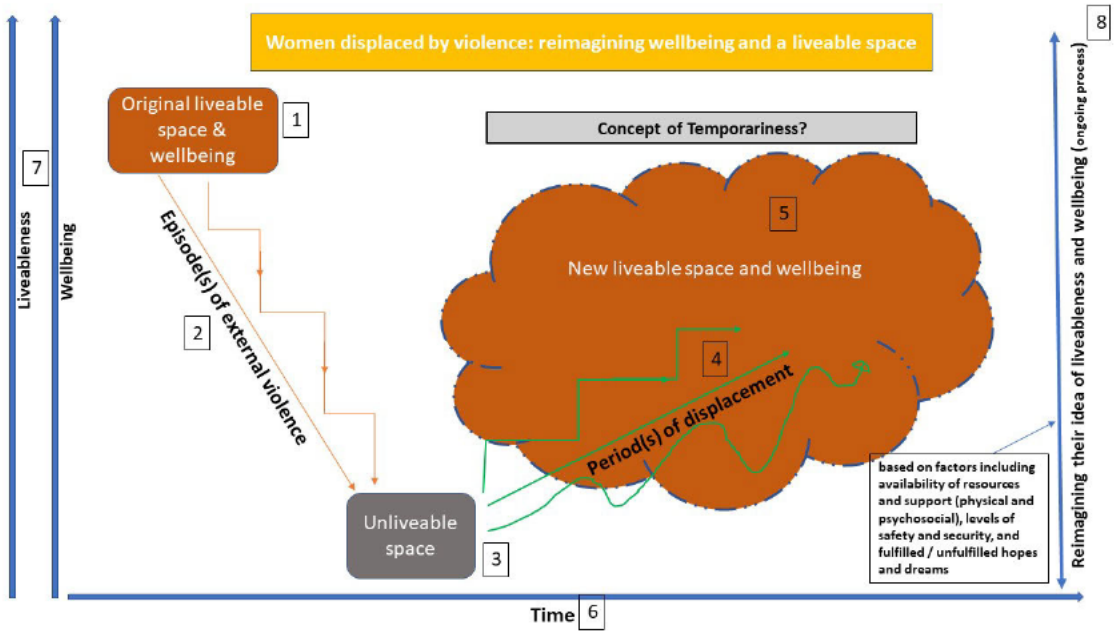


Figure 4: Conceptual model shown in the group interviews.

as needed, and also to help with introducing some of the areas of questioning in a visual way.

The first image shown was the conceptual model image (figure 4), to be explained in chapter 6. Although this image still had several words on it that required translating, the women found it useful to be able to see the model that their previous conversation had helped to develop and would refine further through the final group interview.

The second image used (figure 5) sought to illustrate the interdependency of the four categories involved in liveable space, and to show how that might change over time as the relationships between the four categories were reimagined. Although a very basic illustration, the women really identified with it, with many nodding heads and murmurs of approval as it was explained.

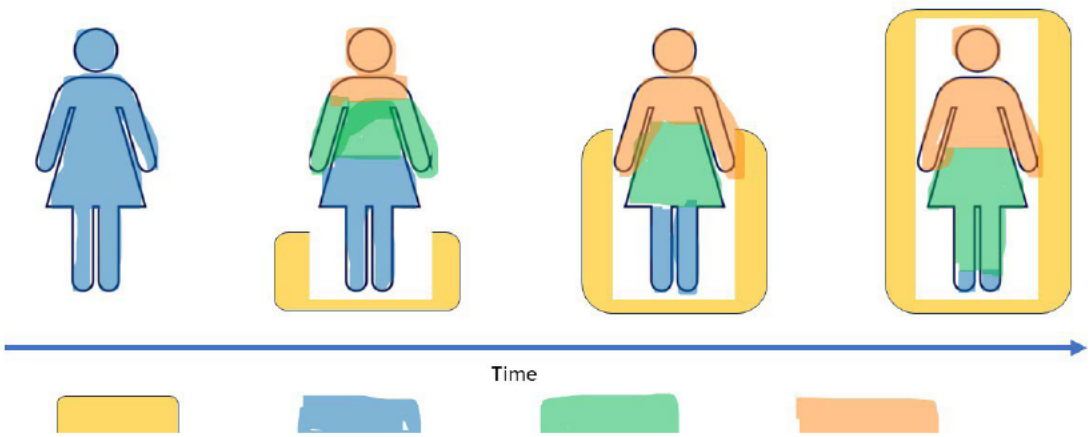


Figure 5: Representation of category interdependence shown in group interviews

The location of the group interviews for second and third stage data collection did vary a little, based on the preferences of the Acholi groups. One of the groups continued to choose to meet in the ILA offices in Acholi Quarters, but the other group chose a site that was within the area in which many from their cooperative lived. This latter choice is discussed in the following section on ethical decisions 'in the moment'.

The first stage of interviews took place in March 2023, the second stage interviews took place in July 2023, and the third stage interviews took place in October 2023. Transcriptions were carried out whilst I was in country to enable clarification of any section of the audio recording to be gained from the interpreters. Discussion also took place with the interpreters regarding their reflections on the interviews, and if there was any supplementary contextual information that they felt should share. In each case, the interpreters responded that the interviewees were pleased with the process, they felt that they had been listened to, and they were very happy to have taken part in the research. Similarly, many of the participants expressed great joy at the opportunity to participate in research that was linked to an overseas institution, and to be given the chance to share their knowledge and thoughts with people from outside their community, and or who represented international agencies, e.g. UNHCR, WFP.

5.4 Ethical decisions 'in the moment'.

Much consideration was given to the ethical implications of the research during the planning process, resulting in ethical approval being given by the Research Ethics Committees of both University of Gloucestershire and Gulu University. However, some real-time ethical decisions had to be made 'in the moment' whilst putting the research plan into practice. These have already been alluded to regarding changes that were made to the research plans, but they will be further considered here as relating to the ethical perspective of the decisions made.

5.4.1 Decision taken not to have the community meetings.

The community meetings were not held to ensure that a lower profile was maintained for the interviews. Ethically, this decision related to achieving increased anonymity for the interview participants as well as reducing the potential for harm against them. The community leaders felt that if too many people knew about the interviews, there could be unrealistic expectations by the community regarding numbers of participants, assumptions about who would be involved, financial compensation, and access to Westerners for ongoing support. All of this

could lead to the potential for participants to be negatively targeted by non-participants. This was deemed to be an unacceptable and ethically unacceptable risk to the participants. The risk was therefore mitigated by cancelling the plan for the community meetings.

There was also a concern from the Palabek camp leaders that the potential for unrealistic expectations within the community could exacerbate community unrest already initiated by an unexpected WFP announcement regarding a possible reduction in food allowances. Thus, there was an ethical component of potential for harm within the wider community as well as the participants themselves. This additional reason also played a part in taking the ethical decision to cancel the Palabek community meetings.

5.4.2 Adjustment to interview timings

Real-time ethical decisions were taken at Palabek and at Acholi Quarters relating to the timing of the interviews. At Palabek, this was in part to keep the profile of the interviews and the interviewees lower in order to protect them from potential pressure or coercion associated with misplaced assumptions by other SSRs regarding any bias in the selection process and receipt of compensation. But in both cases, it was also in recognition of the relationship between the time of day at which the interviews were conducted and the impact on the participants.

The initial research plan for the interview schedule had involved interviews taking place throughout the day. However, mornings at Palabek are the times when community members focus on household chores and ensuring access to food for the rest of the day. Thus, it would be non-beneficial to the participants to have to use this time for an interview. The women at Acholi Quarters tend to be engaged in acts of casual labour and income generation in the mornings, and therefore could be financially disadvantaged if they were requested to take part in an interview at that time. At Palabek it was also suggested that the interview profile would be lower if carried out at a time when the rest of the community was engaged in an ILA-led Empower meeting and therefore not at risk of interrupting the interviews. I raised concern that the participants might lose out by missing some of the meeting, but the ILA staff were confident that they would be able to ensure that through repetition of delivery at subsequent meetings, this would not be the case. It was therefore decided to hold the interviews purely in the afternoons, to ensure that no participant was disadvantaged through having to attend in the morning.

5.4.3 Alterations to the location of the interviews.

Another real-time ethical decision related to the choice of locations for the interviews. In the research plan, it was proposed that the participants could choose their preferred interview location. In so doing, they were given autonomy over that aspect of the interview process, and they could ensure that the location was one where they felt safe and that assured them the level of privacy that they desired. In reality, variations from this plan took place.

In Palabek, the location for the interviews was proposed by the ILA staff member who was acting as interpreter. Having liaised with the ILA team regarding the location of the community Empower meetings she then identified a quiet location nearby where the interviews could be held. The location was visibly hidden from the community meeting, but close enough that the participants could attend the meeting when they were not being interviewed. It was also located such that the participants could discretely enter and leave the community meeting from the rear and remain relatively un-noticed by others. The chosen location was also away from any main thoroughfares within the settlement so that residents at Palabek who were not involved in the Empower meeting would not pass by. This all helped to ensure the ongoing desire to maintain a low profile of the interviews and interviewees as discussed above.

In Acholi Quarters, the real-time ethical decision relating to location was a very different one. In this instance, during the group interviews, one of the groups chose a site that was within the area in which many from their cooperative lived. It was an open site near a well-used pathway which therefore did not lend itself to anonymity nor confidentiality of conversation. This was highlighted to the participants, but they responded that that they had nothing to hide from their neighbours and they fully trusted them not to interfere with the interview process. It was also a convenient location regarding being accessible for their children / grandchildren who were playing in the community, if any need should arise. Although this decision did not comply with the ethics of confidentiality and privacy, their choice of location was respected on the grounds of the ethics of autonomy and beneficence. It was also a visual representation of the power that they had as participants in the interview process, which helped with getting the interviews off to a good start regarding trust and power balance.

5.4.4 Providing the option to end an interview early.

The first interview at Palabek was with a woman who was carrying her child on her back. It transpired that the child was sick and in need of medical attention at the camp ‘hospital’, but the mother wanted to participate in the interviews. As the interview progressed the child

showed increasing signs of distress, and the option to end the interview early was offered. Initially the woman did not accept the offer, but this could be due to the perceived power imbalance and the thought that it would be unacceptable and disrespectful to withdraw from an interview with a 'westerner'. To respect the participant's wish to continue, but also not increase distress to the child, the interview was continued for a short time more and then drawn to a natural but early close so that the child could be taken to the hospital. Thus, ethically the autonomy of the participant was respected but also harm for the child was avoided. There was also a demonstration of seeking to reduce the power imbalance through allowing the participant to make the decision.

5.4.5. Potential for retraumatising

On a few occasions, participants showed signs of distress as they retold some of their traumatic experiences. At these times, there was an ethical dilemma of whether to stop and ease their pain, or to continue and gain more data, which potentially had longer-term gains through the outcomes of the research. If the participant showed signs of distress, they were given opportunity to stop despite potential implications on the data collection process. All chose to continue. At the end of the interviews, several of the participants commented about how grateful they were to be able to share their story, and how they found that each time that they spoke of their experiences, the pain inside would subside a little bit more. This knowledge helped to justify the decision to continue with the interviews, even if some upset was apparent.

5.4.6 Maintaining a good relationship between ILA and the Palabek staff

The decision to follow the requests of the Palabek community leaders rather than the research plans approved by GUREC did also have an ethical implication regarding the longer-term benefit to the Palabek refugees. The camp leaders were very aware of my relationship with ILA, and thus my actions could influence the relationship between the Palabek UNHCR staff and ILA. By complying with their well-reasoned requests to adjust the research plans, I also did not jeopardise the ILA-Palabek relationship, which is crucial for the ongoing provision of a trauma counselling service delivered by ILA to the benefit of all the service users.

5.5 The potential harm of Secondary trauma in research

Research relating to secondary trauma, including vicarious trauma and secondary traumatic stress is substantial. However, many of these findings focus on trauma experienced by professionals who are supporting those who have experienced trauma. (Tang, *et al,* 2024; Guerrero, 2023; Ogińska-Bulik, *et al* 2023). Studies focussing on the trauma experienced by research interviewers from hearing trauma-narratives given by interviewees are fewer (van der Merwe & Hunt, 2019; Smith, *et al.*, 2021). However, this type of secondary trauma is being addressed in this section, described through the following personal reflection on the secondary trauma experienced by myself as the researcher.

Secondary trauma following interviews where the topic being discussed is of a traumatic nature can potentially be experienced by both the interpreter and the interviewer, as both have been exposed to the recounting of the narrative. The interpreter hears the narrative first, and then must relive any trauma expressed as they interpret the narrative for the interviewer. The interviewer observes the interviewee's body language and possible distress as they recount their experiences, and then experiences the distress again as the narrative is interpreted. As the research lead, I was aware of this potential secondary trauma for the interpreter, and I was also aware that I had a responsibility for their welfare. Thus, after each interview, the interpreter and I debriefed together, to share any reflections and issues that either of us might be struggling with as a result of the interview contents. This helped very much in the initial decompressing from the intensity of the interviews. One reflection from the interpreter during a debrief session was that, through the strategies she had developed for coping with her personal experience of living through the war, and through her role as an ILA trauma counsellor, which involved repeated exposure to such stories, she was potentially more able to disconnect from the narratives and not become so traumatised compared to myself, who has had less exposure to such experiences.

In his research note regarding secondary trauma that he experienced during qualitative interviews with displaced Iraqis, Keyel (2021) reflects on the lack of preparedness that he undertook for himself as the interviewer regarding risk-management for his potential exposure to trauma compared to the preparation undertaken to being sensitive to the potential for the interviewee's retraumatisation. Subsequently, he experienced symptoms of secondary traumatic stress disorder, which can occur as a result of repeated exposure to the recounting of traumatic experiences by others. Keyel also refers to the decade that he previously spent working with for organisations that serve refugees and migrants, and the assumption he made that this

previous exposure was sufficient to prepare him for the experience of carrying out interviews with a traumatic narrative.

In a similar vein, through my previous work with the Acholi and Palabek communities and the times when they shared their stories with me, I do have experience of sitting and listening to the horrors of the war. So, to a certain extent, some of what was shared was not new. But previously, I have heard the story once, and then had some distance from it as I returned to the UK at the end of the trip. With these interviews, an intensity not previously experienced occurred due to the cumulative effect of interviews, transcription process, and repeated analysis of the transcripts. the process of data collection and analysis which included repeated in-depth exposure to It was this intensity that resulted in the secondary trauma.

Symptoms of secondary trauma include anxiety, exhaustion, irritability, restlessness, and disconnection from others (Keyel, 2021). A study into the implications of researching sensitive and traumatic topics lists emotional exhaustion, guilt, self-blame, feeling phony, and a range of physical manifestations of stress as further symptoms of secondary trauma (Dickson-Swift, *et al.*, 2009). For the researcher, these can be experienced within the interview setting, outside of the interview setting but whilst still in a 'professional capacity', and in the personal life of the researcher (Middleton, *et al.*, 2022). Certainly, for me there was an increasing sense of exhaustion as the interviews progressed, and on reflection it might have been better to have more space between the interviews. But a subconscious coping strategy kicked in, and I was able to maintain a sensitive and professional approach for each of the interviewees, no matter how many previous interviews had been conducted.

When I returned home from the first set of interviews with the women at Palabek and Acholi Quarters, I was both physically and emotionally very tired, and somewhat irritable with those around me. Friends and family wanted to know if the interviews had 'gone well' but beyond confirming that they had been achieved and there was some very useful content, I found it very hard to say anything more. Obviously, confidentiality meant that I could not share details anyway, but even talking in general was hard. It felt as though there was a protective mechanism going on inside such that if I did not articulate what I had heard, it would create a safe distance for me from the horrors of what had been shared. I also experienced a sense of guilt following the interviews. I felt guilt for having such an easy life compared to those I had interviewed, and guilt for not having experienced their trauma and pain. Clearly this was an irrational response, but it still felt very real, and was something that I struggled with.

From a well-being perspective, not talking about the trauma was an unsatisfactory solution. I also found that I was struggling to maintain an objective perspective in the analysis, as the process of reading and rereading the transcript felt increasingly traumatic. It was only after two supervision sessions that the bubble of secondary trauma that had been building inside me was pierced. To retain confidentiality, no participant names were disclosed, no information shared was specific to only one participant, and both supervisions were held under the agreement of total non-disclosure.

The outcome of those conversations was a big positive difference to how I approached the constant comparative method of analysis and engaged with the transcripts. As a result of the conversations, I was able to relinquish the sense of guilt and take a more rationalised perspective. There is nothing that I can do about the fact that the women did live through awful trauma and I did not, but what I can do is provide a platform for their voices to be heard, and for their experiences to feed into a bigger discourse. That is what this research can do. The women were so grateful for being given the opportunity to share their individual experiences, and in so doing see it transform to something bigger. No longer was it just their own siloed story. Instead, it feeds into a bigger story, and through the research they can represent South Sudanese refugee women and Acholi displaced women within wider discourses. The recognition of this ultimate outcome of the interviews was a balm for the pain of secondary trauma that I had experienced, and as the pain receded it was replaced by a renewed determination to do my best for the women and all that they had been through.

Concluding remarks

This chapter has considered the reality of putting the research plan into practice. Attention has been drawn to the ways in which the practice had to deviate from the plans, and explanations have been given as to the causes and justifications of these deviations. Changes were made both before and during the data collection processes due to decisions of external stakeholders, and these have been addressed including an explanation of the amended implemented processes. Some changes involved real-time ethical decisions having to be made, and these have also been documented. In each case the description of the circumstances leading to that decision being made have been given, as well as the justifications for that decision.

A description has been given of the individual and group interview processes that took place. Images have been included to help with visualising the realities of the interview process,

including interview locations and some simple visual representations used to enhance verbal explanations of the findings. The chapter ends with a personal reflective piece relating to the secondary trauma that was experienced as a result of conducting, transcribing and analysing the interviews. Whilst this trauma is incredibly minor compared to the actual trauma that the participants experienced as they fled from war, it is still worthy of inclusion as it evidences another ethical aspect of research that is carried out within this field, and that should not be ignored or considered too minor for attention.

CHAPTER 6: ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

Introduction

In this chapter, the process of analysing the data will be explored along with an explanation of the findings. In line with the grounded theory approach, the analytical method was one of constant comparison. An overview of this method is given, including the introduction of a four-stage framework of constant comparative analysis set out by Glaser (1992). A brief description of some key Grounded Theory terms will also be given, in order that they can be fully understood within the context of the subsequent text.

Following this overview, a visual representation of a constructivist grounded theory is given, to position the analysis within the wider method. The diagram also shows how the four-stage framework ties in with the constructivist grounded theory method. The chapter then considers the analysis findings using this 4-stage framework. Attention will be given to the findings at the initial coding stage, the focused coding stage, and the identification of the theoretical code and its categories. There is also an initial discussion regarding theoretical saturation and the determining of when it has been reached. This includes a personal reflection relating to the process of determining theoretical saturation in this study. Further consideration of this will be given in chapter 12.1. The chapter concludes with consideration and reflection of some key aspects of the interviews that, whilst not directly pertinent to the development of the grounded theory, are still considered to be worthy of inclusion with regard to the contextual insights that they give.

6.1 Analysis within Grounded Theory: An explanation of the key terms

6.1.1 Constant Comparative Analysis

When following GTM, analysis of data is not a one-time linear activity. Instead, the analysis utilises a constant comparative approach that occurs concurrently with the collection of data rather than after all data has been collected.

The comparisons take place at all analysis levels, from coding of incidents through to identification of the final concepts. In this way, the initial analysis informs the direction of subsequent data collection, and the subsequent analysis indicates the concepts and categories that are within the emerging theory (Bryant and Charmaz, 2007).

Glaser (1992) breaks the constant comparative method of analysis down into four stages. 1) coding and comparing of incidents that are applicable to each category, plus writing appropriate memos; 2) integrating categories and their properties; 3) solidifying the theory and reducing it down to its underlying uniformity; 4) writing the theory. These stages will guide the development of the theory in this study.

6.1.2 Codes, Categories, and Core Categories. With the development of GTM and the emergence of different iterations changes have occurred in the use of terminology, particularly regarding the different analysis outcomes. In Classic GT Glaser talks of coding incidents as the lowest conceptual level of analysis, which lead into categories and their properties as the medium conceptual level, and then tops out with a core category at the highest conceptual level (Glaser 1992). By comparison, in Constructive Grounded Theory, the lowest conceptual level of analysis is initial coding, followed by focused coding with categories as the medium conceptual level, and then theoretical concepts as the highest conceptual level (Birks and Mills, 2023). In this study, the latter set of terms will be used, in line with following a CGT approach.

6.1.3 Memo writing is described as the 'fundamental process of researcher / data engagement. [it] is the methodological link, the distillation process, through which the researcher transforms data into theory' (Lempert, 2007, p245). Memos are also a tool by which the researcher can recognise the categories from the focused codes (Charmaz, 2006). Essentially, they are the tool by which the researcher captures conversations that they have with themselves regarding all and any aspects of the grounded theory process as it progresses. The memos can then act as the archive of observations, reflections, and ideas that occurred during the development of the emerging theory.

6.1.4 Selective Coding occurs after the researcher has identified theoretical codes and related categories. The analysis that takes place at this stage is selective in nature, delimiting its focus to just that data which is relevant to the conceptual framework that has started to emerge (Holton, 2007).

6.1.5 Theoretical Sampling encompasses the process of jointly collecting, coding and analysing data for the purpose of determining what data should be collected next and from whom, in order to progress towards the emerging theory (Glaser, 1992)

6.1.6 Theoretical Saturation describes the point when newly coded incidents only add bulk to a current category rather than adding any new aspects or properties to it (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). However, some literature suggests that this definition can be problematic to put into practice. This view will be explored further in section 6.2.

6.1.7 Theoretical Sensitivity refers to the researcher's understanding and insight into the substantive area being studied that plays into their ability to identify and generate concepts from the data and relate them into an emerging theory (Glaser, 1978). It is affected by the different positionings that the researcher adopts throughout the research process, which themselves will be more apparent to a reflexive researcher (Orland-Barak, 2002).

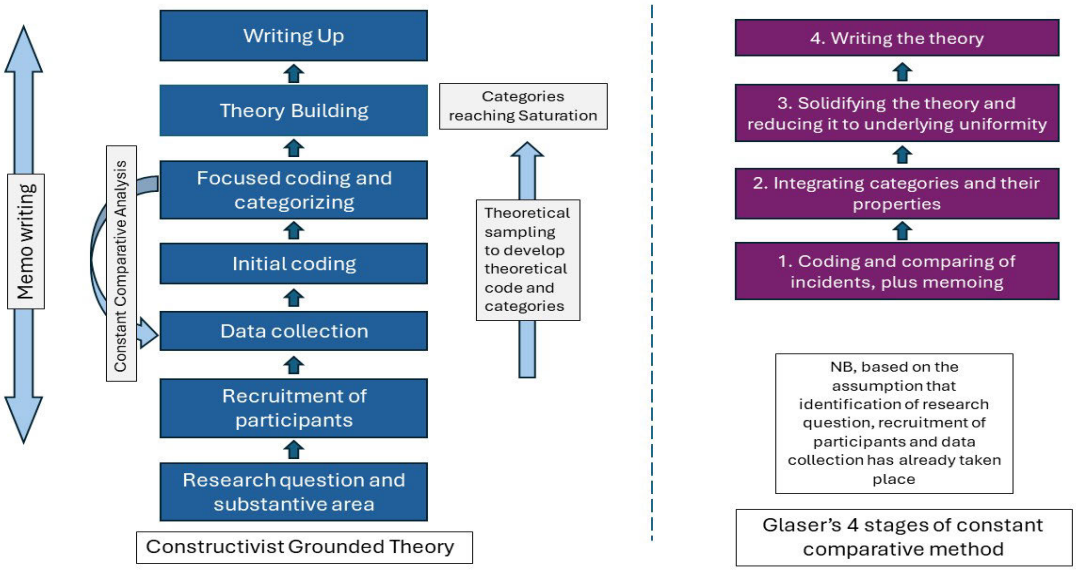


Figure 6: Visual representation of constructivist grounded theory

To conclude this section on the general principles and terminologies of grounded theory, figure 6 gives a simple representation of the CGT process. It is adapted from the diagram constructed by Alison Tweed and shown in Charmaz (2014) p18 and also shows how Glaser's 4-stage framework sits within the CGT process and which stages of each process are equivalent to each

other, despite slightly different terminology. Whilst the diagram looks quite linear in style, it should be noted that the reality of the process follows a more free-flowing and cyclical route particularly for the stages of data collection, initial coding and focused coding. This is due to the analysis taking place alongside further data collection, which is happening as a result of the findings from the analysis.

6.2 Reaching theoretical saturation

Before proceeding to explore the analysis process, and a consideration of the findings that came from that analysis, the process of reaching theoretical saturation will be given further attention in recognition of its key role within the grounded theory process. As alluded to above, a discussion is taking place amongst some grounded theory practitioners regarding the practicality of Glaser and Strauss's original definition of theoretical saturation. Charmaz (2006) endorses their view with her description of theoretical saturation as one where no new theoretical insights can be gained through gathering further data. Similarly, Faulkner and Trotter (2017) describe it as the point at which no new category properties are being revealed, nor any further expansion or deepening of the descriptions, explanations and interpretations produced within the research focus. Whilst the definition is largely accepted, a key problem identified, particularly for novice researchers, is how to determine, justify and adequately articulate when saturation has been reached, given that, in reality, new theoretical insights can always be found, and new sources of data could always be explored if resources permitted (Low, 2019).

Part of the challenge for novice researchers comes with identifying the difference between code saturation and meaning saturation, where code saturation equates to 'heard it all' and meaning saturation equates to 'understand it all' (Hennink, Kaiser & Marconi, 2017). According to the authors it is not enough to reach code saturation and think that theoretical saturation has been achieved; meaning saturation must also be achieved. This requires a larger number of interviews to be conducted and it is important not to stop data collection as soon as the researcher feels that the answers are just being replicated from one respondent to the next. Instead, through constant comparison, the data collection should continue until there are no new meanings or theoretical insights being put forward through the interviews.

Another metric that Low (2019) draws attention to is that of sample size as relating to determination of saturation. She discusses the lack of consensus regarding what is considered to be an acceptable sample size, and also highlights the varying, and sometimes contradictory

arguments relating to the benefits of small versus larger sample sizes. This can be further seen through comparing the conclusion of Guest, *et al* (2006), who propose that a small sample size is adequate to develop sufficient themes and interpretation, whilst Roy, *et al* (2015) suggest that small sample sizes can lead to doubt and reduced plausibility that saturation was reached. The issue of homogeneity versus heterogeneity of participants will also have a bearing on sample size, with a homogenous sample generally reaching saturation sooner than a heterogenous one.

Aldiabat and le Navenac (2018) suggest that, whilst it is a strong and laudable tenet of GTM that there is not a single 'recipe' that all researchers should follow, it could be useful if some generic guidelines were available. This is particularly so for key aspects including recognition of reaching theoretical saturation. They then go some way to addressing this need through identifying some factors that they have found to be useful in this process of recognition.

The first of these factors is recognising the influence of a simple research question compared to a complex question in that a complex question is likely to take longer to achieve saturation. Researcher experience also plays a part – novice researchers might take longer than those with more experience, especially if the increased experience brings with it a deeper appreciation of the philosophical understandings and theoretical frameworks. The use of triangulation within mixed methods practise is also seen to benefit the speed of reaching saturation.

For Low (2019) the key issue is that reaching saturation is not a quantifiable or single marker that should be surpassed. Instead, it is achieved through being able to answer a set of questions that are derived from a pragmatic interpretation of the original key texts relating to theoretical saturation. These questions relate to whether the conceptual model is robust, addresses deviant cases, and whether it is conceptualized and generalized such that it works within a broader social context.

Reflection from the author:

For myself as a novice researcher in the field of grounded theory, this review of theoretical saturation was a very useful process to undertake. In so doing, it helped me to recognise the means by which I can determine and justify why I feel that I have reached theoretical saturation in my research and have the confidence to stand by that decision. There is always the temptation to wonder if more interviews should have been done, or if, as a novice, I might have missed something in the analysis process. By taking the pragmatic approach put forward by Low (2019), and bearing in mind the reflections of other writers, I feel assured that I have done enough to reach saturation. This claim will be reviewed in chapter 12, where the emerging

theory is revealed, and I will address the questions that Low proposed in more detail to show that the findings are robust and honourable to South Sudanese and Acholi women who provided the data.

6.3 Analysis in reality

The analysis techniques used for this study were primarily off-line methods although some use was made of the N-Vivo qualitative analysis software in the relatively early stages. The initial coding was carried out in Uganda during the initial interview period, but a lack of reliable internet forced the development of an off-line approach to enable this to happen. Analysis using N-Vivo was subsequently trialled with the aim of using it to compare frequency of codes, but it was found to be too rigid and structured and didn't suit the more 'free-flow' approach that was tending to emerge during off-line periods. Therefore, the analysis reverted to using off-line methods.

The coding was predominantly incident-by-incident due to the dominant discourse style of the participants. This included a lot of scene-setting and repetition in their narrative, as well as a tendency to switch between first person and third person, and to vary the way in which they referred to particular people. For example, in one anecdote the participant might refer to her uncle as 'the uncle', 'him', or 'the brother' (i.e. brother of her parent). By using an incident-by-incident coding technique, it was possible to draw out the codes without potential confusion coming from the variabilities in discourse.

The initial attempts at coding resulted in what was retrospectively recognised as a lot of labelling rather than conceptualising of incidents. Consequently, the initial output from the analysis was many labels that appeared different but were actually related. Labelling is not a method in GT (Glaser 1992) and so this outcome was a potential wrong turn, put down to being a novice in Grounded Theory. Through reviewing the data and recoding the incidents conceptually in line with GT methods, the incidents that had previously been labelled separately started to be absorbed into certain concepts. For example, labels of violent war experiences (abduction, murder of family members, torture) all became absorbed into the concept of 'experiencing violence'.

Having drawn up a list of initial codes, these were then reviewed during the focused coding phase to identify the more significant codes in line with the stronger lines of thought that were coming from the participants. These focused codes, or categories as per CGT terminology given

earlier, were then further explored in subsequent rounds of interviews with Acholi women as well as returning to all the original interviews and carrying out further selective analysis in line with the focused codes. Thus, the analysis process was non-linear, and involved an iterative and constant comparative approach, to ensure that the data sources were always at the heart of the analysis.

With the categories and potential theoretical code becoming clearer, the research entered the theoretical sampling stage of Grounded Theory through which the researcher can explore new ideas that are coming from the data, in part through sampling new material and data from new participants (Chun Tie, Birks & Francis, 2019). This took the form of interviews with new Acholi participants, as well as further interviews with previous participants, and focused particular attention on the categories and theoretical codes identified. Selective coding was then used to saturate those codes. Through the selective analysis the properties of, and connections between, the theoretical codes became evident and from this the grounded theory emerged.

Having considered the process of Grounded Theory analysis both from a theoretical perspective and contextually as it pertains to this Grounded Theory study, the focus now moves on to discuss the findings that emerged with reference to Glaser's four stages of constant comparative analysis.

6.4 Findings

6.4.1 Stage 1: Coding and comparing incidents

According to Glaser (1992), the first stage of the constant comparative method of analysis involves the coding and comparing of incidents as they can be applied to each of the categories that is emerging. Alongside this, as at every stage of GTM, is the writing of memos to enable the capture of relevant thoughts in a more descriptive and evolving way.

In this study, the initial coding of the interviews resulted in several codes. These are set out in table 3 where they have been clustered together depending on their nature. The codes are conceptual in nature allowing them to span the different contextual experiences of the women, and not be limited to one conflict only. The conceptual nature of codes also ensures that the comparing of incidents can take place between the different groups of participants allowing a comprehensive constant comparative analysis process to take place.

	Categories				
	Unliveableness	**Forced Displacement**	**Receiving services**	**Outcome of services**	**Looking forward**
Codes	Experiencing gender-based violence	Fleeing home	Provision of physical resources	Increased physical wellbeing	Hopes and dreams
	Experiencing gender-based lack of choice	Struggling mentally	Provision of trauma counselling	Increased mental wellbeing	
	Experiencing violence of war	Lack of resources	Connect with community	Interpersonal benefits	
		Inter-tribal tensions			

Table 3: Initial set of categories and related codes

The grouping process naturally led to the identification of categories that, within the CGT process, go on to become the focussed codes. In this study, the initial categories of the codes were 'unliveableness', 'forced displacement', 'receiving services (on arrival in a new space)', 'outcome of services', and 'looking forward'. Further analysis of the latter three highlighted them as being related to each other as stages in the process of reimagining what they might perceive to be a liveable space rather than their previously inhabited space which had proved to be unliveable, resulting in forced displacement. These three initial categories were thus combined into a newly titled category of 'reimagining liveable space', resulting in the updated set of categories and codes as per table 4.

	Categories			
	Unliveableness	**Forced Displacement**	**Reimagining of Liveable Space**	
Codes	Experiencing gender-based violence	Fleeing home	Provision of physical resources	Increased physical wellbeing

	Female disempowerment	Struggling mentally	Provision of trauma counselling	Increased mental wellbeing
	Experiencing violence of war	Lack of resources	Connect with community	Interpersonal benefits
		Inter-tribal tensions		Hopes and dreams

Table 4: Updated categories and related codes

Having carried out initial coding and categorisation of the data collected in the first set of interviews, the analysis progressed to stage two, that of integrating categories and their properties.

6.4.2 Stage 2: Integrating categories and their properties

The updated categories identified in table 4, i.e. unliveableness, forced displacement, and reimagining liveable space, were visually encapsulated in a conceptual model (figure 7). The model is explained here to demonstrate its role in integrating the categories and their properties, and in determining the next stages of data collection. A fuller explanation of the key concepts will be given in the discussion chapters of this work (chapters 7 – 11). NB the numbers given in the explanatory notes pertain to the numbers on the diagram.

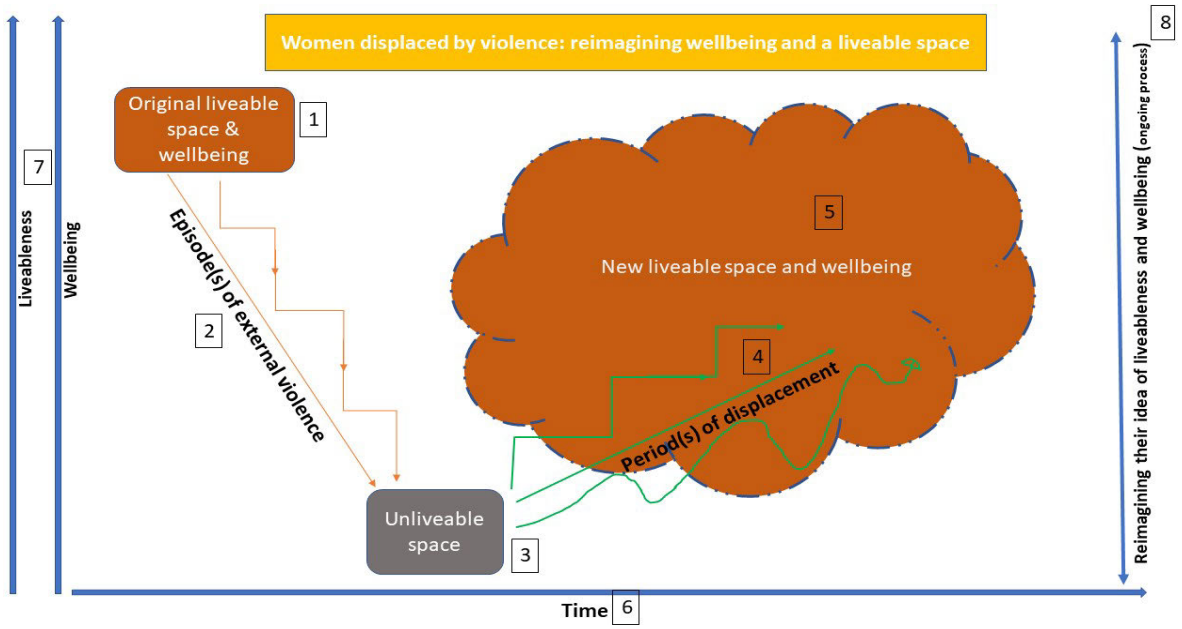


Figure 7: Conceptual model of the initial categories identified

This model represents the conceptual journey that each participant experienced from a life pre-conflict that was liveable and had an accepted level of wellbeing (1), to the impact of external violence (2) resulting in a life that was deemed unliveable (3), to the experience of forced displacement (4) that resulted in the participant starting a new life in a space considered more liveable than position 3 (5). This all happened over time (6), although the passage of time relating to the different stages in the conceptual journey will vary between the participants, hence there are no time units of scale. The transitions from liveable to unliveable (2), and then from unliveable to liveable via the process of displacement (4) also vary between participants. For some it is a single experience (represented by a straight arrow), whilst for others it is a more staged process (represented by stepped and looped arrows). The new liveable space has many variations in how it is perceived, and in the criteria that individual participants use to determine if it is liveable or not. These criteria, which included wellbeing and liveableness (7), were seen to change and be reimagined over time (8), and this is why this part of the diagram is represented as a shape with softer and less specific boundaries to it.

Through the process of developing the conceptual diagram, the integration of the categories with their properties was determined as per table 5:

	Categories		
	Unliveableness	**Forced Displacement**	**Reimagining Liveable Space**
Properties	External and gender-based violence	Gender-based disempowerment	Liveableness
	Gender-based disempowerment	Access to resources	Wellbeing
	Inner peacelessness	Mental instability	Community

Table 5: Updated categories and their properties

The grounded theory approach has the data at the heart of the study, and uses the analysis of that data, and the emerging codes and categories, to determine how to proceed with the study and any further data collection (Tarozzi, 2020). There is thus no predetermined plan regarding which category to explore further. In this study, consideration of the conceptual model

developed following the first interviews resulted in questions relating to the category 'reimagining liveable space' with the associated properties of liveableness, wellbeing, and community. These questions included reference to further information about each of the properties themselves, as well as the nature of the relationships between the properties, and the way in which that interconnectedness plays a part in the reimagining of liveable space over time. It was also noted that there was less literature available relating to this aspect of the model, and that there was the potential for a theory to emerge in this substantive area. It was therefore decided to focus on the reimagining of liveable space for subsequent data collection and analysis.

In choosing to focus on this area, what had been a category was now confirmed as the theoretical code from which a theory might emerge. The subsequent interviews that were carried out allowed the categories of that code i.e. the concepts of liveableness, wellbeing, and community, to be explored until it was felt that theoretical saturation of those concepts had been reached. It was during those interviews that a further conceptual category was identified relating to the theoretical code of reimagining liveable space. That category was 'temporariness', and this was also explored until theoretical saturation was reached. In line with the iterative and non-linear nature of Grounded Theory analysis, stage 1 of the analysis process was repeatedly carried out with each new set of data, as well as reviewing previous data, to allow constant comparison of incidents across the different phases of interviews, which in turn ensured that the categories were fully saturated.

By the end of the analysis stage an updated conceptual model (figure 8) had been developed. This shows the relationship between the theoretical code of reimagining liveable space, and its

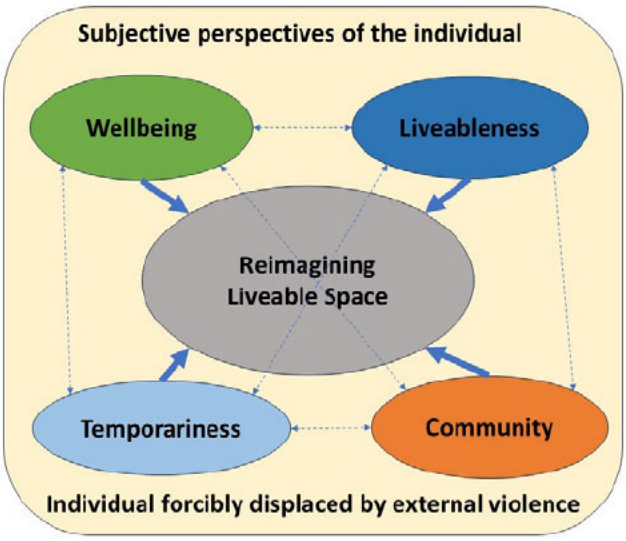


Figure 8: Updated conceptual model

four categories of wellbeing, liveableness, community, and temporariness. It also draws attention to the fact that the individual perspectives of each of these concepts has a strong subjective element to it, and that the data has been drawn from individuals who have been forcibly displaced by external violence.

6.5 Navigating emotional responses – three strategies identified.

Before considering each category in turn, some insights from the interviews will be shared in view of the contextual background that they provide regarding the experiences of the women. Some observations are from memos relating to vaguing, silencing and third-personing: three strategies utilised by the participants in the first set of interviews. Even though they do not feature as categories in their own right, these self-preservation strategies were utilised by the women as they answered the questions and navigated their way through the emotional memories associated with their responses. Then will follow a reflexive piece regarding the use of some particularly horrific sections of the interviews.

Vaguing

With regard to vaguing, some of this was just a natural part of the narrative response style that many of the women used to set the scene. It indicated their awareness of my position as a relative outsider who lacked personal experience of the information that they were about to divulge. But some of it could also have been 'vaguing' as a way to protect self from talking specifically about the painful memories.

For example, SSR2, SSR5, and SSR6 all speak in very general terms about their experience of the war in South Sudan:

SSR2: *"every time you are hearing guns shots, every time people are killed, every time you have to sleep in the bush".*

SSR5: *"every time the rebels come, every time you would be hearing gun shots, every time people are killed".*

SSR6: "*They kill anybody at any time*".

In each of these examples, the participant refers to the atrocities that took place in the war but gives no personal details of what that was actually like for them. This could be because they

were fortunate enough to not actually have any such experiences. But it could be because they did have those experiences, and it is only through 'vaguing' that they can manage the associated emotional trauma and pain, which could have occurred relatively recently, given that the participants have all fled from South Sudan since 2017.

By comparison, some of the Acholi participants gave very graphic details of what they had experienced. However, given that the war in Acholi-land ended 20 years ago, any experience during that war will have occurred at least that many years ago if not more, and so the emotional pain and mental trauma might have lessened somewhat reducing the need for 'vaguing'.

Silencing

Another strategy was that of 'silencing'. This has been noted by Tankink (2013) as a common strategy by South Sudanese women to avoid others shunning her or judging her based on her history, particularly relating to gender-based violence. It has been noted in this study also, and two of the Acholi women, AQ3 and AQ4, directly referred to it in their interviews, thus confirming that the strategy is used as a protective method beyond that of the South Sudanese borders.

AQ3: '*She has never shared this thing with anyone. It is her first time to share this, with you. People always used to come, they used to interview, but she has never shared this with anyone. It is her first time to open to you'*

AQ4: '*I could not share with any of my sisters, I could not share. I could not share the darkest thing; I could not share even to my sisters.'*

Third-personing

The third strategy of note is that of 'third-personing' whereby the participant uses third person narrative to recount an experience.

An example of this can be seen in the following section of AQ2's interview: *"When the war started again, people started running. There you run when your hands are up. Everyone started running their own way. It was around their home…. They run, then they come home, but then they have to go back to the bush during the night. Sometimes you would stay hungry. Sometimes you would stay in the bush, like most of the girls, you would stay and hide in the bush".*

At no point does AQ2 speak of this memory in the first person, although as she recounted it, it was evident that she was speaking from personal experience and not just hearsay. By using third person narrative, she places some distance between herself as the narrator and the incident being described, which in turn might help to protect her from the potential pain of retelling traumatic stories.

Reflective piece from the author

Throughout the writing of this thesis, I have been wrestling with the question of how much should I expose the reader to the brutality and horror that was shared within the interviews?

Do I share it all, or do I hold back, and if I hold back, then what is the motivation behind that decision? Is it to protect the reader from the potential trauma that could come from reading the testimonies of the participants? Or is to protect myself from further trauma? Is it in some subconscious way an effort to protect the women and the image that is portrayed of them? Or is it purely down to the practicalities of having a finite word-count, and so, if the information is not directly relevant to the point being made, then it has to be left out? These women have achieved such an incredible feat in surviving what they have, and in moving from surviving to living. They have all done it whilst also supporting children and younger siblings, and endeavouring to protect those dependents from also having to experience the same horrors. Is it acceptable for me to share the worst parts of their stories, and all the loss and trauma that they have endured, or do I focus on celebrating their achievements?

That part of what the women shared was mostly given as background context for what they had to flee from and why they ended up being displaced. It also gave context for why their life has been unliveable, and an insight into the trauma that they carried with them as they came to their place of refuge. It was given as an explanation for the various examples of mental disturbance and lack of wellbeing that they were describing and to help me understand the background to their situation now. Their experiences were entrusted to me, for me to use as I felt was best.

In writing up my findings, the focus has landed on the theme of reimagining a liveable space. Throughout the exploration of this theme, and the four categories that make it up, I have drawn on extracts from the interview transcriptions to provide evidence and to ensure that the explorations stay true to the voices of the women. I have not shied away from using extracts that draw attention to aspects of the women's lives that would be considered totally

unacceptable in many societies. However, I am also aware that sections of the women's stories have not been shared, as they were not pertinent for inclusion in the discussions. Some of these sections are the most brutal and horrific parts of the interviews.

On reflection, I feel that it is important that I do share insights into these sections, to honour the unbelievable bravery, courage and resilience of these women, and to firmly locate the latter experiences and responses of the women against the truth of what they were previously exposed to and lived through. The achievements of now need to be firmly placed in the reality of the past, in order to really bring home the magnitude of those achievements.

What follows are paraphrased versions of the circumstances surrounding the displacement of some of the women. Together they give an insight into the horrors that were taking place, and from which the women fled.

One SSR participant spoke of being at a neighbour's home with her baby sibling when the rebels attacked her own wood and thatch home. She returned to find her home on fire, with the door locked from the outside so that her parents were trapped inside. When she eventually got in, she found her parents lying on the floor in a pool of blood, each of them having been shot in the head before the house was set on fire. The girl ran with her young siblings, including the unweaned baby. Sadly, she was unable to keep the baby girl alive on the journey to safety, and she had to bury her baby sister along the way. She is now loco parentis for her remaining siblings.

Another of the SSR participants spoke of the terror that she has carried for years as a result of being married to a man who became one of the rebel soldiers carrying out many killings. The woman lived in fear of ever being found by one of the families who had been bereaved as a result of her husband's actions, and finally that day came to pass. She has been on the run with her children ever since.

Some of the most brutal stories came from the AQ participants. One woman's story included rape, seeing people getting their ears and tongues cut off, and having an experience that included her wider family being ambushed by the rebels whilst burying a child who had been killed in a previous attack. They were then forced to lie face down on the ground before being murdered through attacks with guns, pangas and machetes. She also described how the rebels would kill people by digging ditches, putting people in the ditches headfirst and then covering them over with earth until suffocated and the legs stopped moving.

Another of the AQ women spoke of an occasion when the rebels rounded up her and her family and tied all their hands behind their backs. They then randomly shot dead one of the family

members whilst the others all had to watch. Another time the rebels abducted family members, killed them, chopped the bodies up and put the body parts in a big pot to make a 'stew' which the remaining family members were forced to eat.

The final story that I will share is of being abducted by the LRA rebels and forced to serve in their 'army'. The roles that this woman had to fulfil included female-associated 'domestic tasks' e.g cooking, keeping the camp tidy, but also included being available for the army leaders' sexual requirements resulting in rape and gender-based violence. The participant who shared this story told of how she was abducted twice, and managed to escape twice, but then was imprisoned by the government army and so had to endure the further trauma of incarceration.

These experiences are undeniably horrific and brutal, and I apologise if some readers find these insights upsetting, but I do believe that the knowledge helps to give a better baseline from which to consider the exploration of categories that follow. The knowledge also confirms the level of trauma that the participants have experienced, and it reinforces the magnitude of their bravery and resilience in achieving all that they have.

Concluding remarks

In this chapter, the process of analysing the data has been considered, including a preliminary explanation of the grounded theory method and key terminology. Particular attention was given to the current discourse regarding reaching theoretical saturation. However, the specifics of achieving this position within this study are being withheld until chapter 12 in order to enable a more natural narrative to take place and avoid revealing the grounded theory too early. The findings from the data have been outlined and presented in line with the first two stages of the constant comparison 4-stage framework set out by Glaser. The outcome of these findings has been the identification of the theoretical code around which the emerging theory is based, and the four categories of that code. The theoretical code is 'reimagining liveable space' and the four categories of that code are wellbeing, liveableness, temporariness, and community.

The final two stages in developing the grounded theory are those of solidifying the theory and writing it up. However, before these stages are attended to in chapter 12, a discussion will follow that looks in more detail at each of the four categories of the theoretical code (chapters 7 – 10). Having each been considered in isolation, attention will be given, in chapter 11, to their interconnectedness with regard to the theoretical code of reimagining a liveable space.

CHAPTER 7: PERCEPTIONS OF WELLBEING

Introduction

The quest for a single definition of wellbeing is a quest as yet unresolved (Dodge, *et al.*, 2012) and definitions currently in use are various. For example, The *Cambridge Dictionary*, (2021) defines it as 'the state of feeling happy and healthy' and De Feo, *et al.*, (2014) state that wellbeing 'is about feeling good and functioning well and comprises an individual's experience of their life' (p6). Diener, *et al* (2018) draw attention to the different dimensions of wellbeing: 'the most general term covering how well individuals are doing in life, including social, health, material, and subjective dimensions of well-being' (p3). Wellbeing has been identified as one of the four categories that relate to the theoretical code of reimagining liveable space, and in this chapter the discussion will centre around the data that emerged from the analysis of the interviews. A data-driven description of wellbeing will be developed in line with the constructivist approach to this grounded theory study. The different dimensions of wellbeing under consideration will be explored through a gendered lens in line with the feminist standpoint and in recognition of the fact that women were the providers of all the interview data. Community wellbeing and psychosocial wellbeing will also be addressed. The position of education in wellbeing looks at the impact of the Empower programme on the mental wellbeing of the participants, as this is the programme that all but one of the women took part in and that they cite as the source of an array of useful and beneficial learning. The final section of the chapter draws attention to some issues that are particularly relevant to the Acholi Quarters residents with regard to wellbeing. The chapter starts with an overview of wellbeing, and exploring the relationship between wellbeing and the Capability Approach, as this latter concept will be shown to have significant correlations with aspects of this research.

7.1 What is wellbeing?

7.1.1 A brief historical overview

The history of wellbeing goes back many centuries. References to the often-related concept of happiness, and its pursuit in everyday activities can be found in evidence dating from many ancient civilizations, including the Egyptians, Mesopotamians, and Chinese dynasties (Lomas, 2021). Then, in the 4th century BC, Aristippus put forward wellbeing as the pinnacle of hedonistic pursuits of personal pleasure. Three thousand years later, Aristotle posited an alternative expression of wellbeing as that of eudaimonia (Ryan & Deci, 2001). Eudaimonia can be

described as a state of human flourishing that is in line with developing one's potentials and gaining meaning in life (Fowers, 2016) and Aristotle's highlighting of the term was a significant moment in the discourse still ongoing regarding the definition of the term 'wellbeing'. A deeper exploration of eudaimonia reveals that, for Aristotle, the concept is a voluntary action by the individual rather than a state of mind, and that these actions have been deliberately chosen in order to achieve good (Capuccino, 2013). What makes up the good that is the ultimate achievement of eudaimonia is, according to Aristotle, particular to the individual and their unique essence (Hester, 1991). Hence eudaimonia is achieved in line with the natural potential and meaning of life for that individual, and not necessarily through work or externally imposed tasks in life.

Alongside the eudaimonic expression of wellbeing there have been other philosophical progressions that have influenced the advancement of this concept and human development. Utilitarianism is one such, with J Bentham and JS Mill being two strong proponents. The focus of utilitarianism is to act in such a morally appropriate way that the outcome is as much happiness, or utility, as possible. Thus, there is a hedonistic perspective to the philosophy, but utilitarians also hold that good should be gained for the greatest number, and not be egotistical in nature (Driver, 2022). Various branches of utilitarianism developed through seeking how to determine which action should be taken to achieve the greatest good. One of these was outcome utilitarianism wherein the act chosen should be the one that yields a sum total of utilities that is at least as high as any other act. Another was motive utilitarianism which focuses on the ranking of actions based on morally-based motives (Sen 1979). Ultimately however, a key concern of utilitarianism is equitable allocation of utilities (Galanis & Veneziani, 2022) and the parallels between achieving this and achieving eudaimonia are evident: playing a willing part in equitable utility allocation could potentially be a step along the route towards finding eudaimonic wellbeing.

Another discipline that has played a key role in wellbeing development is that of positive psychology, whose roots go back to the philosophies of utilitarianism, hedonism and eudaimonia. Positive psychology positions itself as a field that focuses on the study of individual, community and societal flourishing and identifying the factors required to enable this flourishing to occur. In so doing, it seeks to provide theory-based interventions that can positively impact wellbeing (Wicher, 2017). Proponents of this field view wellbeing through a combined hedonistic-eudaimonic lens which can be seen in the evolution of various theories and models. One such model that features regularly in the literature is the PERMA model of wellbeing which combines positive emotions (P), engagement (E) and meaning (M) with

relationships (R) and accomplishments (A) (Seligman, 2018). Critiques of positive psychology and its influence on wellbeing include the fact that many of the models have an overly Western-centric approach and are strongly individualistic in nature. The focus on happiness as a route to wellbeing is also criticised particularly regarding societies where individual happiness is often secondary to factors such as the wellbeing of family, community and /or faith groups (Lambert, *et al*, 2015). My concern regarding the Western-centric nature of wellbeing narratives is part of the driving force behind this study, and this critique regarding individualism versus community in the determination of wellbeing will be referred to again later in this chapter.

Over the course of history, individual and societal wellbeing has been significantly affected by the rise of modernisation, democratisation and industrialisation (Glatzer and Kohl, 2017). Whilst that effect has not always been positive there are outcomes that can be demonstrated to have positively impacted wellbeing, including the increase in personal and state wealth, mass democracy and freedom of speech, and the development of health and welfare regimes. In the period since 1980, all the world's major regions have benefited from, and experienced, considerable growth in wellbeing with regard to health, education and income, with even the poorest and least developed countries being able to cite increased literacy levels and life expectancy (Estes and Sirgy, 2017).

7.1.2 Human development indicators and wellbeing

One arena in which the development of wellbeing features, and which is relevant to the progression of this study, relates to the evolution of human development indicators as a means of ranking and measuring societal progress. For many years, the progress of nation development was measured through the growth of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita. This indicator, which only measures marketed economic activity, was being used as a measure of societal welfare more broadly, and over time it was recognised to be inadequate in several ways. For example, it did not give attention to distribution of resources, and it tried to allocate a single number to a very complex and multi-faceted picture within the nation (Kubiszewski, *et al* 2013). Different frameworks were developed in response to these defects including the utilities-based approach, and the resources-based approach (Nussbaum, 2011). However, whilst each was seen as an improvement on the previous approach, the concern was that they were primarily focused on economic growth and did not adequately incorporate other non-economic dimensions that are so pertinent to the lives of minority groups (Singh & Cowden, 2017). For example, a resource-based approach does not consider the variations between individuals in

their ability to convert resources into actions, whilst the utility-based approach does not differentiate between hierarchical social traditions and so can result in reinforcing inequalities (Nussbaum, 2002). It was into this space that the Capabilities Approach was positioned, as developed by Amartya Sen, and more recently by Martha Nussbaum.

7.1.3 The Capabilities Approach

The Capabilities Approach is concerned with evaluating the advantages of a person "in terms of his or her actual ability to achieve various valuable functionings as part of living" (Sen, 1993, p30). In so doing, it considers their capabilities i.e. what the person can do and be compared to their functionings i.e. what the person can achieve. Thus, capabilities refer to opportunities whilst functionings refer to achievements that are the realisations or outgrowths of capabilities (Robeyns, 2017). In this way there are strong parallels with the concept of wellbeing, and also with the wider theme of what constitutes a liveable life, as per the theoretical code of this study.

Key elements of the approach include:

- the focus on each person as an individual,
- their choice or freedom to exercise their capabilities and functionings,
- the pluralist nature of capabilities that cannot be reduced to a single numerical value,
- the recognition that capabilities do not just reside as an ability within the person, but also include the freedom and opportunities created by political, environmental, economic and social influences,
- addressing the ingrained societal injustice and inequity that results in a lack of access to capabilities for those who are marginalised and discriminated against (Nussbaum 2011).

Nussbaum further developed the Capabilities Approach and compiled a list of ten capabilities[1] that she considered to be central requirements of a life lived with dignity. This list can act as a

[1] 1. Life: that does not end prematurely, or results in a life not worth living.
2. Good bodily health: including adequate nutrition and shelter.
3. Bodily integrity: including freedom to move, safety from violence, and choice regarding sex and reproduction.
4. Senses, imagination and thought: including unrestricted use of these faculties, in an informed and educated way, and with opportunities for creativity and freedom of expression.
5. Emotions: being able to express emotions without fear or anxiety of possible repercussions.
6. Practical reason: being able to plan and reflect on personal progression of life.
7. Affiliation: including being able to live with and engage positively with others; and being treated with dignity, respect, and equality.
8. Other species: being able to have concern for the natural world.
9. Play: including laughter and recreational activities.
10. Control over one's environment: political and material (Nussbaum, 2011).

useful benchmark when considering the factors that the participants in this study highlighted as imperative for a liveable life and will be used accordingly.

Central to Nussbaum's writings on the Capabilities Approach are the experiences of women, and in particular the injustice of the inequalities that women experience across many sectors and in many parts of the world (Nussbaum, 1999, 2000). Thus, the relevance of the Capabilities Approach as a tool that can capture the individual situations, opportunities and deprivations of women in their own contexts is important. Pyles and Banerjee (2010) note that the capabilities list set out by Nussbaum is a 'litmus test by which to measure these women's and other's functionings in a just society' (p53) although they do also comment on the low priority that the list gives to work and income, which for women is often a key factor in them gaining independent access to resources and opportunities. The ability to focus on the complex and multidimensional nature of the lives of women is identified as a key strength of the Capabilities Approach in studies with diverse female sample groups, for example Suart (2019), Charles and Denman, (2012), Van Raemdonck (2019), Selvam (2008), and Zereyesus (2017).

From an African perspective, Kuhumba (2022) draws attention to the way in which the Capabilities Approach can be a framework for developing empowerment programmes for disadvantaged groups, and in particular focuses on women as the disadvantaged group within the patriarchal societies of traditional Africa. Another article that links the Capability Approach and Africa is that of Ncube & Mkwananzi (2020) who use the Capability Approach to explore the issue of migration within the African subcontinent because of its ability to cut across 'political, economic, cultural and social spheres' (p70). Similarly, Van Raemdonck (2019) uses the approach to review livelihood programmes for refugee women in South Africa. The programmes' enhancing and limiting features were subsequently identified with regard to the women's capabilities, and recommendations for improvements were made that expanded capabilities and functionings regarding their ability to move towards self-reliance. The identification of unfulfilled basic capabilities for staff and students helped to analyse reasons behind the gap between expectations and performance in rural Ugandan primary schools (Vermeulen, 2013), again demonstrating the nuanced and flexible benefits of this approach. However, Hoffmann & Metz (2017) warn that the individualist focus of the Capabilities Approach could be seen to oppose the relational ethos of Ubuntu that so strongly underpins African ethics. Ubuntu will be given more attention later in this chapter regarding wellbeing and the community (7.4.3) but suffice to say that if the Capabilities Approach can be applied at a community level, then the inherent focus of Ubuntu for collaborative, cooperative and participative interactions can bring about capabilities that target not just the individual but the collective whole. Thus, the flexibility

of the Capabilities Approach enables it to be sensitive to cultural differences and to function fully within the context of pluralist and diverse societies (Giovanola, 2005; Yap & Yu, 2016). In this way also, in this study, the Capabilities Approach is a useful framework against which to position the discussion about wellbeing, as it can cross the boundaries of ethnicity and focus on the needs and aspirations of the community, as identified by the participants themselves.

Note from the author:

As already stated, this study is a grounded theory study that is directed by the data that the participants have chosen to divulge. When I embarked on the study, there was no preconceived idea on the direction in which it would go, other than the general substantive area which had been identified. It was up to the participants to direct the research based on what they chose to disclose to me, and from the analysis of those interviews emerged the codes and categories.

Therefore, when I was carrying out the analysis, I was not looking at the data through a Capabilities Approach (CA) lens and I did not have a CA hypothesis in the back of my mind that I was trying to fit my research around. Instead, I was keeping an open mind to see what codes and themes emerged, and then exploring the ones that stood out as being the key categories to explore further with additional interviews and data gathering.

However, what has emerged from that process certainly ties in with CA, and can be seen to support the premise of CA. Therefore, it is sensible to include CA within this post-analysis discourse. Another researcher with same set of findings might have chosen to theorise the findings purely through a CA lens and using a different methodological approach. For me, however, the most important driver is having the women's voices at the centre and letting their knowledge and lived experiences direct the outcome. Hence, I have stayed with grounded theory as the main methodological approach for my research.

Whilst the primary purpose of my study is not to reinforce CA, equally it is not aiming to undermine it. Certainly, there will be some reflections that can speak into the CA paradigm, but that would be because of the grounded theory demonstrating how it fits into the wider theoretical discourses rather than as a specific aim of the research.

7.2 Wellbeing within the context of this study

Thus far, this chapter has explored aspects of the history of wellbeing as a concept, and its inclusion in national and international tools to measure human development. Wellbeing also

features in goal 3 of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UNDESA, 2015). As a result, there are now multiple ways in which the term wellbeing is used, as demonstrated in table 6 which shows the number of references by each of four search engines for a small selection of the types of wellbeing found in academic literature (correct on 04/04/2024).

	Search Engine used			
Keyword	**Google Scholar**	**PsychInfo**	**Scopus**	**SocIndex**
Well-being	8,000,000	68,443	130,486	22,796
Subjective wellbeing	3,940,000	16,229	8,225	7,243
Mental wellbeing	2,900,000	49,571	32,216	10,980
Physical wellbeing	3,760,000	64,673	25,470	21,304
Economic wellbeing	3,030,000	11,469	11,905	8,094
Community wellbeing	3,480,000	6,283	19,251	2,239
Eudaimonic wellbeing	43,800	1,028	115	259
Hedonistic wellbeing	34,800	95	37	25
Wellbeing index	2,080,000	12,102	9,449	1,747
Wellbeing at work	4,020,000	6,779	8,490	11,994
Wellbeing in schools	1,550,000	45,587	10,024	3,592

Table 6: Wellbeing references, generic

However, within this wealth of literature, data from the Global South is notably lacking (Disabato, *et al.*, 2016). At a theorising level, Sen and Nussbaum, with their work on Capability Approach, have helped to address this lack of acknowledgement regarding the disparate realities of life for individuals and societies through taking account of human diversity in the range of dimensions that are included in the conceptualisation of wellbeing. Not all the dimensions are equally relevant for all groups, but by including dimensions that are more relevant for minority and marginalised groups, the Capability Approach becomes a much more inclusive and relevant framework (Robeyns & Byskov, 2023). In this way, the experiences and perspectives of women, and those from less developed countries who have or are denied access to different options and capabilities are just as relevant as those of the middle-class,

white, Western male. But, when carrying out literature searches for wellbeing relating to women refugees in the global south, using the same search engines as previously, the following figures result (table 7, correct on 07/06/2024). It is into this paucity of literature relating to the wellbeing of women refugees from South Sudan and Uganda that I position my research.

	Search Engine used			
Keywords	**Google Scholar**	**PsychInfo**	**Scopus**	**SocIndex**
Cross-cultural wellbeing	1,820,000	618	858	124
Wellbeing global south	1,700,000	272	617	103
Wellbeing refugees	226,000	374	1,180	249
Wellbeing women Africa	751,000	108	431	66
Wellbeing women Africa refugees	93,100	4	12	2
Wellbeing women Uganda refugees	28,700	4	7	1
Wellbeing women South Sudan refugees	31,100	505	4	0

Table 7: Wellbeing references, focussed

Regarding the epistemology of wellbeing and how different groups understand the term within their cultural context, Baird, *et al,* (2012) and Bragin, *et al.*, (2015) both note that their particular research groups, who would each be classified as marginalised ethnic groups from Sub-Saharan Africa, had no direct translation for 'wellbeing' in their local language. Different ethnic heritages may have different epistemological understandings of wellbeing as a construct and not all population groups will necessarily identify equally with the dominant discourse of wellbeing. Similarly, different demographical sectors of the same ethnic group may have different understandings and interpretations of the concept of wellbeing, and it should not be assumed that research findings from one age-group can be transposed across to another (Gennings, *et al,* 2021).

Studies by Horn (2013), and Bragin & Taaka (2013) are perhaps those that come closest to the geographical focus of this study in that they consider the perception of wellbeing amongst

conflict-affected Acholi women living in northern Uganda. A notable finding from Horn relates to the challenge of taking a construct that was created in an individualistic society and then seeking to utilise it in a universal way on a very different society. As will be shown below in the consideration of attributes that study participants proposed in their discussion of wellbeing, this point of imposing individualism within a community-focused tradition was evident in this study also. Thus, a eudaimonic perspective of wellbeing is closer to the understanding of wellbeing expressed by the participants in this study as it relates to a subjective perception of human flourishing in line with the benefits of humankind rather than the normative ideals that are the focus of many quantitative and developmental studies.

The study by Bragin & Taaka (2013) compares perceptions of psychosocial wellbeing for women from three sample groups, one of which is in northern Uganda. For each group, domains of wellbeing were identified, and the list for the women from northern Uganda provides a useful comparison against the findings from this study, as will be noted later in this section. The challenge of finding a more inclusive understanding of wellbeing that is relevant to and accessible by a broader global audience has been addressed by Lambert, *et al* (2020) who review the recently updated set of questions used in the worldwide Gallup poll to measure wellbeing. The additional questions move the measurement of wellbeing from focusing primarily on life satisfaction, to include the consideration of the role of culture, community, environment and governance within social wellbeing, as well as hedonic and eudaimonic aspects of wellbeing. In so doing the measurement of wellbeing can become more contextually nuanced, and comparisons between societies can take place in a more contextual and refined way.

The foci of these additional questions reflect some of the attributes that were given to wellbeing by the research participants. In the group interviews one strong reflection that emerged was the relationship between community and individual wellbeing. Thus, from group interview 1: *the wellbeing of one person depends on the wellbeing of the community. If the community isn't well, then the individual will not have wellbeing.* Similarly, from group interview 2: *'When others are OK then you are OK. Their wellbeing affects your wellbeing'.*

The environment was also recognised as having a bearing on wellbeing, particularly from a safety perspective. All the South Sudanese participants spoke of the importance of safety when it came to finding peace of mind. SSR4 was particularly focussed on this as she had come to the settlement to escape a vengeful family who were seeking revenge for what her rebel soldier husband had done to their family. When asked how she finds wellbeing, she replied: *'safety is*

very important, so that she's not being looked for because of what the husband did. If their safety is guaranteed, that would be OK." Later, when exploring how easily peace and wellbeing came to SSR4, and stay with her, she said: "*peace just came naturally cos the people who are looking for her are not around. But if they will resurface, that peace will disappear automatically*". In this, the link between safety and wellbeing is clearly made.

Governance was not alluded to directly regarding wellbeing but was spoken of by AQ16 when discussing community: "*Having local leaders who provide security in the community is good.*" AQ6 also spoke of governance about the local agencies that support the community: "*because of the organisations that are here to help, it means that we can have a better standard of living than if we were in a community without those organisations*". Given that it has already been established that individual wellbeing is dependent on the wellbeing of the community, it can be inferred that these aspects of good community will therefore be relevant to personal wellbeing.

Having considered wellbeing from the perspective of external bodies of literature, attention will now be turned to developing a description of wellbeing that is grounded in the data from this study. In so doing the description will be co-constructed and will fully reflect the perspectives and standpoint of the participants.

7.3 A data-driven description of wellbeing

Unlike the concepts of liveableness, community and temporariness, the concept of wellbeing has been integral to this study from the outset as part of the substantive area of women experiencing conflict-caused forced displacement. Therefore, the concept has been a distinctive part of the interviews from the beginning, including the pre-study interviews with members of the ILA team.

As outlined in chapter 4.6.1 the six pre-study interviews were conducted in English, with a notable outcome of those interviews being that each participant gave a different Acholi translation of the English word 'wellbeing'. Each response incorporated its own nuance and elements of the concept of wellbeing, and yet all were slightly different. This finding is significant in that it resonates with, and shows parallels to, the multifaceted attributes of wellbeing as previously acknowledged, and also with the lack of a single definition for the term in English.

During the interviews, other words or phrases were used to describe individual wellbeing and factors that were important to achieving it. These have been grouped into the following categories: physical, mental, spiritual and community. See table 8.

Physical wellbeing	Mental wellbeing	Spiritual wellbeing	Community wellbeing
Safety	Happiness	Presence of God	Peace
Employment	Good life	Prayerful community	Community harmony
Access to food	Sleep well		Community support
Own home	Inner peace		Good neighbours
Physical health	Settled mind		Family life
	Mental health		Love for each other
	Healed mind		Respect for each other
	Strong mind		
	Hope in the future		

Table 8: Words and phrases used to describe aspects of achieving wellbeing.

The word cloud below (figure 9) represents the different frequencies by which the words and phrases were used. The larger the font size, the more frequently was that word or phrase used in the descriptions of well-being and its various attributes.

Figure 9 – word cloud of words and phrases related to well-being

Based on the sizing of the different words, it is evident that, for the participants in this study, mental wellbeing is very dependent on attributes relating to family and the community in which the individual is based, rather than access to physical resources. Thus, phrases such as 'good neighbours', 'family life', and 'community support' feature more prominently than food, physical health, own home or employment. Hence, in the first Acholi group interview, when asked if wellbeing can be found in a situation where all the physical resources are luxuriously catered for but there are no other people living nearby, the response was "*you can have all the physical resources in the world, but if there is no community then wellbeing will not be there.*"

Similarly, the second Acholi group interview included the following response, "*Real wellbeing can only come when you feel properly at home, with no sense of temporariness, and when you are in a community that you feel fully rooted and connected to, where their language is your language, and where their traditions and heritage are your traditions and heritage.*" This again reinforces the importance of good community regarding personal wellbeing and brings out the eudaimonic perspective which is seen to be so much more important to them than a purely hedonistic view of wellbeing.

The wellbeing domains listed by Bragin & Taaka (2013) for the Acholi participant group were as follows: good home and marriage, access to resources, religion and spirituality, education, raising children well, looking smart and having a 'nice' home, support from organisations outside the family, participation and advocacy, time to rest and relax, the garden, being able to help others, men's engagement. Encouragingly there is considerable overlap between this list and the word list of table 8, although there are some differences, due to the following possible reasons. Firstly, the women in Bragin & Taaka's study, whilst of Acholi heritage, are not living as IDP's following forced displacement, but are living in their traditional homelands. Also, the word list given in table 8 is an amalgamation of words and phrases given by participants of Acholi and of South Sudanese heritages. Further, the Bragin & Taaka study had a pure focus on wellbeing from the outset, unlike this study which had an identified substantive area but was less predetermined in the particular area of focus within that. Finally, Bragin & Taaka utilised a research design that included concept identification and concept clarification stages prior to semi-structured interviews which gave opportunity to ensure that every domain was considered in the interview.

One issue relating to wellbeing that does not directly appear in the wellbeing word list for this study, but that does appear in a word list of factors pertaining to a lack of wellbeing is that of

gender-based attributes. This can be seen in the word cloud below (figure 10), which is based on the frequency of words and phrases used in the interviews to describe a lack of wellbeing

Figure 10: word cloud of factors relating to a lack of well-being

Gender-based deprivations were given as the second most common reason for a lack of wellbeing amongst the participants after violence of war, much of which itself was gender-based, although not acknowledged as such by the participants. The experiences of the women that fall into the category of gender-based deprivations reinforce the case for incorporating feminist standpoint as a methodological perspective of this study. To carry out a study where their voices are not at the centre to articulate and draw attention to their gender-based experiences would result either in those experiences being omitted or being articulated through the eyes of others. Those others could be the men who are involved in causing the deprivations, or they could be women from another context who do not fully understand the intricacies and context to those deprivations. In both situations, the issue of power would over-ride that of gender and it is important that this is guarded against. By using a feminist standpoint, this can be achieved, as the focus is placed directly on the voice, perspective and standpoint of the woman. Further discussion regarding the gendered dimensions of wellbeing will follow, along with a consideration of other dimensions.

To conclude this section however, based on the above findings relating to wellbeing, a co-constructed description of wellbeing that is grounded in the data from this study, and therefore relevant to the participants of this study, is proposed as follows:

> **'Achieving inner peace and wellbeing of an individual, following significant traumatic experiences, is significantly dependent on the safety, stability and wellbeing of the community in which that individual is located. Good neighbourly and community**

relationships, that offer mutual respect, gender equality and support, are key in enabling the individual to find wellbeing through gaining mental healing and stability, and through developing a sense of hope for the future.'

7.4 The different dimensions of wellbeing

From the above co-constructed description of wellbeing, some dimensions are identified that warrant further consideration. These are the gendered dimension, the neighbourly and community dimension and the psychosocial dimension which encompasses the phrase above relating to 'mental healing and stability, and through developing a hope for the future'.

7.4.1 The gendered dimension of wellbeing

In the 'World Happiness Report', (Fortin, *et al,* 2015) differences in wellbeing are considered with regards to gender and age. The subjective measure of wellbeing goes beyond just material or economic factors and includes cognitive evaluations of the personal experience of life, as well as positive and negative emotions. Gendered differences in the experience of wellbeing are evident, although the picture is not the same across all regions of the world. In most of the positive emotions considered, there is little gender difference in the early years, but by the later years of life, men tend to be slightly higher in their positive experiences. The notable exception is that of feeling safe at night where women rate consistently lower than men across all the ages and yet safety was one of the factors identified in the description above as being key for personal wellbeing. Conversely, for the negative experiences, women rank higher than the men. These experiences of anger, worry, sadness, depression, anxiety and pain will all lead to a reduced sense of wellbeing. The findings relating to subjective life evaluations show that women in five of the eight regions of the world have higher life evaluations. However, in Sub-Saharan Africa, the life evaluation of women is less than men, indicating a lower expectation of the level of wellbeing that their life might contain.

A recent report by the United Nations Secretary General, following a meeting of the Commission of the Status of Women, approached the multi-faceted concept of wellbeing for women from the entry point of poverty. It stated that 'Women and girls living in poverty experience multiple and compounding deprivations, including by being denied a decent standard of living, food security, nutrition and adequate housing. Those deprivations are intensified by other dimensions of inequality, including race, ethnicity, disability, location, marital and migrant

status, HIV status, sexual orientation and gender identity. Women and girls experiencing multiple, intersecting forms of discrimination tend to fare worse across all dimensions of wellbeing.' (UN Secretary General, 2024, p4)

Whilst the statement by the UN Commission had a global reach, the reduction in subjective wellbeing for women in Sub-Saharan Africa has been studied more closely within Uganda (Rishworth, *et al,* 2020). It was found that key drivers to help improve the pathway to wellbeing for women include community support, access to group activities, numbers of close friends and relatives, government assistance, and access to socio-economic support. As will be shown below, this list ties in with the findings in this study relating to both the drivers for improving wellbeing, and also the gendered deprivations that can lead to a reduction in the sense of wellbeing for the woman.

In the following extracts, SSR1 gives some graphic examples of the deprivations that she experienced because of being a woman and a mother:

"As a woman who has gone through war, her wellbeing is something that has been denied. Why? First, she lost her parents. Each time she looks at those graves where the parents were buried, it disturbs her mind. On top of that, the brothers at home – they did not care for her when her parents died. That one brings trauma, cos she thinks 'if my parents were alive, my well-being would be catered for'."

"Then, looking at the war in South Sudan, where people have run for refuge, have run for food, you see there is no happiness. So, for her, as a woman who has gone through war, it has not been easy on her side."

"Women like her, who have gone through war, but also who are in her category, cos right now she's a total orphan... When the parents died, and the people who lived, they denied them... like the brothers to the father, they have denied them to the girls, especially the girls, they have denied them rights. Rights to access to land for cultivation, and in her mind and the sisters, they think if the parents were around, at least they would have access to land.

Also, when they were coming to Uganda here, they did not carry anything. As women you just have to run with your child. You cannot even carry any livelihood item to come with, not even like a cow to come with it. So that one has made it very hard. At least other people like men who have muscles they can carry something. But for her, she is a lady, and so she just came with nothing and so that one makes her life very much more hard on this side."

From this extract can be seen a gendered disparity regarding access to the basic elements that can help lead to wellbeing. Some of this will be explored in chapter 8 'Perceptions of Liveableness' but still this extract demonstrates the strong material dimension of deprivations that in turn impact her wellbeing. Her position as a mother with those associated responsibilities lead to further deprivations. When she fled from the war, her primary consideration had to be ensuring the safety of the children and fulfilling their needs rather than being able to focus on herself and her own needs.

Another aspect of gender-based deprivations was described by participants who had been abducted by the LRA and taken as child brides. At the time of abduction, they were deprived of family-related opportunities, and later they were denied the chance to return home, due to the stigma associated with having been a child-soldier. This experience of the participants is borne out by studies from conflicts across the world. The involvement of girls in armed combat worldwide is one that receives much less attention than the involvement of boys (Mazurana & McKay, 2001). Their experiences include sexual abuse and psychological trauma, as well as the violence of war itself (Pillai, 208). For the participants in this study, some rehabilitation has been available through the work of ILA, as will be discussed further below. However, the availability of rehabilitation, ideally of an individualised nature, and asylum generally for girls who have escaped from being child soldiers is pitifully low compared to that available for the boys (Stevens, 2014; Vindevogel, *et al,* 2011).

These aspects of gender-based deprivation that have been raised by the participants in this study all have an influence on the lack of wellbeing. They occurred because of the gender inequality that is cited by those working in these communities as prevalent in the traditions of South Sudan and northern Uganda. According to Deacon and Sullivan, (2010), insufficient research has been carried out relating to 'women's gendered experiences of wellbeing and distress' (p118), and how they do, or do not, attain wellbeing in a post-war environment. Gender-based deprivations is a key factor in the lack of wellbeing, either due to experiences that occurred during the trauma of the war and subsequent forced displacement, or due to struggles and challenges that the women now endure as related to gender-based factors. These factors pertain to the role of motherhood, to the presence or absence of the husband, including abuse and the role of single-parenting, to the distress experienced through loss of inherited land and the subsequent sense of rootlessness, and or the trauma of gender-based violence. The gender-deprivations experienced by these women are representative of a wellbeing-related dimension that impacts women across the world to varying degrees. It can therefore be inferred that

gender-parity might positively impact the wellbeing of participants, although this was not specifically referred to in the interviews.

This exploration of wellbeing and gender-based deprivations links through to a discussion about liveableness and gender parity that will occur in chapter 8.2. It also ties in with the focus of the capabilities approach, whereby the deprivations can be seen as a lack of access to capabilities and functionings that have been identified as relevant to the fulfilment of life for a woman. The emphasis of the capabilities approach is to promote wellbeing of the individual through enabling people to engage with opportunities and achievements that they personally value (White, *et al*, 2016). Thus, there is a subjective element to it rather than it being a blanket approach for all. The participants of this study have subjectively identified properties of wellbeing that are important to them, either through the presence or absence of them in their lives. In so doing, they have identified capabilities and functionings that are relevant to their personal journey towards the achievement of a fulfilling life.

7.4.2 The influence of children on the wellbeing of the mother

Heltne, *et al* (2020) explore the role of education, including emergency education, in providing support for the mental wellbeing of children living as refugees both within Sudan and South Sudan. This topic also arose in the interviews with the participants, both regarding wellbeing for the children, and the impact on the mother's wellbeing. Further this ties in with the gendered dimension of wellbeing, and the deprivations that can occur for women and mothers, due to gender and role-related responsibilities.

Both SSR and Acholi participants cited accessing education for their children as a positive outcome of fleeing to their new place of living. For example, SSR2 shared about how, now that she is safe and in the refugee settlement, *"she just wants to see her children grow, and also go to school."* She went on to explain that *"for her she did not go to school, because the parents didn't send her to school, and so she doesn't want to see her children go through the same life."* This desire for the children to have a better educational life was spoken of by most of the participants. Thus, education for the children plays a part in the wellbeing of the mothers, as they feel that it brings hope for the future of their children, which in turn positively impacts their own perception of life.

Meyer, *et al* (2019) explore the issue of wellbeing amongst caregiver and adolescent SSRs living in Uganda, including the effect of the arrival of subsequent waves of refugees on the wellbeing

of those already in a settlement. This highlighted concerns from those already present that newer arrivals would divert the focus of settlement leaders and agencies rendering previous arrivals vulnerable to a reduction in services. Whilst my study does not directly focus on adolescents, some of the SSR participants are young adults in a care-giver role, and others have adolescent children living with them. Concerns were cited relating to newer arrivals at the refugee settlement, including the following two examples:

SSR3, a caregiver to her young siblings following the murder of her parents in the war, spoke of challenges she encountered relating to others recently arrived into the block where she lives: *"people are not very friendly, especially for these young and child-headed family. People fight them physically. Sometimes if you are not careful and you do not lock your door, they come and sexually assault. It's hard for their target group".*

SSR5, also a young mother, similarly voiced concerns about the arrival of newer refugees, but this time regarding the reduction in provision of WFP food services for people who had lived in the settlement for a certain period of time. In this extract she is advocating for a small business to generate her own income: *"because the UN says the food is no longer there. So, if she is doing business, she will buy food, and she won't have to worry that she will starve and her children".*

7.4.3 The community dimension of wellbeing

The category of community is considered in more detail in chapter 10, but its inclusion here is in line with its presence as a dimension of wellbeing in the above co-constructed description.

The concept of community is multi-layered, and this influences the relationship between individual and community wellbeing. Community can be location or function based, but also in an increasingly virtual and digital age can have many new interpretations and expressions. However, regarding community wellbeing, and the strong involvement of governments and local authorities in implementing wellbeing policies, the tendency is for the term to retain a territorial focus (Atkinson, *et al*, 2020). Therefore, when considering community wellbeing, it is in part the sum of the wellbeing of the individuals. It is also an expression of the community-based variables that enable individuals to participate in collective living if they wish. But alongside those normative aspects is the more eudaimonic aspect to wellbeing which relates to community cohesion and belonging, shared values, and involvement for the collective good (Sung & Philips, 2016). This aspect of community wellbeing has some parallels in the concept of social capital in that both are 'a property of the individual's set of relationships with others' and

both can 'facilitate certain actions of the individuals who are within the structure to pursue shared objectives' (Kreuter & Lezin, 2002, p231). For community wellbeing, those shared objectives would be activities that bring about positive change for the community members.

There is an interesting dichotomy regarding the importance of community wellbeing versus individual wellbeing when geographical location is considered. In many parts of the world, individual and subjective wellbeing tends to be promoted as a key indicator for demonstration of development. However, in Africa this is not always the case. A study of the Igbo people of Nigeria by Agulanna (2010) concludes that the life of the individual only has meaning within the context of community. Similarly, a study of South African underdeveloped urban townships showed that implementation of a neighbourhood wellbeing framework has direct positive impacts on the wellbeing of individuals (Moghayedi, *et al,* 2023). Very relevant is the African ethos of 'Ubuntu' which is immersed in the relational aspect of human flourishing. It is considered to be the fundamental basis in which Africans view the world (Murithi, 2006) and key to the philosophy of ethnic heritages across the continent (Hailey, 2008). Ubuntu sees the route to personal flourishing as very much embedded in the interpersonal and community perspective (Hoffmann & Metz, 2017). Thus, the route to improving individuals' wellbeing comes through improving community wellbeing. This is echoed by the conversations between the participants in this study, who confirmed that community wellbeing is one of their top priorities, as exemplified by the following two quotes taken from the group interviews.

"One of the first things to do in a new space is to get to know the neighbours. Even more than focusing on physical resources. Neighbours can help with settling in, with getting to know the area, even with seeing where there might be gaps in provision. This can lead to growth of mental wellbeing".

"If you have good, happy and healthy neighbours (and ideally community) then wellbeing will be good".

7.4.4 The Psychosocial dimension of wellbeing

There is a body of research relating to the psychosocial wellbeing of conflict-affected populations, for example Hassan, *et al* (2016), Derluyn, *et al* (2019), and Samuels, *et al* (2017). But, despite global refugee demographics suggesting that women constitute 80% of refugees worldwide (Valji, *et al*, 2003), this is not proportionally represented in the research. However, the subject of psychosocial wellbeing amongst refugee population does include some studies that concern South Sudanese refugees and Acholi people. Roberts, *et al (*2010) consider the

psychosocial wellbeing of South Sudanese conflict-affected women, and separately the impact of conflict on the health and wellbeing of IDPs (Roberts, *et al*, 2009) In this study, the focus is on the effect of conflict-affected deprivations, and the subjects are Acholi IDPs, but the location is rural northern Uganda, rather than the urban experience of Acholi Quarters residents. Adaku, *et al.*, (2016) also consider the psychosocial dimension of wellbeing through the relationship between mental disorders, daily living, productivity and wellbeing for conflict-affected populations.

This issue was also raised by all the participants of this study in some way or another. As a result of the mental trauma experienced during the conflict and subsequent forced displacement, the women spoke of the different ways in which it affected them. Many recounted how daily living was affected through overthinking, flashbacks, inability to sleep and forgetfulness. For example, AQ2 shared that "*When she came this side, she went to the abattoir, where they slaughter animals. And when she saw that blood, it actually brought back the memory of her dead brother who was slaughtered*". In another example SSR2 said "*Sometimes she would put food on the fire and food would get burned because she has forgotten about it*".

Productivity was affected both through the tiredness and feelings of being distracted, but also through the impact of physical manifestations of the mental trauma. SSR4 describes how this has occurred in her life: "*even her mental state is not OK. Sometimes she forgets very fast. They went even to the hospital, they did a scan, then they gave her a medical form to buy the medication, but she could not afford. So, her challenge right now is forgetfulness. She forgets because she is overthinking. And that overthinking has tampered with her memory. … She says her memory is not that OK. People say her something, and she forgets. Until when she will sit, and then she will recollect herself.*" Later in the interview, she also talks of ulcers and heartburn, which again she has spent time getting investigated at the hospital, and all of which impact her productivity generally.

Regarding wellbeing and how it is affected by the experience of conflict, there is much evidence from the data to confirm this. Two quotes describe it well. Firstly, SSR2 contrasts her wellbeing when in the place of conflict with that of escaping to a safe place: "*in South Sudan, wellbeing was not there. Because every time you are hearing guns shots, every time people are killed, every time you have to sleep in the bush, every time you are cooking and you are not eating food as the rebels are coming…. but coming to Uganda she was safe from the rebels, from the gunshots, her wellbeing was OK*".

Secondly AQ3 reflects on what she was denied because of the war, and the impact that has had on her wellbeing, for which she uses the concept of being happy. AQ3 says: *"when they abducted her, she could then remain with only one child. If she was not abducted, then she could maybe have produced more children. But now, they have abducted her when she was still young, come back, putting in prison, abducting her. So, she is not happy as she had only the one child. She didn't have the chance of giving birth to more children. So, she's not happy."*

In a similar vein, other participants spoke of sadness at losing family members, and the impact that those losses had on their wellbeing. These losses are not just a cause of personal grief, but also lead to a wider impact on the community. The unresolved grief that ensues can demonstrate itself in a range of ways including substance abuse, gender-based violence, anti-social behaviour, family conflict, and inter-generational problems as well as a variety of mental ill-health presentations (Somasundaram & Sivayokan, 2013). There is also the trauma of witnessing deaths, and for those who were taken as child soldiers, they might even have had the trauma of being forced to carry out attacks (Vindevogel, 2011). The loss of family members therefore has an impact on mental wellbeing and community wellbeing. It can also impact physical and financial wellbeing, especially if the survivor becomes a single parent who struggles to carry out all the parenting roles alongside trying to find a way to earn a livelihood.

Thus, the war impacted wellbeing at the time through the horrific experiences that were lived through. But it also continues to impact wellbeing through to the lives of the women in their post-conflict situations, through the people and experiences that were taken from them or denied them. Bearing all this in mind, we turn now to explore the role of education in the form of trauma rehabilitation teaching regarding wellbeing in the post-war context.

7.5 Education in wellbeing

The role of education in the wellbeing of the participants was raised through the teaching that many of them had received because of the ILA Empower programme (appendix 10). This programme, which was developed by Sonderegger, *et al* (2011), provides group teaching and trauma rehabilitation following conflict, and has been undertaken by many of the participants. Other programmes are available and have been delivered by other agencies (Betancourt, *et al,* 2009) including self-help tools (Brown, *et al*, 2018) and peer-based programmes (Wollersheim, *et al*, 2013), but for the participants in this study any trauma rehabilitation teaching received was via the Empower programme.

The impact of this teaching on the wellbeing of the participants was referred to many times. The primary benefit was the impact that it had on their mental health.

For example, AQ1: "*Then ILA-Uganda brought some teachings on too much thinking and tiredness, that you've been living with for a long time. So, they kept on teaching, and then she started feeling peace, and a rested mind. All these things that were bothering her and traumatising her started leaving her. That is when she started feeling her inner peace, and her mind started being free. That is when she started feeling her wellbeing.*"

SSR1: "*with the teaching that ILA-Uganda is bringing to them, at least she finds life is much easier. She's now happy. The stress and the trauma that she had, she is now forgetting.*"

SSR3: "*the teaching from ILA Uganda has stopped her from the suicidal thoughts and ideations.*"

The teaching also helped in other ways, which supported the wellbeing of the individuals. Thus, SSR3 spoke of how the group teaching facilitated her getting to know her neighbours: "*Before ILA came, she was lonely, but now she can associate with the neighbours, and she feels happy.*" As already discussed, the community dimension of individual wellbeing is very important, and so this side benefit of improved community integration is an additional gain.

SSR4 spoke of the benefits that the teaching had on her physical health: "*those days before she attended ILA's programme, she used to walk to the hospital almost on a daily basis as she used to have heartburn, ulcers actually. But then, these days, it has subsided. She is no longer feeling that pain that she will be moving to the hospital.*"

An additional benefit given by AQ2 is the empowerment of the teaching to being able to better support others in their struggles: "*the way ILA taught them, she can really speak to these people, and speak to them, and give counsel to them*". In this way, the teaching has given AQ2 access to a new role, which has a further positive impact on wellbeing.

Conversely, AQ3, who until the interview had never shared her story with anyone, has never attended the ILA Empower teaching program. However, she is aware of the link between the teaching and gaining wellbeing: "*she has never shared that with anyone, so she needs that support, she needs that encouragement, she needs that counselling, to have that peace, to have that wellbeing.*"

These findings mirror those found in other studies which explore different aspects of mental wellbeing post conflict. For example, Kandemiri (2019) highlights the positive impact of forgiveness on the mental wellbeing of Congolese refugees, and El-Khodary & Samara (2020) demonstrate the positive benefits of trauma counselling for students in the Gaza strip after they had experienced war-related trauma. Thus, the findings show both through the experiences of those who did attend the teaching program, and those who did not, just what benefit there is to participating in post-conflict trauma rehabilitation opportunities.

7.6 Regarding Acholi Quarters literature

Due to the time that has elapsed since the end of the LRA war, most research relating to the psychosocial wellbeing of Acholi people tends to be approximately 10 – 15 years old and is primarily focused on the Acholi homelands of northern Uganda rather than in Acholi Quarters of Kampala. Studies that focus on aspects of life in Acholi Quarters are few, and none were found that directly consider the concept of wellbeing. Mallett (2010) explores the day-to-day life for IDP residents living there through the conceptual lenses of transition, connection and uncertainty, and the findings can be extrapolated to infer that the levels of these concepts have a negative bearing on wellbeing. Were (2009), and Abalo (2018) each explore the substantive area of livelihood strategies as they relate to households in AQ, but neither study links their findings to the wellbeing status of the study participants. However, in the interviews on wellbeing with the Acholi participants, the topic of livelihoods and lack of regular work arose. In the group interviews money and employment were both cited as attributes important to the wellbeing of the individual. This resonates with a study carried out by Rishworth, *et al* (2020) which explores the drivers of wellbeing in Uganda. Whilst that study particularly focused on the older Ugandan population, access to finance and employment were still given as key drivers. In a nation where there is no state pension, this ongoing reliance on employment as an income stream is perhaps understandable. The desire for access to reliable work also links back to the capabilities approach, and the presence of having access to the capability of paid work, which in turn can open the door to gaining access to many other capabilities.

One study based partly in Acholi Quarters that come closer to considering wellbeing, although not explicitly referenced, is a study by Stites, *et al* (2019). They carried out an in-depth review of Acholi young people who have recently undertaken rural-urban migration from their homeland in rural northern Uganda to three urban conurbations, including Acholi Quarters. The participants in the study all made the journey out of choice and in search of economic

opportunities, as compared to the participants in this study who made a similar journey but in very different circumstances, and not from choice. One of the findings that resonates with wellbeing is the recognised importance of retaining social connections with their rural place of origin. Through retaining those connections, the wellbeing of those who have moved to Acholi Quarters was improved.

This sense of connection to the rural home of the individual is a very important factor in how liveable or not the participant perceives their current space to be, and it appeared in the interviews several times. SSR6 commented on how, despite being in the refugee settlement, and not wanting to return to South Sudan, she still sees her family when they come to visit her occasionally, which gives her the peace to stay. For the Acholi participants, the importance of the link between the rural home and wellbeing tended to come across in a different way and this will be explored further in chapter 9 'Perceptions of Temporariness'. Suffice to say, for some of the participants the relationship with the home community has been irrevocably broken due to the war whilst other Acholi participants still have good relationships with members of their families and clans back in the ancestral home, and this helps them to endure the challenging lifestyle that is found in Acholi Quarters. Thus, there are pieces of research that have some areas of similarity and relevance, but still there remains a gap in the literature that this study can fill.

Concluding remarks

In this chapter, attention has been given to the concept of wellbeing, which is one of the four identified categories of the theoretical code that emerged from the analysis of the data. The discourse around this multi-faceted concept is wide-ranging, with no unifying definition. It features in many disciplines and has many measuring tools attached to it relating to personal, national and international wellbeing, as well as indexes that are specific to a particular demographic, or used across a population. However, in the context of this research, the measurement of wellbeing is not an area that has been explored. Instead, in line with standpoint theory of creating space for women to share their own stories and experience, and with the grounded theory of having the data from the participants at the heart of the study, the concept has been discussed as pertaining to the dimensions of wellbeing that were highlighted in the analysis of the interviews.

An overview of the history of wellbeing was given at the outset of the chapter to set the scene conceptually ahead of focusing in on the study-specific dimensions. This section was followed by an introduction to the link between human development indicators and wellbeing, in particular that of the Capability Approach. This was in recognition of the parallels and resonances between the findings in this research and the principles of access to capabilities and from them to functionings for the women. This link with the Capabilities Approach also carries on through to the subsequent chapters. A data-driven description of wellbeing was generated from the properties of the concept that were identified by the participants in their interviews; the description included reference to the various wellbeing attributes identified: safety, security, community relationships, gender respect and equality, mental good health, stability and hope for the future.

The gendered dimension of wellbeing has been explored including consideration of identified deprivations that can result in a lack of wellbeing. There was an ethnic angle to this through recognition of the participants coming from strongly patriarchal societies, and also the recognition that these deprivations are exacerbated in times of war. Acknowledgement of the Capabilities Approach was also incorporated into this section as the deprivations could be seen as a lack of functionings and capabilities, depending on whether they referred to lack of achievement or opportunity respectively.

Other dimensions explored included the influence of motherhood on wellbeing, the role of community in wellbeing, including reference to the African ethos of Ubuntu, the psychosocial dimension of wellbeing, and role of trauma and mental health awareness training in the improvement of wellbeing. The chapter closed by drawing attention to some issues that are relevant just to the residents of Acholi Quarters regarding wellbeing. The next chapter will explore the second category of reimagining a liveable space, that of liveableness.

CHAPTER 8: PERCEPTIONS OF LIVEABLENESS

Introduction

Like ‘wellbeing’ and ‘temporariness’, ‘liveableness’ is a term that has no direct translation into the Acholi language. This caused some challenges in setting out what was being implied by the

term, as discussed in chapter 4.6.2: 'Research and Interview design'. In keeping with the social constructionist philosophy of collaborative construction of knowledge, there were no fixed criteria for what constitutes liveableness. As a result, when liveableness was being explored in the interviews, the explanation for the term was given as 'the opposite to a life that is so unliveable that you need to flee'. The subsequent conversations focused on subjective perceptions of the term, in recognition that each person will have their own individual threshold at which life is no longer unliveable but has crossed into the realms of liveableness. In general, the tendency was for liveableness to be a concept that relates more to an exploration of the physical and tangible aspects of how life is for the individual.

In this chapter, the findings from these conversations will be considered. Dimensions of liveableness that will be addressed include those of gender, and physical space, as well as other facets raised by the participants. The chapter will then compare dimensions of liveableness given by the participants as pertaining to when they first fled from the war with their criteria for liveableness now. The findings in this section of the chapter also act as a precursor for an exploration of the reimagining of liveable space in chapter 11. Prior to this the chapter will start by considering the links between liveableness and the Capabilities Approach (CA) as introduced in the previous chapter, and a possible framework against which to position the discussion on liveableness.

8.1 Liveableness and the Capabilities Approach

In his study on the relationship between liveable life and educational theory, Säfström (2018) proposes that for life to be liveable for everyone, it must be a life where each individual has equal right to the opportunities on offer in society, no matter their class, ethnicity, gender, or sexuality. His definition of a liveable life takes a rights-based approach and draws out the multi-faceted nature of the concept. However, another approach that can act as a useful framework against which to position liveableness is that of the Capabilities Approach as introduced in the previous chapter. The basic premise of this approach is that it is based on what people are able to do and be (capabilities) and what is the life that they are able to lead (functionings) (Robeyns, 2017). This attendance to what the person can do as well as what they choose to do, ties in very closely with how the person might rate the liveableness of their life. This is particularly so for women who are so often deprived because of gender, power, and lack of access to choice and options regarding their daily life activities. As previously stated, Nussbaum's list of capabilities

(Nussbaum 2011) can usefully act as a benchmark when considering the factors that the participants in this study highlighted as imperative for a liveable life.

8.2 Liveableness and the importance, or not, of gender equality

Safstrom's proposal for a liveable life given above provides a useful starting point when considering liveableness from the perspective of the participants in this study. However, one immediate point of note is the inclusion of gender equality as one of the prerequisites. For the participants in this study, evidence has been given of the lack of gender equality in their lives which, according to Safstrom would infer that their lives are not liveable. This lack of equality also ties in with Nussbaum's list of capabilities listed in chapter 7 and in particular the capability of affiliation which refers to being treated with respect and equality, including gender equality. A lack of gender equality would result in a lack of the capability of affiliation, which in turn would infer a lack of liveableness for the women. The outworkings of the lack of gender equality also implicate other capabilities which can be shown to be lacking. In her critique of the capability approach and gender inequality, Robeyns (2003, pp71-72) proposes a list of fourteen capabilities[2] that are relevant to conceptualising gender inequality in the post-industrialised Western world. Whilst the context of her work is not the same as the context for this study it still provides an interesting female-focused set of capabilities, some of which are raised by the participants in the interviews either directly, or through the interconnectedness of the capabilities.

8.2.1 Gender inequality and education

Gender inequality is evident in the fact that none of the SSR participants had been to school as children. SSR3 simply said ï *she didn't have a chance to study because she was at home*

[2] Life and physical health: being able to be physically healthy and enjoy a life of normal length. 2 Mental well-being: being able to be mentally healthy. 3 Bodily integrity and safety: being able to be protected from violence of any sort. 4 Social relations: being able to be part of social networks and to give and receive social support. 5 Political empowerment: being able to participate in and have a fair share of influence on political decision-making. 6 Education and knowledge: being able to be educated and to use and produce knowledge. 7 Domestic work and nonmarket care: being able to raise children and to take care of others. 8 Paid work and other projects: being able to work in the labour market or to undertake projects, including artistic ones. 9 Shelter and environment: being able to be sheltered and to live in a safe and pleasant environment. 10 Mobility: being able to be mobile. 11 Leisure activities: being able to engage in leisure activities. 12 Time-autonomy: being able to exercise autonomy in allocating one's time. 13 Respect: being able to be respected and treated with dignity. 14 Religion: being able to choose to live or not to live according to a religion

taking care of the children, for her mum", and it was equally simply stated by other participants. This finding is backed up by Bior (2019), who studied the socio-cultural factors affecting the education of girls in South Sudan. He found that cultural practices including early marriage, female genital mutilation and parental gender preference played a large part in the access to education, as well as the influence of war, and the educational experience of the parents. Thus, as well as not having the capability to get an education, the girls also are deprived from the capabilities of bodily integrity, respect, and empowerment.

Gender inequality regarding education for the Acholi participants was not a significant issue. All the participants had attended school in their early years, and it was the outbreak of the war that terminated their attendance. In the case of AQ4, she cited pursuance of education as a reason that she and her siblings were sent to Kampala, but for the other participants this was not the case. For some education just stopped, for others it was intermittent depending on the danger levels at the time, and or whether they were able to attend a school at any point during their journeys of displacement. Two of the participants were abducted as child soldiers, thus halting their educational opportunities. By the time the war had ended, or they had reached a place of settled safety, the opportunity to return to school was past due to age, or the responsibilities of motherhood, or lack of resources. There does not appear to be a gendered component to the experience of the Acholi participants, certainly not one that was verbalised, but it would be interesting to know if the same outcome would have been the case for boys of similar ages and war-related circumstances.

8.2.2 Gender inequality and access to land

Gender inequality was also seen regarding access to land, and the traditional practices relating to land inheritance. The topic of land-access will be further discussed in chapter 9 in relation to temporariness, but it is pertinent to address aspects of it here in relation to liveableness. Reference to land-access comes out strongly in some of the conversations with SSR participants, but several of the Acholi women also spoke of it, and the impact it has had on their lives. The following reflection from SSR1 encapsulates it well: "*she lost her parents. Each time she looks at those graves where the parents were buried, it disturbs her mind. On top of that, the brothers, at home – they did not care for her when her parents died. That one brings trauma, cos she thinks 'if my parents were alive, my well-being would be catered for'.*"

There is a profoundly material dimension to her deprivations which occurs when the death of a family member triggers an automatic consequence of no longer having access to land and cultivation rights. As a result, the woman loses the means to earn her own livelihood. The death of her parents also appears to trigger a negative change in how the woman is perceived within the community in that she now seems to have been repositioned to a lower and lesser status. Other participants also spoke of similar issues highlighted by SSR1, including lack of access to land due to the death of parents or husband, and many spoke of the struggles that they endured, and continue to endure, due to the mothering role that they must carry out for children or younger siblings. A lack of choice in decisions being made about their future regarding displacement, or the lack of opportunity to be involved in that decision were also given as examples of how the participants were denied opportunities that would have been afforded to the male members of the family.

AQ7 explains the impact on access to land as a result of her husband dying in the war: *"when she moved back to Lamwo, to bury the husband, life wasn't easy. The family did not welcome her. They even beat her, and they chased her from home. Yes, they chased her with the children…*

If the husband was alive, maybe she would be somewhere, or maybe she would feel settled, but with the children that she has, with the grandkids and with the other boys that she has to support, still it gives her that trauma about where she came from."

These findings reflect issues highlighted by the Sustainable Development Goal 5 which draw attention to the fact that in 18 countries men can prevent women from working, that 87% of landholders are men, and that 49 countries do not have laws protecting women from domestic violence (Eloff, *et al* 2023). Focusing on South Sudan as one of the source countries in this study, Yusuf (2022) confirms the preponderance of gender-based violence within the country and the many forms that it takes as well as the rights which are abused, all because of a strongly ingrained system of patriarchal and misogynistic practices and institutions. However, studies into the issue of gender-based violence in Acholi communities are not so common, and those that do exist focus more on the role of the war as a cause of the violence (Okello & Hovil, 2007). Whilst this is not to imply that there is no longer any gender-based violence within the Acholi community, it does appear that progress is being made to reduce levels, as the region recovers from the war (Lundgren & Adams, 2014). The findings above also demonstrate once again the interconnectedness of the impact of capabilities, and how access to a capability can have such different implications based on gender.

8.2.3 Adaptive preferences and liveableness

In each of the interviews, the unstated implication of many of the experiences described by the participants was that 'it is just the way things are' in their country, especially for girls from rural and semi-rural backgrounds, which happens to be the case for each of the participants. Capability Approach theorists describe this acceptance of, or resignation to the norm as an adaptive preference, whereby people adjust their expectations to what they believe they can actually achieve, because to aim too high could lead to the pain of failure (Nussbaum, 2001; Sen, 2006). Thus, the SSR participants demonstrated, through their matter-of-fact statement about their situation regarding a lack of education, an unstated acceptance that the traditional belief is that girls in their country do not go to school and instead are expected to stay at home and carry out domestic duties.

Does this mean however, that a lack of access to certain capabilities for the women means a lack of access to liveableness for them? It is evident that gender equality does not exist for the participants, and yet, if liveableness is a subjective concept, then one might ask if this inequity prevents the participants from claiming that life has a level of liveableness in it? Safstrom might propose that a life without gender equality is not fully liveable. However, the inference from the discussions with the participants is that, although they are aware that they have fewer opportunities than their male counterparts, still they can find liveableness within the life that they lead. Also, because they have grown up knowing of the difference in opportunities available, there is a degree of acceptance and adaptive preference. In this way the participants do not demonstrate the perception of injustice about their situation that might be perceived by an outsider who comes from a more equitable culture.

It is interesting to note that those same women who appeared to be accepting of no education for themselves were all seeking to find education for their children. For the SSR participants, this was taking place having been displaced from South Sudan and obtaining access to educational facilities in Palabek. For the Acholi participants, many were citing the education of their children as a reason for remaining in Acholi Quarters (this will be discussed more in chapter 9 on temporariness). Thus, whilst they had accepted the gender inequality implications on education for themselves, they were all making strides to reverse that inequality for their children of both genders. This resonates with a study by Scott, *et al* (2013) which assesses differences in attitudes towards gender-related practices in South Sudan. The study found that most participants agreed with the distribution of gender-specified household roles, where the

emphasis is on the women and girls to carry out the tasks. However, the majority disagreed with the inequality that is placed on access to education, forced marriage, and early marriage. Thus, it appears that, like the participants in this study, there is a move towards pursuing better and more equitable opportunities for the next generation. An example of this is given by SSR2: *"for her she did not go to school, because the parents didn't send her to school, and so she doesn't want to see her children go through the same life."* Although she makes no direct reference to gender inequality, she does express a desire to give her children a better life than she had. Her children comprise boys and girls, so her lack of reference to gender in stipulating which children she wishes to see go to school would imply that for her, it is important that education is accessible for both genders. As a result, the girls would get access to education and also to other capabilities that might result from an education e.g. capability to think and reason for oneself in an informed and educated way, to have access to higher-worth employment opportunities, to have freedoms that can only come through the benefit of being literate and numerate.

Whilst gender equality is not required for a life to contain a perceived degree of liveableness, it has been shown that experience of increased gender parity can lead to a higher level of liveableness and its associated capabilities. Some anecdotal evidence that reinforces this further was gained through a conversation with one of the ILA trauma counsellors who has worked in the Palabek camp in the past. He reflected that, on several occasions, SSR women had commented in group sessions about noticing Ugandan women in leadership positions in the camp, and Ugandan couples working together in the fields. These observations had led to some of SSR women recognising the increased oppression and inequality for women living in South Sudan compared to a woman in Uganda. This in turn had led some of them to decide that they did not want to return to life in South Sudan. The inference is that having observed what gender parity can look like, the South Sudanese women realised how much inequality there was in their lives, which in turn opened their eyes and their minds to a desire for a life more equal.

8.3 Liveableness and space: the neighbourhoods and communities

In a Google scholar literature search, a tally of the first one hundred results for 'human liveableness' reveals that eighty-nine of the results relate to aspects of liveable life pertaining to urban planning, the built environment, or the physical lived-in space, for example Holden and Scerri, (2013), Raman, (2010), Southworth, (2003) (accessed 16/08/2023). In a similar way, as already highlighted, the focus on liveableness during the group interviews tended to focus more

on the physical aspects of the liveable space, whilst the emotional, mental and relational perspectives were discussed more in the sections on wellbeing and community.

In a study that took place in Perth, Australia, the impact of planning policies on the health and wellbeing of residents was considered in a quest to create neighbourhoods that were more 'liveable' (Hooper, *et al.*, 2020). The study listed attributes that are deemed preferable for a community to contain in order to support the sense of liveableness of the residents. These attributes included reference to public transportation, recreational and green spaces and movement infrastructure, building density, and facilities that encouraged community interconnectedness. Whilst Perth is a very different location to that of Acholi Quarters and Palabek refugee settlement, some of the attributes listed by Hooper, *et al* occurred in the interviews with the study participants when they considered what would make a space liveable for them.

Housing density in Acholi Quarters was frequently discussed, with many of the participants yearning for more space. For example, AQ1 explains it thus: "*A big compound, space around you, a garden to grow food, space for all of the family to stay together including other clan members. Here there is none of that, so you can't be completely comfortable here.*"

AQ6 says: "*there is so little space. As a result, you can't have all of your family living in the same place [like you would if you were in the village]. Some live here, some live in another part of Acholi Quarters, some live elsewhere in Acholi Quarters – it's not how families should live together.*"

Whilst these quotes primarily refer to housing density in Acholi Quarters, other attributes that can be drawn out include the importance of being with family, and having a home that is large enough to feel comfortable in, has space for all the desired family members, provides opportunities to carry out activities that can help provide an income and can bring a level of food security and financial independence, if excess crops are sold at the market.

The desire for green space, or at least somewhere to grow food was another attribute referred to by the participants of this study that mirrors an element of a liveable neighbourhood given by Hooper, *et al*. The lack of available space in Acholi Quarters meant that this was expressed as a desire currently evading them, and impacting how much liveableness they were able to find in Acholi Quarters.

AQ4 reflects on the contrast between her childhood village home and living in Acholi Quarters with regard to the impact of access to green and open space: "*at home, in the mango season*

we just eat the mangoes off the tree, there is no need to go and buy any. Here, even in mango season still we have to buy the mangoes as there are no trees around."

AQ7 considers the effect of availability of space and concludes "*If she could have proper space to grow food, and space to spread out a bit then she would feel more at home here"*.

The requirement for space to grow crops was not expressed as an urgent need in the same way by the South Sudanese women due to the nature of the environment in which they were living. However, some of them did comment on the lack of quantity or quality of land to grow a meaningful quantity of crops, and this was often linked to the issues of food security and the desire for the means to pursue independent living .

Figures 11&12: Standard homes in Acholi Quarters

Whilst it is difficult to find accurate statistics on population density in Acholi Quarters, my observations from frequent visits to the settlement are that most families comprise 6 – 8 members living together in a single-room home which is approximately 3m x 4m in size. Some homes are in a terraced back-to-back formation of between 10 and 12 homes per block, others are situated precariously close to the edges of stone quarries that make up two of the community boundaries. Access to electricity is often by illegal hook-ups, and toilet facilities are in communal blocks. There are no formal roads or pavements, and sewage runs in ditches alongside the homes.

The housing density at Palabek was much less, with each home having a small plot of land next to it. This could be used for growing crops, although in many cases the land was very rocky and poor viability. The homes were mud and thatch, again a single room per family. The images above and below give an indication of the contrast in housing density between the two

communities. The first pair were taken in Acholi Quarters, and the second pair were taken in Palabek.


Figures 13 &14: Standard accommodation in Palabek settlement

8.4 Liveableness: attributes beyond space

Another attribute mentioned by Hooper, *et al* (2020) in the Perth study on liveableness is that of community interconnectedness. This reflects the capability of affiliation and social relations and is also discussed by Anderson, *et al* (2015) in a study about liveable lives. However, in the study by Anderson et al, the emphasis is on the impact of small acts of everyday help and support on the social cohesion of communities. The concept of community interconnectedness is very much a natural part of everyday living for the participants in both Acholi Quarters and the Palabek settlement as expressed very eloquently by AQ10: *"Being with others is good for you. If you are alone, you get lonely, and there is no good help for you or no help to understand others. In the community there are people from different tribes and speaking different languages. So, you meet them, and become friends with them. You learn from each other, you become one together, and that helps different cultures in Uganda start to understand each other and live well together."*

The other attributes listed in the Perth study (Hooper, *et al* 2020) regarding liveableness are those of transport infrastructure, and recreational movement. Due to their position as background assumptions in the daily activities of life for the participants of this study, neither attribute was referred to in the interviews. However, some consideration will be given here relating to both attributes, as this will help to provide some context to the lifestyle of the participants.

The rate of private vehicle ownership in Uganda is difficult to accurately determine. According to NationMaster, in 2019, 920,000 vehicles were registered of which 540,000 were privately owned resulting in a total of 21 vehicles per 1000 people (NationMaster, 2023). A different picture is given by the Ugandan Insurance Regulatory Authority who cite a total of 1,542,021 insurable units in 2020 (IRA-Uganda 2020). However, within the context of this study, none of the participants owned a vehicle or knew anyone within their community who owned a vehicle. Thus, public transportation or walking are the only options for mobilising around, and therefore the focus in the Perth study of increasing public transportation in order to reduce reliance on individual cars is of no relevance to the participants in this study.

Regarding the concept of recreational movement for the participants, this is an anathema to them, as would be all other leisure activities. A standard day for the participants of the study, whether the South Sudanese women or the Acholi women, does not include recreational time or activities. There is a high level of physical activity, but this is related to daily living. For example, every day they must walk to the market, or to the food distribution point in the camp, to get provisions for that day. Some of the SSR women also spoke of walking to the health centre several times which is a distance of several kilometres, and so takes up several hours in the day. Much of the work that the Acholi women undertake is physical in nature, whether it is doing domestic chores for middle-class households, breaking up stones at the nearby quarry, or collecting plastic bottles for sale to recycling plants. This work also takes up a significant number of hours as all tasks are renumerated based on the number of hours worked or the volume of product created. So, the longer that the woman spends working, the higher the amount of renumeration that she will gain, even if still in the range of £1 - £2 per day. Whilst most of the SSR women did not have work, the two that had created employment opportunities would spend long hours carrying out these activities to generate maximum income, and so would not have time to consider recreational activities even if facilities were available.

Recreational facilities are not highly accessible in Uganda, and certainly not for low-income households. As an example, the cost to enter the nearest swimming pool or gym to Acholi Quarters is 20,000 Ugandan shillings (approximately £4). Given that most of the women earn on average 4,000 – 8,000 Ugandan shillings per day, to consider spending such a large amount on an activity that could be considered as frivolous and unnecessary would be unthinkable. For the South Sudanese women, the nearest swimming pool and gym would require travelling to the town of Kitgum, a journey that involves 1 hour walking to the nearest bus stop, and then a 1-hour ride by public transport, followed by the requirement to pay similar amounts as the Acholi women. Thus, the inclusion of recreational and leisure facilities as an attribute to liveableness

is not one that fits with the lifestyle of the participants for this study. The lack of financial resources, appropriate facilities, and available time are all obstacles that would render the concept of recreation and leisure something far out of the reach of the participants. From a capability perspective, this lack of access to recreational activities would imply the lack of access to at least one of the key capabilities from Nussbaum's list, which in turn would imply a life less than fully liveable. However, it would be interesting to know whether the interview participants consider the lack of recreational activities to be a hindrance to achieving liveableness, or is the inclusion of this attribute an indication of a problem with the list as it is more relevant to those living in affluent post-industrialised societies? Not all recreational and leisure activities have participation costs associated with them – the children of the communities are frequently seen playing with a banana-leaf, or plastic-bag football. But the fact that the women did not make any reference to leisure activities either as something that they yearned for, or for something that they did, could imply that it is not an attribute that they even consider. Is this because their lives are so entirely dominated by the needs of surviving that they do not give thought to possibilities beyond their reach? Or is it an indicator of adaptive preferences, where the women have just accepted that a lack of opportunities for recreational activities is 'just the way things are'?

A study based in Ghana considered the components required to create a liveable housing environment which can have a positive impact on poverty reduction (Adarkwa, 2007). The focus of the study was to assess the impact of the Habitat for Humanity International housing intervention that had been implemented in rural Ghana. The initiative was implemented in twenty-nine (29) locations in rural Ghana, and the study carried out fieldwork in six of those locations, utilising a case-studies and narratology approach with those affiliates. A large portion of the findings came through focus group discussions with beneficiaries of the interventions who had gained new housing. Consultations also took place with relevant local authority officials. The main items of the focus group discussions included the history of the affiliates, land acquisition process, problems encountered in their previous communities, description of housing and socio-economic situation in new communities, and perceptions of the impact of the initiative on housing stock and subsequently on socio-economic situation. Findings suggested that the combination of improvements in housing stock, security, access to social services and support in setting up small businesses and skills training together led to a reduction in poverty levels. Although Ghana is categorised by the World Bank as a Lower Middle-Income Country and Uganda is a Low-Income country (World Bank, 2022), this study is more relevant regarding liveableness of the physical environment than those studies carried out

in cities in the global North. This list given by Adarkwa relates to components that can help to reduce poverty and, given that this is a desire for all the participants, even if not directly expressed, it is not surprising that this list does indeed compare well with those attributes given by the participants in this study that help them to find increased levels of liveableness.

Housing stock has already been covered above so will not be considered further. The issue of security, as noted below in the section of 'liveableness then', is a very important factor for the participants when they first arrive in a new place, especially after fleeing from a place that had no security. Access to social services was not referred to by the participants, but reference was made to various other agencies and service providers in the way that they can help achieve increased liveableness.

For example, SSR6 refers to the agencies who were there to welcome her on arrival, and helped ensure that she had a plot of land for her home: *"They came, and they were received in this base camp, this [Palabek] settlement. They were put first at the reception centre, and then they were given now the plots where they are staying."* Later she refers more explicitly to the UNHCR as the agency: *"the [disabled] child is surviving because UNHCR has erected for her a house."*

AQ6 speaks of the support that external agencies bring to the Acholi Quarters, and the difference that it makes to their lives: *"because of the organisations that are here to help, it means that we can have a better standard of living than if we were in a community without those organisations. So, they help make a good community".*

Finally in this section, support in setting up small businesses and skills training was also referred to several times both by the SSR participants who had only recently arrived in their new space, and by AQ participants who, although they had been in their new space for a longer period of time, were still seeking improved employment opportunities to give better financial stability.

Examples of this can be seen in the following extracts from the interviews:

SSR3: *"if she has a small-scale business, even when the child is sick, if she has a small soap, or if there is some intervention like she is selling the soap – she is maybe making the liquid soap, that one she can sell so that even if the child is sick, she can be able to support them."*

SSR6*: "if she had a business that she can do and support her disabled daughter, that one would be more meaningful in the life of her and her daughter. Because she*

can save, buy food, buy clothes, and also get medical care for this... for the daughter and for herself."

AQ8: *"I need to have my own business, or my own land in the community. They would give me money so I can send the children to school."*

From a different perspective, but still reinforcing the importance of having a small business to help make life more liveable, AQ4 says: *"I have small business so that I can have the money for what I need when I need it."*

These quotes from the participants reinforce the observations made by Pyles and Banerjee (2010) whereby they draw attention to the importance for women to have the capabilities to access employment and earn an income. Through this means, they can gain financial independence, and achieve other functionings that might currently feel unattainable, or require a choice to be made to determine which one to strive towards. For example, a woman who has a reliable source of income has a wider range of options available to her regarding the schools that she sends her children to. Financial security also assists with food security, access to medical care for all the family, and freedom to move without being dependent on external agencies. That freedom to move can itself provide a degree of personal safety which is so important for women, especially when living in areas where gender-based violence and oppression of women is entwined in the traditions of the nation (Jones, *et al*, 2010). Financial security also increases a sense of personal dignity, and status within the community, as well as the knowledge that she can support others in the community when required which deepens social interconnectedness. Thus, increasing the capability for carrying out paid work has a causal effect on many other capabilities, which all lead to an increased sense of liveableness. Moreover, to bring a cyclical component to the end of this section, one of the capabilities that can subsequently boost the capability for securing good quality paid work is that of education as referred to earlier in this chapter.

8.5 Liveableness then and now

Having considered different facets of liveableness from the perspective of their inclusion in academic literature and how they relate to the findings in this research, attention will now turn to an exploration of how the markers for liveableness changed for the participants with the passing of time.

8.5.1 Liveableness then

The main set of interviews at which liveableness was explored were the two different group interviews, each with four Acholi women who had fled from the LRA war approximately 20 years ago. Having used an exploration of what made life unliveable as the route into discussing liveableness, the conversation then focussed on the key attributes of liveableness for the women when they first arrived in Acholi Quarters, using the following question: 'when you were travelling to Acholi Quarters from the war in the north, what did you hope for that would make this place feel like it was somewhere ok to stay in, somewhere that you could live?'

The combined responses to this question given by the group interviews are seen in table 9. They have been grouped according to the high-level markers of liveableness identified by the groups along with the sub-divisions and additional reasons cited that relate to those markers.

High-level markers	**Marker Sub-divisions**	**Additional reasons cited to explain the sub-divisions**
Safety		From danger and war
Physical resources	Accommodation	Safe
		Able to sleep at night
	Employment	For financial independence
		For self sufficiency
		To afford food
		To reduce anxiety
	Education	For the children
		For a better future for the children
	Medical facilities	For physical illnesses
		For mental health issues
	Food	To help improve health
		To enable medications to be taken
	Access to counselling	To help improve mental health

Mental health aspects		To reduce trauma of the mind
	Increased mental wellbeing	Peace of mind
Community related	To be in a place that can provide a good social life	To replace the life lost through displacement
		With neighbours who understand the plight of displacement
		Where they can share life with other and not feel alone.
	Sense of connection	Same ethnicity
		Same language

Table 9: Markers and sub-markers of 'liveableness then'

The primary attribute given was that of safety. This includes safety through the absence of fighting, but also having a safe space to sleep, and knowing that the children were safe. For the SSR participants, who had only relatively recently arrived at the refugee settlement when they were interviewed, safety was also a key factor regarding the attributes of what made their new space feel liveable. Other attributes of liveableness on initial arrival in a safe space given by both the Acholi women and the SSR women included access to food, access to education, employment opportunities, access to medical facilities and seeking help to overcome mental trauma.

Mental health issues were also raised by both ethnic groups. For the SSR participants, mental health was a significant concern – unable to sleep at night, overthinking things, worry and anxiety affecting their day-to-day existence. This was also alluded to by the Acholi women, but maybe because that period of their lives is now longer ago than it was for the SSR participants, there was not the same strong emphasis on it. However, when digging deeper, all spoke with strong memories of the mental trauma that they went through, and those who received trauma counselling spoke of how life transforming that was. This was considered in more depth in chapter 7 'Perceptions of Wellbeing' but is mentioned here in acknowledgement of the fact that it was an attribute given by the women regarding liveableness, and also as a demonstration of the close relationship and interconnection between the concepts.

Community was also mentioned as an important attribute to achieving liveableness, and again this was relevant for both the SSR and the Acholi participants. This will be considered fully in chapter 10 'Perceptions of Community', but, as with mental health issues, is being noted here to acknowledge its inclusion by the women, and as another demonstration of the overlapping between the concepts.

8.5.2 Liveableness now

Having considered with the Acholi women the attributes of liveableness when they first arrived in Acholi Quarters, the attention turned to exploring how their criteria have changed over time. The question put to them was 'when you first arrived in Acholi Quarters, you say that the most important things for achieving liveableness were to have safety, food, somewhere to sleep, and opportunities for education and employment for you and the children. Now that you have been here for 20 years or so, are those still the most important things to you, or have other aspects become more important in achieving liveableness in your life?'

The combined responses given by the groups to this question are seen in table 10, following the same overall grouping structure used in table 9.

High-level markers	**Marker Sub-divisions**	**Additional reasons cited to explain the sub-divisions**
Physical aspects	Home of their own	No rent to pay
	Affordable living	Food, fuel and clothes
	Good education	Opportunity to choose better schools
		Opportunity for further education
	Kitchen garden	To grow own food
		To enable healthy living
		For wellbeing
		To reduce bills
	Employment	Reliable and regular

		Good wages
	'Space to breathe'	Reduce arguments related to overcrowding and land
Mental health aspects	Peace of heart	
	No sense of temporariness	Feels like a real home
	Sense of Hope	Through availability of opportunities
Community aspects	Calm, quiet gentle place	Not too much drinking
		No fighting and tensions
	Collaborative attitude	Sharing of ideas
	Strong sense of community	Supporting each other in good times and hard times
	Love for and from others	Know each other well
	Respect for and from others	No rumourmongers
	Ethnic identity	Same language
		Being with your own people
		Sense of 'home' i.e. traditions and values

Table 10: Markers and sub-markers of 'liveableness now'

Again, there is a focus on physical resources as liveableness attributes i.e. food, shelter, education, and employment, but the responses have altered in that there are now increased expectations relating to what the participants measure liveableness by. Thus, they speak of having space, living in a home that their own to remove the need to pay rent, and where they can grow their own food.

Community continues to play a part in liveableness, perhaps more so now that basic needs have been met. The need for being with others of the same ethnic background is articulated clearly, and with this is perceived to come the ability to trust and rely on neighbours which is not felt to be so easy when living with those from other tribes. Further discussion relating to this can be found in chapter 10, 'Perceptions of Community'.

A notable inclusion in the discussion of what constitutes 'liveableness now' is the articulation by some of disappointment about how Acholi Quarters is no longer delivering on the perceived measurement of liveableness. One of the women in the group interviews commented on how Acholi Quarters was *'OK when running from the fear of war back home, but now the fear has gone'* and they long to return to the village. Another spoke of being *'disappointed and tired at the lack of opportunities.'* Both comments were met with murmurs of agreement, confirming that the sentiments were held by more than just the participants who articulated them. The desire to live somewhere that did not feel temporary was also given as a parameter by which liveableness is now being measured by some of the participants, as was the importance of living in a place that has opportunities and hope.

8.5.3 Liveableness now v then – reimagining liveableness

As with 'liveableness then', community and mental health aspects are mentioned in 'liveableness now', but these will be considered in more depth within the community and wellbeing sections. It is worth noting here however, that from a liveableness perspective, the mental health concerns for 'liveableness now' are much more tied to the community wellbeing. As was noted in the field notes from the first of the group interviews 'If all felt well in the community then the mental health of the individual would be OK. If there was trouble in the community, then the individual would struggle mentally, and life would feel like it didn't have so much liveableness'. This contrasts to the mental health issues mentioned for 'liveableness then' by the Acholi women, and also in SSR interviews where the focus was much more on overcoming personal mental trauma and peacelessness.

Regarding the attributes given by the participants of 'liveableness now' compared to 'liveableness then', a notable feature is the absence of any mention of safety. When questioned further on this, the participants acknowledged that it was not mentioned because it is not a concern to them anymore. Personal safety, safety for their children, and having a home which is a safe and lockable place to sleep at night are all now achieved. Therefore, whilst they recognised that safety is an important component of liveableness, they also agreed that it is no longer high on their criteria for liveableness, as it is something that they assume as 'a given'. If safety was not a reliable component of their lives, then it would become an articulated desire again, but whilst it is reliably present, the need to refer to it is absent. In this can be seen evidence of how articulation of the subjective criteria for a liveable space are being reimagined over time.

Another area in which the criteria for liveableness have changed over time is evidenced by the desires that the participants now have regarding the list of physical attributes. They are all essentially the same i.e. access to food and shelter, to education and employment, and to medical facilities, but the specific aspirations around each of these have altered. Now having a roof over the head and access to food is insufficient. Instead, owning their home, not paying rent, and having a small patch of land for growing vegetables is the aspiration. Just being able to send the children to a school is no longer good enough, instead they desire that the children attend high-quality schools. Indeed, one of the SSR participants (SSR4) also alluded to this, proving that the reimagining can start quite early on. Similarly, the aspiration is for employment that provides a reliable income, so that the participants can cover their own bills, including being able to access a good-quality medical centre when they need to, rather than struggling to afford even the cheapest and lowest-grade medical facilities which is the current situation for most of the participants. Exploring this within the framework of the Capabilities Approach, it is evident that the reimagining of liveableness has a bearing on capabilities and functionings. When the women arrived at their new space, they were given the capabilities, or opportunities for food, shelter, safety, access to medical care, education, social relations, improving mental health, amongst others. The way in which they achieved these capabilities, ie the functionings, was at a fairly basic level – a simple home, food parcels, no choice on educational facilities, a simple health clinic, minimal social connections, and an absence of war which helped their mental health. Years later, the women still have those same capabilities relating to food, shelter, safety, medical and educational facilities, social relations and improving mental health. But the functionings associated with those capabilities have altered. The home is now more permanent, their food is more diverse, the safety is reliable, they have a choice of medical facilities and schools available to them, they are embedded in the community, and they have received trauma counselling so that they have good mental health. Whether they can actually turn these capabilities into upgraded functionings has a socio-political element to it, but still this highlights that when assessing the liveableness of an individual, it is important to consider not just the capabilities available to them, but also the nature of the functionings by which those capabilities are realised.

One impact of the reimagining of liveableness over time, and the associated increased expectations regarding the nature of 'liveableness' can be seen in the sense of disappointment at the lack of provision and opportunities found in Acholi Quarters. When they first arrived in Acholi Quarters, the expectations of the participants were fairly low, and it was predominantly the previously mentioned basic needs that were required. They were hopeful of a better life,

because they had left the war and come to the capital city, as articulated by AQ1: *"[I] had hopes in Kampala. 'I'm going to Kampala'. I believed it was maybe, a safe haven."* But since then, the reimagination of liveableness has been taking place and there is evidence of frustration and disappointment that things have not improved very much in that time. With the cessation of the war, the initial reason for the participants being in Kampala has disappeared. Couple this with the disappointment at the lack of improved living standards and opportunities, and several participants articulated a yearning to be able to return to their home village. However, as will be discussed in chapter 9, 'Perceptions of Temporariness', this is not as straightforward as it may seem.

Concluding remarks

In this chapter, liveableness, another category of the identified theoretical code of reimagining liveable space has been explored. The properties of liveableness that have been considered are those that were identified through the analysis of the data. Woven into the discussion have been references to the Capability Approach which, with its focus on capabilities and functionings, provides a useful framework against which to position the exploration of liveableness. Given the non-economic, opportunities-based focus of this approach, it is very relevant to works that home in on the options and deprivations of people from diverse and disadvantaged backgrounds, a category into which the participants of this study fall. The gendered aspects of liveableness are drawn out, in line with the feminist standpoint theory that underpins this study, and against the background context of strongly patriarchal societies that are the heritage of the participants.

The second half of the chapter brought a temporal perspective to the exploration of liveableness. This was done through comparing the criteria that were given for liveableness on first reaching a safe place after forced displacement against the criteria that were given after living in a safe place for several years. This part of the discussion of liveableness focused primarily on the data collected from the interviews with the Acholi women, as they were the participants who were able to look back over time and compare their experiences of then and now. Some aspects of this were also drawn out from the data collected in the interviews with the SSR women but given the smaller amount of time that has elapsed since they were displaced, the comparisons were not so available. Some of the data relating to liveableness also referred to the other categories of wellbeing, temporariness, and community, highlighting

the interconnectedness between them with regard to reimagining liveable space. In the following chapter the next of these categories, temporariness, will be considered.

CHAPTER 9: PERCEPTIONS OF TEMPORARINESS

Introduction

In this chapter, the concept of temporariness, which is the third category of reimagining liveable space is explored. The chapter begins with a literature-based review of temporariness relating to migration and displacement, and then turns to the nature of temporariness in refugee camps. This latter section links findings from the literature with references to temporariness as given by the South Sudanese refugee participants. A large part of the remainder of the chapter focusses on temporariness through the experiences of the Acholi participants in their status as internally displaced people rather than refugees. This is predominantly because, at the stage where temporariness was identified as a category to be explored further, access to the SSR participants was logistically not possible, and so the discussion relating to this concept was predominantly carried out with the Acholi women. Some references to temporariness were identified through constant comparison as present in the interviews with the SSR women and these are discussed in the relevant section in this chapter.

Aspects of temporariness that are explored in relation to the experiences of the Acholi women start with a consideration of the reasons why the participants still felt that they were living in a temporary place, even though many of them had been there for at least 20 years. The next section explores why they continue to live in Acholi Quarters if they still feel so temporary and not at home. Some reasons for this are reasons of choice, particularly relating to educational opportunities for their dependents. Other reasons are associated with their war-time experiences and assumptions by clan members regarding the motivations for the women's involvement. Exploration of this will include reference to the ambiguous loss theory which can provide some useful insights to the participants' perception of temporariness.

The next section draws on Cantle's 'layers of separation' model to explore the relationship between temporariness and belonging. Following this, attention is drawn to some gender-based considerations relating to the perception of temporariness for women when set within the

Ugandan context, and the chapter closes with an acknowledgement of the subjective nature of the concept of temporariness.

9.1 Thematic areas of temporariness

A literature review into temporariness reveals a range of thematic areas, and for the purposes of this study, attention will be focused on literature exploring the concept as related to migration, refugees, and internally displaced people. The studies of temporariness for refugees include a range of refugee nationalities (Birger, 2020; Jamal, 2016; Karaagac, *et al,* 2022), as well as locations in which they are living out their temporariness (Berg, *et al, 2022;* Steigemann and Misselwitz, 2020; Verdasco, 2019). Studies into temporariness for internally displaced people can also be found, but these are much fewer in number. Where the studies have a nationality focus, it is predominantly relating to IDP's from countries neighbouring Russia (Brun, 2019; Krakhmalova, 2015; Mezentsev and Kuznetsova, 2022). Studies relating to IDP's in Nigeria also feature more frequently (Asabe, *et al.*, 2022; Edafe, *et al*, 2021; Mohammed, 2022). Notably, the body of literature relating to temporariness for refugees and internally displaced people in sub-Saharan Africa is small, and this research can play a part in filling that gap.

9.1.1 Temporariness in migration

One body of work relates to studies into temporariness in migration, including both the temporariness of the migration episode and the temporariness of the return episode (Kuschminder, 2022). The temporariness of the return episode for a migrant can have three forms (Triandafyllidou, 2022). The first form is forced return, when they must return home due to lack of legal rights to remain. The second form is regulated return, if they are working under a time-limited work visa; and the third is flexible return, when they have legal rights to remain on an employment basis. The experience of forced return would resonate most closely with the participants in this study, in that the displacement is not out of choice. However, whilst Triandafyllidou's focus is on temporariness relating to the return episode, for the participants in this study the forced movement is not in a return direction, and so has the added dimension of moving to an unknown destination.

Regarding the temporariness of migration episode, this body of work relates primarily to migrant workers who have proactively chosen a state of temporariness in search of better work. This can act as a pull factor which, in turn, can have a positive influence on the experience of

temporariness. An example of this is a study of middle-class Pakistanis who are living in Dubai (Errichiello and Nyhagen, 2021). Despite their temporary status, they have a strong sense of belonging within the community, especially for women who have their family with them. It is suggested that the choice to go to Dubai reduces the sense of loss that can accompany temporariness compared to those experiencing temporariness because of forced displacement. This resonates with the findings in this study where the Acholi participants articulated that a key reason for their feeling of temporariness was due to the lack of planned relocation to Acholi Quarters. AQ9 articulated this thus: *"I'm only here because of the war, so the only way to feel less temporary would be to go home."* AQ1 expands this further: *"If I had chosen to come, I would have first prepared, but instead I came here abruptly and that's part of why it feels temporary".*

Migration has become increasingly complex in recent years. Migration routes are less linear, and those taking the routes can have multiple motivations (Triandafyllidou, 2022). Thus, asylum seekers, refugees and economic migrants might all be taking the same variety of routes, which in themselves can have multiple transit points and involve more intermediate steps. The experiences of the participants in this study equally had a range of migration routes as part of their forced displacement, which again highlighted a range of levels of precariousness that they had navigated. For example, SSR1 travelled from South Sudan to northern Uganda, but then returned to South Sudan because *"she found life was hard, so she went back. When she went back to South Sudan, again the brothers chased her away. Then she came back. She started staying. Now she is thinking never to go back to South Sudan."* By comparison, SSR6 had a much more linear displacement. She left South Sudan, came straight to the camp in Palabek and has no plans of going back, or indeed anywhere else. The migration routes for the Acholi participants were also very variable, and the narratives of them are too long to be included as extracts here. Many of their routes involved moving from their home village to a bigger village, then to the nearby trading centre, and eventually to Kampala, possibly via another city or town along the way. AQ3 had a migration route that included a period in prison after she had escaped from the LRA, and AQ5 similarly had a migration route that was made more complicated by the inclusion of a period of abduction by the LRA as well as a period of living with the Ugandan soldier who rescued her.

Depending on the country in which the migrant is located, and the nature of the regime in place, the lack of citizenship for the migrant can be referred to in a multiplicity of ways, which amount to a range of statuses. These statuses all imply a level of temporariness, some of which are accompanied by a higher degree of precariousness than others (Osseiran, 2020). In this study,

the South Sudanese refugees residing in northern Uganda are subject to the Ugandan Refugee Law (2006) which is one that promotes inclusion over marginalisation. As a result, the intention is that refugees entering Uganda are at liberty to move on from the camps and find their own places to live and integrate into local communities, inferring a lower degree of precariousness towards being repatriated against their will, or having to spend all their time in refugee accommodation. However, anecdotal evidence from communities near to the refugee camps is that those who are refugees are not always well received, and finding a community within which they are welcomed can be hard.

9.1.2 The nature of temporariness in the refugee camps

For refugees, the forced nature of their flight from home adds an extra layer of precariousness and uncertainty to the migration experience previously discussed. Only a minority of refugees are able to gain permanent status in their new country of residence, suggesting that most refugees live in a state of 'permanent temporariness' which is accompanied by a lack of progression, meaning and certainty (Olwig, 2023). This is highlighted in a study by Schiltz, *et al*, (2020) who consider the plight of South Sudanese refugees living in a camp in northern Uganda and find that the reality for the participants of gaining opportunities for a positive future regarding education, employment and a place to call home feel out of reach. This sentiment was echoed by some of the SSR participants in this study as exemplified by SSR3 in the following extract which underlines the struggles and despair that she feels:

"They are just getting this little food that UNHCR is giving, and they are surviving like that, but life is not easy for them. She does casual labour in the host community, at least to buy clothing for her siblings, otherwise they would be walking naked. She's just struggling. Life is not easy".

The sense of powerlessness that is felt by refugees in a state of permanent temporariness is also one of the findings by Schiltz, *et al* (2019) in another study of South Sudanese refugee adolescents residing in a refugee camp in northern Uganda. The findings of that study reveal that, in order to survive, the refugee youth must either become resigned to a future with little progress or be willing to take risks and chances when they appear. Again, this attitude towards the future was echoed by some of the SSR participants interviewed for this study. SSR6 even spoke of those who have risked returning to South Sudan because the despair and lack of progress and access to capabilities got too much: *"There are some people who have decided*

to risk their lives and go back to South Sudan because of the hardships also in this base camp".

It should be noted however that this sense of powerlessness and lack of opportunity is not the case for all refugees. A study of some refugees in Norway shows how they used their waiting time to pursue social activities (Bendixen & Eriksen 2018). Another example is found in a study of Congolese refugee women in Uganda who used their time of temporariness in looking forward to a better future for their families following the birth of children (Ramsay, 2017). Similarly, SSR2 was very much of the mindset about creating your own chances: *"Not to sit and wait for handouts. Waiting for UNHCR, waiting for UN, even when you have hands you need to use your hands and do something for yourself, not waiting for people to bring free things."* Through a Capabilities lens, this extract demonstrates how SSR2 considers that there may be capabilities available to the refugees that some are choosing not to convert into functionings. Through opting to transform opportunities into activities, SSR2 suggests that self-created chances to a better life can be developed, rather than sitting around waiting for others to provide the opportunities.

SSR5 also had a much more positive outlook about the possibilities available to her and her children: *"Because there are schools here in the camp, but the education quality is not that good. For her she didn't go to school, but she is looking forward that her children get a better education than what is provided in the base camp…. They can even take their children to Kitgum so that they get better quality education."*

9.2 The nature of temporariness in Acholi Quarters

The sense of temporariness felt by the Acholi participants was very evident throughout their interviews, and it permeated the conversations about all the concepts. For some of the participants, the temporariness had less of a sense of permanence than for others for reasons that will be explored below. But first is a consideration of some of the ways in which the general sense of temporariness was articulated.

9.2.1 Why the temporariness?

When discussing temporariness, all the women identified with the concept to some extent or another. The first area of discussion looked at why, after living in Acholi Quarters for between 15 and 20 years, they still felt that AQ was not their permanent home. Many answers related to the

fact that AQ is not their 'real home', by which they mean their ancestral or clan home. The cultural context to this will be discussed below, but for all the women there was a clear sense that, unless they are residing in their 'real home', they are only living in a temporary place.

AQ4 summarised this thus: *"home is where I was born"*. She goes on *"even if I had a lot of land here, still it wouldn't feel like permanent home, as it is in Central [district]. I'm the wrong tribe to be able to say this is my permanent home."* AQ10 similarly talks of the permanent home as being where she originates from: *"here is temporary as I originated and got married from the village."* For AQ16, the link between 'home' and no longer feeling temporary is simple: *"The only way to feel less temporary would be to leave and go home."*

Two other reasons were given regarding the temporariness of AQ. The first related to the lack of space and a permanent home, especially when compared to the situation back in their ancestral village:

AQ8: *"there's no land to rear animals or to grow crops. As long as that is the case, it will always be temporary here."*

AQ5: *"For AQ to feel less temporary, I would like to have somewhere where I can grow my own food. Just a small place to grow vegetables would be good, but it's so hard to find that space".*

AQ4: *"because we are renting and have no land, everything feels temporary. It'd only feel less temporary if I owned a place and didn't have to pay rent on it."*

Conversely, AQ10 spoke of how she does feel a little more part of the community, because *"I built my own house here. So that helps me feel like I belong"* thus reinforcing the relationship between land and home ownership, and the sense of temporariness.

The other reason given for the temporariness related to a lack of access to documentation demonstrating a right to live in AQ, as referenced by AQ6: *"At the moment, life in Acholi Quarters feels like being in a camp. We don't have any documents to show that we have any legal rights to live here, so, it makes us feel like living here is temporary and that we could be removed at any time."*

AQ1 and AQ10 explain the reasons behind this a little more in the following exchange:

AQ1: *"the land here was given by Kabaka [king of Buganda region of Uganda], so his people can come at any time to chase us away. That is why there is no land titles available. All of the land is just lent to us by the king. And because there is no*

land titles, and we can't own anything, that is why all the time our heart is at home and not here."

AQ10: *"yes, we have no choice here – we must do as we are told. If Kabaka says to go, we must go. If the landlord tells you to leave you must leave. It is all very temporary here."*

To help understand the intensity of feeling behind these comments, it is worth noting that during the period in which the second and third stages of interviews were carried out, one of the Acholi women actually experienced her home being bulldozed and demolished as part of a land-clearing exercise. According to the affected participant, it had not been determined who authorised this action, but many homes were cleared in the one day, with no prior warning given to the tenants. Further as the tenants did not have written tenancy agreements, there was no documentation with which they could prove any formal rights to assist them in finding alternative accommodation at this very traumatic time.

The vulnerability of tenants in informal settlements had also been seen by the participants when homes in other areas of Kampala have been demolished in the past. This was referred to by AQ7, when she was discussing reasons why crime in Acholi Quarters has increased in the recent years: *"it's partly because of other communities being bulldozed and so people from those places have moved in here."* The participants are very aware of their vulnerability to the possibility of losing their home whilst they live in Acholi Quarters and this insight provides an additional layer to what is not being said but still underpins the above comments.

Thus, the sense of temporariness can be seen to be rooted in the underlying visceral understanding of 'home' as well as the level of expectation that is linked to what makes a home, and the more practical aspects relating to land access and permission to remain. This also demonstrates how the experience of temporariness is constantly and brutally reinforced over time.

9.3 Why not move home?

Having established why the participants identified with the sense of temporariness so strongly, the conversation moved on to exploring why, if they feel so temporary, they do not return to the village which they identify as 'home'. Two categories of responses were given: positive reasons where the participants were choosing to stay in AQ for the short-term in light of the benefits that

came from being in the city; and negative reasons which resulted in the participants having no choice but to stay in AQ. Those who were staying for negative reasons were the ones who appeared to be experiencing permanent temporariness.

9.3.1 Temporariness out of choice

In the discussions about temporariness, although there was a tendency for the participants to express negativities about their life in AQ compared to what it could be at 'home', there were still a range of reasons given relating to the benefits of staying and enduring their sense of living in a temporary location.

The most common reason was that of access to education for the children. Across Uganda, most of the primary schools tend to be government-run Universal Primary Education (UPE) schools, a system that the Ugandan government launched in 1999 as part of its Poverty Eradication Action Plan (Mutabaruka & Kabooza, 2017). In rural districts these schools are predominantly situated in towns and trading centres, which have higher populations, whilst the villages and areas with more dispersed populations have fewer schools. This results in a limited choice regarding school options for rural children, and attendance can involve a long walk in the morning and evening, depending on location and due to a low rate of private vehicle ownership. Also, class sizes in UPE schools can often be larger than non-UPE schools, sometimes to the extent of having more than one school shift per day (Kyambadde, 2022). By comparison, in Kampala there are many schools available in a relatively small area, including UPEs, faith-based schools run by charitable bodies and private schools. Consequently, the pupil numbers per school is usually lower which parents and carers often assume equates to a higher standard of education, although empirical evidence to back up this assumption is hard to find (Rutaremwa, *et al,* 2013). Whilst much of this information regarding perceptions of rural versus urban education standards is anecdotal and descriptive rather than quantitative, a tally of the numbers of primary schools in a one kilometre radius centred on Acholi Quarters identifies 10 primary and 4 senior schools, compared to 4 primary schools and 1 senior school in a one kilometre radius centred on Palabek trading centre in northern Uganda (NB these numbers were correct as of October 2023, the time of the visits to Acholi Quarters and Lamwo when the tallies took place).

Another metric that reinforces the anecdotal and assumptive arguments regarding the improved attainment from urban education rather than rural relates to the evidence of a relationship

between income levels and educational attainment, with children who are living in poverty having a higher likelihood of experiencing educational deprivation (Rutaremwa, 2013). The poverty levels in northern Uganda are higher than those of southern Uganda, including Kampala (Ssewanyana, 2007), and the vulnerability to poverty is higher in rural areas than in urban areas (Atamanov, 2022). Thus, those living in Acholi Quarters will be aware that there could be financial disadvantages to returning to their homes in the rural north, particularly whilst they have children and grandchildren who are accessing the education system.

The following extracts confirm these findings: AQ9: *"schools here in Kampala are the reason that I stay. They are the reason that I feel that this is my community. They are better for the children than the schools back in the village."* Also, AQ5: *"Having the children in school here also helps with feeling less temporary as it is a good reason to stay and not return to the village at the moment."*

AQ10 is at a slightly different parenting stage and articulates the link between education of the children and levels of temporariness thus: *"my children have done all of their studying here. But they are finished with studying now, and I am starting to think about going back to the village. So, this place is starting to feel temporary again, as I know I won't be here forever."*

Other facilities in the city were also cited, including universities and medical facilities, even though those facilities sometimes feel financially unobtainable.

AQ4: *"In Kampala you can get all that you need – schools, hospital, university. If you have money you can get everything here, but in the village it is all harder to find.…. So, for that reason I stay here so that my family have good opportunities. At least for now – maybe it will change when they are all older and don't need me so much."*

AQ16: *"The only reason that she stays here is because of her health issues and needing to be near medical facilities, even though she can't afford them,"*

These reasons that cause the participants of AQ to endure the accompanying sense of temporariness are reasons of choice which they know they can escape from if they wish to. Although they did not come to AQ out of choice, which in itself is one of the initial reasons for the temporariness, that they remain for the above reasons is a temporal consideration and choice voluntarily made, which helps to make the temporariness feel more manageable. A study exploring British-based first- and second-generation Ugandan refugees, and their respective ties to their ancestral homeland showed that the first-generation Ugandans

navigated a tension between the desire to go home and the aspirations for their children that could be better fulfilled by remaining in Britain (Binaisa, 2011). The Acholi participants in this study who did have the option to return home expressed that similar tension between remaining in the city and returning to their parental homeland.

9.3.2 Permanent temporariness in Acholi Quarters

Some of the participants had a stronger sense of temporariness as they knew that they would never be able to return to the place that they identify as their true home. The reasons associated with this were all linked to the war and as the participants shared their stories, the pain and despair were very evident.

As with some of the SSR women, loss of access to land was a key issue behind not being able to return home. Naybor (2015) explores the changes in land rights in Uganda, from the traditional practice of communal ownership to current practices that are male-dominated and focus on individual ownership at the exclusion of women. He explains that the route to land inheritance is often lost for the woman following the death of parents or husband and is instead passed to the next male family member. Similarly, Thorley (2015) speaks of the requirement for continuous negotiation between the woman and members of her husband's clan, or her own clan, who might be putting forwards their own claim to land-rights. In some instances, inheritance of land might be written into the will ensuring that the woman does have some land to return to. Hopwood (2015) alludes to this in his suggestion that in the Acholi post-conflict period, there was an improvement in the recognition of land rights for women. An example of this was AQ10 who, unlike most of those that I interviewed, did have ownership of some land in her traditional home. In the interview, she referenced the process she had gone through to regain ownership of her land since the war: *"The land I have has no structure on it, and before it was grabbed. But I went back and settled the matter and now the land is back to me."* However, for many women this is not their experience, particularly if they are not living on the land at the time. This was evidenced by the experiences of several of the participants interviewed, including SSR1 who spoke of her stepbrothers chasing her away once the parents had died, and of her subsequent lack of access to any land. Other participants used to have land, but it had been 'grabbed' whilst they were away. On returning to claim the land, they were blocked by the new owners, sent away with nothing, and so have nowhere to return to that they can call home. It is against that background that the following extracts from the data are given to show the experience of some of the participants.

AQ6: *"when she went back to the village, the lands were all grabbed and so there is a lot of issues. All she wants is to find a plot of land in the village but that doesn't feel possible at the moment."*

AQ12: *"She would love to go home, but there is nowhere to go to because of the land-grabbing issue by other family members and people in the village."*

Similarly, in the second Acholi group interview, when asked if land-grabbing was a gender-based issue, the response was emphatically yes: *"Yes, it is totally due to being a widowed woman. If the husband was alive, then she could go to his family home, and if the parents were alive then she could go to their home. But, in their (Acholi) culture, the inheritance of land is passed down via the male line, so a widowed orphan woman has no rights to any land, and this is the challenge that all [of these women] are facing."*

These quotes infer what a deeply traumatic issue the land-grabbing is for the women, both at the level of the land as a means of livelihood, but also in terms of identity, and relationship with the place she identifies as home. Most of the land-grabbers were members of the wider family who would have cited property rights as their legitimate claim to the land. A few of the land-grabbers were not related to the family at all. Instead, they were individuals or families looking for land with cultivation potential, and happened upon the plot which was, at that time, lying idle because of war-induced displacement of the owners. The newcomers then 'squatted' on the land and claimed ownership potentially citing the right to the means of subsistence as their claim to the land (Murphy, *et al,* 2017). Frustratingly, a key output of the 1998 Land Act of Uganda was to nullify the traditional discriminations against women regarding land inheritance, in part through the introduction of the 'family land' concept which prevented transfer of the land ownership away from the widow on the death of her spouse (Deininger, *et al*, 2008). Thus, this Act, if implemented, could have been used to challenge the experiences of land-grabbing by wider family members that have taken place. However, the dissemination of public knowledge about these improvements in land rights has been very inadequate by the government, and it would appear that this lack of awareness has resulted in the continued sense of temporariness and displacement for the women.

Another aspect to the land ownership issue was demonstrated by AQ1 in the following extract who lived in worry that her land would be grabbed in her absence, so she knew that she should go back to secure her ownership. However, she had previously explained that she was staying in AQ to enable the children to finish education, so the need to move back and potentially lose the benefits for herself and the children in Kampala added to her dilemma. *"Everything in my*

mind says, 'I must go back home'. So, it'll always feel a bit temporary here, although being involved in the community helps to feel more belonging. But if I stay here, they will take away that land [back home], and if they take the land then I'll have no money. So, I must go back."

Alongside loss of land, another reason that some of the women feel that they can never return is the nature of the last interaction that they had with their family members back home. One woman was told never to return due to suspicions by her relatives that she had not been abducted by the LRA but had instead run away to join them.

AQ3: *"He [the nephew] chased the aunt [i.e. her] away with the bitter words that she was in the bush and she was a rebel. And yet that is her home…. She doesn't have a home because that boy took it."*

For this woman, the trauma that she is expressing relates not only to theft of land by other family members as previously discussed, but also to the awareness that her family consider her to have been on the side of the enemy. According to the rest of her story as she shared it with me, this was not the case. Instead, she was abducted and held against her will. To have to live with the knowledge that her wider family believe otherwise must be a source of great trauma for her, especially as they have made it clear that there is no route for reconciliation, or for her to share her side of the story.

In a similar way two other participants were also told that they were not welcome in the village anymore because they had run away during the war (even though the women did not have any choice about whether to leave). For various reasons relating to family members, the option to return to 'home' is no longer one that they can consider.

AQ3: *"when she left the village, and since then even when she tried to go back, they said they would kill her. They threatened her. So, she cannot go back in the village."*

AQ14: *"she tried going back, as so much doesn't feel at home here in Acholi Quarters. But when she got to the village, she was rejected by them all. They accused her of running away, and abandoning them, so now they won't welcome her back and made it clear she must stay away. Therefore, she feels temporary here, but can't go to her proper home".*

Thus, are reasons for some of the participants experiencing a sense of permanent temporariness. Much as they can see some short-term benefits of being in AQ, the long-term

knowledge that they would like to leave AQ but are unable, understandably seems to lead to a much more intense sense of temporariness.

Ambiguous loss theory provides a useful insight into the subjective concept of temporariness, and why it can appear to be unresolved and without closure for so long (Boss, 2010). It also gives some context and explanation to the ongoing identification of another place as home, even when it is known that a return to that place is not possible. The theory, devised by Pauline Boss (2002), originally focused on the experience of people who suddenly lost a loved one. Boss proposed that there are two types of ambiguous loss: 1) when someone / something is physically absent but psychologically present, and 2) when someone / something is physically present but psychologically absent. Bunn, *et al* (2023) suggest that the theory can be extended for use with those who suddenly lose a loved place, as well as loved people, for example the plight of refugees. Similarly, this theory can help to give a framework to the experience of the participants in this study as they live for extended periods of time in a state of temporariness. For them, type 1 of ambiguous loss is most relevant: their real home is physically absent to them, but psychologically it is still very real and present, and the result of this loss is an unresolved grieving process. Advocates of this theory would suggest that the way forward for one who is experiencing the grief of ambiguous loss is a suitably designed counselling programme (Betz and Thorngren, 2006). Unfortunately, for the participants of this study, where life has a degree of subsistent existence, access to such support is not easily available, and certainly not on the scale of need that might be found in a community such as Acholi Quarters.

9.4 Temporariness versus belonging - a possible way forward?

The degree to which a person feels a sense of temporariness could be the opposite to their sense of 'belonging'. A person who feels that they belong in a community, will presumably have a reduced sense of temporariness. The more cohesive a community, the smaller will be the sense of segregation and separation in it. AQ1 says: *"when I'm living in this community, sometimes I feel like I belong. I have my things, I have my friends and I feel comfortable."* Cantle (2018) talks of the 'layers of separation' model that can be used to provide a more complex view of segregation. The eight layers in the model are: Language, Faith and beliefs, Education, Leisure, Employment, Housing, Lifestyle and Social structure (p79). These often overlapping and inter-related layers are cited as ways to create distance between different cultural groups within a multicultural community, inferring that the layers can result in increased separation between different cultures in the same community. However, the layers

listed by Cantle could also be viewed as avenues in which commonalities can be found and shared experiences formed, leading to decreased separation between different cultures in a community.

In the participant interviews, the issue of living with people from other tribes and ethnicities, even if of the same nationality, came up a few times. In some cases, the reference was a negative one, e.g. SSR5: *"for her she's a member of the Acholi in South Sudan but also other tribe members [are here] - there's a way how they don't like her"*. AQ4, when explaining about the increased crime in Acholi Quarters said: *"before, it was mainly Acholi and maybe one or two people from other tribes. So, we were all having the same way of living. It's not that we had a lot of anything, so there was still not enough, but the stealing wasn't there. Not like now."*

In other cases, the reference was more positive and underlined how it can help lead to a stronger sense of belonging:

AQ1: *"In this community I've met new people, made new connections, connections I'd not have made in the village."*

AQ10: *"In the community there are people from different tribes and speaking different languages. So, you meet them, and become friends with them. You learn from each other, you become one together, and that helps different cultures in Uganda start to understand each other and live well together."*

As a demonstration of how the layers of separation can lead to increased segregation within a community, AQ1 refers to the layer of housing and how it increases separation in the following extract: "now *there is a difference between the haves and the have nots. Then, we were all in the same boat, all in the same papyrus type houses. Now there are people who have got nice houses living alongside people in small, rented homes, and it bothers people. The young people without look at the richer people and they decide they want it, and they steal."* Given that these young people also are the ones who do not go to school, and do not have any employment, this quote can also show how those layers are also leading to segregation.

Conversely, AQ4 explains how language can bring people together: *"In Acholi there are many people from different tribes... we also all speak Lugandan which is the common language across the country, so if we can't talk to the other person in Acholi, we just speak in Lugandan... It is important to be able to communicate with others if you are to feel at home in a community."*

AQ4 also references how she believes that shared faith can strengthen a community: *"if the community is having a problem, we must turn to God in prayer. The church must come together in prayer and strengthen each other through that."* Through the diverse tribal membership of the churches in Acholi Quarters, one of the side outputs of the faith layer could therefore be a decrease in potential tribal divisions. It is hard to say definitively how real or not this is. Some might suggest that the reliance on faith derives from their sense that there is no real alternative from the horror of their forced displacement. However, in my numerous visits to Acholi Quarters, and Palabek, I have regularly seen evidence of just how strong the faith element in their lives is, and the importance to them of their participation in a church. This does not appear to come from a sense of obligation or expectation at a human level but does add an extra layer of interaction with others from across the community. Attention has already been given to the layer of education and how that is a key factor in why many of the participants are choosing to stay in Acholi Quarters when they could return to their home. These schools accept children from across the ethnicities and, based on anecdotal evidence from young people in Acholi Quarters, friendships are formed between the pupils irrespective of their tribal heritage. Thus, education can decrease segregation.

This sharing of experiences is seen in diaspora communities that have grown because of migration. Acholi Quarters and the Palabek settlement are two such communities. As different ethnicities come together in a new space, so the values can be seen to influence each other. This transportation of different traditional styles can result in positive new hybrid identities, for example in music (Hutnyk, 2005), arts (Wang, 2008) and speech (Bigelow, 2011). It can also highlight ways in which members of the diasporic community navigate competing pressures of the local culture and their own culture, to create their own 'third space' in which to live out their hybrid identity (Kidd and Teagle, 2012). How far the hybrid identity strays from the traditions and symbols that influence the true identity of the individual will have a bearing on how comfortable they feel living with this new hybrid identity. This in turn will have a bearing on their sense of temporariness, and how much they feel that they belong.

There were a few positive references to this sense of hybrid identity that appeared in the conversation with the Acholi participants, although it was not a concept that was directly identified. AQ10 spoke of how she enjoyed living in Acholi Quarters as it allowed her to live with people from other ethnicities and tribes. She saw this as a positive thing as it allowed her to grow as a person and become one with them i.e. to develop a new hybrid identity. In a similar vein, AQ6 spoke of how she *"has met more people and made more friends than she would if she had stayed in the village where she would just know other people from the*

same village". Again, this experience of living in community with people from other heritages has been viewed as having a positive influence on her life and identity.

However, the experience of living with those from other tribes is not always seen as a positive and this will be discussed further in the following chapter on perspectives of community.

9.5 Where is 'home' - contextual considerations relating to gender, place, and temporariness.

This section provides some context relating to the relationship between the Acholi participants and their ancestral home. It is based on conversations that I had with two male, married Ugandan friends after the interviews relating to temporariness had taken place. One of the men has not experienced forced displacement but does live away from the parental home and has sisters who are married. The other man does not have sisters but had multiple forced displacement experiences during the repressive and terror-ridden reigns of General Idi Amin (1971 – 1979) and Apollo Milton Obote (1980 – 1985). Although the conversations were with men, they were very open about the different experiences between men and women, and thus it is appropriate to include the information gained from them as supplementary information to that already obtained from the participants.

9.5.1 The 'natural order'

The first part of the conversations confirmed what the participants identified as the "natural order" of events regarding the location that a person identifies as their 'real home'. For a man, that place is always the parental home. For a woman, that place is the parental home until she gets married at which time her connection with place will switch to being that of her husband's home. If she and her husband live in the compound of his parents, then his parental home will become her home as well. If she and her husband move to a new location e.g. for work, then the place that she identifies as home will be the place where she lives with her husband rather than his parental home.

From this can be seen how different the gendered perspectives of the natural order are as related to place and displacement. The man may never experience displacement, as he would grow up knowing that he will inherit the land of his parents. Even if he moves away out of choice, still he can retain an inherited link with his 'homeland'. Conversely, unless she never marries,

the woman will always be displaced and will have grown up knowing that the experience of displacement is a standard and expected part of her life in the traditional context in which she is raised. Whether the girl-child wants to be displaced or not, as soon as she is married, she will become so as an outcome of the natural order.

Note from the author:

The way in which the phrase 'natural order' is used, and the unspoken, gendered implications that accompany it, could be seen as common parlance for the more academic terminology of 'gendered perspectives of displacement'. This theme of displacement is one that weaves its way throughout this research and is relevant to all four of the categories that make up the theoretical code. It therefore will be considered in greater depth in chapter 11, which embraces all the categories, rather than considering it in just one of the category chapters which could risk implying that it is not relevant to the other three.

9.5.2 Visceral link between land and identity

Alongside this 'natural order', as it is understood by the participants, in both the conversations with men it was independently confirmed that for Ugandans there is a visceral link between land and identity. Three areas of consideration were given that help to explain this link more.

The first is that the place identified as home is the place where food can be grown. For rural Ugandans, this might be the place where they were born, but it equally might be the place where they are now living, if food can be grown there. For urban Ugandans, where access to nearby land for cultivation is not possible, the place that they identify as 'home' will usually be the parental home for men, or the husband's parental home for women.

The second aspect regarding the location of 'home' relates to legal rights. For a Ugandan to be able to feel that a place is home, they must have some sort of legal right that proves this. In some instances, this is a physical document that states the title deeds and ownership rights. But for many Ugandans, particularly those living in rural areas, the traditional route to gaining a legal right to land ownership is one that comes through public announcement but is not necessarily written down. The process for this would be a series of meetings between the landowner and community leaders, in which the landowner expresses their desire about who will inherit the land on their death, and how it will be apportioned. If these meetings have not

taken place before the death of the landowner, then the land is divided as per the natural order of that tribe. In the case of some of the Acholi women who find themselves land-less, it might be that their parents were killed suddenly in the war before any meetings had taken place, and then the absence of the women due to forced displacement meant that they were not available to request some of the land when it was being shared out. As was referenced earlier in this chapter, the Land Act of 1998 has now provided a legally enforceable vehicle by which a woman can claim her right to land, even if there was no previous written evidence. However, due to the lack of public knowledge about this act the traditional male-biased system continues to be practised, leading to gendered deprivations and lack of access to land-based capabilities for women.

The third aspect that was named as a strong influencer of where home is considered to be relates to the place where the Ugandan expects to be buried. For the men, the assumption is always that they will be buried at the parental home, and this expectation provides a strong link between identity and home. For the women, the assumption is that they will be buried at the same place as their husband, and they would only be buried at their own parental home if either they did not get married, or if there are some exceptional circumstances that result in the husband's parental home not being an option to them (e.g. divorce, major crime or an action that brings disrepute against the family). This links back to the 'natural order' of progression for a woman and where she calls home, and it highlights the patriarchal nature that is embedded within it.

9.5.3 Land and gendered power

The last part of the conversations related to the contextual power issues that can act as obstacles to a woman being able to access land. The responses, that fitted into three scenarios, reinforced what some of the participants, both Acholi and South Sudanese, had referred to.

In the first scenario, when the parents of the unmarried woman die, in the absence of other arrangements the land will be passed down the male line. Daughters might inherit if there are no sons, but often it will instead be passed either to grandsons, or to other male relatives e.g. nephews and brothers.

In the second scenario, when the husband dies the land bypasses the wife and goes to the oldest son, or in the absence of a son to another male relative. This is the situation that was

cited by AQ3 where she returned to her home to gain the land from her deceased husband but found that it had been given away to her nephew.

In the third scenario, the woman is unmarried and living with her mother and stepfather but has no contact with the birth father. When the stepfather dies, the woman i.e. the stepdaughter, has no legal right to any land and it all goes to the males who are related by birth, no matter how long she has been living with her stepfather. It was this situation that took place in the life of SSR1, and resulted in her fleeing to Palabek, due to the abusive actions of her stepbrothers.

The relevance of these conversations is that they highlight gender-based issues that are common to all Ugandans (and very probably to those of other African nationalities) and are not specific just to those who have been forcibly displaced. Thus, a certain level of temporariness may be felt by many who are living away from the place that they identify as truly home. However, as the participants pointed out, the added component of being forcibly displaced has compounded the sense of temporariness, and for some, the knowledge that they can never return to their home results in a permanent temporariness that includes an ongoing sense of grief for what can never be. Viewing these issues through the lens of the capability framework, it can be seen how the traditional ethnic practices and hierarchical structures influence the access of women to capabilities that have a bearing on their place within the community. This is then further affected by the gendered impacts on the displacement that they have experienced, resulting in them being marginalised still further.

Another point of note relating to these insights is that it reinforces the need for ensuring that any discourse relating to a concept is contextually sensitive and relevant, and that a 'one-size-fits-all' approach is not appropriate.

9.6 Temporariness: the subjectiveness of it all

A final comment regarding the concept of temporariness and how it has been personified and explained by the participants refers to the subjective nature.

All the study participants live in a community that they identify as being a temporary place; all feel a sense of temporariness. The reasons for that temporariness are varied, as already explored, but the responses and attitudes to the temporariness are also varied. For some, going back home is an option, for others it is not. But even for those who can go back home, there are a range of justifications as to why they stay. For those who cannot go back home for various reasons, their imposed exile also leads to a range of attitudes and responses.

What was apparent through the conversations and interviews is the subjective nature of how the participants view temporariness and incorporate it into their lives. Some had a more positive outlook and are making the most of where they are living. Others had a more negative outlook, even when surrounded by others who were expressing positive reflections, and or appeared to have harder situations to cope with.

The one unifying theme regarding temporariness was the fact that it was caused by forced displacement that was outside of their choosing and control. Beyond that, the variation in responses and attitudes were as variable as the number of participants, which will be explored more in the section on intersectionality of the categories.

Concluding remarks

In this chapter, temporariness, the third category of reimagining liveable space, has been explored. The first aspect of the concept to be considered was that of temporariness as a form of migration, and whilst it was acknowledged that the voluntary nature of temporariness through migration is different to the forced nature due to displacement, still points of similarity were discussed, including the variations in complexity of routes that are sometimes undertaken as part of the displacement process. Aspects of temporariness as felt in refugee camps were also considered as relating to the South Sudanese participants in this study. These included the lack of progression and opportunities available for most refugees to move on to a more permanent and settled life, and the accompanying sense of powerlessness and frustration. This lack of opportunities could be seen as a lack of access to capabilities and resultant functionings to enable the women to live fulfilled and meaningful lives. Instead, the deprivations that they endure reinforce and prolong the sense of temporariness that they are enduring. Whilst the gendered perspective of these deprivations was not directly explored, when viewed in the context of the male-dominant traditions of the refugees, there is a strong likelihood that the lack of opportunities that the women experience is much more life-impacting than the experience of the men.

For the internally displaced Acholi participants, the exploration of temporariness took a few routes. The first area to be considered looked at the reasons why, after living in the community for so long, the women still felt such a sense of temporariness. One of these reasons related to their subconscious interpretation of the concept of ‘home’ and the traditional beliefs and assumptions associated with that concept. This included a gendered angle relating to the

relocation of 'home' on getting married, resulting in a shift in where 'home' is, as well as the implications of how this changes again in the situation of being widowed. There was also a more practical aspect to the sense of temporariness as relating to the reality of how vulnerable the Acholi Quarters location is to potential demolition through urban development.

The next area considered why the women did not return to their homeland, and whether it was voluntary or forced. Depending on the reasons given by the individual women, examples of both voluntary and forced temporariness were identified. This perspective was also linked to the ambiguous loss theory with those who were experiencing forced temporariness as a result of not being able to move back to their preferred home could be said to be experiencing ambiguous loss type one

Land-ownership was seen to be a key issue in this section. From the women's perspectives, there were significant challenges relating to land rights and land-grabbing. There was a strong gendered influence on this, with many testimonies to the multi-layered trauma of losing access to family land following the death of parents or husband as a result of war, as well as the trauma of leaving the land due to forced displacement. Others spoke of land being 'grabbed' by male relatives (however distant) resulting in the woman having no place to call home. One of the women had followed through on a process of regaining her right of land ownership, but none of the others appeared to be aware of any rights that they had relating to land ownership. Instead, they all cited that the route of land ownership inheritance followed the male lineage, and therefore as women they had no such opportunities. Whilst frustration was expressed at this situation, the women also demonstrated a resigned acceptance to their fate as it being 'just how it is'. From a feminist standpoint perspective, this example of lack of access to land rights demonstrates the significant lack of privilege afforded to women in this context (and many other societies which follow similar traditions), due to the inherent gender and power-imbalances that exist. This also resonates with the gendered perspective of the capability approach that has been explored in previous chapters and that draws attention to the lack of access to some capabilities for women as compared to men.

This acceptance of their fate as being 'just how it is' ties in with references made to 'the natural order' as regarding the location that a woman calls home. The gendered implications of this were explored, including the underlying premise that, according to the order, a man might never be displaced whereas a woman grows up expecting to experience displacement from her family home, whether she likes it or not. This creates an ontological insecurity within the role of the woman at the best of times. The brutality of war and the resultant experience of forced

displacement add extra levels of complexity to the way in which the natural order is played out, and how it can result in a spoiled identity for the woman or girl-child.

The 'layers of separation' model was used to help explore the concept of temporariness, and in particular with regard to the relationship between temporariness and belonging. The layers in this model, which include faith, language, education, leisure, lifestyle, housing, employment, and social structure were originally cited as ways to create distance between community sectors. However, they were shown in this study to also be used in an inverse way as vehicles to prove commonality between community sectors, and so bring about increased interconnectedness, and a greater sense of belonging. The chapter concluded by looking at some gender-focused, contextually-based specific interpretations of home as relating to Ugandan women, and acknowledges the subjective nature of the concept. In the next chapter, community, the remaining category of reimagining liveable space, will be explored.

CHAPTER 10: PERCEPTIONS OF COMMUNITY

Introduction

In this chapter, the concept of community will be explored. This is the fourth of the categories identified as contributing to the theoretical code of reimagining liveable space, and it will be explored using a similar format to the previous categories. Firstly, a literature review will be conducted to reveal more about the nature of the concept. This will include reference to some of the key voices that have featured in its development. The next section acknowledges the constructivist paradigm that underpins this research through the construction of a working description of community, based on the findings from the interviews. Following this, two aspects of community will be considered, specifically diversity in community, and crime in the community. It should be noted that aspects of community have already been explored in the chapters on liveableness, wellbeing, and temporariness and so, to avoid repetition, will not be reconsidered here. The chapter will close with a discussion of South Sudanese community and what can be inferred from the interviews regarding the impact of those traditions on the lived experiences of the participants.

10.1 What is 'community'?

The concept of community has a history of discourse regarding the essence of its meaning, with no single definition being reached. In 1887, Ferdinand Tonnies put forward his theory which highlighted a significant distinction between community of location (gesellschaft) and community of interests, values and intellectual unity (gemeinschaft) (Bond 2013). Another key contributor to the discourse was Emile Durkheim who introduced the concept of mechanic and organic solidarity as a related pair of lenses through which to view society and how it can be held together (Mechtraud, 1955). Durkheim proposed that when a community is small or new, the members of that community tend to bond together based on similarities, and any instigated rules and laws focus on people having to observe and stay within the confines of those similarities (Thilakarathna, 2019). This type of solidarity is mechanical solidarity. However, as a community grows, mechanical solidarity is superseded by organic solidarity which is based on differences rather than similarities. Durkheim particularly applied this to the division of labour within a society, and purported that, if the divisions happen naturally, i.e. organically, then solidarity within that society will evolve positively through the interest in one another that is prompted by diversity (Thijssen 2012). However, if the evolution of division is distorted and disturbed by high inequality of resources and access to opportunities, then solidarity of that community will not occur (Herzog, 2018).

Since then, the discourse has continued but the concept of community, even at the start of the 21st century, was still predominantly thought of as a settings-based, shared-interest concept, experienced through face-to-face interactions (Atkinson, *et al,* 2020). However, multiple definitions of the term exist across the different community-associated disciplines in which it is used, many of which are constructed by people who are not members of the communities in question (Jewkes and Murcott, 1996). This is discussed further by Cohen (2013) who considers that a definition of community, when defined by members of that community, will importantly include the perceptions of those members in delineating the boundaries of the term. An example of this is the following definition of community that was constructed by members of four diverse US communities in a study (MacQueen, *et al*, 2001). The definition that emerged was 'a group of people with diverse characteristics who are linked by social ties, share common perspectives, and engage in joint action in geographical locations or settings' (MacQueen, *et al.*, 2001, p1936). In this definition, locus is a key factor, but in a world where communities can exist outside of place, it has been proposed that community could be defined more in terms of the networks that bring people together under a united focus, and that lead to a sense of shared identity and norms (Bradshaw, 2008). This could then be applied to people who are united

through a shared location-based identity, but equally could be applied to people who have a shared identity based on non-geographical attributes, and has parallels with the work of Tonnies outlined above.

The progression from community as a location-based concept to the possibility of it existing in isolation from a location can result in an individual being a member of multiple communities simultaneously. When a community becomes linked to personal values and identity, the way is made for the individual to join different communities in parallel, for example based on faith, politics, gender, ethnic heritage and more. In this way, I would consider myself to be not just a member of the community in which I live, but also a member of an online community of individuals linked through a common interest in triathlons, and a member of my church community which I remain a member of whether I am in the UK or abroad. This also ties in with the concept of a psychological sense of community (PSOC) which pertains to the way in which individuals see themselves in relation to the society in which they are embedded (Boyd and Nowell, 2014) and can help to reduce alienation felt by individuals who feel disconnected to the society in which they geographically live. Instead, through connection with others who have similar values outside of their physical community, the individuals can still experience a sense of community, including knowing that they matter to others, that they have a space to share their feelings, and that they are not alone (McMillan and Lorion (2020). In this way, it can be seen how closely PSOC links with the concept of wellbeing.

Focusing on studies that have an African context, other definitions of community that can be found in the literature include a focus limited to the population under study within a geographical context (for example Seeley, *et al*, 1992); the wider population that is affected by the research even if they do not live in the same geographic area (for example Morin, *et al.*, 2008); and a group of individuals who are united by a common theme e.g. women in Nairobi who are all engaged in sex work (Bandewar, *et al,* 2010). Regarding policy development, reference to 'community' can be both positive and negative. In the land reform program of South Africa, the use of the term was found to be positive when applied to the needs of the poor and ensuring that policy was focused on them. However, when the focus on community resulted in opposing groups being forced together in ways that resulted in the stronger group overpowering the weaker group, the use of the term was not so helpful (Keep, 1999). In the field of biomedical research, Tindana, *et al.*, (2015) cited a number of different common characteristics that were used to draw participants from a community, although that community was usually geographically placed. In reference to the earlier comment regarding the role of community

members in defining a community, it was also noted that most decisions relating to what was considered as a community were made by external researchers.

Thus, there are three broad categories for the use of the term relating to community. These are community as location, as social interaction, and as it relates to policy and responsibility at political and societal levels. Within this study, the use of community will predominantly apply to its interpretation within the context of the first category.

10.2 Constructing a working definition of community

In line with the constructionist paradigms that underpin this research, a working definition for community will now be constructed. It incorporates the different aspects of the concept as put forward by the participants, and therefore represents their views on the term. Thus, the definition will be grounded in the data rather than using a definition created by members outside of the community being considered, or one from previous academic studies.

In the interviews, the focus was on what made a community good as opposed to bad. In constructing this definition, the transcripts from the interviews were analysed for words and phrases that the participants used to describe a 'good community' and the findings can be seen in the word cloud shown in figure 15.

Figure 15: terms given to describe a 'good community'

For these women, the most important thing about a community is the people. A good community occurs where there are good relationships, friendships, and neighbourly support. *Harmony, supportive, respect, love between people, happiness, welcoming,* and *hospitable* are

all words that were used to describe the ideal interpersonal relationships within a good community. Therefore, a community for these participants is primarily about the people who live in it, and the relationships between those people. This very much ties in with the African concept of 'Ubuntu' as also mentioned in chapter 7.4.3. and which is considered to be the backbone of African philosophy. It is described by Ewuoso & Hall (2019) as being a relational ethos that "prizes relationships of interdependence, fellowship, reconciliation, relationality, community friendliness, harmonious relationships" (p93). They continue their description by highlighting that all Ubuntu-related actions are taken such as to "honour the capacity to relate communally, reduce discord or promote friendly relationships with others". With this insight, and within the context of their experiences of displacement, the important value that the participants placed on the relational attributes of community as opposed to physical or location-based attributes is understandable. The use of the term 'Community' within the conversations did have some variability to its use and at some moments was seen to encompass the wider neighbourhood in which the participant lives, or at other times relates to more of a micro-community which is made up of just the close neighbours. However, the essence of Ubuntu, whether applied to neighbours or to the wider community was evident. This interpretation of the term would also tie in more with the organic solidarity perspective of Durkheim as described in the opening section of this chapter with the focus being more on solidarity that evolves through diversity which prompts positive community.

Consideration was given to the ethnic makeup of a good community, and whilst the participants did not feel that a community must be of one ethnic background, it was agreed that there was benefit to having others around who speak the same language, have the same cultural and faith-based background, and, in the case of fleeing from war, have some shared experiences to enable mutual support and understanding. The following extract from a memo written at the time of the second round of interviews reinforces this point:

In the discussion with the Acholi women about liveableness, community was mentioned, and this also tied in with comments made by the SSR participants in their individual interviews. The SSR women spoke of the challenge of being with people from other tribes, inferring a preference for being with people just from their tribe. Similarly, the Acholi women spoke of the preference for being with others from their own tribe and tongue. In part, this ensures a sense of connection and shared heritage, but also it ensures easier integration through speaking the same language, and a higher chance of making new friends to replace those lost through the displacement and the war. Being with others from the same background also increases the chances of being with people who understand the pain of displacement, and who have shared experiences so

understand the background story to the displacement. (memo 'liveableness then', written 21092023)

Thus, community is made up of people who have points of mutual reference, whether shared experience, faith, language or heritage. The inclusion of shared experience within this list of mutual reference points could be seen as adding an extra layer of complication to the understanding of community, as it results in the inclusion of recent experiences rather than just the more traditional markers of identity. However, set against Durkheim's definitions, mechanical solidarity comes about through similarity, which includes shared experiences, and thus they fit in with the concept of community. Also, it might be that the shared experiences are because of, or have led to, shared values. If so, this links with Tonnies's gemeinschaft version of community, again confirming that shared experiences are an acceptable point of mutual reference within the concept of community.

Throughout the discussion of community, when the participants spoke of the concept it was very much based on being in the same location, whatever other attributes were also being referred to. Although the participants were in communication with friends and family members who, whilst sharing an ethnic and cultural heritage live in another part of the country, it was clear that these others were not considered part of the same community. For these participants, therefore, the definition of community must include reference to shared location, which ties in with Tonnies's gesellschaft theory of community. Another factor commented on several times by the participants related to access to acceptable resources, and these primarily focused on physical space: space to grow food, to live together with all of the family, to play, and having a safe and secure space in which to live. Safety was also alluded to regarding the importance of a lack of crime and violence. For the participants, whilst it was acknowledged that some community members do commit crimes and violence, it was agreed that those people are unwanted and unwelcome members of the community.

Bringing these components together, a working definition of community that has been constructed from, and is grounded in the data generated by the study participants could be as follows:

> **'Community describes a group of people who are united through the location that they live in, through points of mutual experiential and cultural reference, and who share a desire for a safe, secure, family-focused, and healthy lifestyle.'**

10.3 Diversity in community – for good or bad

As referenced above in a memo extract, the concept of community arose in the discussions about liveableness with both the Acholi and the SSR women. For both groups, the preference appeared to be to live in a community where the members were from the same tribal heritage, with shared language, values, religion and experience. This preference was reinforced through references by the participants to negative aspects of living with those from other ethnicities. However, despite the suggestion that living in a more ethnically homogenous community might reduce the possibility of crime and increase the chance of social integration, there were also some positive perspectives given by some of the participants regarding living in a more diverse community than would be the case if living in the village. AQ6 reflected how "*she has met more people and made more friends than she would if she had stayed in the village where she would just know other people from the same village.*" Similar responses were given by AQ5 and AQ16, with the latter adding that "*it is a real positive …. to know that people from outside AQ care enough to take time and interest in us and to be there to support us when things are hard.*" These comments reinforce the concept of organic solidarity as outlined earlier in this chapter, whereby people who have different identities connect through shared experiences across those identity categories.

A perspective given by Turner and Fozdar (2010) regarding the nature of community can help to reconcile these seemingly opposing views. They suggest that community should not be considered as related to ethnicity, race, or religion, but instead to context, and to the desire inherent within people for connectedness. This ties in with the earlier references in this chapter to the psychology of sense of community (PSOC), whereby community is purported to be a concept that is a tool to overcome any sense of alienation and isolation. Whether the individual participants are looking for connection relating to their sense of identity (ethnicity, gender, religion etc), or relating to a shared experience, or even if they are looking for connection with people who have different experiences, PSOC can describe that inner relational desire to avoid or overcome detachment from others. Within this study, the context of the Palabek community is that of forced displacement because of war. The tribes are not all the same, and there may be some residents who are from a different religion, but their context unites them, as does their desire to be connected with others. The context of the Acholi Quarters community is harder to define. Initially, when the ethnic make-up of the community was all Acholi, it was also that of forced displacement due to war. But with the passing of time, others have moved into the community for various reasons. Some of the moves have been voluntary, and others have been involuntary. Some people are remaining out of choice; others remain because they have no

alternative. But despite these variations which make finding a common context harder to achieve, the desire for connection is apparent, and this can be a uniting feature within the community. The positives and the negatives of a community are very subjective in their identification and are based on the experiences of the individuals. Thus, diversity in the community is not always seen as a bad thing, depending on the perspective of the participants. Provided that the diversity does not hinder the really important issue of friendships that offer mutual support, encouragement and practical assistance as needed, then benefits of diversity were acknowledged.

10.4 Crime in the community

One issue that arose relating to community was that of the increasing prevalence of crime amongst young people within the community, and some reflections from the participants were given as to why this might be the case. The initial comments relating to this noted that the issue of crime was a relatively new problem. Thus, AQ4: *"15 years ago, it was not like this in Acholi Quarters. There was a lot more peace then. Now it has got worse".*

When asked what the causes of this might be, a few different theories were put forwards. The arrival of residents from other informal settlements that had been bulldozed by the government was the first reason given, implying that crime might be less if a community was less ethnically diverse. The next reason given related to the presence of an increase in the material divide within the community, as articulated by AQ1: *"Now there are people who have got nice houses living alongside people in small, rented homes, and it bothers people. The young people without look at the richer people and they decide they want it, and they steal".* The explanation continued that the young people have the perception that they deserve the same as the richer group, despite a difference in education, employment status, and attitude to work. As a result, the young people steal what they feel is rightfully theirs. There are two elements to the work of Durkheim that resonate with this scenario. Firstly, it appears to demonstrate what happens when organic solidarity does not happen spontaneously. The forced relocation of residents from another settlement into Acholi Quarters led to an unnatural expansion of the community and the introduction of residents who were not there out of choice. These factors may have played a part in a potential imbalance in the division of labour within the community. Consequently, rather than individuals being drawn together through seeing the benefits of working with those from other labour levels and categories, they were likely to have a

tendency toward suspicion and resentment, resulting in the patterns of crime that were described.

The other aspect of Durkheim's work that resonates with this scenario is the concept of anomie. A phrase rarely used nowadays, anomie refers to the lack of commitment within the community to upholding and respecting the shared values and rules that guide and regulate the actions and aspirations of individual members. As a result, there is a breakdown in the social organisation of the community, leading to negative behaviours and social upset (Bernburg, 2019). This concept was then further developed to become the Institutional Anomie Theory (IAT). This proposes that anomie occurs when there is sufficient social imbalance such that the dominant societal institution is that of the economy, whilst all other institutions responsible for positive moral and social actions, e.g. family, education, government are perceived to be demoted to a lower standing (Zito, 2019).

In the case of the young people in Acholi Quarters, their actions, when interpreted through the organic solidarity and IAT lenses, would infer that they have become so focused on the economic imbalance that they perceive between their situation and others around them, that this has become the main influence on their behaviour choices. When that is coupled with cognitions of suspicion and resentment towards those around them who appear to be succeeding better in life, the outcome is one that moves towards crime and deviant behaviours. It is not to say that they are no longer in touch with the morals of the community on which they were raised, but those morals now do not have the same level of power and influence over the decisions that they make about life choices.

An additional aspect put forward relates to the role of social media, and the resultant increased awareness of the materialist contrast with young people in other parts of the world. It was felt by the participants that this might lead to a sense by the young people of Acholi Quarters that a similar level of materialism should be accessible to them also. This is echoed by studies published by Asiimwe (2019) and Kayondo (2015) which considered the impact of social media on Ugandan teenagers living in Kampala and found that there were notable negative elements with regards to behaviour, morals, and inter-generational relationships. Again, this ties in with the earlier discussion on anomie. The young people turn to social media to guide their behaviour and decisions, and in so doing move away from regulatory structures at a community level resulting in a lack of support and guidance to help individuals with monitoring their behaviour within a locally acceptable way.

10.5 'Community' within the context of the South Sudanese traditions and values

The aim of grounded theory studies is to develop a theory or model that is not limited to one specific time or place. Within this study there are two ethnicities from which the participants are drawn, and whilst the discussions about the emerging theory should not be limited to these ethnicities, still it is appropriate to give some attention to particular nuances of those heritages and how they might add context to the interpretation of the data. For the Acholi community this has already been addressed in the discussion of temporariness regarding the interpretation of references to 'place' and 'true home'. Some attention will briefly be given here to the South Sudanese community.

Most of the literature relating to South Sudanese communities focuses on gender-based issues, and in particular the violence and lack of parity that is directed towards women and girls. The South Sudanese values-system is a strongly patriarchal one and an example of how this negatively impacts girls and women can be seen through the reduced access to education for girls compared to boys. The prevalence of gender-based violence targeting women is another example, as are the multiplicity of hardships and deprivations that the women and girls have to endure (Bradley*, et al*. 2024). The topic of bride price and its resultant objectification and commodification of women and girls is further example of the influence of patriarchal traditions on the lives of South Sudanese women (Deng 2021). Ellsberg, *et al* (2020) have considered the influence of normal patriarchal South Sudanese traditions on communities in times of war and found that the prevalence of violence against women increased during times of conflict. This finding was reinforced through the outcome of a further study which explored the abductions of women during violent cattle-raids. The study found that the abduction, slavery and violence against women by the cattle-raiders was predominantly due to the underlying patriarchal beliefs and traditions that a woman's value is found only in her reproductive capabilities (Ellsberg, *et al*, 2021).

Whilst the focus of these studies does not directly produce a description of South Sudanese community, still it is possible to extract information on the nature of the communities which can then give added context to the interviews of the SSR participants. One example of this is the explanation given by SSR1 regarding the range of gender-based deprivations and violence that she has endured at the hands of her brothers and her husband. Another is the fact previously discussed in chapter 8.2.1 that none of the SSR participants had been to school, and the matter-of-fact way in which they said this, implying an acceptance, or adaptive preference, that this was the norm for them, along with the caring roles that they were expected to carry out for

younger siblings. Conversely, there were also examples of how some of the SSR participants were embracing their relative freedom from the confines of their old life and seeking to gain opportunities for their children, including daughters, that had not been available to them. Thus, SSR1 is saying that she will never go back to South Sudan, and SSR2 and SSR5 both speak of ensuring that their children get access to education, something that they were denied. This example of embracing their new-found freedom and breaking down some previous ethnic traditions and values mirrors a study by Pittaway, *et al* (2023) of South Sudanese refugee families who had been granted asylum in Australia. One of the findings from this study was the impact of a shift in the values of different generations, resulting in family breakdowns, intergenerational rifts, and an increasing disregard for values that were once the backbone of South Sudanese life. It will be interesting to see whether, in years to come, the SSR participants of this study have also diluted down, or turned away from some of the values that they grew up with, and instead taken on traits of the Ugandan way of life.

It should be noted that the patriarchal nature of South Sudanese society is not unique to that country. Many African nations have a similar tradition of patriarchy which results in women being discriminated against in many ways (Atim, 2022) and experiencing much gender-based violence (Enaifoghe, *et al,* 2021). Within the arena of conflict, women are often further victimised, through increased violence, increased burden of care, and reduced access to resources. But it should not be assumed that within war, women are always the victims and never the perpetrators. Women do sometimes have roles as combatants and whilst this is often an oppressive and abusive role that is forced on them, the increasing number of women involved in war might infer that the portrayal of women as always being the peaceful gender is not appropriate (Shekhawat, 2015). However, in the case of the participants in this study, none of them had voluntarily participated in the war as a perpetrator of violence, but each of them had their own story of gender-based challenges, discrimination, and reduced access to capabilities both before the war, during their time of forced displacement, and since their arrival in their place of refuge.

Concluding remarks

In this chapter, the concept of community has been explored. Reference has been made to the work of Tonnies and Durkheim as two key voices in the development of the concept discourse. The former was the author of the gesellschaft / gemeinschaft dichotomy, and the latter highlighted mechanical and organic solidarity, and anomie with regard to their impact on the

development and functioning of community. The concept of Ubuntu was also referenced as a key African philosophy that underpins much of the natural way of thinking across the continent. It can therefore be inferred that it would be an assumed set of values for the participants, even if it is not directly named in their interviews. Attention has been given to the concept in the three broad categories of being location-based, values-based, and politic-based. A fourth facet of community can be seen in the psychological sense of community that can help to break down feelings of alienation and isolation. A working definition of community has been proposed, as constructed from the views and insights of the participants, and particular facets of the concept have been explored. The perceived benefits and disadvantages of diversity in community was one such facet, and the other was the presence of crime in communities. This was theorised through the work of Durkheim, and also through the institutional anomie theory. The chapter concluded with reference to the South Sudanese community, and a contextualising of aspects of their traditional values and heritage that were highlighted by the participants. These drew attention to the patriarchy that is such a strong presence and influence on the life of women and girls, both with regard to deprivations that they had already experienced, and the way in which it is inspiring some of them to seek a better life for themselves and their families now that they are away from the patriarchal control.

Having considered each of the categories of the theoretical code in turn, attention will now move in the next chapter to an exploration of how the categories interact with, and influence each other, and how that is expressed as a reimagining of liveable space.

CHAPTER 11: REIMAGINING LIVEABLE SPACE

Introduction

At the end of chapter 6 'Analysis and Findings', it was stated that the theoretical code that has emerged from the data for this study is that of reimagining liveable space. It was also stated that this code has four categories associated with it, those being wellbeing, liveableness, temporariness, and community. All of this is against the backdrop of a lived experience of forced displacement for the women as a result of the brutality and violence of war. Having considered

each of those categories individually, this chapter will explore the ways in which reimagination has taken place, including reference to the relationships and interconnectedness between those categories. The chapter will consider how each of the categories in turn can be seen to have been reimagined. It will then move on to explore the relationship between the categories and how they influence each other as they each develop and progress over time. The section on the interconnectedness of the categories is demonstrated using four scenarios, each of which has been drawn from the lived experience and standpoint of one of the study participants. Each scenario shows how a change in one of the categories has consequences on the perception of the other categories. They also demonstrate the subjective nature of how the categories are perceived. The Capabilities Approach, as introduced in chapter 7, will be referenced in this chapter as a potential framework against which the categories, their interdependence, and the ability of the women to achieve them can be explored. The chapter will commence with an exploration of gendered perspectives of displacement, as it pertains to refugee women living in a place that they do not consider to be home.

11.1 Gendered perspectives of displacement

The impact of displacement has been a common factor across this piece of research by virtue of the experiences of the participants, and gendered implications of displacement have featured in each of the previous four chapters. In chapter 7, attention was given to the gendered dimension of wellbeing for the displaced women, including the implications of gender-based violence, gendered deprivations and family-related opportunities on their wellbeing. In chapter 8, aspects of liveableness that were affected by gendered deprivations included education, and access to land. The gendered implications of land ownership were explored in chapter 9, with reference to temporariness and experiencing displacement. Gender was also a key factor in the reference to the 'natural order' relating to the place called home, with the theme of displacement for women running through it. Finally, in chapter 10, gender-based references related to the context of the South Sudanese participants, and the implications of their ethnic traditions on the nature of their displacement experiences. In this section, these themes will be drawn together in an exploration of the gendered theories of displacement, and in particular as relating to forced displacement because of conflict.

11.1.1 The natural order of gendered displacement

In chapter 9.5, reference was made to the 'natural order' as it relates to Ugandan traditional understanding of 'home' and the different gendered perspectives of place and displacement. It was noted that, through the patriarchal tradition of land inheritance, the man may never experience displacement. Conversely, the woman will always experience displacement, unless she remains forever unmarried at her parents' home. Entwined into the experience of displacement for the woman will be social and legal factors. These include the traditional expectation for her to become a wife and a child-producing mother, carry out unpaid domestic tasks and conform to societal restraints and conventions on who she can and cannot interact with. There might also be traditional conventions that could be viewed as conflicting with basic human rights regarding ownership of possessions, land ownership (see chapters 8 and 9), autonomy of decision-making, and freedom of speech (Farago, *et al*, 2021).

Thus, there are many factors related to the natural order for women regarding place and displacement, and the role of the woman therefore has an ontological insecurity built into it even in times of peace. These factors can be further complicated when the woman experiences an unplanned and traumatic displacement, for example because of war. Not only do these relate to the spatial aspect of displacement, but also to the potential abuse, violation and violence that can occur in particular for displaced women. Together, these varied and gendered implications of the natural order that are done to a woman can result in a spoiled identity (Andrews, 2020), including shame and stigma for that woman or girl-child.

11.1.2 Gendered displacement due to war

The landscape of conflict tends to be a masculine one with women being disadvantaged throughout. Those who are displaced because of war tend to be women and children, whilst the men might remain behind to fight, or to protect their homes and land. This can result in safe spaces for refugees comprising many female-headed households (Hans, 2012). However, from a feminist perspective, the power dynamic that accompanies gendered hierarches means that those spaces are not always very safe, especially for women (Skou 2018). In 2008, in recognition of the many gendered insecurities faced by women, the UNHCR published a Handbook for the Protection of Women and Girls. It reads "The impact of forced displacement on women and girls can be devastating..... Family members may have to assume different roles and women and

girls may become sole providers for their children/siblings. The situation is exacerbated by the lack of gender equality." (UNHCR, 2008, p9)

Displacement due to conflict has different implications for men and women and, from a feminist standpoint perspective, it is important to recognise the gendered differences, and not consider all refugees as one homogenous group. Skou (2018) makes the point that the extent to which displaced individual women experience threat will depend on their personal, economic, political and or social situation. Caarten, *et al* (2022) also allude to this in their article about the prevalence of sextortion amongst vulnerable women during migration and displacement. This is particularly so amongst 'illegal' migrants who can experience precarious situations as they flee towards a new life. In so doing, the many attributes that impact the level of safety or danger that a woman will experience during a time of displacement are highlighted.

As well as the gender-specific challenges and dangers experienced along the way, there are also implications of gender-related roles once arrived at the destination. An example of this is the challenge that men may have in accessing meaningful work in their place of displacement (Gowayed, 2017). This can result in disempowerment from fulfilling traditional male role-related expectations and an unwillingness to fulfil alternative tasks that might be viewed as traditionally for the woman.

Conversely, the woman, in fulfilling her traditional gendered tasks, must navigate inadequate provision of resources, fulfil expectations of supporting elderly, disabled and young family members, administer the daily tasks of collecting food, water and fuel, and cope with what are often poor and unsafe sanitation facilities (Skou, 2018). Women and girls displaced into urban areas often live in very poor conditions without access to money, education or health care. The threat of abuse or fear of deportation can result in them being imprisoned indoors such as would not happen to a man (UNHCR, 2008). Admasu, *et al* (2021) explore the relationship between gender and poverty on forcibly displaced populations and find that multidimensionally poor households tend to be headed by women. Thus, the woman may lack access to some basic capabilities, and even where those capabilities do exist, it is not always possible to turn them into functionings. These challenges that the woman faces because of displacement are similar to the challenges identified by the research participants. They also mirror many of the attributes that the research participants referred to in the previous chapters when discussing what makes a place liveable including a safe home and community, access to food and land, space to be together as a family, and the right and freedom to remain, or to return to their traditional homeland.

The different gendered perspectives of displacement are clear, but Indra (1999) warns against attributing to gender all representations of the challenges faced by women. In so doing, the influences of power and privilege can be overlooked, along with the danger of neglecting 'class, subcultural and situational variability' (p xiv). She goes on to draw attention to the additional pitfall of using Western feminist ideals as the benchmark against which to consider masculinity and femininity of non-Western heritages. Similarly, Boyd and Grieco (2003) draw attention to the nature of 'gender' as a social construct which results in societal variation for the ideals, expressions and expectations of each gender. The role of the researcher to always employ contextual sensitivity is therefore imperative, as is the importance of utilising the standpoint of the participants without reframing it into a western perspective. Further, the view achieved through the capability approach can help to ensure that the situation of the individual is being considered through more than just a gendered lens.

To close this section, the experience of those who are displaced will be affected by their gender, but also by several other factors. In this study, all the participants are women, and they come from similar ethnic backgrounds. There is, therefore, a large amount of their experience that can be interpreted through the gender lens, but it would be remiss to imply that this is the only influencing factor. As has been previously highlighted, the power and traditional expectations of a patriarchal society play a significant factor, and the added complexities and brutalities of war further complicate the situation, as well as individual agency regarding how to respond to a given situation. The passing of time is another factor that will influence how an individual responds to their experience of displacement, and this will be considered in the next section.

11.2 Changes in category criteria over time

In the discussion on liveableness, attention was drawn to the way in which the participants' criteria regarding liveableness changed over time. Thus, on first arriving in their new space, an important criterion for it to be deemed as having liveableness was safety and security, where the individual felt able to sleep at night. Access to food and shelter, and education for the children were other identified criteria. However, once the participants had been in that place for a while and felt more settled, so the criteria changed for how they imagined their liveable space. Thus, safety was no longer an articulated criterion as they just took it for granted. The standard of education became more important – no longer was access to basic education enough, but instead the participants focused on the quality of education available. Criteria relating to provision of food and shelter were also reimagined, progressing from acceptance of charitable

handouts of these resources to having land of their own on which to build a home and produce food. Thus, over time, reimagination of liveableness took place.

Using the Capabilities Approach terminology (Nussbaum, 2011), this reimagining of liveableness occurs due to increased capabilities being made available. For example, whilst in a state of forced displacement, the participant did not have the capability to live with much bodily integrity due to a lack of food, shelter and clean water. On arrival at the camp, she received food parcels and the resources to build a simple shelter. Thus, her capability to live with bodily integrity increased. The realisation of that capability includes the functioning of eating a daily meal and sleeping in a secure shelter. Over time, as the participant's life became further secure and settled, she might have started growing crops, or earning an income (each of which can be identified as functionings that are occurring because of the realisation of related capabilities). These functionings in turn would lead to a further increase in the capability to live with bodily integrity, and thus the participant's perception of what that capability looks like in daily life would been reimagined. Similarly, on first arriving, the participant had little opportunity, or capability, to make rationalised and educated decisions – her main focus was to find safety, and her imagining of that capability was low. But as she settled in and gained access to the information and teaching on offer by the different agencies present, so her capability to make educated and informed decisions increased and was reimagined. Further, as she put that reimagined capability into practise, so the functioning of making informed decisions was realised.

A similar reimagination can be seen regarding wellbeing, and how the focus of the participants on what constitutes wellbeing has changed over time. When the participants first arrived in their new space, having recently fled from the trauma of war, their perception of what constituted wellbeing was very much focussed on mental health attributes such as the need for a settled mind, and for peace of mind. At that time, wellbeing was therefore very much focused on their own personal needs. However, when the participants considered what they perceive to be important criteria for their wellbeing now, this focus changed. In the intervening years, in part through receiving trauma counselling, and in part through the time-related distance in place since the traumatic experiences, the focus on wellbeing has shifted away from being strongly individualistic to becoming more community-centric. Thus, the wellbeing of the participants now depends on the wellbeing of their families, friends, and the community. There is still an element of focus on their personal wellbeing, but overall, it is more strongly linked to the well-being of those around them, demonstrating a reimagination of wellbeing over time. In chapters 8 and 10, reference was made to the African concept of 'Ubuntu', which has a very relational

ethos. Ubuntu focuses on the flourishing of community as a key driver behind the wellbeing and flourishing of an individual. The reimagining of wellbeing over time demonstrates the increasing presence of Ubuntu within the life of the participant. When the individual was struggling to survive and was very focused on her own needs, attention towards the concept of Ubuntu was low. This could understandably be due to the over-riding need for survival suppressing all other instincts, including community-based interactions. However, as the individual felt more settled and safer, the tendency appears to be that the focus shifted more to the community, and the concept of Ubuntu became more prominent again.

The influence of temporariness on the imagining and reimagining of liveable space can be seen to have changed over time. On first arriving in their new space, the participants understandably felt a great sense of temporariness having just been forcibly displaced from their home, and not knowing anyone in the new community in which they were living. However, with the passing of time, the settling of life, and the building of connections within their community, the intensity of their sense of temporariness decreased and had less of an influence on how liveable space was being imagined. There are several issues related to the traditions and values inherent in the heritages of the participants that also played a role in the degree of temporariness being perceived by an individual. These include gender-related issues, the balance of power and the hierarchy of decision-makers within the communities from which the participants come. The way in which personal circumstances due to their war experiences intersect with these issues is a very individualised factor. However, it is apparent that the perception and subjective sense of temporariness did change over time, and this is a factor in how liveable space is reimagined.

Regarding the category of community, some reimagining of the criteria can also be seen, although possibly less marked than with liveableness and wellbeing. On first arriving in their new place, the criteria for how community can make a place feel liveable were mainly focused on being with others from the same tribe and tongue. Thus, common heritage was important, as was being with others who would understand what the individual had been through due to shared experience. Over time, this continues to be a criterion to a certain extent, although there is less emphasis on being solely with others from the same tribe. The experience of getting to know and live alongside others from different ancestral heritages, with no definite detrimental impact on community safety has been positive. This was evidenced by the comments highlighted in chapter 10 that were made regarding the benefits of being in a more diverse community, with a greater breadth of experience and knowledge. In this way it is evident that the category of community has been reimagined over time.

Thus, for each of the categories of the theoretical code of 'reimagining liveable space' there is evidence from the data of a process of reimagination taking place. However, in each of the discussions on an individual category it was apparent that none of them were completely delineated. In a similar way, Nussbaum shows how the different capabilities of a marginalised and impoverished Indian woman are interlinked and have an influence on each other as well as on the functionings that the woman can achieve (Nussbaum, 2011). Rather than being delineated, the interconnectedness of the categories was evident. This is an important factor to consider in the overall reimagination of liveable space and attention will now be given to it.

11.3 An initial view of the interconnectedness of the categories

Figure 16 is designed to visually represent the interconnectedness of the four categories involved in the reimagining of liveable space.

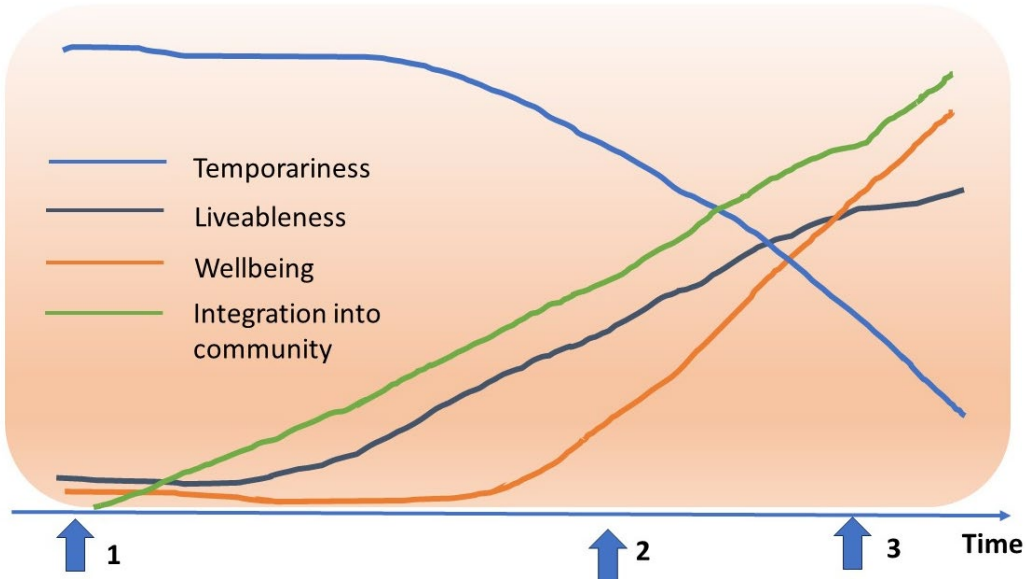


Figure 16: Representation of the relationship between liveableness, wellbeing, community, and temporariness

In this image, when the woman first arrives at the new place, temporariness is high, liveableness is low, wellbeing is even lower and there is no real integration into the community (point 1 on the time axis). Over time, the woman gets to know people in her new community, and liveableness starts to improve with the provision of resources, but still temporariness remains high. There is also a lag between the improvement of liveableness and wellbeing, as discussed by participants who claimed that wellbeing cannot improve until living conditions have got better. However, as the woman becomes more integrated into the community, and as liveableness increases, so wellbeing starts to increase and temporariness decrease (point 2 on the time

axis). There comes a time when wellbeing overtakes liveableness (point 3 on the time axis) and this is evidenced by the assertion of the participants that wellbeing is not purely dependent on the provision of physical resources, but also on connectedness and relationships within the community. Thus, wellbeing can continue to increase even if the improvement in resources contributing to liveableness plateaus.

Based on this representation, the relationship between the four categories appears to be fairly straightforward. However, each of the categories is multi-faceted, and has a strong subjective element to it, which adds layers of complexity to the impression of interconnectedness given above. Some examples of this will now be considered in the form of four scenarios. It should be noted that these scenarios are not an exhaustive list but between them give examples of how a change in the progression of one category can impact the progression of the other categories.

11.4 How the changed perception of one category can influence the other categories: four scenarios.

When the perception of one category is altered due to a change in life circumstances, it impacts how the other categories are perceived. This will be illustrated through four scenarios, one for each category. For each scenario, an image has been created as an explanatory illustration. To reinforce the fact that each scenario relates to a different individual, and there should be no assumption that the same circumstances will lead to the same outcome for two different individuals, each scenario is represented by a different foot or shoe. These four examples of foot or shoe were carefully chosen to represent the fact that many refugees flee on foot, and the shoes are similar to the simple items of footwear worn by many in the area. They also act as a reminder that it is important that to ‘walk in the shoes’ of those who have undergone the displacement, and not just make assumptions about how they might respond to the circumstances in which they find themselves.

11.4.1 When the perception of wellbeing is affected

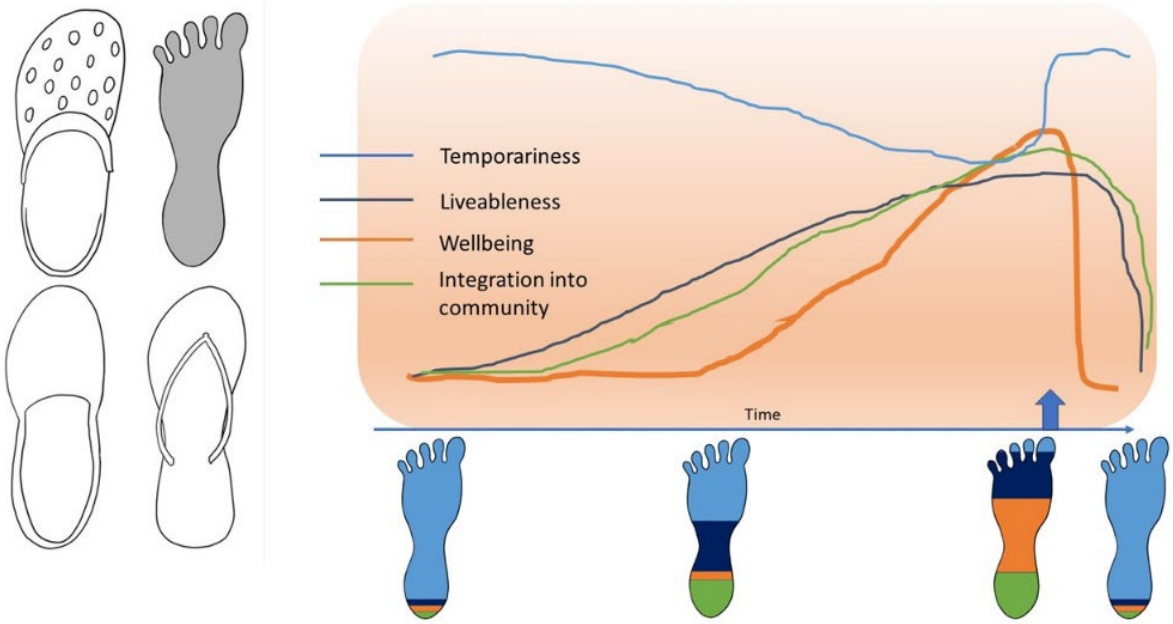


Figure 17: When the perception of wellbeing is affected

This scenario is based on the interview with SSR4 who had fled from a family that was seeking retribution for the acts of her rebel husband on their family members, and her comments on what would happen if that family appeared. Initially the woman arrives at the new place following displacement. She gets provided with food, shelter and the children start attending school. Her perception of liveableness therefore increases. She gets to know her neighbours so that her sense of community increases, and over time she receives trauma counselling leading to improved wellbeing. She still feels very temporary however as she knows that this place will not be a long-term home for her. Provided that the vengeful family are not present, she feels safe, which further improves the sense of liveableness and wellbeing, and as she gets to know people in the community her sense of temporariness reduces a little. However, one day her worst fear is realised (as per the arrow). The vengeful family find where she is staying, and the woman hears that they are coming to get her. Instantly her fear returns, and with it her unsettled mind, her anxiety and her concerns for the family; in short, her sense of wellbeing plummets. She no longer feels safe, and the refugee settlement no longer feels liveable. She knows that she must leave the community, as she does not know who she can trust, thus increasing her sense of temporariness and reducing her positive sense of community.

11.4.2 When the perception of liveableness is affected

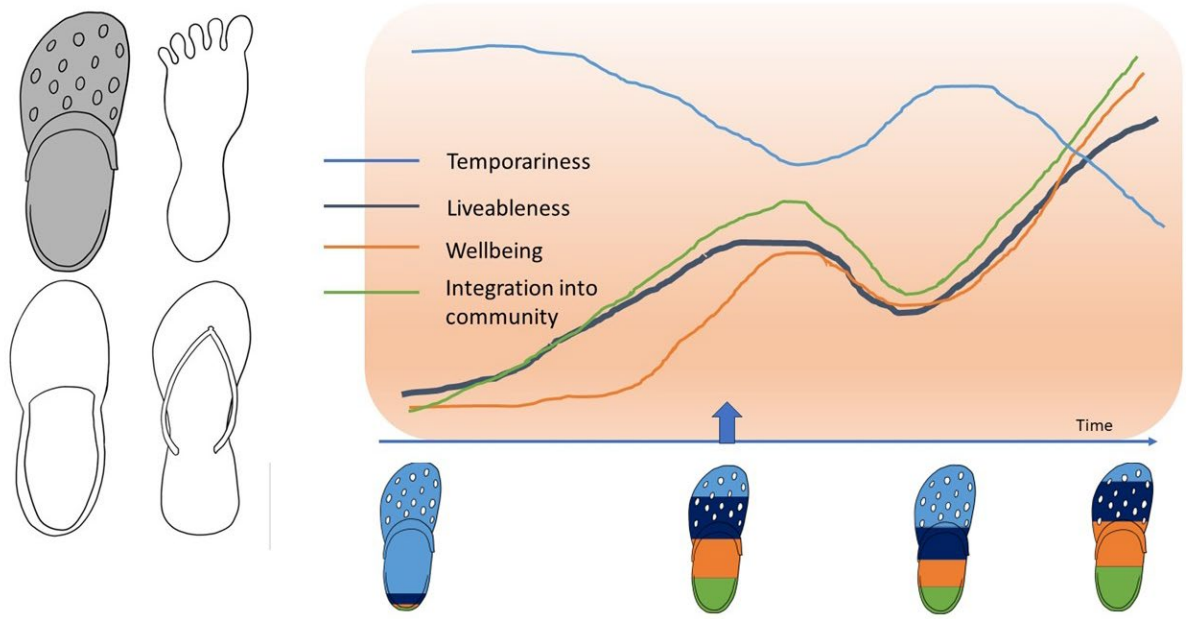


Figure 18: When the perception of liveableness is affected

This scenario is based on the interview with SSR5 and comments she made about her dreams for the future for herself and the children. She arrives in the safe place. Initially her wellbeing is very low, but as her sense of liveableness increases through the provision of safety, food and shelter, her wellbeing then also starts to improve. She engages with neighbours and gets to know people in the community leading to further increase in wellbeing, as well as feeling less temporariness. Her wellbeing improves further as she receives trauma counselling and sleeps better at night. She starts a small shop selling basic commodities in the community, so her sense of liveableness increases, as does her sense of community as she gets to know more people. However, after some months, the access to physical resources plateaus (as per the arrow). She starts to wish for access to resources unavailable from within the camp, for example better schools and access to a better market for her shop. Thus, she undergoes a process of reimagining liveableness resulting in dissatisfaction with what she has. Her perception of liveableness drops and with it her sense of wellbeing. She recognises that she must relocate if she is to realise her dreams (see map 3), leading to increased temporariness and a decreased sense of community engagement. It might be that she does leave, and she goes to a new community where there are better opportunities, so increasing her perception of liveableness. As she settles into the new place, her engagement with the new community might increase and as she develops her sense of identity there so her wellbeing might improve, and she might feel less temporary. This latter part is supposition but shows how interconnected the different aspects of liveable space are, and what can happen when the sense of liveableness is impacted.

11.4.3 When the perception of temporariness is affected

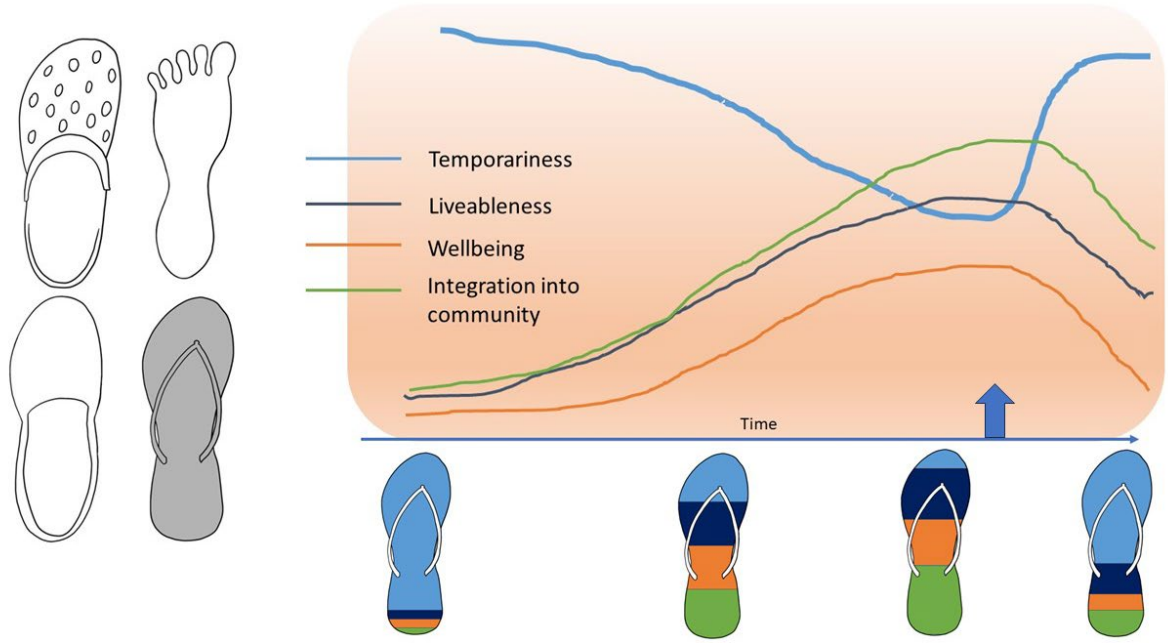


Figure 19: When the perception of temporariness is affected

This scenario is based on an interview with AQ7. When she arrived in Acholi Quarters her sense of temporariness was high, and her senses of liveableness, wellbeing and community were low. Things improved as she found somewhere to live and got a small job that brought in some income. Her sense of liveableness increased, she became more integrated into the community and developed some good friends, and so her sense of wellbeing also improved. Her positive feelings to the community also led to a sense of belonging and a reduction in how temporary she felt. However, the temporariness was still there to a certain degree and there came a time when she wanted to explore moving back to the village (as per the arrow). Unfortunately, the family back home made it very clear to her that she can never return to her ancestral home due to the circumstances under which she left during the war. As a result of this, she now lives in Acholi Quarters because she has no other choice, not because she wants to, and this has increased her sense of temporariness. The process has also led to a reimagining of what constitutes an acceptable liveable space, again because her current situation feels unresolvable. Subsequently she feels trapped in a life that she does not want, resulting in a decrease in sense of liveableness. All of this has had a big impact on her wellbeing, and on her sense of community, because she views the community as one that she has no option but to live in rather than one that she would like to live in. Thus, in this scenario, although objectively it might appear that not much has changed in her external circumstances, the discovery that she

will never be able to realise her dream of returning home has had a profound impact on her subjective perception on all the categories of liveable space.

11.4.4 When the perception of community is affected

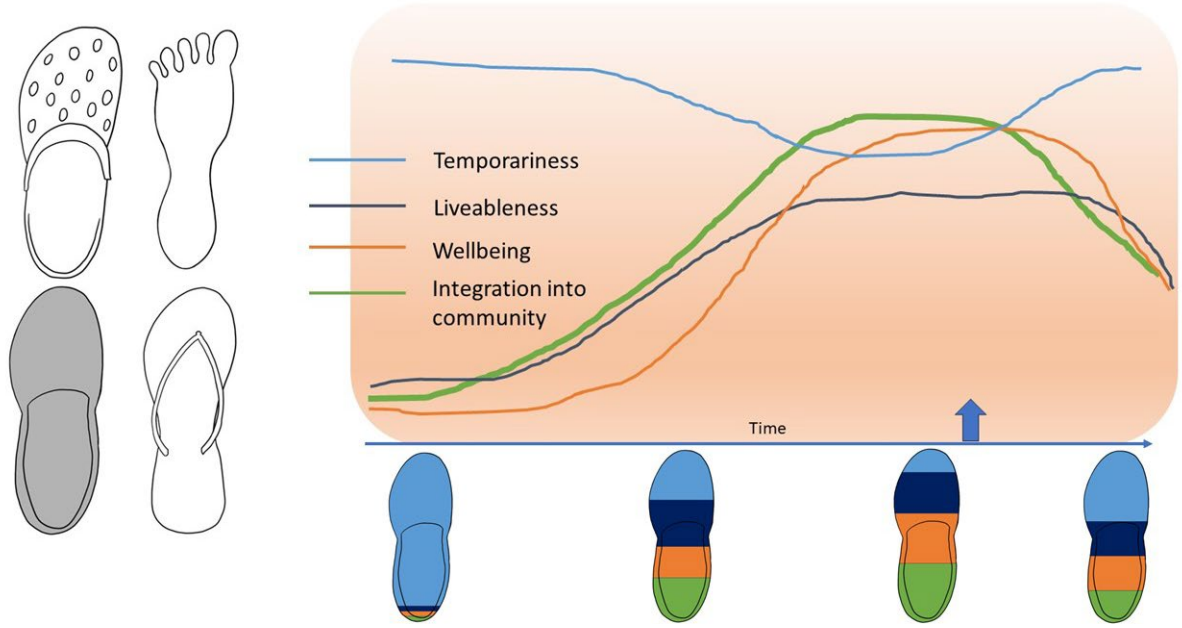


Figure 20: When the perception of community is affected

This scenario is based on an interview with AQ4 who spoke of the impact that she felt regarding some troubles that she was seeing in the community. Before these troubles, she had found the community a good enough place to live. Her sense of community was good, the children were doing well at school, and she had a simple business meaning that her sense of liveableness was good. She had received trauma counselling and subsequently had been able to put the troubles from the Acholi war behind her, which, when combined with a good relationship with neighbours and the presence of close family resulted in good wellbeing. She said that she would always have some level of temporariness as Acholi Quarters is not her proper home, but she was accepting of living there for now. However, with the increased youth-related troubles in the community (as per the arrow), her feelings towards, and her desire to integrate with certain parts of the community diminished. These negative feelings about the community have impacted her sense of wellbeing, as she saw that wellbeing of the community suffer. It also meant that she was reimagining what it takes to make a place liveable, and as a result her sense of liveableness decreased, and her sense of temporariness increased as the troubles heightened her desire to leave Acholi Quarters and move back to the ancestral home.

11.5 Reimagining and interconnectedness

The above four scenarios have, between them, demonstrated both the interconnectedness between the four categories, and also given examples of how the criteria of liveable space can be reimagined over time. Further, they have demonstrated the degree of subjectivity associated with these concepts. No two women have exactly the same background to their current situation, each of them has their standpoint from which they are speaking and living. As a result, each of them will respond to the current set of circumstances in which they find themselves in their own unique way. For example, if SSR4 was to be placed into the situation of SSR5, her response may not be the same as that of SSR5. SSR4 forever has the constant worry of being found by the vengeful family and might feel unable to leave the relative safety of the Palabek camp, so altering her reimagining of what she perceives to be a liveable space. To give another example, AQ4 and AQ7 might have different responses to the perceived levels of crime in Acholi Quarters. AQ4 knows that she can leave to go home but AQ7 lives with the knowledge that she will never be able to go home. As a result, AQ4 might have a lower tolerance of the crime compared to AQ7 who did not mention it as an issue that bothered her in the same way.

The subjective nature of the reimagining and of the interconnectedness also serves as a reminder of the importance of giving attention to the voices of individuals. This ties in with the standpoint theory that underpins this research, and it also is one of the key features of the capabilities approach that has been referenced at points throughout this study. It could be said that all four of the women who have been used in the example scenarios have access to very similar capabilities. With regard to Nussbaum's list of central capabilities (2011), the women all had access to food, water and shelter as per the capability of bodily health. They had access to a safe environment as per the capability of bodily integrity, and they had access to education as per the capability of senses, imagination and thought. But how they each chose to interpret and action those capabilities differed. For some of the women, the capabilities, and their corresponding functionings in their current form were enough, at least at the time of the interviews. For others they were inadequate, resulting in plans for a future that included an improvement to the capabilities and functionings to which they would have access. The broad-brush circumstances of the women were the same: forcibly displaced as a result of war and living in a place not considered to be their true home. The access to the capabilities was very similar, but the responses to those capabilities altered depending on the individual nuanced circumstances of each woman. It is a strength of the capabilities approach that there is space to incorporate those individual responses and not just gloss over them or dilute them down.

Another feature of the reimagining and interconnectedness that comes through is the lack of hierarchy between the four categories of wellbeing, liveableness, temporariness and community. No category was shown to have more influence regarding the reimagining than any other category. In some cases, it appeared that moving towards wellbeing was not achievable until progress had been made on the liveableness aspects. But, in other cases, it was said that physical resources were no use unless the mind was more settled, or where they could start to feel a sense of community. Again, the subjective nature of the responses demonstrated that there was no single linear relationship between the categories. Instead, the relationship between the four categories involved in reimagining a liveable space is multi-directional and non-hierarchical. This can be visualized in the following way:

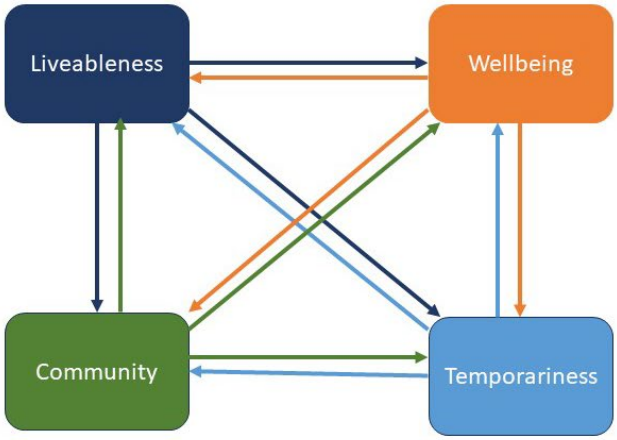


Figure 21: relationship between the four categories

Concluding remarks.

In this chapter, the gendered perspectives of displacement have been explored particularly with reference to forced displacement due to war. The substance of the identified theoretical code has also been examined. Thus, the focus has been an exploration of the reimagination of liveable space, as it relates to women who have been displaced by war. What has been evidenced from the data, and exemplified through the above scenarios, is that reimagining of liveable space does take place, and that the interconnections between the different components during this process are complex. Changes in those interconnections can occur simultaneously and multi-directionally and it has been shown that there is no hierarchy regarding which component is more influential than the others. The strong subjective element relating to the interconnectedness and the reimagining of liveable space has been evidenced.

This reinforces the standpoint paradigm which has been a key element of this research from the outset with the determination to ensure that the voices of these women are heard, in their own

right, as unique and valuable contributions to the wider discourse. The discussion has also included reference to the Capabilities Approach, and the strength of that framework in providing flexibility for individual responses to what might otherwise look like a generic set of circumstances.

In line with grounded theory, the discussion thus far has been focused on, and grounded in, the data gathered from the participants. However, according to Glaser, a grounded theory should have fit, work and modifiability, in order to show relevance with situations wider than just the particular circumstances of this study and so it is important that the emerging theory follows these criteria.

This also ties in with the final stages of Glaser's four stage process of analysis as previously referred to i.e. solidifying the theory and reducing it down to its underlying uniformity, and then writing the theory. It is these stages that will be pursued in the next section.

CHAPTER 12: THE EMERGENCE OF THE GROUNDED THEORY

Introduction

At the outset of this thesis, I stated that one of my intentions was to take the reader on a journey through my research. The journey started by introducing the research, the inspiration behind it, the researcher and the key personnel without whom it could not have taken place. The reader was then acquainted with the philosophical and theoretical aspects of the work, including the paradigms that underpin the study and a consideration of the research from an ethical perspective. The theoretical aspects of the research concluded by introducing the reader to the proposed research design. The journey of the thesis then shifted from theory to practice. Firstly, the realities of putting the research design into practice were explored, including highlighting areas of discrepancy between research plan and execution along with the reasons for those discrepancies. Following this, the analysis process and findings were explained with the resultant emergence of a theoretical code and its related categories. The journey of the thesis then took a focussed look at each of those four categories in turn. There is no hierarchical order to the categories. Instead, just like carbon, hydrogen, oxygen and nitrogen are all equally essential as the building blocks of living organisms, so wellbeing, liveableness, temporariness

and community are all equally important in how a woman perceives and reimagines her liveable space. Having explored the categories, the thesis then moved forward through a discussion relating to the theoretical code.

In this chapter, the journey will reach its conclusion with the revealing of the emergent grounded theory. This is accomplished through completing the final two stages of Glaser's four stage process of analysis, namely solidifying the theory and reducing it down to its underlying uniformity, and then writing up the theory. Charmaz considers the development of a theory to be a practical act of constructing abstract understandings that are embedded in the real world (Charmaz, 2006) – this resonates with Glaser's requirement of refinement and reduction. In line with this, a grounded theory should have fit, work and relevance, and modifiability (Fletcher and Sarkar, 2012), in order to be relevant in situations wider than just the circumstances of this study. It is therefore important that the emerging theory follows these criteria, and adherence of this will be demonstrated in this chapter.

This chapter begins with addressing the justification for the claim of reaching theoretical saturation that was put forward in chapter 6. This includes addressing the issues of robustness and deviant cases, and how well they are accounted for in this study. Following this, a narrative of the final stages in the practical act of theory development for this study will be given resulting in the fulfilment of the aim of a grounded theory study, namely the production of a grounded theory. In so doing, the requirements of fit, work and modifiability are achieved. The theory is also distilled down so that is sufficiently abstract and free from contextual constraints that it can work and be relevant in a broader range of contexts that come within the substantive area of inquiry. The emergent grounded theory will then be revealed as the culmination of this piece of research.

The final sections of this chapter will consider the grounded theory in line with the research questions, and regarding its possible role in exploring wider contexts in light of its abstraction and conceptualisation. This will lead to the identification of possible areas of further study to assist with testing the theory further and draw attention to any identified gaps or limitations that can addressed in future studies. The chapter will conclude with a visual representation of the relationship between the methodological paradigms for this study and additional theories and concepts that have been referenced and utilised.

12.1 Reaching theoretical saturation – justifying the claim

The discussion in chapter 6.2 regarding the identification of achieving theoretical saturation concluded with a proposal by Low (2019) that gave three criteria that should be addressed. Those criteria had been derived from her pragmatic interpretation of the writings of Glaser, Strauss, Corbin, and Charmaz, and are as follows:

- Does the conceptual model, from which the theory has emerged, demonstrate robustness?
- Does the model address deviant cases?
- Is the model conceptualised and generalised such that it works within a broader social context?

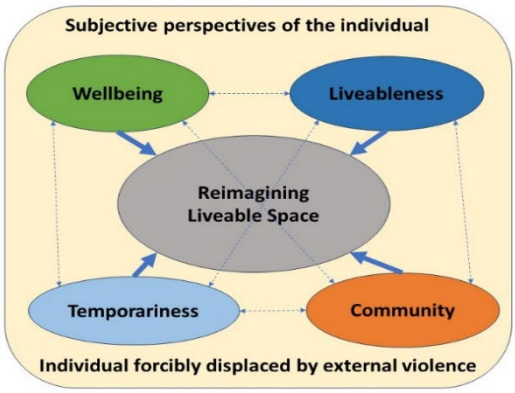


Figure 22: Conceptual model of the grounded theory

All the questions put forward by Low refer to the conceptual model developed as part of the emergence of the grounded theory. In this study, that model was shared in chapter 6, but for easy reference is replicated here (figure 22). The third of Low's questions will be addressed in section 12.3 relating to reduction and refinement of the theory to its underlying uniformity, but the issues of robustness and deviant cases will now be considered.

12.1.1 Robustness

According to Roberts (2002, p153) 'the quality of the data collected, and the effectiveness of theoretical sampling are arguably the most important determinants of the robustness of grounded theory.' Theoretical sampling and data collection should cease only when a theory, that is grounded in the data, has emerged sufficiently to demonstrate that it addresses the research questions and research objective, and enables a conceptual framework to be developed. Furthermore, the use of reflexivity as a tool used by the researcher can increase robustness through the development of procedural transparency (Engward & David, 2015).

Through maintaining a reflexive stance during the collection of data, changes can be made to the process if required. An example from this study was that of altering the interview style from individual to group to facilitate participants in sharing their thoughts, and exploring concepts more deeply in a collaborative way. Also, the group interview style was amended for the third set of interviews so as to allow all participants to have time to speak rather than some voices dominating the responses which had been a tendency in the second set of interviews. Reflexivity within the analysis stages can assist with identifying codes, and deviant cases. Also, a reflexive researcher will be more attuned to any considerations that they might bring relating to their personal values and beliefs based on their history, ethnicity, and socioeconomic background (Palaganas, *et al*, 2017)

Regarding the quality of the data, Charmaz & Thornberg (2021) consider credibility of data to be an important criterion for demonstrating quality in grounded theory studies. This includes being able to show that there is sufficient data that is relevant, original and useful to the wider discourse of the substantive area. The following factors provide evidence of efforts that have been made to ensure the credibility of this data, and further evidence of this will be seen in subsequent sections relating to the relevance and wider applications of the emergent theory. The participants have all had lived experience of the subject being explored, and by interviewing women who come from two different, but somewhat overlapping contexts, the findings can be shown to be relevant to wider than just one specific group. The data was collected in their first language, ensuring that they were not limited in their ability to share fully what they wanted to say, and the interpreters were personnel with whom they had good relationships through previous interactions; this would have helped the women to feel safer and more relaxed within the interview setting. The use of 'blank page' interviews also gave the women control regarding what they decided to share, without being asked any questions that could send them down a pre-determined route. Whilst it was not possible to interview additional SSR women after the initial interviews, the quality of the data collected from them enabled their interviews to continue to be used as a source of data alongside the subsequent interviews carried out with the Acholi women. These subsequent interviews were carried out to provide extra data from which to explore more deeply the categories that were appearing and were linked to the emerging theory; they were not an indication that the initial Acholi interviews were inadequate.

Roberts' second determinant of the robustness of grounded theory is that of the effectiveness of theoretical sampling. This is measured through the emergence of the grounded theory such that research questions and objectives can be addressed, and a concept model developed. The research questions for this study were set out in chapter 1.5. They are:

1. How do each of the groups understand and make meaning of the concept of well-being, within their life context?
2. What can be learnt from the findings relating to well-being for women in a context of trauma caused by conflict?
3. How can the findings benefit the working practices of organisations delivering trauma counselling?

However, it was made clear that those questions were designed during the research planning stage and, in line with the organic, non-predetermined nature of grounded theory, they may not fully align with the findings of the research. The women were encouraged to share what was most important to them, and in so doing, they covered topics beyond the narrow focus of wellbeing. Therefore, the emergent theory, that is developed from the theoretical code and its categories, may not appear to solely answer the research questions but might incorporate other categories as well. However, the category of wellbeing is clearly one of those identified by the participants and explored within this study. As a result, the questions can be answered in part regarding their direct knowledge of wellbeing, and also regarding the relationship between wellbeing and the other identified categories. At this point, reference to the answering of the research questions is limited to how it evidences fulfilment of theoretical sampling to prove robustness. Further discussion regarding how these questions have been answered in the light of the emergent theory will be explored in section 12.5.

The research objective is: 'to explore the subjective perspectives of the experiences of two groups of women, currently residing in Uganda, who have been displaced by war and are now creating new lives for themselves in refugee and displacement communities.' By carrying out interviews with women from the two groups, subjective perspectives have been explored. By setting out the general focus of the interviews as being their experiences relating to displacement by war, the exploration has remained within the substantive area of the objective. Thus, the research objective can be seen to have been addressed through the data collected, and through the conceptual model that was developed in line with the emergent theory. Therefore, the theoretical sampling was sufficient to demonstrate robustness as one of the key tenets of theoretical saturation.

With reference to the call by Engward & Davis (2015) for the use of reflexivity as a tool to increase robustness within research, the process of memoing has been a useful means of achieving this. Extracts from some of those memos have been included in this study, and the

process of memo writing has been integral to the interpretation of the research findings as well as the development of the conceptual model and grounded theory. Reflexivity regarding the positionality of the different research personnel i.e. the research lead, participants, and interpreters, helped to ensure that the research always had the voices of the women at the heart of it, and did not deviate into representing the stance of the researcher or interpreter. Through reflecting on memos written during the interview period, it was possible to review the data collection methods and ensure that they were as effective as possible. It was also possible to identify cases that demonstrated deviancy and did not always follow the same pattern as others. The conceptual model can therefore be shown to be robust in that it has been developed as an outcome of appropriate data collection, sufficient theoretical sampling, and the utilisation of reflexivity. In this way, the first criterion for demonstrating the achievement of theoretical saturation has been fulfilled.

12.1.2 Deviant cases

The second criterion set out by Low (2019) for confirmation of reaching theoretical saturation relates to whether the conceptual model addresses deviant cases. Walsh, *et al* (2015) describe deviant cases as 'the cases in your data that don't fit your modal patterns' (p14). Through using these contradictory cases to interrogate the analysis findings and the conclusions being drawn, the subsequent emergent theory should be a more inclusive and well-defined theory (Haning, 2021). In this study, there was no single case that presented as deviant across all four categories of the theoretical code. However, there were cases that demonstrated deviations in certain categories as will now be highlighted, and between them they can help to test the inclusivity of the conceptual model.

Whilst most of the participants were mothers at the time of experiencing forced displacement, there were two deviant cases. One of these was SSR3 who, although she had children with her, was not their mother but instead was their oldest sibling who had been forced to adopt the role of 'mother' to the younger siblings following the murder of their parents. The second of the deviant cases was AQ4 who was a school child at the time of forced displacement and was sent away from the war to try and continue her education. In both cases, the participant did not fit the normal pattern of mother fleeing with children, but despite this, their experiences do fit with the conceptual model of reimagining liveable space after being forcibly displaced due to violence. Further, within their narratives can be seen examples of how their perceptions of the categories associated with a liveable space are being reimagined over time. Thus, SSR3 speaks

of how she would like to have a small business in the future so that she can provide a better future for her siblings and herself, even though their current situation is a safe, liveable space. AQ4 demonstrated an ongoing progression of the reimagining of liveable space as she transitioned from displaced girl separated from her parents, to her mother moving down and resuming head of household, to becoming a young single mother, to her current status of being a single mother of university students with a community leadership role. Together, these two cases, which both deviated from the norm, demonstrate that the conceptual model can be applied to their situations.

Another deviant case was that of AQ3 who, although a mother, had to go through forced displacement without her child due to the risk of being re-abducted by the LRA to serve again as a child soldier. She also deviated from the norm in that she was the only participant who had not attended the ILA Empower programme, and so was not able to speak of the impact of the programme on her wellbeing. However, despite these deviations from the norm, the conceptual model still works when applied to her situation. She spoke of how she now has a different perception of what constitutes a liveable space for her compared to when she was initially displaced, and that perception comprised elements of liveableness, wellbeing, community, and temporariness.

AQ3 and AQ7 each demonstrate another deviation in that they have both tried to return to their home communities in the north and been categorically told that there is no place for them ever again due to their previous involvement with the LRA. Thus, these two cases demonstrate a deviancy of not having the option to ever return home, whilst the other cases have not had that option permanently shut down. Granted, some of the other participants, for example SSR1, might have expressed a preference not to return, and SSR4 expressed fear about ever returning home. But it was only AQ3 and AQ7 who had been definitively told that returning home would never be an option. Their experiences brought a different perspective to the category of temporariness, but still their cases fitted into the conceptual model.

Through these deviant cases, it is possible to show that the conceptual model that has been developed is a model that is inclusive of wider sets of data than just those which fit into narrow criteria and that each of the categories was explored to a state of saturation. In this way, the second of Low's criteria for demonstrating theoretical saturation, that of determining whether it addresses deviant cases, has been fulfilled. The third criterion put forward by Low (2019) considers whether the model has been conceptualised and generalised such that it works within a broader social context. To achieve this, the model and emerging theory must be

distilled down to their underlying uniformity. The steps taken to achieve this are outlined in section 12.3, but suffice to say that, regarding whether it is reasonable to claim that theoretical saturation has been reached, the fulfilment of all three criteria gives the required justification.

12.2. Solidification of the theory: What is the theory that is emerging?

As discussed in chapter 11, the key outcome from this research relates to the reimagining of liveable space over time, and the relationship between its four categories of liveableness, wellbeing, community, and temporariness. The research has particularly focused on the experiences of women living in Uganda who have been forced to flee from conflict in their home country, with the time span since fleeing ranging from three years to twenty years. The South Sudanese refugee women fled to a new country, whilst the Acholi women were internally displaced within their own country. Thus, the findings from this study represent those who are recognised as refugees by the UNHCR, and those who qualify as IDPs. The findings also represent those who have recently fled from war, and those who can include longevity in the context of their experience.

War is the identified cause of conflict that resulted in the forced displacement of the women. However, there were also references to gender-based violence and to oppression that were exacerbated because of the war and may have contributed to the displacement causation. Thus, examples were given by the participants of ways in which the traditional patriarchal order of being, when driven by the violence of war, becomes oppressively misogynistic, and a key driving force of displacement.

The theory that is emerging, as pertaining specifically to the participants of this study is as follows:

> *South Sudanese refugee women and Acholi internally displaced women, living in Uganda, all of whom have been forcibly displaced because of gender-based violence and oppression exacerbated by war, will demonstrate a reimagining of liveable space with the passing of time and based on their perceptions of wellbeing, liveableness, community and temporariness.*

However, this cannot be the final theory, as it is too context-specific to the data that was collected. Instead, it must be reduced to its underlying uniformities that will stand firm irrespective of the context in which it is used. It also needs to be tested for having the fit, work, and modifiability required of a grounded theory. These aspects will now be considered.

12.2.1 Fit, work and relevance, and modifiability – according to Grounded Theory terminology

For a theory to have fit, as relating to grounded theory terminology, the categories of the theory must fit with the data, rather than data being forced or selected to fit with preconceived categories and theories. Also, as the data collection proceeds, there should be an ongoing process of reviewing, refitting and modifying categories to ensure that they continue to fit all the data, and not just a decreasing portion of it as newer data reveals codes and categories that do not fit with the previous categories (Lomborg and Kirkevold, 2003).

In this study, the codes and categories that were identified in the analysis of the initial data are not the same as those identified as the categories of the final theory. As the data collection has progressed, the categories have been reviewed and modified through the constant comparative process, to ensure that they are relevant to the new data, but also fit with previously collected data. This can be evidenced by the fact that quotes to illustrate elements of the discussion about the final categories included those drawn from segments of the SSR interviews, even though those were the first interviews completed, with no follow up interviews carried out. This demonstrates that the final categories fit with all the data collected and not just a specific portion.

For a theory to satisfy the criteria of work and relevance, it must be able to a) explain what has happened within the area of inquiry, b) predict what will happen in future situations related to the substantive area, and c) interpret what is taking place (Glaser, 1978). This is done through demonstrating the relevance of the theory to the data that has been gathered, and more broadly to the area of study in which the research is being carried out, thus providing practical utility of the theory. The theory as it currently stands partially fulfils the criteria for work and relevance in that it can explain what has happened within the area of inquiry, and it can predict what might happen in future situations but only if those situations occur within the context identified in the theory. To completely fulfil the criteria, and be relevant to situations that are related to, but not limited to the exact area of inquiry, the theory needs to be reduced to its underlying uniformities as will be shown below.

For a theory to be modifiable, it must be open to correction, extension or further development as new evidence and insights become available with the passing of time (Nathaniel and Andrews, 2010; Weed, 2009). The theory as suggested above is locked into contextual specifics

which could limit its modifiability. Once it is reduced to a form that is not contextualised to place, time, or ethnicity of participants, it will be more readily modifiable to future adaptations as new information and knowledge become available through further research. This process will now be explored.

12.3 Reduction and refinement to the underlying uniformity

The purpose of this final stage of the development of the grounded theory is to produce a theory that is sufficiently abstract and free from contextual constraints that it can work and be relevant in a broader range of situations that come within the substantive area of inquiry. This also demonstrates the fulfilment of the third of the criteria for theoretical saturation.

In the initial theory, reference is made to the ethnicity and location of the participants, which is too specifically contextual. Their underlying uniformity is that they are all women who have been forcibly displaced through gender-based violations, and so this will form the first part of the grounded theory. In making this change, the theory can become relevant to women who have been forcibly displaced regardless of location. The next reference that provides contextual constraint is that they were displaced by war. This phrase could be refined to refer instead to external violent episodes as the reason for displacement. This provides the possibility for the theory to be relevant to women who have been displaced because of violence but not war, for example those displaced due to religious or political persecution, or women who have fled from domestic violence. The need for further research to substantiate this possibility remains. However, removal of the term 'war' makes the theory more open to working for and being relevant to their situations.

With those two amendments in place, the theory has been modified thus:

> *Women who have been forcibly displaced by gender-based violation and abuse through violent external episodes will demonstrate a reimagining of liveable space with the passing of time and based on their perceptions of wellbeing, liveableness, community, and temporariness.*

Some further amendments are required to this version of the theory in order to reach the final version. The first is the inclusion that the women personally experienced the violent episodes. This is important, as that was the case for the women on whom this theory has been founded, and there is no guarantee that they would have fled if the violent episodes were happening nearby but with no personal impact. It is also important to include reference to the uniquely

personal aspect of the experience in recognition that it should not be assumed by external agents how an individual will respond. Instead, external agents should seek to 'walk in the shoes' of those whom they are seeking to serve, be willing to listen to the individual and respond according to their particular needs rather than developing a generic non-flexible response.

Another amendment is the recognition that the reimagining of liveable space is influenced not just by the four named categories, but also by the interconnectedness of those categories. As was shown in chapter 11, the categories do not act independently of each other, but instead each have a bearing on how the other categories are perceived. The final amendment is to recognise the individual and subjective nature of the perceptions of the categories. How each woman perceives the categories is unique to her, and how the categories interconnect is also unique to her. Even if two women have very similar personal experiences of violence, still they will have their own specific perceptions of it, and this should be included in the final theory.

12.4 Unveiling the final grounded theory

Having incorporated these amendments into the construction of the theory, the following constitutes the final grounded theory for this study:

> ***Women who have undergone forced displacement due to profound, personal experience of gender-based violation and abuse through violent external episodes will demonstrate a reimagining of what constitutes a liveable space with the passing of time and as influenced by the interconnectedness of their individual, subjective perceptions of wellbeing, liveableness, community, and temporariness.***

12.5 Wider applications of the grounded theory

The theory that has emerged has the South Sudanese and Acholi women at its heart. By reducing it down to its underlying uniformity and removing context-specific references, the intent is that it makes itself available to other relevant contexts which could be the focus of further studies. Some of these contexts will now be outlined.

The first area is whether the theory would hold when applied to women displaced from a war zone to a different continent or country with a very different heritage, traditions, and language. Refugees from Syria, Afghanistan, or Ukraine who have fled from their war-torn home nation and are now living in the UK could be the focus of such a study. All have been forcibly

displaced because of war, but how does their new life in a very different societal context affect how they demonstrate a reimagining of liveable space over time?

A point of note on this: when one arrives at Entebbe international airport – the main entry point for air-travellers to Uganda, a big sign in the arrivals hall says 'Welcome to Uganda, the pearl of Africa'. That sense of being a welcoming nation to people from other countries is something that goes far beyond the airport walls. Despite being ranked 159 out of 193 in the United Nations Development report (UNDP 2024), Uganda is one of the largest recipients of refugees in the world (NRC 2023), and it has set out in law a focus on inclusion and integration of those refugees rather than marginalisation. By comparison, UK is ranked number 15 out of 193, is much wealthier, and yet its response to refugees seeking a safe place in the country is highly politicised and divisive, as was demonstrated in the recent UK general election. This is not the place for an exploration of the differences between the responses of those two nations, but I draw attention to it if nothing else to highlight the fact that the experience of displaced women in a country should not be subconsciously, or consciously linked to the apparent level of development of the host nation.

Another area in which to explore the flexibility of the theory relates to women who have been forcibly displaced due to non-war-related violence, for example women who fled from violence associated with trafficking or from domestic violence and are now living in a safe house. Would the findings of such a study demonstrate or deny that the theory can transfer across from war-related violence to other forms not related to war? Through the abstraction process, the implication is that the theory should transfer across, but further studies are required to test it out.

In this study, the women were identified through being members of communities linked with ILA. Consequently, all the participants had gained access to trauma counselling and awareness programs, and all bar one had availed themselves of this provision. Therefore, it would be interesting to see how relevant the theory is when applied to women forcibly displaced by violence but who have not received any trauma counselling or awareness. Would the lack of that support impact their reimagining of a liveable space over time, and how? In particular how might a lack of mental health support influence the woman's wellbeing, the category in which the trauma awareness programme was highlighted?

Finally, some may query whether the gendered reference should be removed from the final theory to make it relevant to those who identify as anything other than a woman. All the data collected was from participants who identify as women, and there is no data specified to

represent the views of men or those with other gendered identities. However, further research could explore if the gendered reference can be modified and replaced with a gender-neutral term. That this is a possibility within the scope of the theory provides further evidence that the emergent theory fulfils the criteria to be classed as a grounded theory.

12.6 Answering the research questions

In line with the grounded theory approach, there was no guarantee regarding the direction that the findings would take within the identified substantive area of study. Consequently, the research objective and questions initially set out were held loosely. The research objective was: 'to explore the subjective perspectives of the experiences of two groups of women, currently residing in Uganda, who have been displaced by war and are now creating new lives for themselves in refugee and displacement communities.' As highlighted in section 12.1.1, this has been met through the course of this research process. The answering of the three research questions, as set out in chapter 1.5 will now be addressed.

12.6.1 Research question 1

'How do each of the groups understand and make meaning of the concept of well-being, within their life context?'.

In the initial interviews all the participants explained their understanding of wellbeing. They also spoke about their perceptions of the level of wellbeing in their lives at that time and reflected on factors that had helped or hindered their wellbeing at different times during and since their experiences of displacement. These perceptions and understandings of wellbeing have been explored in chapter 7 and provide an answer to this question. A more longitudinal view on wellbeing has also been explored through the conversations with the Acholi women who, through time elapsed since fleeing from the north are able to look back at how their wellbeing has changed over the years and this provides an additional area of response to this question.

12.6.2 Research question 2

'What can be learnt from the findings relating to well-being for women in a context of trauma caused by conflict?'

Drawing on the discussions in the previous chapters, several points of learning have emerged. These have all been explored previously so a summary only is provided here. One of these is that wellbeing is not an isolated concept within the context of women who have experienced trauma as a result of conflict, but is closely related to, and connected with the concepts of liveableness, community, and temporariness. Another important point of learning is that all these concepts can vary and be reimagined over time. Further, there is no hierarchy between the concepts. Each of them can have an influence on the perceptions of the others in a positive way, but also in a negative way. A fourth point to note is that the same situation can be perceived very differently by different individuals, and thus there is a strong subjective element to how wellbeing and the other categories are perceived, and how the interconnections between them are played out. Consequently, an individual's perception of wellbeing depends on many factors, and that perception can fluctuate according to the variabilities of those factors. It is worth noting that some of the answers given below to question 3 could also be applied to question 2, as there is some overlap between the two questions regarding the quest for identifying points of learning.

12.6.3 Research question 3

'How can the findings benefit the working practices of organisations delivering trauma counselling?'

This question was included as a response to the fact that the interview participants were members of groups linked with the Ugandan non-profit organisation, I Live Again Uganda (ILA), which has trauma counselling as a key component of its work. Therefore, it was known that many of the participants would have some experience of trauma awareness and or counselling, whether individually or as part of a group. From this, it was surmised that there may come some findings from the research that could benefit organisations such as ILA. However, as has been previously mentioned, the grounded theory methodology meant that there was no directing of interview questions to ensure that trauma counselling was explored. Instead, any findings relating to this area came about as a result of the information that the participants chose to share and the direction of conversation that they chose to pursue. Nevertheless, within the emergent grounded theory there are some key components that can benefit the working practices of organisations delivering trauma counselling, as will now be outlined.

According to Levers (2012) trauma counselling should enable a healing process for the client whilst maintaining a holistic view of that client. The knowledge that the imagining of liveable space changes over time i.e. a process of reimagining takes place, could have implications for the enabling of the healing process, and provide a useful insight for trauma counselling practitioners. If the client is altering their perceived end goal during the course of the counselling process because of the reimagining, then the route to achieving that end goal should also be re-addressed and the practices of the trauma counselling provider would need to reflect this. One way to achieve this could be to incorporate periodic reviews regarding the client's updated desired outcome from the counselling.

Interconnectedness and subjectivity together inform the requirement for a counsellor to maintain a holistic view of the client. Through being mindful of the interconnectedness between different facets of the client's identity, the counsellor can avoid either focusing on a limited view of the client or taking a multi-faceted view but not connecting those facets together. In both cases, the holistic view of the client would be sub-optimal. Another learning point relates to being mindful of the subjective nature of responses within the counselling process. Thus, it is important not to make assumptions about how an individual might be perceiving her experience of and position in a situation, based on the responses of others who have gone through similar. Instead, the woman must be treated as an individual, and her own personal and subjective viewpoints heard. This is particularly relevant for organisations which utilise group therapy as part of their portfolio. Group therapy can be useful for imparting general information, learning points and principles, and it is a form of therapy that benefits those who prefer to process their experiences in a multi-person format. But there should be no assumptions made about homogeneity of experiences, and clients should be reminded that everyone is individual in their response to, and memories of a traumatic experience.

A final learning point can be found through consideration of the four categories identified in the grounded theory. Each of the four categories has a range of properties associated with it, as discussed in the relevant chapters in this thesis. For example, liveableness includes safety, gender, education, access to resources, and land rights. Wellbeing includes physical, mental, spiritual and community aspects. Temporariness includes whether it is chosen or imposed, and what options are available to the individual to move to a state of chosen permanence. Community includes mutuality, diversity, and safety. Together, these categories and their properties are a useful indicator to those delivering trauma counselling of the breadth of areas that can impact the client and how they might respond to the healing process. The organisation might therefore consider reviewing its practices to ensure that practitioners are

providing space and opportunities for the client to explore these different areas if they feel it is appropriate.

12.6.4 Reflections from the ILA staff

Note from the author:

Just prior to the submission of this thesis, I had the opportunity to travel to Gulu and share the findings of my research with the staff of ILA. Those present included staff who had taken part in the interviews and the facilitation of the data collection, as well as other staff who were interested to hear about the research that ILA had been involved in. At the end of my presentation, I asked those present if they had any reflections on how the research findings could benefit the work of ILA, and other organizations involved in trauma counselling for displaced victims of violence. The responses given were very encouraging and whilst not an official part of the data collection for this research, I feel that they are worthy of inclusion in this chapter regarding their pertinence to the answering of question 3. It is noted that some of the reflections are also relevant to question 2. However, as they have been given by practitioners of a trauma counselling organisation, they are being allocated primarily as answers to question 3.

One theme that came from the responses by the ILA staff was the usefulness of the identification of the four categories and how they should all be considered when working with trauma victims, rather than just focussing on mental wellbeing which tends to be current practice. The recognition of the interconnectedness of the categories was also identified as being very important, so that any of the four categories should not be explored in isolation.

Other responses related to the reimagining and altered perceptions of the categories over time. One of the staff reflected how they often assume that the sense of temporariness decreases as displaced people integrate into the new community, However, as the programmes tend to provide intervention that is relatively short-term, there is no support available for those who might later experience their temporariness increasing again as the dissatisfaction with their 'non-home' community and the desire to return to their original home grows. Another respondent reflected that, as a result of these insights into the reimagining of categories over time, trauma counselling agencies should seek ways to journey with people for the longer-term to help them build resilience, rather than providing trauma counselling as a 'one-hit wonder'.

Some interesting reflections were given regarding the community category, including the recognition that, when talking about community, there is an important distinction between the host community and the community of displaced people. In my research, the focus has been on the community of the displaced people, as my participants were from those communities. However, the host community should not be ignored. The communities have different needs, and both must be considered within the development of the programme for displaced people. One of the ILA staff recalled how they have seen attempted integration of displaced people into existing communities go badly wrong when the host community has not been consulted about their willingness to accept new people into their midst. Thus, it is important that the proposed host community are willing to host, are included in the planning process, and can see tangible benefits from the arrangements. Through being educated, equipped, and assured of the long-term benefits for their community, peaceful co-existence is more likely. Without this, according to the ILA staff, displaced people entering the community might not be welcomed, might sense resentment from the host community, and can then struggle to recover from their existing trauma, or potentially experience further trauma.

One of the ILA staff reflected on the usefulness of this research in the consideration of 'safe spaces' for vulnerable refugees. They shared how some refugees can be relocated to 'safe spaces' because of particular threats or dangers, and at the time it is considered the best move for that individual. However, this might be questioned when explored through the lens of this research. Certainly, the liveableness perspective is accounted for in that they are safe and have their physical needs met. However, they are removed from their community, which could have a detrimental impact on their wellbeing, on their sense of community, and on their overall recovery. It can also lead to a greater sense of temporariness, as they may be unsure of the duration of their stay in this safe space, and thus struggle to settle into their new life. The reflection from this led to a recognition that it is important to include the individual in the decision-making process regarding their future, and not just leave it to external agencies to act on their behalf.

The final theme of the reflections related to the usefulness of the research findings when setting up a new trauma counselling programme, as well as when reviewing the practices of existing programmes. The four categories and their interconnectedness were agreed to be a useful lens through which to consider the aims and objectives of the trauma counselling as well as being of use when developing a tool to measure outcomes. It was suggested that, given the inclusion of the spiritual aspect of wellbeing, agencies that do not have their own in-house faith element, might collaborate with faith-based organizations in order to ensure that

attention can be given to all aspects of wellbeing. A suggestion was also made that a useful tool to come from this research would be a set of policy recommendations for each of the four categories regarding what to look out for, and how to best ensure that each category is considered in the support of the refugee. Finally, it is important to consider the wellbeing of the community (host and incoming) from the start, rather than only focussing on the wellbeing of the individual receiving trauma counselling.

These reflections by the staff of ILA clearly demonstrate that there are many ways in which the findings from this research can benefit the work of organizations delivering trauma counselling services. This is very encouraging to note as it confirms that the findings are recognised as relevant and useful by the service providers, and not just surmised to be so from an academic standpoint. They also provide additional evidence regarding the way in which the research objective and questions have been answered, including the provision of learning points and information to benefit relevant agencies. As a result of the abstraction and conceptualisation of the grounded theory, these learning points do not necessarily need to be limited to the specific context of the study but instead could be applied more widely to other situations previously identified where women have undergone forced displacement due to personal experiences of violent external episodes.

12.7 Recognising study limitations

It would be remiss to conclude this thesis without acknowledging the presence of some limitations within this study, and these will now be considered. The first limitation is that the research was carried out by a novice with regard to Grounded Theory Methodology. To try and reduce the impact of this, I attended GT webinars to meet with other practitioners and discuss best practice, and I had good supervisory support, but still it is recognised that in the data collection and analysis stages I was coming from a place of limited experience. The second limitation relates to this, in that I was carrying out the fieldwork as a single researcher and thus did not have in-person opportunity to compare notes in the field regarding the coding process. Regular input from the supervisory team provided remote support during the field-work period, as well as ongoing input throughout the research period. However, from these observations, one might question whether a more experienced team of researchers would have found different outcomes from the same data set. Another possible limitation is that I was only able to meet with the SSR women once, compared to the three visits that I had with the Acholi women. The reasons for this have been explained and the data from the SSR participants was

used throughout the constant comparison process, so it is not a given that the data was incomplete because of only seeing them once. Theoretical saturation was reached using the data that was obtained, and this claim has been justified. But the inequality identified could be viewed as a potential limitation and is therefore being acknowledged. These three identified areas could all be addressed in future studies, and in so doing can help to further test and strengthen the emergent grounded theory.

Concluding remarks

In this chapter, attention has been given to the justification of the claim that theoretical saturation was achieved. This included consideration of how to prove robustness of the data using the parameters of data quality, effectiveness of theoretical sampling, and the use of reflexivity to strengthen robustness. Achieving theoretical saturation was also evidenced through addressing deviant cases to demonstrate how the conceptual model that underpins the grounded theory is inclusive of these cases. The chapter then considered the requirements of a theory to demonstrate fit, work, and modifiability, and gave examples of how each of those criteria were met. Demonstrating modifiability was achieved through the process of reduction and refinement of the theory, so that it advanced from being context-specific to becoming more abstract and conceptual in nature. In so doing, the final theory that emerged is free from contextual constraints such that it can work and be relevant in a broader range of situations that come within the substantive area of inquiry. This theory is grounded in the data collected from the research participants and is constructed from the information that they felt was important to share within the substantive area of women who have been displaced by external violence. Importantly, it represents their voices, and gives them the knowledge that their lived experiences have, in some small way, fed into the wider discourse regarding how to support other women who have experienced forced displacement due to violence.

The research presented in this thesis utilises a combination of grounded theory and feminist standpoint approaches. In this way, the voices of forcibly displaced women, who have lived experience of fleeing from war, have been enabled to be heard, and a theory grounded in the data that they shared has emerged. However, within the discussion that took place exploring the different aspects of that emergent theory, reference has been made to other theories and concepts, including the Capability Approach, gendered perspectives of displacement, Ubuntu, and Durkeim's theory of solidarity. Some might critique this inclusion of other theories as

reducing the focus on grounded theory and feminist standpoint, and it is to help counter that potential criticism that I have developed figure 23 with the accompanying narrative.

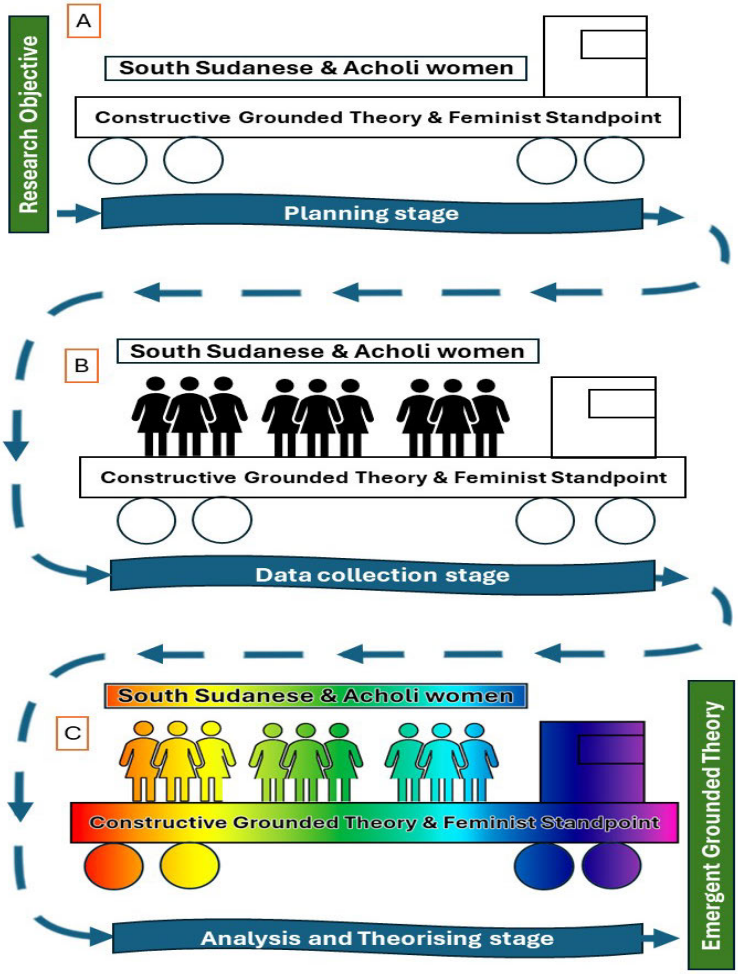


Figure 23: Representation of the relationship between the research paradigms used for this study, and the additionally referenced theories and concepts.

In the first section (A), the research is being planned and will utilise grounded theory and feminist standpoint as a vehicle on which to explore the research objective that relates to the experiences of South Sudanese and Acholi women. However, the plans are somewhat hypothetical – hence represented in black and white outlines.

In the second section (B), the research has progressed to the data collection stage, and the conversations with the women are taking place. Thus, women are on the grounded theory vehicle, but no deep analysis and theorising has taken place, and so the image still lacks vibrancy.

In the third section (C), the research is moving through analysis towards the production of an emergent grounded theory. Through the constant comparative analysis process theoretical saturation of the data was achieved and the findings have been explored in the light of other literature. In this process, other theories, including those mentioned above, have been drawn on to give additional insight and understanding to the emerging theory. Metaphorically, the additional insights and understanding that come through reference to the theories have brought colour to the research, hence its use in representing this stage.

This research is an innovative and novel piece of work that is not just grounded theory, nor just feminist standpoint, nor just capability approach or any of the other theories and concepts. Instead, it is a study that weaves these approaches together in a unique way and emerges the stronger for that. Grounded theory and feminist standpoint approaches are together the vehicle from which the research goes on to incorporate other key theoretical paradigms in its findings. Through holding the emerging theory in the light of those theories, there is opportunity to demonstrate how the research can hold its own within a greater body of study than just that with which it is immediately related.

This research is also a study that does not just focus on wellbeing for displaced women, or liveableness, or temporariness, or community. Instead, it has its uniqueness in the way in which it weaves those four components of liveable space together and demonstrates their important relationship to each other. Most studies tend to focus on just one of these categories, or at best two. To draw all four together in a relevant and pertinent way, based on the information that has been shared by the participants is again an original approach that could be an entry point for further publications and research.

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UNIVERSITY OF GLOUCESTERSHIRE

Via email

Dr Robin Bown
Research Ethics Committee Vice-Chair
Senior Lecturer in Marketing Interpretation
Oxstalls Campus
Longlevens, Gloucester, GL2 9HW

Tel: +44 (0)1242 714486
Email: rbown@glos.ac.uk

Helen Harrison
[redacted]

02 March 2022

Dear Helen

Thank you for your recent application for ethical approval.

I am pleased to confirm ethical clearance for your research following ethical review by the University of Gloucestershire's Research Ethics Committee.

Please keep a record of this letter as a confirmation of your ethical approval.

Project Title:	'Exploration of epistemology of wellbeing for women, against a context of conflict-affected trauma, for three specific and interconnected yet separate groups, based in Uganda'
Start Date:	01 March 2022
Completion Date:	31 October 2026
REC Approval Code:	REC.22.33.3

If you have any questions about ethical clearance please feel free to contact me. Please use your REC Approval Code in any future correspondence regarding this study.

Good luck with your research project.

Regards,

[redacted]

Dr Robin Bown
Vice-Chair of Research Ethics Committee

APPENDIX 2 – GULU UNIVERSITY REC APPROVAL

GULU UNIVERSITY

P.O. Box 166, Gulu (U)
Website: www.gu.ac.ug
Email: gurec@gu.ac.ug

Tel: +256 471 432 096
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RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

01/03/2022

To: helen harrison

university of gloucestershire
[redacted]

Type: Initial Review

Re: GUREC-2021-180: A grounded theory epistemological exploration of wellbeing for women with lived experience of conflict-affected trauma, based in Uganda, version 3.0, 2022-02-10

I am pleased to inform you that at the **81st** convened meeting on **17/02/2022**, the Gulu University REC, committee meeting, etc voted to approve the above referenced application.
Approval of the research is for the period of **01/03/2022** to **01/03/2023.**

As Principal Investigator of the research, you are responsible for fulfilling the following requirements of approval:

1. All co-investigators must be kept informed of the status of the research.
2. Changes, amendments, and addenda to the protocol or the consent form must be submitted to the REC for re-review and approval **prior** to the activation of the changes.
3. Reports of unanticipated problems involving risks to participants or any new information which could change the risk benefit: ratio must be submitted to the REC.
4. Only approved consent forms are to be used in the enrollment of participants. All consent forms signed by participants and/or witnesses should be retained on file. The REC may conduct audits of all study records, and consent documentation may be part of such audits.
5. Continuing review application must be submitted to the REC **eight weeks** prior to the expiration date of **01/03/2023** in order to continue the study beyond the approved period. Failure to submit a continuing review application in a timely fashion may result in suspension or termination of the study.
6. The REC application number assigned to the research should be cited in any correspondence with the REC of record.
7. You are required to register the research protocol with the Uganda National Council for Science and Technology (UNCST) for final clearance to undertake the study in Uganda.

The following is the list of all documents approved in this application by Gulu University REC:

No.	Document Title	Language	Version Number	Version Date
1	Data collection tools	english	version 3.0	2022-02-18
2	covid risk management plan	english	version 3.0	2022-02-10
3	Informed Consent forms	acholi	version 3.0	2022-02-10
4	Informed Consent forms	arabic	version 3.0	2022-02-10
5	Informed Consent forms	english	version 3.0	2022-02-10
6	Protocol	English	version 3.0	2022-02-10

Yours Sincerely

Dr. Gerald OBAI
For: Gulu University REC

APPENDIX 3 – UGANDA NATIONAL COUNCIL OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY APPROVAL

Uganda National Council for Science and Technology

(Established by Act of Parliament of the Republic of Uganda)

Our Ref: HS2148ES **1 April 2022**

helen harrison
Nkuru Nziza Foundation
Kampala

Re: Research Approval: **A grounded theory epistemological exploration of wellbeing for women with lived experience of conflict-affected trauma, based in Uganda**

I am pleased to inform you that on **01/04/2022**, the Uganda National Council for Science and Technology (UNCST) approved the above referenced research project. The Approval of the research project is for the period of **01/04/2022** to **01/04/2023**.

Your research registration number with the UNCST is **HS2148ES**. Please, cite this number in all your future correspondences with UNCST in respect of the above research project. As the Principal Investigator of the research project, you are responsible for fulfilling the following requirements of approval:

1. Keeping all co-investigators informed of the status of the research.

2. Submitting all changes, amendments, and addenda to the research protocol or the consent form (where applicable) to the designated Research Ethics Committee (REC) or Lead Agency for re-review and approval **prior** to the activation of the changes. UNCST must be notified of the approved changes within five working days.

3. For clinical trials, all serious adverse events must be reported promptly to the designated local REC for review with copies to the National Drug Authority and a notification to the UNCST.

4. Unanticipated problems involving risks to research participants or other must be reported promptly to the UNCST. New information that becomes available which could change the risk/benefit ratio must be submitted promptly for UNCST notification after review by the REC.

5. Only approved study procedures are to be implemented. The UNCST may conduct impromptu audits of all study records.

6. An annual progress report and approval letter of continuation from the REC must be submitted electronically to UNCST. Failure to do so may result in termination of the research project.

Please note that this approval includes all study related tools submitted as part of the application as shown below:

No.	Document Title	Language	Version Number	Version Date
1	Data collection tools	english	VERSION 3.0	18 February 2022
2	Informed Consent forms	english	VERSION 4.0	20 March 2022
3	Site Specific Protocol	english	COVID RISK MANAGEMENT VERSION 4.0	20 March 2022
4	informed consent form Acholi	acholi	4.0	20 March 2022
5	Project Proposal	English	VERSION 3.0	
6	Approval Letter	English		
7	Administrative Clearance	English		

Yours sincerely,

[redacted]

Ms Beth Mutumba
For: Executive Secretary
UGANDA NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

LOCATION/CORRESPONDENCE

Plot 6 Kimera Road, Ntinda
P.O. Box 6884
KAMPALA, UGANDA

COMMUNICATION

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EMAIL: info@uncst.go.ug
WEBSITE: http://www.uncst.go.ug

Title of the study: A grounded theory epistemological exploration of wellbeing, set against a context of conflict-affected trauma, based in Uganda
Investigator(s): Helen Harrison, PhD student

Community Engagement Plan
Version 3.0

Goal

- to explore the epistemology of wellbeing for three separate, yet interconnected groups of people who are living in Uganda and who have lived experience of conflict-affected trauma

Research questions

- How do each of the groups understand and make meaning of the concept of well-being, within their life context?
- What can be learnt from the findings relating to well-being in a context of conflict-affected trauma?
- How can the findings benefit the working practices of organisations delivering trauma counselling?

Objectives

- To explore the epistemology of wellbeing for three specific Uganda-based communities, each of whom has experience of conflict-affected trauma, and who are linked through trauma counselling.
- To conduct semi-structured interviews with six – eight female participants from each of the communities.
- To use thematic-induced analysis to develop a theory relating to the epistemology of wellbeing that is grounded in the interview data

The key community stakeholders to be involved

- I Live Again Uganda (ILA): Gulu-based non-profit organization that delivers trauma counselling
- Members of the South Sudanese refugee community living in Lamwo district: this community have received, and continue to receive, trauma counselling from ILA
- Members of the Acholi Quarters community in Kampala: this community have also received, and continue to receive, trauma counselling from ILA
- Gulu University REC

The research team responsible for managing community engagement activities

- The lead researcher is Helen Harrison, PhD student from University of Gloucestershire in UK. Helen has been involved in community-based volunteer work in East Africa for 12 years, supporting a number of indigenous organisations, including ILA. She therefore has a significant amount of experience regarding cross-cultural sensitivity, and also a strong network of local residents who can advise and support with community engagement activities
- The research team will also comprise two or three members of ILA staff. These staff members will not participate as interviewees, to avoid conflict of interest.

Approach(es), activities and mode of implementation as well as the justification for selecting the approach(es)

- **approach** for the research is a feminist constructivist grounded theory approach. The reason for this approach is that it places the participants at the centre of the research, and the outcome from the research is a theory grounded in the data sourced from the participants. Thus their voices, perspectives and experiences are centre-stage, which is in contrast to the dominant narrative of wellbeing that has been constructed in the western-centric global north. The feminist approach has been chosen in recognition that women make up the majority share of refugees and displaced people, and yet their voices are less often heard.

- **research activity** for gathering data will be semi-structured interviews. The reason for this choice is to enable participants to respond to the questions in their vernacular, and not require any level of literacy as a questionnaire would require. The interviews will be semi-structured to allow some similarity of questions which can lead to comparative findings, but also have flexibility to follow the particular themes of each individual. The choice was made for interviews rather than focus groups to ensure that each participant is able to speak in a safe private space, rather than risk feeling out of their comfort zone if having to speak in a group setting

- **mode of implementation**: the interviews will be conducted by the lead researcher, but with an ILA staff member present to do translation.
Brief written notes will be taken, but the interviews will be recorded using an audio device, to allow for full transcription later, and to improve the body language of the interviewer. Video recordings will not be made, to protect visual identity.
Participants will be given an ID code to protect their true identity.
Participants will be given the choice of whether to be interviewed indoors or outdoors. This is in recognition of the fact that some participants might have previous trauma associated with certain locations, and so, by giving them the control over the location of their interview, this association can be lessened.
The interviews will take place over two days, preceded by information meetings with community leaders and an open community information meeting.
See 'draft interview questions and schedule' for more details

Communication strategy for the engagement

1. meeting between ILA research team members and lead researcher to discuss all aspects of the research and consider communication strategy, including what information is to be shared at each stage. This meeting will take place via internet-based communication eg Zoom, whilst lead researcher is still in UK
2. 'soft launch' of the research between ILA and community leaders, to inform them of opportunity for women from their community to participate in the research, and to share general information about the purpose of the research, and research activities. These meetings will take place during the month prior to arrival of the lead researcher
3. Community engagement week, with lead researcher present
    a. In-depth meeting between community leaders, lead researcher and ILA staff. This will permit time for the community leaders to fully engage with the research aims and objectives, benefits, planned activities, implications for their community members. In so doing they will be able to ask questions as required ahead of the community meeting, make any suggestions on improving the implementation plans, and grant their permission for the research to go ahead
    b. Community meeting for all who wish to attend. NB if numbers exceed those permitted within Covid-secure guidelines, then multiple meetings will be held. NB See 'community engagement meeting content' for further detail on content of meeting.
    c. One to one meetings for participants, to review the informed consent form, and ensure that they are fully cognizant with all aspects of the research and research method.

An evaluation plan for the community engagement activities

- written report will be compiled following the zoom meeting between lead researcher and ILA staff. This will include notes on any improvements and alterations to the research process that have been proposed, and dates for implementation.
- Written reports by ILA staff relating to 'soft launch' conversations, including dates of conversations, names of community leaders involved, any comments and concerns.
- Community engagement week
    - Meeting with community leaders – data gathered includes names and official role of attendees, questions asked and responses given, any suggestions made for improvements and alterations, and evidence of the implementation of the suggestions
    - Community meeting – data gathered includes numbers, gender ratio
    - Interviews – data gathered (as well as the interview data), includes number of participants applying to take part, drop-out rate, method of selection for interviewees in the case of an excess of applicants.
- Post engagement week
    - ILA staff to meet with leaders and collect anecdotal evidence on the perceived success of the engagement week, along with any suggestions on leaders regarding how to improve next time.
    - NB this will be carried out by ILA staff as they have a stronger relationship with the community leaders and can garner responses that might be less forthcoming to the lead researcher.

Plan on mitigation of risks and conflicts resulting from community engagement efforts

- Actions taken to mitigate risks and conflicts

- Engage ILA staff to assist with all community sensitization activities
- Use ILA as they already have strong and positive relationships in the communities to be researched and are well known and trusted.
- I have already visited the communities in non-research capacity and have delivered training to community members as well as being associated with community development programmes. Thus, when introducing me to the community, ILA can link me to programmes that have brought benefit to the communities, to reinforce that I have positive history with them.
- Engage with community leaders first in deference to their authority and ensure to gain their support and approval for the research plan and programme
- Hold open community meetings so that no community members feel excluded from the research, even if they are not female.
- Explain at the open meetings that there is no financial or material gain from participation, in order to protect participants from misplaced expectations regarding possible numeration
- Allow participants to choose the location of choice for their interview so that they can control their environment
- Any interviews carried out indoors will not be in a room that can be overheard from outside, to protect the privacy of the interviewee
- Any interviews carried out outside will be in a space that does not have members of the public passing by within earshot, to protect the privacy of the interviewee.
- A list of selection criteria will be created for the participant group to fulfil re range of ages and range of married status. This will ensure that, in the event of an excess of applicants, independent reasons can be given regarding the final choice of participants
- All participants have to self-refer, no referrals will be taken from community leaders or husbands, family members. This will guard against the possibility of accusations of preferential choice of participants.

Expected visits to the participating communities by lead researcher

- Year 1 to carry out data gathering
- Year 3 to share preliminary findings from analysis
- Year 5 to share final outcome from research

Training needs -

Prior to implementation of the community engagement activities, training will be given to the ILA staff regarding their role as translators for the interviews. No other training needs have been identified

Budget –

The lead researcher undertakes to cover the cost of all expenses incurred in these activities
Items include but are not limited to:

- Travel expenses for lead researcher from UK to Uganda
- Travel expenses from ILA office to the communities for research team
- Travel expenses for community leaders and interviewees if required (NB, the community meetings and interviews are to be carried out within the community, so minimal travel requirements are envisaged for these individuals)
- Board and accommodation for research team during the community engagement week
- Provision of light refreshments for the meeting with the community leaders (eg sodas and small snacks)
- Provision of light refreshments for the prospective participants at the one-on-one meetings prior to interviews
- Provision of light refreshments for the participants during interviews
- Provision of light refreshments for the follow up meetings with participants and community leaders to share findings of the revision
- Provision of printed materials for recruitment purposes, and to ensure covid secure measures

Footnote

This community engagement plan has been devised in collaboration with Mr Benson Ocen from I Live Again Uganda, who is conversant with the dynamics of the target communities

APPENDIX 5 – INFORMED CONSENT, ENGLISH VERSION

INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENT

Title of the study: A grounded theory epistemological exploration of wellbeing, set against a context of conflict-affected trauma, based in Uganda

Investigator(s): Helen Harrison, PhD student
Institution(s) University of Gloucestershire, UK, and Gulu University, Uganda

Introduction

This informed consent explains the study to you. After the study has been explained, any questions you may have are answered, and you have decided to participate in the study, you will be asked to sign a consent, which you will be given a copy to keep.

Helen Harrison is a PhD student from the University of Gloucestershire, UK. Before becoming a student she has spent several years working alongside a number of African organisations, including a Gulu-based non-profit organisation called I Live Again Uganda. This research comes out of some training that she has been delivering to those organisations.

The purpose of the study is to explore what wellbeing means to women who have lived experience of trauma caused by conflict, and to use the findings of the research to help improve the relevance of information that is available around the world relating to wellbeing and women.

The research is not being sponsored by any funding body. It is being carried out with the support of 'I Live Again Uganda' (ILA). ILA provide trauma counselling services to individuals and community groups in Gulu, Lamwo and Acholi Quarters. No financial renumeration is taking place. ILA staff will assist with facilitation of meetings, and translation of interviews.

Purpose:

The study seeks to explore what wellbeing means to women who have lived experience of trauma caused by conflict, and are living in the global south.
The findings of this study will help to improve the relevance of information that is available around the world relating to wellbeing for women, and in particular for those who have a background of trauma and are not living in the global north, which is where much of the dominant information is compiled.

Procedures:

Your participation in this study will involve taking part in an interview with the lead researcher and a translator.

Who will participate in the study?

You have been invited to participate in this study because you are female, and have lived experience of conflict-affected trauma. The interview will last for approximately 45 minutes and there will be between 6 and 8 women from your community being interviewed. Only one person will be interviewed at a time, and none of the other women will be present when you are being interviewed, so as to ensure your privacy.

Risks/discomforts:

There is no foreseeable risk of harm or discomfort that will arise from your participation in this study. The only risk or discomfort will be the inconvenience in terms of time spent during the interview.

Benefits:

By participating in this research you will help to ensure that information relating to wellbeing is improved to be more relevant to women who have had similar experiences to you. Your participation will lead to a better understanding of the experiences of women, and will therefore help other women in many parts of the world.
Please note that there is no material benefit from taking part.
All participants will get feedback on findings and progress of the study, and any new information that affects the study participants (including incidental findings) will be made available to you.

Confidentiality:
Your identity will not be revealed to any one as we shall only use codes to identify participants. Information obtained will only be accessible by the research team. Soft copies of the data will be protected by password and hard copy files will be kept under lock and key. Confidential information will only be accessed by the principal investigator.

Alternatives:
You do not have to participate in this study if you are not interested. You will not lose any benefit in case of no participation.

Cost:
There will not be any additional cost incurred as a result of participating in this study. Time compensation of ugx. 5,000 will be provided to you after the interview.

Questions:
If you have any questions related to the study as a research participant, you can contact the principal investigator, Helen Harrison on telephone number 07780 25907 (Uganda phone), or +44 (0) 7966 034 584 (whatsapp), or via email helenharrison@connect.glos.ac.uk

Statement of voluntariness:
Participation in the research study is voluntary and you may join on your own free will. You have a right to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty.
If you have any issues pertaining to your rights and participation in the study, please contact the Chairperson, Gulu University Research Ethics Committee, Dr. Gerald Obai Tel: No., 0772305621; email: lekobai@yahoo.com/lekobai@gmail.com; or the Uganda National Council for Science and Technology, on plot 6 Kimera road, Ntinda, Kampala on Tel 0414705500.

Statement of consent
..... has described to me what is going to be done, the risks, the benefits involved and my rights as a participant in this study. I understand that my decision to participate in this study will not affect me in any way. In the use of this information, my identity will be concealed. I am aware that I may withdraw at anytime. I understand that by signing this form, I do not waive any of my legal rights but merely indicate that I have been informed about the research study in which I am voluntarily agreeing to participate. A copy of this form will be provided to me.

Name ……Signature / Thumbprint of participant……Date ……

Name……..Signature of Witness……Date……

Name……..Signature of interviewer…… ……..Date……

APPENDIX 6 – INFORMED CONSENT, ACHOLI VERSION

Karatac me yeyo pa ngat ma oniang.

Wi lok me kwan/ kwed;Ojenge I kom ngec ki kwed matut malube ki ber bedo, ma dok I kom ajiji me lweny I lobo Uganda.

Lakwed man Aye: Helen Harrison, latin kwan ma i rwom ma malu me PhD I gang kwan Univaciti me Gloucetercire i lobo Olaya, ki gang kwan madit ma malu i Gulu ma kilwongo ni Gulu Univacity.

Nyute

Katac me keto cing eni nyutu tyen lok me kwan man, ki me gonyo lok me kwan man, kace lapeny tye ci lagam bene bi bedo tye, wek i mok tami me bedo i kwan eni, ki bi penyi wek iket cingi me ye, kun bene, i gamu karac man dong boti bene me agwoka.

Helen Harrison latin kwan me gang kwan mamalo me Glouceterchire i lobo Olaya, kum kube ki Gulu univacity ma tye i Gulu kany, ma peya ocako kwan man, en otero mwaka mapol ka tic i lobo del col ki dul mapol ma patpat, I kine en aye dul matiyo labongo magoba me cente i Gulu ma gilwongo ni ILA Uganda, kwed man obino malube ki pwonye ma en obedo kapwonyo dul magi.

Tyen lok me kwan man, tye me niang matut ni mon ma gi okato ki i lweny dok obedo ki ajiji gi niang tyen lok me "Ber bedo"nining? Dok me tic ki ngec man me konyo wilobo bedo kingec I kom Ber bedo ki mon.

Kwed man pe tye ngat mo ma oculu pire, ento ma lube kikony pa ILA Uganda ma gin nywako tam kilwak in kin gang i Gulu, Lamwo, Acoli kwota, dok pe tye Cul mo ma bi time pire. Lutic Pa ILA bi konyo me leno tam i kacoke ducu ki me gonyo leb i kare me peny ki kwed.

Tyen Lok:

Kwan man tye me niang kit ma Ber Bedo, gonye kwede bot mon ma obedo ki ajiji ma lweny okello, ki jo ma tye kabedo i lobo mukene.
Adwogi kwan man bi konyo me kelo aloka-aloka ki ngec kamaleng i wii lobo ducu ma Lube ki Ber Bedo pa mon.makato ne aye bot mon ma okato ki I ajiji me kumalu kama kwed ki kwan man otime iye.

Yoo

Bedo ni I Kwan man obi mito ni ibed I lapeny kacel ki lakwed madit ki lagony leb.

Nga ma bibedo I kin kwan man?

Ki lwongo in me bedo i kwan man pien in itye dako, ki bene i bedo ngat ma okato ki i te kare me ajiji me lweny. Dong peny man bi tero dakika maromo 45, (pyera angwen wiye abic), dok wubi bedo kin mon maromo 6 nyo 8 ma gi bedo i kin gangwu ma gi bi gamo peny man.

Acara /ayela-yela

Pe tye lworo pi acara ki awano nyo ayela-ayela, ma bibino ma lube ki bedo tye ni i kwan man. Lworo matye aye ni bedo agonya twero bedo pe pi cawa ma i bi tero me gamo lapeny.

Magoba;
Bedo tye ni i kwed man bi konyo wek ngec malube ki Ber bedo oyube makato i kin mon ma okato ki i tekare ma cal-cal ki man. Bedoni bi kelo aloka-aloka madit ki niang matut ikom tekare ma mon kato ki iye, ki dong bi konyo mon i wii lobo ma patpat.
Alegi me Niang ni kony mo me jami Amiya calo magoba me bedo tye ni i kwan man pe.
Jo ma tye I kwan man weng bi nongo lagam ma lube ki adwogi me kwed ki kit ma kwan tye kawot kwede, ki ngec manyen ma twero bino i kom jo matye i kom kwan man (macalo tekare i kom kwed) weng ki bi weko bedo tye bot wu.

Mung:
Lok komi pe ki bi nyutu bot ngat mo keken, kit macalo ki bi tiyo ki lanyut me kaka jo ma tye i kwed man, ngec ma ginongo bi bedo twolo bot dul pa lukwed keken, ngec magi ducuki bi gwoko ne i nyonyo pa munu, ki I karatac ma ki pwungu wiye ki kupwulu. Ngec me mung ducu lakwed madit aye bi gwoko ne.

Yoo mukene:
Pe myero i bed i kwan man ka cwinyi pe mito. Pe i bi keng magoba mo kadi pe i bedo i yub man.

Wel:
Pe tye lamed me wel mo malube ki bedo kwan man, obal tic pi cawa aye bi bedo 5,000 ma ki culu i nge peny ducu ka otum.

Lapeny:
Ka itye ki lapeny ma lube ki kwan man macalo ngat ma odyere me bedo i kwed man, Ci i twero goyo cim bot lakwed madit (Helen Harrison i nama cim 0778025907 (cim me Uganda), nyo +44(0)7966034584 (watcap) nyo wok ki i waraga me nyonoyo pa munu i coyo kuman “helenharrison@connect.glos.ac.uk”

Tyen lok me dyere:
bedo i kwed me kwan man pet ye dic mo iye dok itye kitwero me weko ne labongo pwod mo, ka itye ki lok mo malube ki twero ni pi bedo i kwan man, ci kube ki won kom ma loyo lok kom kwed, i gang kwan madit i rwom mamalo Gulu Univacity, jo ma loyo kwed ki woro, Dakta Gerald Obai Nama cim 0772305621 nyo waraga nyonyo pa munu lekobai@yhoo.com nyo lekobai@gmail.com nyo Jo maloyo cayan ki nyonyo i Uganda, polot 6 gudi kimera ma tye Natinda, Kamapala nama cim 0414705500.

Lok me keto cing.
…….kit ma ki pora kwede ngo ma obi time, acara nyo magoba ki twero na me bedo I kwan man. Aniang ni moko tama me bedo I kwan pet ye ki adwogi mo I yo mo keken, tic ki ngec, lok koma ki bi kano ne calo gin me mung, atye ki ngec ni atwero yub man I cawa mo keken, aniang ki keto cinga I karatac man pea bi tic ki twero na I yo mo ento nyutu ni ki niaga malube ki kwed man, ma an adyere me bedo tye iye ni. Cal pa karatac man ki bi mina bene.

Nying……Lanyut/ keto twon cing madit.pa labedo I yub man……
Nino dwe……

Nying…….lanyut pa Caden ……Nino dwe……

Nying ……lanyut pa lami peny…….Nino dwe……..

Translation of the informed consent form was provided by Nokrach Joel and Francis Okot.

APPENDIX 7 – INFORMED CONSENT, ARABIC VERSION

وثيقة الموافقة مع العلم

عنوان الدراسة: نظرية مبنية على الاستكشاف المعرفي للرفاهية، في مقابل سياق الصدمة المتأثرة بالصراع، ومقرها أوغندا

المحققة (الباحثون): هيلين هاريسون ، طالبة دكتوراه
المؤسسة (المؤسسات) جامعة جلوسيسترشاير ، المملكة المتحدة ، وجامعة جولو ، أوغندا

مقدمة
هذه الموافقة المستنيرة تشرح الدراسة لك. بعد شرح الدراسة، و الإجابة على كل أسئلتك، وقررت المشاركة في الدراسة، سيُطلب منك التوقيع على الموافقة، وسيتم إعطاؤك نسخة للاحتفاظ بها.

هيلين هاريسون طالبة دكتوراه من جامعة جلوسيسترشاير بالمملكة المتحدة. قبل أن تصبح طالبة ، أمضت عدة سنوات في العمل جنبًا إلى جنب مع عدد من المنظمات الأفريقية ، بما في ذلك منظمة غير ربحية مقرها غولو تسمى أنا أعيش مرة أخرى في أوغندا I Live Again Uganda. يأتي هذا البحث من بعض التدريبات التي كانت تقدمها لتلك المنظمات.

الغرض من الدراسة هو استكشاف ما تعنيه الرفاهية للنساء اللواتي عشن تجربة الصدمة الناجمة عن الصراع، واستخدام نتائج البحث للمساعدة في تحسين ملاءمة المعلومات المتوفرة حول العالم فيما يتعلق بالرفاهية والمرأة.

لا تتم رعاية البحث من قبل أي هيئة تمويل. يتم تنفيذه بدعم من منظمة "أنا أعيش مرة أخرى في أوغندا" (ILA). تقدم ILA خدمات استشارية للأفراد وفئات المجتمع المحلي المصابين بصدمات في (غولو) Gulu و (لامو) Lamwo و (أركان أتشولي) Acholi Quarters. لا يوجد سداد مالي جاري. سيساعد موظفو ILA في تسهيل الاجتماعات وترجمة المقابلات.

الهدف:
تسعى الدراسة إلى استكشاف معنى الرفاهية للنساء اللواتي عشن تجربة الصدمات الناجمة عن الصراع، ويعشن في جنوب الكرة الأرضية. ستساعد نتائج هذه الدراسة على تحسين ملاءمة المعلومات المتوفرة حول العالم والمتعلقة برفاهية النساء، وخاصة أولئك الذين لديهم خلفية من الصدمات ولا يعيشون في شمال العالم، حيث يوجد الكثير من المعلومات السائدة التى تم جمعها.

الإجراءات:
ستشمل مشاركتك في هذه الدراسة, المشاركة في مقابلة مع الباحث الرئيسي ومترجم.

من سيشارك في الدراسة؟
لقد تمت دعوتك للمشاركة في هذه الدراسة لأنك أنثى، ولديك تجربة معيشية من الصدمات المتأثرة بالنزاع. ستستغرق المقابلة حوالي 45 دقيقة وستتم مقابلة ما بين 6 و 8 نساء من مجتمعك. ستتم مقابلة شخص واحد فقط في كل مرة، ولن تحضر أي امرأة أخرى عند إجراء المقابلة، وذلك لضمان خصوصيتك.

المخاطر / المضايقات:
لا توجد مخاطر متوقعة للضرر أو الانزعاج الذي سينشأ عن مشاركتك في هذه الدراسة. سيكون الخطر أو الانزعاج الوحيد هو الإزعاج من حيث الوقت المطلوب لإجراء المقابلة.

الفوائد:

من خلال المشاركة في هذا البحث، ستساعد مشاركتك في ضمان تحسين المعلومات المتعلقة بالرفاهية لتكون أكثر صلة بالنساء اللواتي مررن بتجارب مماثلة لك. ستؤدي مشاركتك إلى فهم أفضل لتجارب النساء ، وبالتالي ستساعد النساء الأخريات في أجزاء كثيرة من العالم.
يرجى ملاحظة أنه لا توجد فائدة مادية من المشاركة.
سيحصل جميع المشاركين على ملاحظات حول النتائج وتقدم الدراسة ، وسيتم توفير أي معلومات جديدة تؤثر على المشاركين في الدراسة (بما في ذلك النتائج العرضية) لك.

السرية:
لن يتم الكشف عن هويتك لأي شخص حيث سنستخدم الرموز فقط لتحديد هوية المشاركين. لن يتمكن فريق البحث من الوصول إلى المعلومات التي تم الحصول عليها. ستتم حماية النسخ الإلكترونية من البيانات بكلمة مرور وسيتم الاحتفاظ بملفات النسخ المطبوعة تحت القفل والمفتاح. سيتم الوصول إلى المعلومات السرية فقط من قبل المحقق الرئيسي.

البدائل:
لا يتعين عليك المشاركة في هذه الدراسة إذا لم تكوني مهتمة. لن تفقدي أي فائدة في حالة عدم المشاركة.

التكلفة:
لن تكون هناك أي تكلفة إضافية يتم تكبدها نتيجة المشاركة في هذه الدراسة. تعويض الوقت 5000 ugx. بعد المقابلة.

أسئلة:
إذا كان لديك أي أسئلة تتعلق بالدراسة كمشاركة في البحث ، يمكنك الاتصال بالباحث الرئيسي ، هيلين هاريسون على رقم الهاتف 0778025907 (هاتف أوغندا) ، أو 7966034584 (0) 44+ (whatsapp) ، أو عبر البريد الإلكتروني helenharrison @ connect.glos.ac.uk

بيان المتطوعين:
المشاركة في الدراسة البحثية تطوعية ويمكنك الانضمام بمحض إرادتك. لديك الحق في الانسحاب من الدراسة في أي وقت دون عقوبة. إذا كانت لديك أية مشكلات تتعلق بحقوقك ومشاركتك في الدراسة ، فيرجى الاتصال برئيس لجنة أخلاقيات البحث بجامعة جولو ، الدكتور جيرالد أوباي ، رقم الهاتف: 0772305621 ؛ البريد الإلكتروني: lekobai @ yahoo.com / lekobai @ gmail.com ؛ أو المجلس الوطني الأوغندي للعلوم والتكنولوجيا:

Plot 6, Kimera road, Ntinda, Kampala
رقم الهاتف 0414705500

بيان الموافقة

..... وصف لي ما الذي سيتم القيام به, والمخاطر والفوائد التي ينطوي عليها, وحقوقي كمشاركة في هذة الدراسة. أفهم أن قراري بالمشاركة في هذه الدراسة لن يؤثر علي بأي شكل من الأشكال. عند استخدام هذه المعلومات ، سيتم إخفاء هويتي. أدرك أنه يمكنني الانسحاب في أي وقت. أفهم أنه من خلال التوقيع على هذا النموذج، فأنا لا أتنازل عن أي من حقوقي القانونية ولكن فقط أشير إلى أنني قد تم إبلاغي بالدراسة البحثية التي أوافق على المشاركة فيها تطوعا. سيتم توفير نسخة من هذا النموذج لي.

الاسم ..... توقيع / بصمة الإبهام للمشتركة ..... بتاريخ .....

الاسم ..... توقيع الشاهد ..... بتاريخ .....

الاسم ..... توقيع المحاور ..... بتاريخ .....

Translation of the informed consent form was provided by Ahmed El-Halibi.

Appendix 8

Risk Assessment for overseas travel relating to PhD data collection

Participant: Helen Harrison

Participating Universities: University of Gloucestershire and University of Gulu

): 1 = Rare, 2 = Unlikely, 3 = Moderate, 4 = Likely, 5 = Very Likely…….Risk Category (RC): 1 = Low, 2 = Minor, 3 = Significant, 4 = Seve

Risk Rating (Risk Likelihood x Risk Category): 1 - 3 = Very Low, 4 - 8 = Low, 9 - 14 = Medium, 15 - 19 = High, 20 - 25 = Very High

Helen Harrison has visited Uganda many times before (in excess of 25 times). On each occasion she has spent at least a portion of the visit in Kampala,

ITEM	ACTIVITY	RISKS	POSSIBLE CONSEQUENCES	INITIAL RISK RATING	PLANNED PRECAUTIONS	RL	RC	RISK SCORE	RISK RATING

1	General	All risks	Personal injury of any type	Medium	Proper planning. Aware of and heed to Foreign Office travel advice. No deviations from planned activities. Full safety briefings with local facilitators including ensure all aware of, and have access to, emergency plan. Adequate cash reserves. E-copies of passport and tickets as back-up for paper version. Passport kept on person for the occassions when it is physically needed as ID, and in a locked safe at the accommodation when not required. Travel insurance in place. First aid kit carried, and knowledge of local medical facilities, including phone numbers. Proper clothing and footwear. Sun/insect protection. Mobile phones with local sim cards plus list of emergency phone numbers. No photos taken without first seeking permission. Ensure awareness of local traffic conditions. Take extra care when on streets and crossing roads/tracks. Take minimal valuables. Be prepared to lose items. Respect local laws and customs.	2	4	8	Low
	GENERAL								
2	General activities on trip	Loss or theft of personal property	loss of personal possessions, upset	Medium	Minimum of valuables brought into country. Appropriate hand luggage. Ensure minimal visibility of any item of value, including in accommodation. No valuable items to be left on display at any time. Insurance of personal items. Portable back up disc for daily back up of all data gathered	2	2	4	Low
3	General activities on trip	Harassment	stress, emotional issues	Medium	Understanding of and respect for local laws and customs. Appropriate clothing and footwear to be worn that is culturally respectful and sensitive.	2	3	6	Low
4	General activities on trip	Mild-moderate injury /illness	personal injury, stress, emotional issues, possible disruption to programme delivery	Medium	First aid kits in place. Travel insurance (including repatriation) in place. Medical/needle packs. Correct vaccinations prior to the trip. Sunhats & sunblock & drinking water to be fully available at all times.	2	2	4	Low

5	General activities on trip	Severe injury/illness or death	significant medical care required, disruption to programme delivery, stress, emotional issues	Medium	UK emergency contact in place. Assess medical facilities ahead of time re access, provision, contact numbers etc. Emergency plan in place. Medical packs include syterile syringe sets. Assess provision of air ambulance for remote areas. Medical repatriation in place through travel insurance as appropriate.	1	5	5	Low
6	Illness via locals	transmission of infection or Illness via locals	infection Illness,	Medium	No personal contact other than hand-shakes. Attention to personal hygiene. No contact with blood or bodily fluids. Follow universal blood and body-fluid precautions ie barrier precautions when dealing with any body fluids, hands and other skin surfaces washed immediately if contaminated, good disposal of contaminated first aid equipment; all cuts and abrasions immediately covered with suitable dressing.	2	4	8	Low
7	Internal crises locally	Public disorder	Personal injury, stress	Medium	Safe in accommodation Evacuation plan in place. checks FCO website daily regarding any possible cause of concern. Also liaise with insurance and airline/ Diversity Travel in the case of alternative travel arrangements being required. Phone local British Embassy in the event of any troubles, or rumours of troubles Taking advice from local contacts. Review programme to avoid any potentially dangerous locations based on current FCO advice	2	4	8	Low
8	Evacuation/Repatriation	Injury, Robbery, Assault, Panic	Personal injury, stress	Medium	Evacuation plan in place. Researcher and local facilitator have local embassy number stored in own phone. Access contact at British Embassy to assist with evacuation procedure. Travel Insurance to accommodate.	2	4	8	Low
	TRAVEL								

9	Travel within **Uganda**	Illness, accidents, assault, kidnap, robbery	Personal injury, stress	Medium	Procedural checks on travel company prior to trip, to ensure all vehicles are fully roadworthy, MOT'd, insured, and adhere to all local legal requirements. Also that drivers have full driving licence. Seatbelts to be worn where available. Only 1 person per seat, no standing, driver to drive at safe speed limit. Vaccinations. Access to medical Staff. Always be aware of roads/traffic. Researcher experienced in **Uganda** and these trips. Emergency response plan in place	2	4	8	Low
10	Broken down vehicle	Passengers being stranded by broken down vehicle	Vulnerable position at side of road, unable to reach destination on time; disruption to programme	Medium	Ensure passengers are in a safe place, and if necessary move away from vehicle to an agreed safe place. Drivers have full breakdown / insurance coverage. Make use of local knowledge of drivers to identify safe location in which to wait. Telephone to call for assistance. Driver from recognised transport company arranges for replacement vehicle.	2	3	6	Low
11	Travel to / from Uganda	Being stranded in **Uganda** due to airline failure, flight cancellation or volcanic ash cloud	extra costs due to prolonged stay	Medium	Full procedure from **travel agent** to be obtained prior to travel; emergency funds available through international credit card	1	4	4	Low
	ACCOMMODATION								
12	Fire, smoke	Danger from fire, smoke etc.	Injury, death	Medium	Identify fire evacuation route and fire prevention arrangements on arrival. Only choose accommodation that adheres adequately to fire prevention procedures and has easy evacuation route	1	5	5	Low
13	Eating arrangements	Food poisoning, food allergies	Mild to severe illness	Medium	Kitchens inspected where possible. Proper cooking arrangements in place. No salads. No ice cubes. Safe drinking water always available inc for brushing teeth. Avoid nail-biting.	2	4	8	Low

14	Sleeping arrangements	Assault, insects, heat, theft	Personal injury, discomfort, loss of possessions	Medium	Only use rooms that can be locked from inside. Security guards. Rooms locked when out of room. Don't leave personal possessions on display	2	3	6	Low
15	theft of personal belongings	theft of personal belongings from room	emotional stress, loss of valuable documents	medium	Keep passport on person or locked in a safe. Store any items of possible value in locked suitcase during day, if not being taken to the field.	2	3	6	low
	AROUND THE PROJECT AREA								
16	Harrassment by locals	Females being harrassed	emotional issues, stress	Medium	Wear non-provocative clothing. Behave in a culturally sensitive way, and liaise with local facilitators to ensure achieving this at all times.	2	3	6	Low
17	Buying food locally	Sickness & diahorrea	personal illness / injury, emo	Medium	Advise not to eat anything bought on the streets. Always have own drinking water	2	2	4	Low
18	Movement in local community	Mugged or attacked	Personal illness / injury, emo	Medium	All movement around community to be undertaken in daylight hours. Until well-known by local community, researcher to be accompanied by local facilitator, to ensure not get lost or attacked. Keep backpack closed, and properly worn so less tempting to snatch.	2	4	8	Low
	COVID RELATED RISKS								
19	Face to face meetings and interviews	Transmission of coronavirus	contract coronavirus, medical care required, interruption of programme, potential to infect others through further transmission of the virus	Medium	Fully vaccinated with Government approved CV-19 vaccine. Wearing of facemask when moving around, and when in close proximity with others. All meetings to be outside where possible, or in well-ventilated rooms. Maintain 1m+ social distancing. Regular hand sanitising, using soap and water, plus antiviral spray. Wipe down surfaces before and after use. Demonstrate good hygiene and Covid secure practices. Avoid handshaking and other body-to-body touching. Use of lateral flow tests to determine coronavirus status as appropriate.Self-isolation if become infected	2	3	6	Low

20	Travelling during pandemic	Transmission of coronavirus	contract coronavirus, medical care required, interruption of programme, potential to infect others through further transmission of the virus	Medium	wearing of facemask at all times when travelling. Where possible avoid travelling in close proximity with others. Where possible maintain good ventilation during travel. Regular use of antiviral hand sanitiser and wiping down surfaces. Follow FCO guidelines regarding safety to travel. PCR and lateral flow tests to confirm coronavirus status as required.	2	3	6	Low
21	Self-isolation due to contracting the virus	Lack of access to food and drink as unable to go shopping	illness exacerbated through inadequate nutritional input, dehydration due to inadequate oral fluid intake	Medium	always have some emergency rations of non-perishable food items. Always have spare bottle of water. Phone numbers of local facilitator and other trusted local contacts in phone who are able to do shopping and leave outside accommodation door.	2	2	4	Low
22	Change in status of national border openings due to change in perceived risk levels from international visitors	Borders close and international flights cancelled	requirement to get emergency flight back to UK, stranded in Uganda with financial implications	Medium	full travel insurance, including repatriation due to Covid. Daily check of FCO website regarding advice about changes to border status. Flights booked through ABTA / ATOL protected travel agent to enable changes to be made. Local trusted Uganda friends who are able to provide accommodation as required.	3	2	6	Low

APPENDIX 9 – 'STICKY NOTES' INTERVIEW IMAGES

Images showing the responses gathered during the second stage of interviews. This stage of interviews was the first two group interviews, both held at Acholi Quarters.

The images show an amalgamation of the responses of both groups. The colours of the notes were chosen at random, and therefore the colours in one image have no relationship to notes of the same colour in another image.

The first image shows the attributes of unliveableness named by the participants. This was used as a lead into a consideration of what constituted liveableness on arrival at the safe space (image 2) and what constitutes liveableness now (image 3). Following this the discussion moved on to what constitutes wellbeing (image 4), and finally a conversation regarding the relationship between wellbeing and liveableness (image 5).

Image 1: Unliveableness.

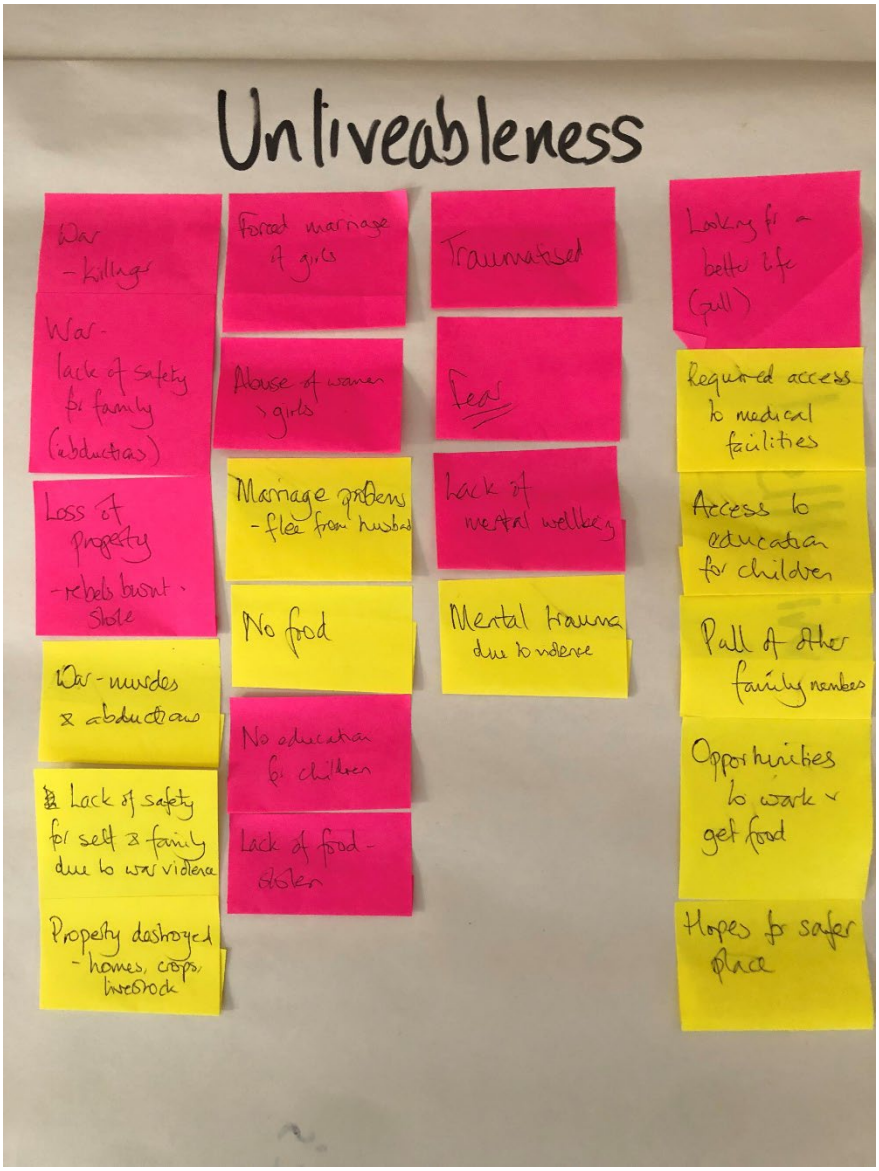


Image 2: Liveableness Then

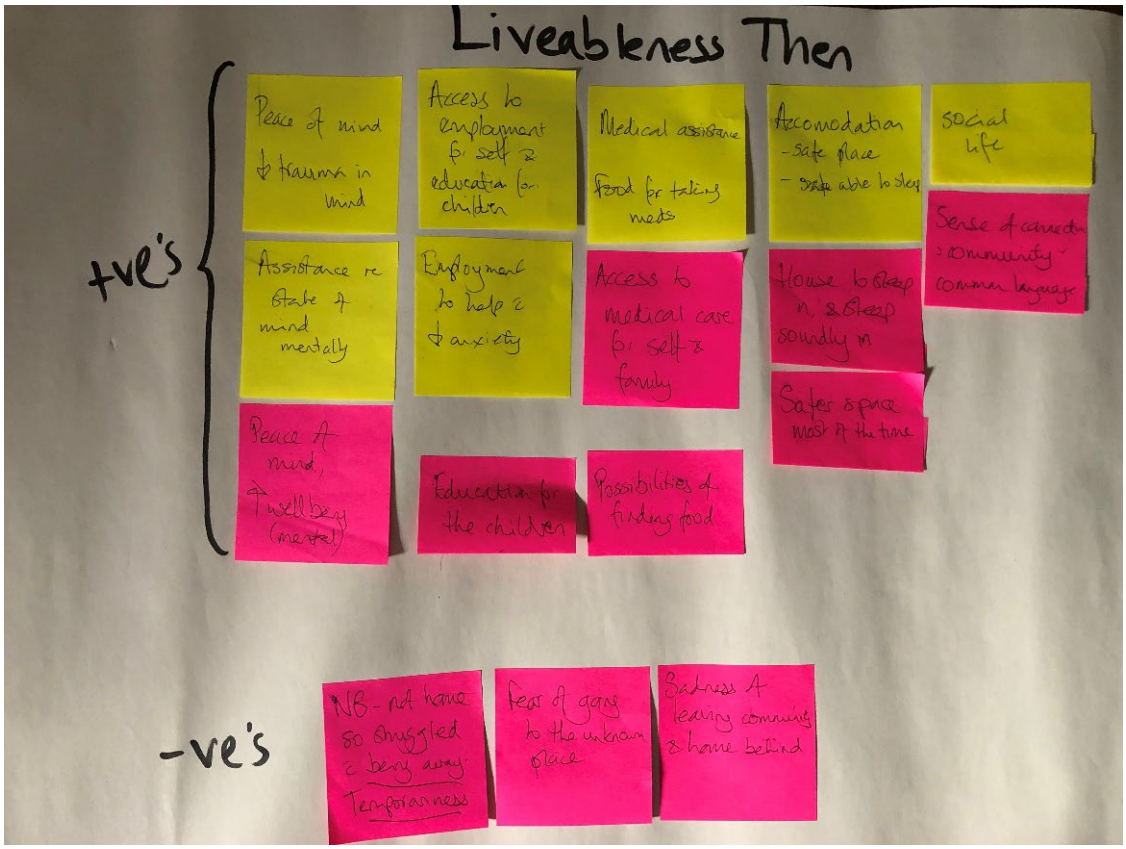


Image 3: Liveableness Now

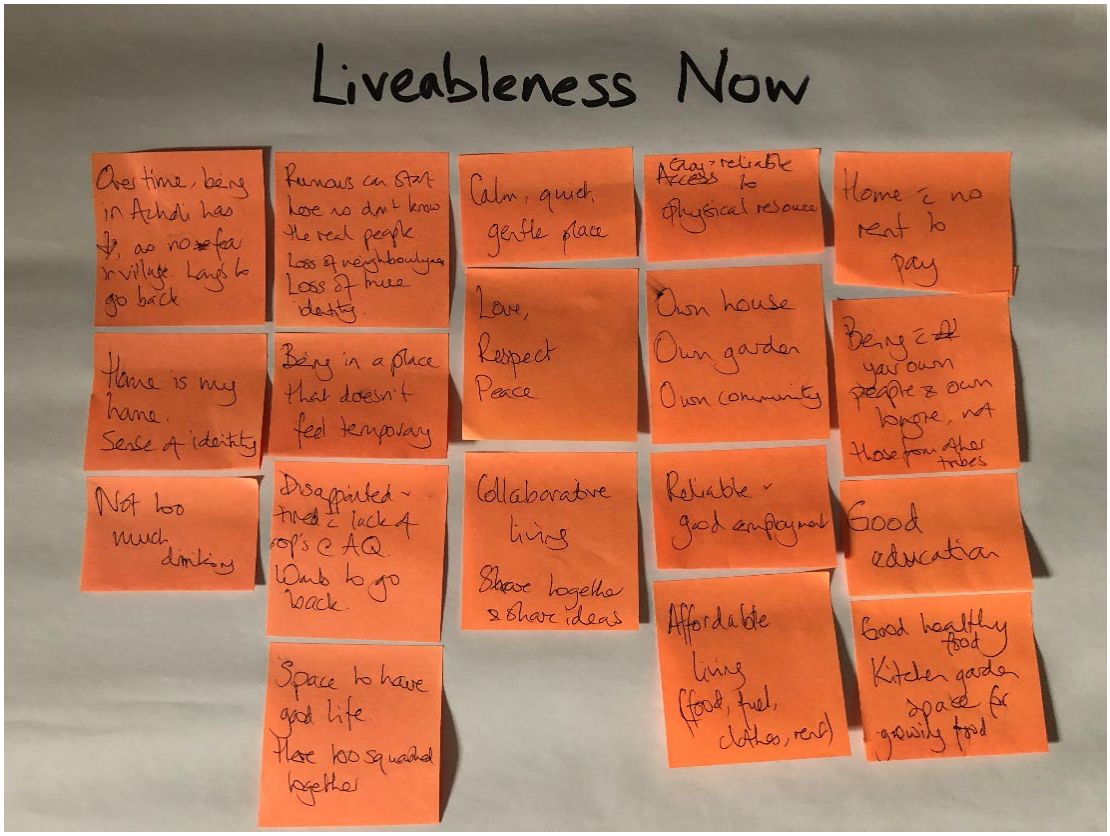


Image 4: Wellbeing

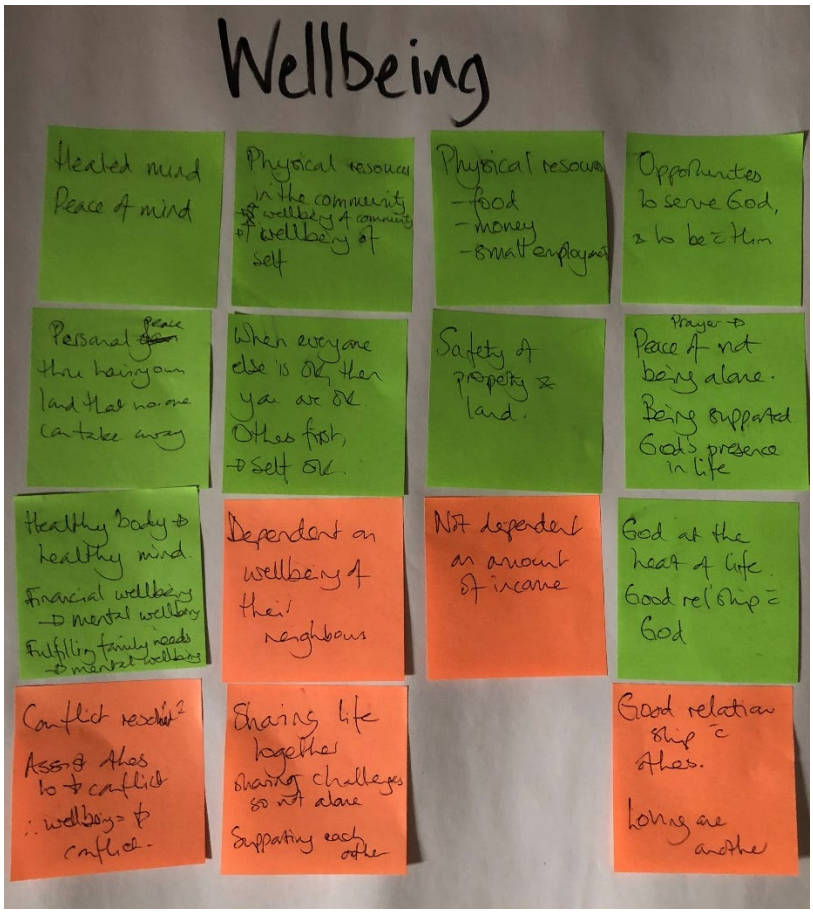
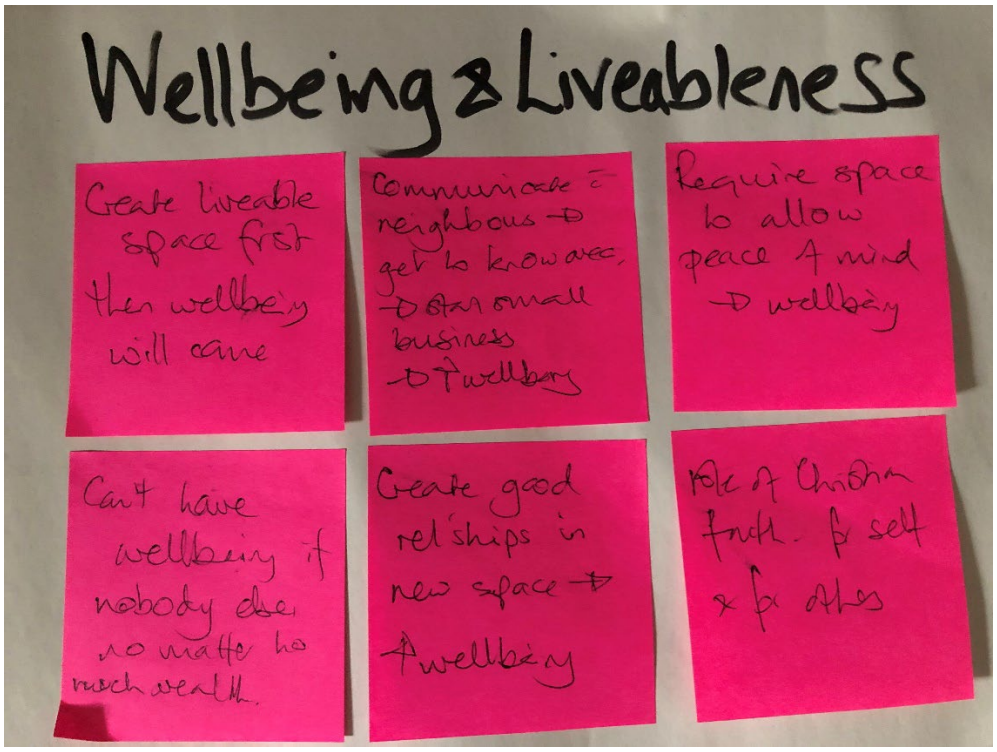


Image 5: Liveableness and Wellbeing



APPENDIX 10 – THE EMPOWER PROGRAMME – AN OUTLINE

Adapted from: 'Trauma rehabilitation for war-affected persons in northern Uganda: A pilot evaluation of the EMPOWER programme'

Sonderegger, R., Rombouts, S., Ocen, B. and McKeever, R.S. (2011), Trauma rehabilitation for war-affected persons in northern Uganda: A pilot evaluation of the EMPOWER programme. *British Journal of Clinical Psychology*, 50: 234-249. https://doi-org.glos.idm.oclc.org/10.1348/014466510X511637

The EMPOWER programme (Sonderegger, 2006) was designed as a universal intervention for war-affected persons and was developed by experienced clinical psychologists over a 1-year period with local community members – using an action research model. The programme combined an evidence-based CBT framework, in conjunction with culturally sensitive and culturally relevant knowledge and activities. The aim of the programme is to help war-affected persons overcome their traumatic experiences and acquire the skills needed to deal with ongoing and future stresses. The programme draws upon the biopsychosocial model of psychological well-being and consists of thirteen 2-hour sessions divided into two distinct phases. The first phase of the programme focuses on enhancing emotional resiliency. This phase includes nine sessions that cover topics such as: setting rules for group participation; trust building; identifying challenges; goal setting; exploring the psycho-physiological basis for stress and trauma; learning how to identify and control physical responses to stress and trauma; relaxation techniques; developing protective behaviours; and challenging negative thoughts. As part of the treatment process, participants were required at a later stage in the programme to disclose traumatic events one-on-one with the facilitator. Each facilitator would then identify an appropriate traumatic event for group disclosure at a suitable time.

The second phase of the programme is concerned with reconciliation. The programme was developed to support all community members to better understand their personal challenges and introduce concepts of forgiveness to promote peace and reconciliation. Reconciliation, as described to participants, is about letting go of past hurts, bitterness, and anger towards self or others, and being able to get on with life. Participants are taught that forgiveness helps to heal emotional pain on the inside, but it never excuses people for what they have done and does not, in itself, make bad memories go away. Whilst the programme does not explicitly encourage participants to reconcile with the rebels or government soldiers, nor does it enter into political debates about restitution or restoration, by working towards forgiveness participants are able to strive to reconcile their experiences of war with their new goals of recovery.

The administration of the EMPOWER programme incorporates group-based discussions, story-telling, physical activities, and games to accompany the printed treatment manual transcribed in the local Acholi language. Sessions are carried out on a daily basis within the location that the participants live, over a period of three weeks. The participants tend to sit in a large circle for the promotion of safety and equality. Sessions typically commence with a game, song, meal, prayer, or other culturally relevant activity designed to make participants feel comfortable and enhance group cohesion. Each session lasted for approximately 2 hours.