LIVELIHOODS OF FEMALE-HEADED HOUSEHOLDS IN NAMUWONGO SLUM, KAMPALA UGANDA.
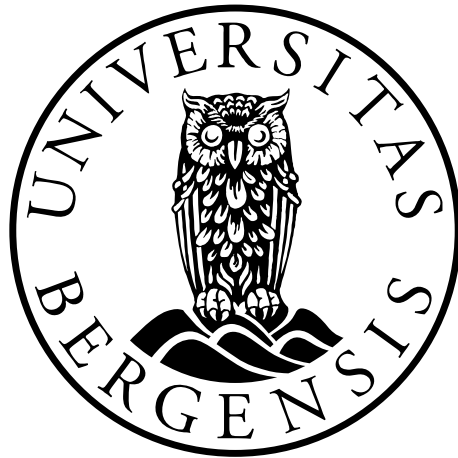
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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my family, especially my late grandmother Kawanguzi Aida who instilled me the values of patience and perseverance.

Acknowledgement.

Abstract

This study focuses on the livelihoods of female-headed households (FHHs) in Namuwongo slum in Kampala Uganda. The trajectory of FHHs to Namuwongo slum, their livelihood challenges, and their livelihood strategies for survival are explored. Data material was collected through qualitative methods, such as in–depth interviews and observations. The Sustainable Livelihood Approach and Empowerment were adopted as theoretical frameworks for analysis. There are a number of reasons as to why some slum households are female headed. These reasons include widowhood and separation and divorce. Extreme poverty appears is a common feature among FHHs. Despite low levels of education and lack of regular employment, leaving the FHHs vulnerable; this study demonstrates that their ability to improvise alternatives for their survival is surprisingly strong. FHHs both run informal business and involve themselves in casual work to create income for their households. FHHs also use human capital in the form of family labor as a way of securing financial capital. Some also involve children in income-generating activities as a livelihood strategy. Social capital among the FHHs is significant because they share information, ideas, and livelihood resources to build their assets and find solutions to their problems. Neighbours and relatives are also used as a strategy to lessen financial constraints. The female heads of households are members of local savings groups and projects, such as the sisterhood project that offer financial assistance to their households. These projects also aid them in sending their children to school. The results of this study indicate that while FHHs manage to get by, they face some challenges. These include limited resources, lack of decent housing and infrastructure, and health risks entailed in living in the slum, such as lack of enough clean and piped water, poor drainage and flooding after heavy rainfalls.

ACRONYMS

DFID	Department for International Development
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
FHHs	Female-headed households
FHoHs	Female heads of households
HIV/AIDS	Human immunodeficiency virus infection and acquired immune deficiency syndrome
IAP	Inappropriate Adaptive Preferences
KCCA	Kampala Capital City Authority
LC	Local council
LRA	Lord's Resistance Army
MHHs	Male-headed households
MHoHs	Male heads of households
NGO	Non Government Organisation
NSD	Norwegian Social Science Data Services
SLA	Sustainable livelihood approach
UBOS	Uganda Bureau of Statistics
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
OHS	October Health Survery
WHO	World Health Organisation

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

"At the present time, we are experiencing a phenomenon known as the "feminisation of poverty", which has been accentuated, amongst other things, by the increase in separation and divorce. Added to the tradition of leaving responsibilities for children to the mother, this situation has given rise to an increasing incidence of lone parent families headed by women whose vulnerability, for all their members, is elevated" Chant (2003, p. 2).

1.1 Introduction

This research study explored the livelihoods of female-headed households (FHHs) in the Namuwongo slum of Kampala, the capital city of Uganda.

Households vary contextually and so does their headship. According to Budlender (2003), household headship in Africa is mostly affiliated to men. However, female-headed households (FHHs) are now becoming more pronounced and a reality. In a study by Varley (1996), it is put forward that the phenomenon of female headship of households can no longer be overlooked. It is very much a reality that is frequently discussed by scholars and development workers, especially in relation to housing and poverty issues (ibid).

FHHs are seen as a result of male migration, death of male partners, conflicts, and separation and divorce, among other reasons (Chant, 1997; Horrell & Krishnan, 2007; O'laughlin, 1998). According to Chant (2003) and Horrell and Krishnan (2007), there are two main forms of FHHs, de jure and de facto, which addresses reasons for why households became female-headed. Chant (2003) also claims that we can see a change globally with regard to acceptable forms of family headships, eluding the norm of a man as the customary gender to head a household.

Uganda is not an exception to this trend of changing forms of family headships. According to the Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS, 2010), FHHs in Uganda increased from 27 per cent to 30 per cent in four years (between 2005 and 2010). As women are

now increasingly heading households, we may also expect changes in gender norms and expectations.

FHHs mean that women are the main household providers, regardless of the presence of a male partner. In a study by Ntozi and Zirimenya (1999), it was revealed that in the traditional Ugandan society, men are seen as heads of households and the main breadwinners. Men being the decision makers of the houshold, women were seen as subordinate. Due to various factors, such as divorce and widowhood, family structures are changing and women are heading households in Uganda, particularly in urban slum areas. With the number of women and children living in the slums in Uganda, like in the Namuwongo slum in Kampala, growing (Mann 2014), the question is how they can survive and make a living under such poor conditions.

In order to analyze the findings of this study, the sustainable livelihood approach (SLA) and the theory of empowerment were employed for the understanding of the livelihoods of female-headed households in Namuwongo slum. The sustainable livelihood approach is very dynamic because of its focus on understanding the livelihoods of persons by detailing factors such as their assets, supporting institutions and elaborates on conditions in their contexts that may seem to affect their livelihoods. Additionally, the empowerment approach was used to analyze the factors that empower and/or disempower women (respondents) who head households in Namuwongo slum and how available resources are used as survival strategies for their households and their livelihoods.

1.1.1 Problem statement

This study seeks to examine how these FHHs survive especially in the context of a slum in Kampala[1]city. The evidence given by UBOS (2010) about the increase in the number of FHHs in Uganda and the low levels of education among women (heads of households)

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[1] Kampala is the capital city of Uganda "from a small Kibuga (Buganda Kingdom headquarters) and a township established for administrative purposes. The city has expanded from 170 acres gazetted in 1902, to 3,200 acres by 1929 and 195 sq km by 1968" cited by Norstrand, Development et al. 1994 in (Lwasa).
Kibuga is a town and or city in Luganda.

affecting their employment status is a central premise for this study. According to UBOS (2010, p. 16), "the proportion of females with no formal education (24%) is more than double that of males (10%)". With these low levels of education, women are bound to face exclusion in the formal employment sector. This is a very significant issue and, therefore, important to look at within the context of FHHs.

According to A. Ellis, Manuel, and Blackden (2005), women in Uganda are seemingly placed in economically, socially and culturally inferior positions as compared to men. The study also revealed that women lack access to resources and knowledge of their rights to resources such as land that could enhance their socio-economic growth and development (ibid). Women in Uganda seem to have low bargaining power with regard to productive roles which are domesticated and unpaid such as looking after the household - cooking and child-rearing. A. Ellis et al. (2005) remark that women in Uganda make up 80 per cent of unpaid workers. According to Appleton (1996), it is not only the lack of access to land and other assets that may lead to poverty among FHHs but also the inaccessibility to education among girls and women that makes women vulnerable in society. As a result of less education and the lack of access to resources, FHHs are bound to face more difficulties in their daily lives, especially with the absence of a male contributor.

Living in a slum exposes one to a state of vulnerability. Therefore, FHHs in urban slums may actually experience more or less risky livelihoods. According to Tumwebaze, Orach, Niwagaba, Luthi, and Mosler (2013), the standard of living in urban slums of Kampala is poor, with lack of quality basic social services to the inhabitants. This concern with vulnerability brings me to question how FHHs manage to survive in their daily lives especially with mounting expenses and the lack of support from a male partner. The triple burden of having to generate an income, of childcare and also look after the entire household seems to rest on one person who is the female head of household (FHoH). This burden sometimes exerts a lot of pressure that even two people such as husband and wife

may find difficult to handle satisfactorily. It is important, therefore, to examine how a woman, as the head of a household, meets these livelihood needs on her own.

1.1.2 Purpose of the study

Most studies on FHHs are quantitative and depict the households as being faced with extreme poverty. However, such studies fail to define and describe the poverty faced by FHHs in depth, which may result in missing out on important aspects of the livelihoods of these households. To fill this gap, this study has adopted a qualitative approach to investigate the problem of livelihoods of FHHs. According to Kabeer (1994), those who are faced with problems in their everyday lives can best tell us about their experiences in their context. Therefore, this study has used the qualitative method to investigate and create knowledge about the livelihoods of FHHs in the slum of Namuwongo from their own perspective and lived experiences.

1.1.3 Motivation for the study

Studies have been done concerning livelihoods of FHHs but none to date has really looked at the situation of FHHs in the slum of Namuwongo in Uganda. Namuwongo is located in central Uganda in Kampala city. It was chosen as the area for my research because at the time of research, it was one of the most highly-congested slums in Uganda. This study found that the population of Namuwongo is comprised of people from different areas in and around Uganda. Sims (2012) says it is mostly women and children from areas that were affected by the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) war in northern Uganda and immigrants from rural areas of Uganda in search of a better life in the city that reside in Namuwongo.

Having lived in Kampala since childhood, I used to visit the Namuwongo slum on market days with my aunt to check out the many activities that were going on such as the performance by magicians and musicians that seemed interesting to me as a child. During these visits, it struck me how life in a slum seemed very difficult.

I was, therefore, inspired to carry out a study on the livelihoods of female-headed households in the slum of Namuwongo. The area also had a large potential when it came

to providing information for this study.

1.1.4 Brief profile on female-headed households in Uganda

There is limited literature about FHHs in Uganda. However, a 2010 household survey revealed that FHHs have greatly increased in Uganda (UBOS, 2010). Furthermore, according to UBOS (2010), there was an increase in the proportion of female-headed households in both rural (from 26 per cent to 29 per cent) and urban areas (from 29 per cent to 35 per cent) in 2009-10 as compared to 2005-06. However, some regions have higher percentages of FHHs than others. For example, the western region has the highest increase in percentage of up to 31 per cent unlike the eastern, which has an increase of 28 per cent. The central region seemed to not have had a change in its percentage (ibid). Overall, the percentage of FHHs in Uganda has increased over time.

1.2 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

1.2.1 Uganda-country profile

Uganda is located in East Africa and is ideally referred to as the pearl of Africa mostly because of its scenic nature. Uganda is landlocked and shares borders with Kenya to the east, Tanzania and Rwanda to the south, Democratic Republic of Congo to the west and South Sudan to the north. Dimanin (2012) puts forth that Uganda is divided into four administrative regions; that is the northern, central, eastern and western regions. The country has got 112 districts with Kampala district located in the central region as the capital city (ibid). The UBOS (2014) puts the population of Uganda at 34.9 million, with six million people living in urban areas. The report says that out of all the 6, 426, 013 people living in urban areas, 1.5 million people are living in Kampala city.

Uganda is ethnically diverse and results by UBOS (2002) reveal that its population comprises 59 ethnic groups. The most popular ethnic groups are the Baganda in the central region, Banyankore in the western region, Basoga and Iteso in the eastern region and Langi and Acholi in the northern region (ibid). There are various religions practised in Uganda. However, Christianity dominates under denominations of Catholic, Anglican/Protestant, Orthodox, Seventh Day Adventist, and Pentecostal. Islam is also practised in Uganda, among other smaller religious entities (UBOS, 2002).

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1.2.2 Brief political history of Uganda

Uganda was under British colonial rule until 1962 when it gained independence. Since gaining independence, the country has gone through a series of events and conflicts such as the dictatorial rule of Idi Amin from 1971-1979. The conflict in the northern region of Uganda lasted for about 20 years until 2006 led by the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) under the command of rebel leader Joseph Kony (Dimanin, 2012). The country has since gained better political climate under the regime of the current president Yoweri Kaguta Museveni.

1.2.3 The growth of slums in Uganda

Uganda has experienced population growth over the years. According to Mukwaya, Bamutaze, Mugarura, and Benson (2011), the population curve of Uganda has not slowed down since 1948, with the growth rate of urban population being thirty times more than that of the rural areas. In addition, in a report by UBOS (2002), it was stated that out of all the urban areas in Uganda, Kampala absorbed most of the population at 40 per cent. The increase in urbanization in Kampala is a result of many factors: the economic possibilities and industrialization in the city, high fertility rates and rural-urban migration, among others (ibid). According to Mukiibi (2012, October), because of the increased population in Uganda and urbanization, some people end up settling in the outskirts and peri-urban areas. These areas are usually unplanned and lack access to basic services and give rise to slums (ibid). UBOS (2014) reveals that Kampala has the highest population of all urban centers in Uganda. In addition,Tumwebaze et al. (2013) cite that most of the urban population in Kampala resides in slums which are characterized as low-lying areas and formerly swamps that are usually at risk of flooding when there are heavy rains.

1.2.4 Presentation of the study area

Namuwongo is a slum area, which is located in Kampala, Uganda's capital city. It is administratively located in Bukasa parish and Makindye division. Namuwongo has village zones of Namuwongo A, Namuwongo B, Soweto, Kasanvu, Kanyogoga, Yoka and Tibaleka. Namuwongo slum originated in the late 1970s and the early 1980s when diverse people from different cultures, countries and religions began to reside in it (Mann, 2014). The residents include people from northern Uganda who fled during the

LRA conflict that left so many homeless. Refugees of other armed conflicts from surrounding countries such as Congo and South Sudan also reside in the slum. The estimated population is about 15,000 people (Mann, 2014). Namuwongo is also close to some of the industries in Kampala and the Ugandan railway network passes through it. Much as Namuwongo has people from different ethnic tribes, the language most commonly used is Luganda.

Namuwongo slum is characterized by poor social services such as lack of water, poor waste disposal and management, poor housing, lack of good hospitals, good schools and good security. In addition, Namuwongo slum also experiences outbreaks of diseases such as cholera and a high crime rate; making the slum a place of hardships for one to live in[2].

1.3 Definition of key term: household

According to UBOS (2014 p. 13), a household is *"a group of persons who normally LIVE and EAT together."* In this study, a household is understood as a group of people living together or even far way from each other. When the head of the household and/or breadwinner is a female, it is called an FHH.. In this study, women run the economic affairs and decision-making of the households. These women include single mothers, widows, separated women and some married women who head their households. The female heads of households (FHoHs) get no support from their male partners[3] even when it comes to those who still live with them in their households.

1.4 Main objective of the study

The major objective of this study is to explore the livelihoods of female-headed households.

1.4.1 Specific research objectives

1) To explore how the women ended up living in Namuwongo slum as female heads of households;

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[2] See Dimanin (2012) and Mann (2014)
[3] Male partner in this study stands for husband, ex-husband, ex-boyfriend and boyfriend.

2) To explore the livelihood challenges of female-headed households in the Namuwongo slum;

3) To explore the livelihood strategies and opportunities/ achievements experienced by female-headed households.

1.5 Structure of the thesis

This thesis has eight chapters. The first chapter presents the introduction and background of the study, the study area and urbanization and growth of slums in Uganda. A brief profile on female-headed households in Uganda, the objectives and research foci are also presented in the first chapter.

Chapter two looks at the related literature and explores the concept of female-headed households. It also looks at the causes of female-headed households and the challenges and livelihood strategies of female-headed households. Chapter three presents the theoretical framework and discusses both the sustainable livelihood approach and the empowerment theory that were used for the analysis of this study. Chapter four highlights the methodology used for the study and it presents the study population and selection of informants, the study area, research design, research instruments, data analysis and presentation, reflexivity and positionality, ethics and the challenges faced during the study. Chapters five, six and seven discuss the empirical findings of this study. Lastly, chapter eight presents the overall conclusions for this study, the main findings, the recommendations and areas for further research.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW AND CONCEPTS

2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents literature firstly on the concept of headship of households in general and secondly literature on the phenomenon of FHHs in particular. The chapter also reviews studies from the global, African and Ugandan contexts on the different themes related to FHHs. The key themes of the literature review are on the causes, challenges, and livelihood and survival strategies of FHHs.

2.2 Household headship: A general overview

It is necessary to have an overview on the concept of household headship while reviewing literature on FHHs; and to understand the gender dynamics of the heads of households. According to Budlender (2003), headship of households is usually affiliated to the oldest male in traditional African societies who often economically provides for the household. For instance, Posel (2001) states that headship of households in South Africa is usually taken up by the oldest and highest-income earner in the household. Furthermore, the head of the household is a key decision maker and is usually the final decision maker (ibid). While Budlender (2003) and Posel (2001) note that the oldest male who is providing the financial resources a household needs becomes its head, Posel (2001) adds that having higher income than one's household members is not the final determinant to household headship. This is because in households where men have less income than women, men may still take up headship. This is despite the fact that women may be contributing more economically to the welfare of the household (ibid).

In an article, Kibreab (2003) states that household headship is not homogeneous but varies contextually. For example, in Eritrea, in spite of the fact that some women contribute economically to their households, their higher economic status does not bestow on them the headship of households. Thus, when a male partner is missing in the Eritrean household, the oldest son may take up its headship, leaving out the woman who may be the one economically providing for the same household (ibid). Similarly, a study

by Handa (1994), observes that even though some women in Ghana work hard to support their households economically, headship of their households is conferred onto the men. The studies quoted here to some extent relate to a study done in Uganda by Ntozi and Zirimenya (1999). Ntozi and Zirimenya (1999) note that men in Uganda are considered and regarded as default heads of households. This is because they are considered as the ones more capable in terms of gender with the ability to make household decisions. They are also thought to have control over resources. This is largely as a result of the socially constructed ideas and cultures that subordinate women and seem to empower men over women (ibid).

Extant literature indicates that the percentage of men heading households in Africa is higher than that of the women. However, it is no longer disputable that women are also heads of households in specific contexts. Varley (1996), for instance, argued that female-headed households challenge the standardized notion of males as heads of households. This is because FHHs have become dominant phenomena in literature, especially in fields such as development and planning (ibid). Oginni, Ahonsi, and Ukwuije (2013) further say that though households are mostly headed by men in Africa, FHHs are steadily increasing and from 2003 to 2008, the percentage of FHHs had increased from 17 per cent to 19 per cent in Nigeria.

Budlender (2003) advances the view that FHHs are a global phenomenon. Their increase has raised global concern since they are overall considered as vulnerable and poor. Bongaarts (2001, p. 269), like Budlender (2003), says the proportion of FHHs has increased in the different regions of the world with "13 per cent in the Near East/North Africa, 16 per cent in Asia, 22 per cent in sub-Saharan Africa, and 24 per cent in Latin America." Tanzima (2010) indicated that FHHs have increased even in countries with strong patriarchal systems that seem to subordinate women. Tanzima's (2010) study revealed that women are now heading households in Bangladesh. The studies mentioned posit ideas on the concept of headship of households as mostly a male domain. However, this may not be the case in all contexts. Thus my study takes upon an exploration of households headed by women in the Namuwongo slum of Uganda.

2.3 The phenomenon of female-headed households: A global overview

Chant (2003) states that there are two major categories of female-headed households. First is the de jure category, which includes single, widowed, divorced or separated women. The second is the de facto category, which comprises of wives of male migrants, or women who play the dominant role even with the presence of a male partner in their lives. Buvinic and Gupta (1997) say that the concept of female headship seems problematic, transitional and not neutral. This is because headship is backed by traditional norms and internal conflicts. Buvinic and Gupta (1997) argue that the other factors that make one a household head include one's economic status.

FHHs consist of various categories including "female-maintained,""female-led,""mother-centered,""single-parent," or "male-absent" rather than only "female-headed households (Buvinic & Gupta, 1997, p. 260). The concept of FHHs should take into consideration the features of female-maintained households that are residential units and female-headed households that are part of kinship units because often the latter belongs to a larger unit headed by a male (ibid). Varley (1996) also says that studies on the concept of FHHs should be all-round, and not only look at single mothers with high levels of dependent children in their households. Female-maintained, female-led, mother-centered and male-absent households should also be considered in studies on FHHs. This is to avoid the a rigid approach towards the category of FHHs (ibid).

2.3.1 Causes of FHHs

Mullings (1995) says that wars, migration and increasing unemployment highly accelerated the phenomenon of FHHs and women raising children by themselves. FHHs were evidenced in both industrialized and developing countries such as Iraq and South Africa (ibid). The scholar further states that while female headship of households is a global phenomenon, different groups of people from different parts of the world and / or with different ethnic backgrounds have different experiences in relation to FHHs among them than others. For instance, the high rates of unemployment among the African-American men lead them into taking up criminal-related work. This increases their incarceration rates, contributing to a lack of eligible African-American men for marriage.

As a result, some African-American women end up as heads of households (ibid). Among the Euro-Americans, an increase in feminism and employment of Euro-American women has highly contributed to their economic independence and a change in their attitudes towards marriage. They choose to become independent of men and take charge of their own households after probably divorce or separation (ibid). Likewise, a study by Lokshin, Harris, and Popkin (2000) found that the growing incidence of single mothers in Russia was mostly as a result of the high rate of divorces in the country.

Chant (2007) found that domestic violence is one of the factors causing FHHs in countries such as Costa Rica. In order for women to protect themselves and their children from abusive men, they turn to single motherhood and run their households. Ruwanpura (2003) asserts that FHHs are a result of conflicts that cause death of husbands. Extra-marital affairs by men also make wives leave husbands and end up as heads of households. And the girls born in FHHs are more predisposed to heading their own households as adults (ibid).

2.3.2 Challenges of FHHs

According to Chant (2003), FHHs are assumed to be the poorest households. Women have been marginalized and their access to resources such as land is limited. Their low levels of employment and heavy work burden with low salaries also contribute to why they may be assumed as poor (ibid). Single mothers and women in FHHs in some cultures have actually been termed as the "new poverty paradigm." Chant (2003) further argues that unlike developed countries, some developing countries have not yet established schemes that can help support FHHs such as giving them benefits from the state. With such a lack of support, FHHs are challenged (Ibid).

Differing from Chant (2003), Fuwa (2000) says that FHHs are not a homogeneous group. He adds that poverty levels faced by FHHs are contextual and vary among the different categories of de jure and de facto FHHs. Using examples of Panama, he further says that in spite of urban areas having more and better economic opportunities than the rural areas, there is evidence that FHHs in urban areas are more unemployed and deprived than those in the rural areas. The analysis of FHHs contextually is very

important in order to rule out any undue form of biases on the different categories of de facto and de jure households: "In some parts of the world, such as in South Asia, widows have long been recognized as being particularly disadvantaged and poor; in Panama, however, there is no indication that widows are disadvantaged in terms of consumption in non-indigenous rural areas" Fuwa (2000, p. 1522)

Buvinic and Gupta (1997) say that FHHs seem poor and challenged in their livelihoods because they have low incomes with many dependents. This makes the FHHs vulnerable and targets for anti-poverty schemes. FHoHs are faced with the burden of domestic work and discrimination in the employment sector due to their low levels of education, which may lead to the existence of poverty among their children and future generations (ibid). In addition, Lokshin et al. (2000) posit that unemployment among single mothers in Russia is slightly higher than the rest of the population. This is because they usually have low levels of education such as only a high school certificate. Yet in Russia earning income is related to the levels of education. This in the end poses as a challenge to the single mothers in Russia especially those with low or no education (ibid).

2.3.3 Livelihood and/ or survival strategies of FHHs

A study by Lokshin et al. (2000) mentions that as a survival strategy for single mothers in Russia, women choose the option of co-residing with their relatives. Through this, single mothers share household duties and caretaking roles of their children with relatives while they also get support from the government (ibid). Lokshin et al. (2000) further say that single mothers who get support from the government and choose to stay alone still find it hard to survive because their income is not enough. Relatedly, Ruwanpura (2003) says FHHs in Sri Lanka (as a strategy for survival) get help from their relatives, for example when it comes to looking after their children when they go to work.

Withers (2011) advocates the analysis of FHHs against the backdrop of their cultures and contexts. This kind of analysis is against assumptions of essentialism and homogenisation of FHHs that seem to suggest that all FHHs are marginalized, poor and lone mothers. He reveals that in Samoa, mothers are never alone and always have support from their extended families. The category of "woman" is not homogeneous and neither is the

category of FHHs. Therefore, a study of the experiences of FHHs should be contextualized and analyzed within specific local conditions (ibid).

Like Withers, Villarreal and Shin (2008), who did a study in Mexico, found that FHHs are not as poor as some scholars tend to assume. This is because they have social networks on which they rely for social and economic support. In addition, some FHHs also receive income remittances from relatives abroad for their livelihoods. However, in this study it is revealed that women in Mexico do not just become heads of households. The women consider their economic status in such a way that only women who are economically independent choose to head their households. Those who are not financially able move in with their parents as a strategy for survival and a way of seeking support from their parents (ibid).

A study by Edin and Lein (1997) in the United States of America, in the cities of Boston, Chicago, Charleston and San Antonio, revealed that many single mothers had extra part-time jobs for the survival of their families. Single mothers on welfare, for instance, were involved in both reported and unreported work; formal and informal employment. Unreported work involved cash-based work such as underground work which involves selling drugs and stolen goods as well as sex to generate income (ibid). Some mothers who headed households received cash-based support from community networks, such as local charities and churches as well as from their children's fathers. However, this support was mainly in the form of child support, decided by the government through a court of law (ibid).

These perspectives about FHHs from the global point of view are intriguing. The question, however, is what is the situation of FHHs in an urban slum in Uganda?

2.4 Studies from Africa

2.4.1 Causes of FHHs

A study by Horrell and Krishnan (2007) revealed that in Zimbabwe, female headship is associated with migration; when men migrate, they leave their wives behind as the heads

of households. Poverty mainly influences men to migrate to the cities and to neighboring countries such as South Africa in search of work especially in mines and farms. O'laughlin (1998) observes that FHHs in Southern Africa became prominent in literature in the 1970s. According to O'laughlin (1998), FHHs were mainly attributed to the increase in migration of men in search for work. For example, in Botswana, men migrated to South Africa in search of employment, leaving women behind as the heads of households. O'laughlin (1998) found that even with the growth of industries in Botswana, which can create employment, and the reduction of employment opportunities for migrants in South Africa, men from Botswana still migrated to South Africa. O'laughlin (1998) says that much as women also migrate in big numbers to urban areas, the number of men migration from rural areas is still more than that of women in Botswana.

Horrell and Krishnan (2007) say that due to the HIV/AIDS scourge, household structures changed in Zimbabwe. Due to HIV/AIDS-related deaths of male partners, many women were left as widows and FHoHs. A study by Schatz, Madhavan, and Williams (2011) revealed that some households in rural South Africa became female-headed as a result of HIV/AIDS that left women as widows to fend and look after households. The study reveals that both young and old widows faced hardships since they had lost male partners. However, the older widows were more challenged because of the limited ability to work. A study by Mturi, Makatjane, and Molise (1999) showed that female headship in Lesotho had increased and this was mainly attributed to deaths of male partners. This study mentioned that over 50 per cent of female heads in Lesotho are widows. However, some women become heads of households even before they got married (ibid). A study by Yimam (2014) in Ethiopia revealed that death of a husband contributes to the prevalence of FHHs and also pointed out that in-laws may blame widows for the death of their spouse and label them as unfortunate. Thus widows may choose to isolate themselves from the community.

Dungumaro (2008) says the age at which females start heading households is higher than that of the males. In South Africa, women mostly become household heads at the age of 60. Divorce and separation are causes of FHHs as stated by Dungumaro (2008); however,

widowhood and women who have never been married before seem to make up higher portion of FHHs (ibid). A study by Abeya, Afework, and Yalew (2011) in western Ethiopia showed that intimate partner violence affects household structures. These scholars argue that women in FHHs have higher chances of escaping sexual, psychological and physical violence in their lives; thus, leaving a man and heading their own households may be a way of escaping violence.

2.4.2 Challenges of FHHs: African perspectives

Mason, Ndlovu, Parkins, and Luckert (2014), who carried out a study in Tanzania, say that lack of access and ownership to resources greatly constrains and poses a challenge to the FHHs. FHHs are vulnerable as compared to male-headed households (MHHs) because of the lack of access, control and ownership of resources such as land. This limits their food production and consumption (ibid). Similarly, a study by Horrell and Krishnan (2007) showed that the lack of access to resources such as land and employment of women on farms also affects the livelihoods of their households. However, not all FHHs are faced with the same challenges since they are not a homogeneous category. The de-jure FHHs seem to be more challenged because they lack income and they may be found among the poor households even though the de-jure FHHs may have an asset base similar to MHHs. The de-facto FHHs, however, may have no and /or lack assets; this limits their agricultural production even though they may be educated or have income (ibid).

In a study by Dungumaro (2008) in South Africa, it is revealed that FHHs may have many dependants in their households which constrains their few resources. This contributes to the deprivation and poverty experienced among the FHHs unlike in the MHHs. Unlike MHHs that can afford to use electricity for instance some FHHs resort to using wood for cooking because they can barely afford electricity for their households. This affects heating up of their houses when the weather is cold. In addition, due to the poverty in FHHs, household members are faced with hunger due to lack of adequate food in the households (ibid).

A study by Mulugeta (2009) in Ethiopia, reveals that FHoHs, particularly widows, are stigmatized and socially excluded in their communities. Due to stigma and social

exclusion, FHHs may face limited access to resources, negatively affecting their livelihoods and social capital. Furthermore, the study says that children from FHHs seem vulnerable. The marginalization and stigmatization of FHoHs who are widowed and divorced is a challenge some women face in Ethiopia as said by Newton-Levinson, Winskell, Abdela, Rubardt, and Stephenson (2014). FHoHs face hostility and stigma in their community. This is mostly in relation to their sexuality; widows may not be expected to have sexual relations after the death of their partners. Due to this, widows exhibit a fear of the occurrence of unwanted pregnancies in case they engage in sex. This is because widows are not supposed to be sexually active outside marriage after a loss of their husbands. FHoHs may live in fear and even isolate themselves and yet this may negatively affect their social and financial capital in relation to accessing resources for their household livelihoods (ibid).

Furthermore, a study by Akinsola and Popovich (2002) in Botswana showed that the quality of life of FHHs is poor both in urban and rural areas. This is because FHoHs have many dependants inclusive of extended relatives. Consequently, FHHs have low incomes, which contributes to their high levels of deprivation. In addition, FHHs are faced with poor nutrition brought about by the high levels of poverty. Akinsola and Popovich (2002) show that the quality of life of FHHs in Botswana is poor since they are a significantly deprived. FHHs seem to live in overcrowded and congested areas, which lack proper services such as latrines (ibid).

However, in a study by Frayne (2004) in Namibia, as a result of migration to urban areas, FHHs in urban areas face more livelihood challenges than those in rural areas. This is more so when they have weak social ties and kinship ties in the rural areas. The inter-relationships between households in the rural and urban areas are regarded highly (ibid). This is because in situations of deprivation, especially of food, relations in the rural areas may send food to those in urban areas. However, when the rural–urban relations are weak, some poor urban FHHs are bound to be vulnerable to hunger (ibid).

In a study by Zakari and Song (2014), in southwestern Niger, FHHs were found to be vulnerable, poor and facing higher rates of food insecurity in their households unlike

MHHs. Although women contribute a lot to food production in many countries in Africa, it is not enough to make them self-sufficient. The study revealed that FHoHs in Niger are mainly widows and they are faced with high rates of poverty in their households. Poverty affects FHoHs' purchasing power and ability to buy food for their dependants (ibid).

However, as mentioned earlier, there is a need to deconstruct the category of FHHs and understand their challenges contextually and by category; this will help in generating more reliable information about FHHs and their experiences. For example, in a study by Van de Walle (2013) in Mali, FHHs such as widow-headed households were found to be the most vulnerable, having low living standards compared to other households. This was found in both urban and rural areas. The study mentioned that other categories of FHHs may actually live in better conditions and have better welfare than those headed by widows. This is because widows usually have many dependent children and they have limited support from governments towards their households (ibid).

Similarly, a study by Goebel, Dodson, and Hill (2010), in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa, argued that FHHs are a vulnerable category. They are challenged by their low levels of education, which lead to their discrimination in terms of formal employment. Also, the lack of access to health services and further ill health that is sometimes attributed to old age, especially when the heads of households are very old women. The FHHs in Pietermaritzburg are also affected by some factors in their social context such a poor waste management. This contributes to spread of diseases such as diarrhoea. As FHHs generally have low income, they can rarely afford hospitals for treatments and depend on traditional medicines for healing (ibid).

2.4.3 Livelihood strategies of FHHs: an African perspective

A study by Kamanga, Vedeld, and Sjaastad (2009) showed that in addition to farming and growing of crops as strategies for survival in Malawi, FHHs also go into forests in search of resources such as firewood and thatch grass, among other items. The forests are a source of livelihood income for many FHHs in Malawi since most of them lack access to land for agriculture. The forest resources are put to home use to roof their small houses and for sale to generate income (ibid).

Mulugeta (2009) says in addition to farming as strategy for survival, FHHs also involve themselves in the informal sector. This involves carrying out activities such as petty trade as livelihood strategies to enhance their income. Mulugeta (2009) indicated women are also involved in prostitution to raise income for their household. In addition to working in the informal sector, Lemke, Vorster, Van Rensburg, and Ziche (2003) say, social ties and networks are significant and enhance the empowerment of women they helping FHoHs to come out of challenging situations in their household livelihoods. Social ties and networks may include relations with relatives and neighbours, which provide mutual support in times of need (ibid). Mulugeta (2009) says households led by single mothers may actually not be as deprived as presumed because of their strong social ties with friends and relatives. For instance, single mothers can find food from their mothers' households and in exchange, they perform other duties in the households such as chores or vices versa (ibid).

Relatedly, a study by Frayne (2004) showed that social relations are instrumental to the livelihoods of FHHs. FHoHs are considered a vulnerable group of people especially those in urban Namibia, but those with strong ties in the rural areas experience a vast amount of support. This is especially so in situations where FHoHs have limited access to food in their households (ibid). The mutual reciprocity experienced among the rural and urban households is a survival strategy for those with strong relations (ibid).

The literature related to the phenomenon of FHHs from the African perspective is abundant and varied. FHoHs were challenged in their livelihoods; nevertheless, they improvised strategies for survival and for the members of their households. And since FHHs are not homogenous, more knowledge on FHHs in an urban slum in Uganda is needed. These studies from the global and African contexts posit some important issues, which are examined in this thesis. However, they don't address the question: what are the causes, challenges and livelihood strategies off FHHs in the Namuwongo slum in Uganda?

2.5 Ugandan Perspectives

2.5.1 Causes of FHHs

A qualitative study by Koenig et al. (2003) showed that domestic violence, in both forms of physical and verbal abuse, has greatly contributed to a high incidence of FHHs in Rakai in Uganda. . Physical abuse involves slapping, kicking and boxing of spouses, while verbal abuse involves use of insulting and derogatory words. Women sustain injuries from physical abuse such as fractures, dislocations and wounds (ibid). The perpetrators of the violence are sometimes under the influence of alcohol. In order to protect themselves and their children, some women choose to become single mothers to avoid the cycle of domestic violence in their lives (ibid).

The study by Ntozi and Zirimenya (1999) says HIV/AIDS contributed to the prevalence of FHHs in Uganda. Many women were left widows by the death of their male partners. Due to the scourge of HIV/AIDS, household structures were transformed and FHHs arose in Uganda, especially widow-headed households (ibid). Similarly, a study by Nalugoda et al. (2004) in the Rakai district in Uganda showed that the scourge of HIV/AIDS has contributed to the high mortality rates among the residents. This gave rise to FHHs. Even though divorce and separation contribute to the incidence of FHHS, the increase in mortality rates of male heads of households is likely to have contributed to the phenomenon of FHHs in Uganda (ibid).

2.5.2 Livelihood challenges of FHHs

In a qualitative study by Appleton (1996), he says many households in Uganda, especially in the urban areas, are headed by women. He says these households face poverty and argues that it is not the lack of resources but the lower levels of education and sometimes no education at all that seem to contribute to high poverty and the challenges faced by female-headed households in Uganda. When women get access to education, they obtain skills and may be in a much better position to fend and provide for their families without too much struggle (ibid).

In a study done by Dolan (2002), the lack of access to resources such as land is seen as a significant challenge of FHHs and their livelihoods in Mbale, Mubende and Kamuli districts of Uganda. In comparison to the MHHs in the mentioned districts, FHHs face difficulties in food production; this is also because they lack financial resources and other assets such as land. This makes the FHHs vulnerable and they struggle in their livelihoods as compared to MHHs. Even when they get involved in non-farming activities and try self-employment, the proceeds are low. This poses as a challenge to their livelihoods (ibid).

A study by Taylor, Seeley, and Kajura (1996) showed that FHoHs are constrained financially and are vulnerable and unable to provide for their families. The study further mentioned that FHoHs are so constrained that they are unable to manage unplanned events in their lives such as illnesses in their households.

Furthermore a study by Adelman and Peterman (2014) says that households headed by women in northern Uganda after the civil war conflict were the most affected by displacement. The study revealed that even though both FHHs and MHHs suffered displacement and loss of land, FHHs suffered more and continued to face more challenges such as occupying very small pieces of land with low value. In addition, they experienced more land disputes than the MHHs (ibid).

A study by Kanyamurwa and Ampek (2007) mentions that households affected by HIV/AIDS in Uganda face various challenges; however, FHHs are more affected than MHHs. Kanyamurwa and Ampek (2007) say that women heads were found to be more vulnerable than male heads with the former having lower chances of getting remarried than the latter. The study revealed that FHHs risked high chances of losing control over their resources such as land and livestock, especially when they had to meet social-economic difficulties particularly in relation to HIV/AIDS. Female heads with HIV/AIDS sometimes sold their property to access medicines and get proper nutrition. However, this was still a challenge because land rights in rural Uganda favour men and, therefore, MHHs had better survival strategies than FHHs (ibid).

FHHs in Uganda seem vulnerable as put forward by the above studies. Low levels of education, less access to resources such as land and low levels of employment significantly challenge FHHs. However, this may not be the situation for all FHHs in Uganda. Thus my study specifically creates knowledge on FHHs in the slum setting of Namuwongo.

2.5.3 Perspectives on the livelihood strategies of FHHs

According to Appleton (1996), some FHHs receive income in form of money remittances from some members of their households. For example, households headed by widows may receive income from their children, and those with migrant male partners may receive income from their partners to support their households. In addition, women are involved in the informal sector and perform jobs such as petty trade for the survival of their livelihoods (ibid).

Herrin, Knight, and Balihuta (2009) say that as a strategy for survival, FHoHs migrate to developed countries in the search of employment to raise income for their households. They further say that much as MHoHs also migrate, FHoHs migrate more than them. This may be attributed to push factors such as laws that favour men over women in access to land resources. Because women experience fewer chances and lower levels of employment, and yet need to survive, they migrate in search of employment to enable them support their households (ibid).

A study by Kanyamurwa and Ampek (2007) says that some FHHs in Uganda are dependent on social and economic livelihood support from social networks such as NGOs, friends and family. NGOs offer both cash and welfare support. The study says that this is helpful to the households especially those challenged by HIV/AIDS because they are vulnerable. However, a study by Taylor et al. (1996) says that much as FHHs regard social capital in the form of friends and relatives highly, they are not always in position to help economically because they may also face the same financial constrains as the FHHs. As most studies on FHHs from the Ugandan perspective are from the rural areas, less is known about the livelihoods of FHHs in slums like Namuwongo. Hence this

study explores the livelihoods of FHHs in relation to the themes of their causes, challenges and /or survival strategies in the urban slum of Namuwongo in Uganda.

2.6 Contributions of my study

This study shows that the category of FHHs in Namuwongo slum is a significant group in Uganda, which has not received enough attention and focus. Given this, there is a need for policymakers and government to address the challenges and problems faced by this category of FHHs. Though various studies have been carried out on FHHs in Uganda, Africa and globally; few studies look into the situation of FHHs in urban areas, and particularly slums. My study fills this important gap by producing knowledge about an urban slum context.

Furthermore, most of the previous studies on FHHs are quantitative and seem to produce generalised knowledge about the group of people being studied (Creswell, 2009). This study, on the other hand, used qualitative methodologies where emphasis is given to the lived experiences of FHHs. My study is localized and gives prominence to the voices of some women who head households in Namuwongo slum. Also some of the studies on the phenomenon of FHHs are a decade old and could not have captured the current situation of FHHs. Hence this study fills the gap by producing knowledge on the current situation of FHHs in Namuwongo slum.

CHAPTER THREE: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 Introduction

As stated by Creswell (2009), in order to carry out systematic research, the use of theory is very important. This is because theories offer systematic guidance and broader explanations to social phenomena. Theories also explain how different variables in research may be related. This study used the sustainable livelihood approach (SLA) as advanced by Ian Scoones and the empowerment theory enunciated by Naila Kabeer. Both approaches were applied to explain the livelihoods of FHHs in Namuwongo slum. The sustainable livelihood approach was found useful because it is very dynamic, with different crosscutting aspects. Additionally, it is useful for "understanding complex, local realities" (Scoones, 2009, p. 172). This study also used the empowerment approach to find out how the female heads of households (FHoHs) exercised agency in their daily life and in relation to their resources for their livelihood outcomes and achievements. In this chapter, the SLA will be articulated first, followed by the empowerment theory.

3.2 The Sustainable Livelihood Approach

According to Chambers (1995 as cited in Scoones, 2009, p.173), livelihoods experienced in different contexts vary and can be very complex; they can be defined as the "means of gaining a living." The livelihood approach has for many years influenced research on development thinking and practice in rural contexts. In Zambia, for example, ecologists, agriculturalists and economists used it to come up with practical means to address development challenges (ibid).

Over the time, the livelihood approach has evolved, especially after the Brundtland Commission on Environment and Development, together with the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Rio, placed more emphasis on issues of "poverty reduction and development with longer-term environmental shocks and stresses" and sustainability (ibid). The livelihood approach further evolved into the sustainable livelihood approach (ibid). Furthermore, it was during the 1990s that the SLA was articulated by Robert Chambers and Gordon Conway to investigate livelihoods of

people in poverty situations and how they survive or manage in situations of poverty (Chambers & Conway, 1992; Scoones, 2009). Chambers and Conway developed the most significant definition of livelihood in 1992 in the following terms:

> *"A livelihood comprises the capabilities, assets (including both material and social resources) and activities required for a means of living. A livelihood is sustainable when it can cope with and recover from stresses and shocks, maintain or enhance its capabilities and assets, while not undermining the natural resource base."* Scoones (1998, p. 5)

Carney (2003), argues that the SLA has been used by various organizations such as United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and Department For International Development (DFID), among others. These organizations use SLA to understand challenges such as poverty in different contexts where the organizations operate with a view to reducing poverty and creating better livelihoods for people living in marginalized, deprived and poverty-stricken contexts (ibid).

According to Scoones (1998, p.5; 2009), the sustainable livelihood framework can also be used as a tool for analysis of households, individuals and categories of people in different settings because of its emphasis on reality based on the perspectives of particular individuals. Therefore, the SLA was very useful in this study for it enabled me to examine and understand the livelihoods of FHHs in Namuwongo slum from their own perspective. I was able to examine the nature of their capitals (assets) and the structures that limit and/ or enhance their access to resources to achieve their desired livelihoods. After all, as reported in the report by DFID (1999), livelihoods may be negatively or positively affected by shocks such as floods, conflicts, and earthquakes, among others. These phenomena may act as stressors for the livelihoods of those already adversely affected. The SLA was, therefore, significant in the analysis of how FHHs manage the shocks and stresses of life and the strategies they come up with to address the stresses in order to achieve their desired livelihoods.

The sustainable livelihood framework as exemplified by Scoones.
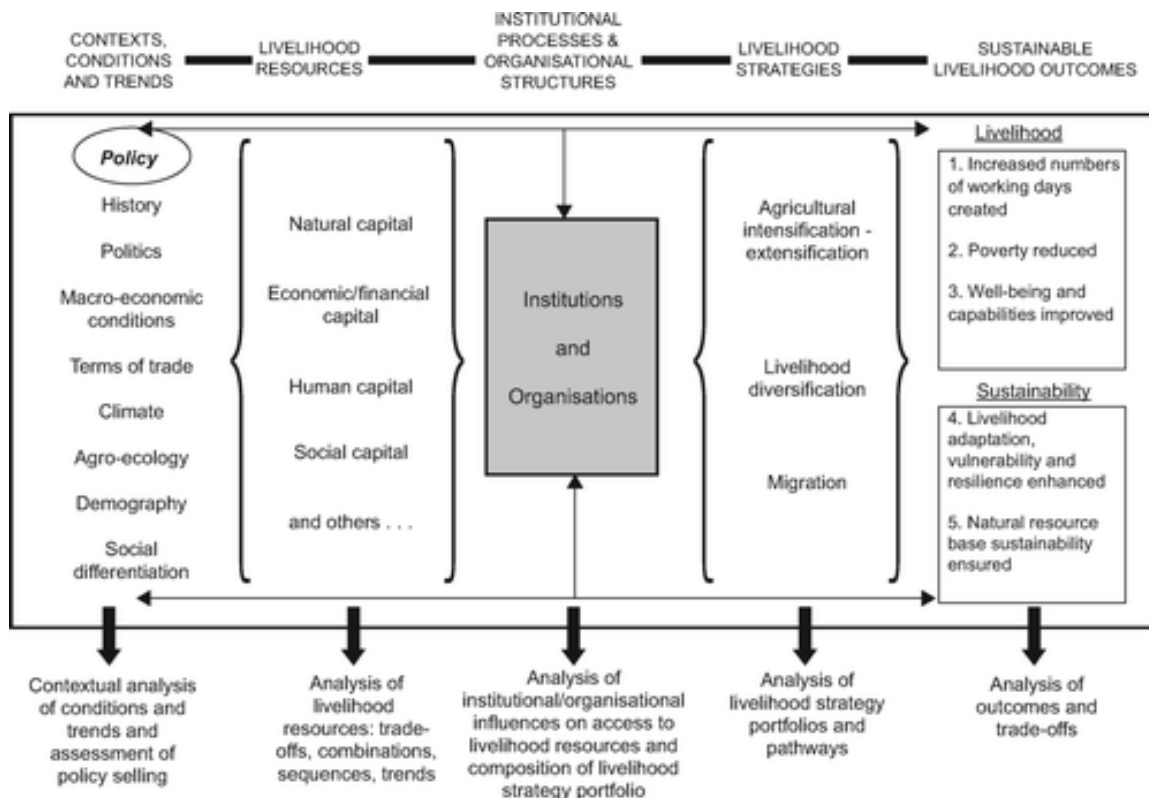
Figure 1. Sustainable livelihoods framework: a checklist (Scoones 1998).

This study primarily used Scoones' sustainable livelihood approach. According to Scoones (1998), and as figure 1 shows, the SLA comprises of five different dimensions. First, are the context, conditions and trends that refer mainly to the conditions in a particular society and how the conditions affect the livelihoods of individuals. Second, SLA also includes the livelihood resources that involve assets which may also be termed as capitals. Third, are the institutional processes and transforming structures, focusing on the organisations and institutions that influence the accessibility to livelihood resources and the development of livelihood strategies (ibid).

Fourth, SLA encompasses descriptions of how livelihood strategies are used by individuals for survival. According to Scoones (1998; 2009), the strategies used by individuals for their survival must be diversified. Livelihood strategies require being creative and innovative in terms of obtaining income to survive shocks and stresses that

one may face in the situation where a livelihood activity is not providing the means of survival (ibid).

Fifth, SLA explores livelihood outcomes, focusing on how the livelihood strategies selected by individuals contribute to their wellbeing, poverty reduction, and livelihood adaptation in their contexts in relation to the betterment or destruction of their livelihoods. The livelihood outcomes are very closely linked to the livelihood strategies that individuals use for their livelihoods.

Furthermore, the dimension of livelihood outcomes calls for an examination of the livelihoods gained by people and the sustainability of their livelihood strategies. This also includes the vulnerability experienced by others such as children and future generations (Moser, 1998; Scoones, 1998). It is important to note that all the above-mentioned dimensions complement one another to define and contribute to the livelihood of an individual, household or even a community.

According to Scoones (1998, 2009), achievement of a desired livelihood strategy requires accessibility to different livelihood assets which can improve the livelihoods of people. Assets include various resources that may also be termed as 'capitals' and they can be human, natural, social, and financial capitals.

Below is a description of the different forms of capitals in Scoones' SLA and how the different forms were used in this study.

Human capital: This encompasses skills, knowledge, labour, optimal health and physical capabilities that work together for the production of a successful livelihood (Scoones, 1998). In this study, I mainly focused on human capital in relation to dependency, labour, education, alternatives for better health and use of housing and the children in FHHs in chapter six.

Financial capital: This mainly involves cash, credit/debt, savings and other economic assets, including basic infrastructure, production equipment and technologies which are essential for the desired livelihoods of persons or groups of people (Scoones, 1998). This study looked at financial capital as the ability to have access to loans, credit funds relative

to assets owned by female-headed households, the working and living conditions and the economic activities of FHHs in Namuwongo as a way of reflecting on their financial capital.

Social capital: By social capital, Scoones considered social resources such as social networks, social claims, social relations, affiliation and associations upon which people rely on pursuing different livelihoods. This study mainly concentrated on social-cultural and religious beliefs, kin relationships and relationships with neighbours of FHHs in Namuwongo slum. In addition, the study also looked into other social networks such as non-governmental organisations and their relations with FHHs.

Natural capital: This includes soil, water, air, genetic resources and environmental services (Scoones, 1998). In relation to the natural resources, this study focused on infrastructure in relation to floods and poor drainage, water, soil in relation to land and farming and the hygiene in the context of Namuwongo slum.

According to F. Ellis (2000), SLA has various core principles of great value such as it being people-centred as opposed to institutions which helps researchers to understand those in particular situations from their point of view. In addition, Ashley and Carney (1999) argue that SLA emphasizes the principle of being participatory. The SLA involves the particular group of people that are targeted and these people may be consulted to give solutions that may be essential for their lives. This, therefore, includes those that are being studied to contribute to the study. It is a dynamic approach as it looks at the changes that may actually occur in people's lives and their experiences as they come in and out of particular situations and challenges in their lives (ibid).

In conclusion, it can be stated that the SLA shows how the dimensions of assets; contextual factors and trends; transforming-institutions; livelihood strategies; and livelihood outcomes can interact in determining the livelihoods of people.

3.2.1 The usefulness of the SLA for this study

I used the SLA as an important tool of analysis for this study so as to explore and understand the interaction of the choices and strategies made by FHHs to achieve and sustain their livelihoods. Living in a slum such as Namuwongo may be considered risky and, therefore, likely to increase the vulnerability of FHHs to various negative phenomena such as poor health, high crime rates, poverty, poor sanitation, lack of basic services among others.

The slum context puts FHHs at risk and the SLA is thus useful to finding out what strategies they come up with for their survival. The SLA offers a holistic overview on how individuals use the resources within their reach and combine them with livelihood strategies to achieve or fail in their livelihoods in their given contexts (Scoones, 1998).

Useful as the SLA may be, there are some critical voices drawing to its limitations. For example, Morse and McNamara (2013) state that the sustainable livelihood framework is not objective because it takes for granted openness and trust of respondents in a study. Respondents of a study may find it difficult and uncomfortable to open up about their assets and their survival strategies; hence they may not share all the required information (ibid). Furthermore, a problem may arise where the power relations between the people being researched on and the researcher are negotiated by the researched -on to suit their own interests (ibid).

Furthermore, SLA does not provide enough clarity to the understanding of gender relations and issues, which is a very important aspect for a study like this very one. According to Carney (2002), gender is an important element that should be analyzed to find out how women, men and children in their contexts deal with the existing power relations in their lives in order to meet their desired livelihoods.

According to Tesfamariam (2007), the SLA ignores the mental capital of individuals yet it is an important aspect in their livelihoods. McCoy, Ralph, Wilson, and Padian (2013) argue that mental capital is a very important aspect and seems to be the foundation for the accessibility and interaction of all the other capitals in the livelihoods of people. In order to utilize available resources, stable mental capital is required so that one can benefit

from the available resources. However, if the mental capital is not stable, resources in the end may either be underutilized or destroyed. Arnot (2000), also suggests that mental capital may determine the success and failure of one's livelihood. Social capital in the form of social networks such as friends, neighbours and church groups helps to nourish the mental capital in the pursuit of livelihoods (ibid).

In order to surmount the limitations of power and gender that are exposed in the SLA; the empowerment theory was used as a second tool for the analysis of findings in this study.

3.3 The empowerment theory

The empowerment theory was used to examine the factors that empower and/or disempower FHHs in the slum of Namuwongo. Different scholars have described the theory of empowerment in different ways. According to Kabeer (2005, p. 13), "Empowerment refers to the process by which those who have been denied the ability to make choices acquire such an ability." In her definition of empowerment, Kabeer (2005) states that alternatives must be seen to exist in society so that individuals can make choices. There have been other scholars like Khader (2011) who have criticized Kabeer for placing undue emphasis on choice as a yardstick for empowerment. Khader (2011), states that not every choice is empowering as sometimes, people make bad choices which go against their basic self-interest. She terms such choices as inappropriately adaptive preferences (IAP) (ibid). She suggests that the state of being empowered happens when the IAPs have been removed. Additionally, she seems to state that empowerment should not be imposed on people but they can only achieve it on their own through self-realization and self-entitlements (ibid).

While discussing empowerment, Mosedale (2005) advances that empowerment has been widely used by development agencies such as the World Bank. However, not many of the agencies show to what extent they have succeeded in their empowerment processes in relation to their programs with people.

Mosedale advances that empowerment of women should be linked to four steps. Firstly, in order to be empowered one must be disempowered and this is in line with Kabeer's understanding of empowerment (ibid). Secondly, while the role of development agencies

is important in facilitating empowerment, it is ultimately upon individuals to achieve empowerment. Thirdly, empowerment should include a sense of decision-making by people on very important issues in their lives and the ability to act upon them. Fourth, empowerment is not an end within itself or a final product, but an ongoing process (ibid). Overall, according to Mosedale (2005), empowerment should look at the lived experiences of women to bring about change in their lives and they should be the ones to spearhead their own empowerment and it should not be forced on to them. Empowerment should not be seen as an end process but as a continuous one so as to bring about change in the lives of individuals (ibid).

Kabeer (2005) explains the notion of empowerment through the concepts of agency, resources and achievements; which she argues are integral in the process of gaining empowerment.

Though several authors have written on the theory of empowerment, this study mostly used concepts in Kabeer's theory of empowerment.

Dimensions of exercising choice in Kabeer's empowerment

Resources   agency   achievements
(Pre-conditions)   (Process)   (Outcomes)

Source: (Kabeer, 1994)

Resources: As stated by Kabeer (2005), resources are the medium through which agency is exercised by individuals to make choices for their livelihoods. Furthermore, Kabeer (1994, p. 437) states that "resources are not only the material in the more conventional economic sense but also the various human and social resources which serve the ability to exercise choice." Resources are acquired from various sources in society and they are meant to influence individuals' lives and provide them with the ability to make choice and thus empower them. However, when aspects of power come into play, actors in authority have an upper hand in the obtaining and distribution of resources. This restricts and hinders others who are not in authority to access these resources (Kabeer, 2005).

Resources in the empowerment theory are somewhat similar to the concept of capitals in the sustainable livelihood approach in that they both seem to suggest that resources or capitals are human, social and financial (among others) in nature.

Agency: Followed by resources is agency. Kabeer (2005, pp. 14-15) argues that agency is when an individual acts to achieve their desired goals and it involves "meaning, motivation and purpose that individuals bring to their action" in addition to decision-making and observation. Agency has both negative and positive aspects. Negative agency is when certain actors in authority make choices over those that are not in authority and this is termed as 'power over' (ibid). This could lead to the suppression of the interests of others and violence may be used as a mean of gaining authority. The positive attribute of agency is 'power to' in a sense that people have the ability to make choices even amidst obstacles which are overcome to achieve desired goals (Kabeer, 1999; 2005, pp. 14-15).

Kabeer (2005) states that agency can be of two kinds: passive and transformative in its interrelation with resources and achievements. Passive agency is when individuals experience limited choices which they try to overcome by use of alternative means. For example, in this study, women who cannot afford health services may resort to herbal/natural treatments, which they obtain at no cost from nature. In addition, they manage to take care of their children even with the limited resources they have. Transformative agency is the ability by individuals to challenge constraints and power structures and restrictive aspects in their lives, in order to transform their lives and the structures that may disempower them (ibid). However, the notion of agency by Kabeer has been reformulated by other scholars such as Mahmood (2001, p. 210), who suggests that agency should not be viewed as "as a synonym for resistance to relations of domination, but as a capacity for action that historically specific relations of subordination enable and create". Therefore, historically-created cultural norms such as patriarchy that subordinate women can be challenged either at the individual or collective level in order to bring about change. Furthermore, agency is contextual and different people may ascribe meaning to the aspect of agency and ways of exercising agency in different ways (ibid).

Achievements: According to Kabeer (2005),"resources and agency make up people's capabilities." Capabilities determine the potential that people have to lead their desired lives. Achievement occurs when a desired livelihood is realised and this, in turn, is determined by the potential and efforts of the people. Kabeer argues that achievement is agency exercised and its consequences. She exemplifies that taking up waged work as a distress sale of labour as an achievement may arguably not lead to empowerment (ibid). Rather, achievement should have a greater virtue of self-reliance that results into self-independence (Kabeer, 2005).

3.3.1 The usefulness of the empowerment approach for this study

The urban slum that I chose for this study is faced with various challenges that may disempower FHHs. The theory of empowerment helped me to examine how the women exercised agency within the context of the challenges they face. The empowerment approach closely links to the livelihood approach in a way that the outcomes and achievements discussed in both approaches relate to how individuals exercise agency to make various choices for their livelihoods. Therefore, the empowerment approach was important for this study to analyze how the female heads of households survive, access and control resources and the choices they make to obtain sustainable livelihoods for their households in the slum. It was relevant for this study to use the empowerment theory to analyse how the FHHs exercised passive and/or transformative agency in making choices and decisions for their lives and to secure livelihoods. Empowerment theory also helped me to explore the processes that FHHs use to negotiate and address power relations in their community and the decisions they take to achieve their wellbeing, welfare and livelihoods.

The ability of the FHoHs to make choices, access and control resources are very important for the livelihoods of their household and this very much relates to the concept of capital in the SLA. Empowerment was used to analyse the findings in this study in chapter six, which describes the life of the slum FHHs in relation to resources and / or capitals, and the challenges faced by the FHHs.

The empowerment approach was also used to inform the empirical findings in chapter seven which mainly describes the strategies used for survival based on the contextual resources and achievements and how the FHoHs exercise agency and make decisions for the betterment of their lives and their households.

In conclusion, I used the theory of empowerment, which illustrates the aspects of power, agency, resources and achievements, to anaylse the research findings of chapter six and seven in my study. Living in a slum as female head of a household with high levels of poverty, high crime rate, poor infrastructure and lack of basic needs suggests that the empowerment of women is inhibited. However, as they go about their daily lives, they exercise agency and use the resources within their reach to come up with strategies; enabling them not only to survive, but also to also improve their livelihoods and make unexpected achievements.

CHAPTER FOUR: METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction:

This chapter describes and explains the approaches used for data collection and interpretation process, delineating the study population, selection of respondents, the study area, methods by which data was obtained, instruments of data collection, challenges met, ethical considerations, positionality and reflexivity. The chapter also includes a thought process of data analysis, and addresses issues of data quality.

4.2 Research design

My study was guided by a research design as enunciated by Robert K. Yin. According to Yin (2009), research design is the logical structure through which a study can be implemented by linking the research objectives and the data to be collected. A research design helps in eliminating rival explanations and simplifies a study by making evidence very clear, doing away with falsification in the study (Yin, 2009, p. 26). My study took on a qualitative research design to cover female heads of households that care for their own children independently and without support from male partners. Qualitative methods were used to explore livelihoods of FHHs in the slum of Namuwongo in Kampala city in Uganda. Qualitative methods were effective because qualitative approach prompts a researcher to carry out a study in its natural setting with the actual group of respondents in their locality (Creswell, 2009; Silverman, 2010).

While in the field, I carried out all data collection activities because I am conversant with Luganda language spoken in Namuwongo slum. I did not need assistance.

4.3 Research instruments

The main research instrument used for the study was an in-depth interview guide, which I designed for the key respondents, female heads of households (FHoHs). For the other respondents such as the local council (L.C) members and the two men whom I randomly selected in Namuwongo, the study used a semi-structured interview guide to collect data. The interview guide created for the study sought information on various themes which included: education, work, why and how the respondents became heads of households, number of children, community perceptions of their status, as well as their daily

livelihood challenges and experiences. The guide helped the study gain not only detailed information but also steered the researcher to keep in check with areas to cover and where following up was required.

As Kvale (1996) argues, an interview guide reveals the topic of research and its chronological order as being carried out in the interview and relates to what is being interviewed. The themes, theories used for investigation, and successive analysis all relate to the topic of interview. Kvale (1996) further explains that interviewing engages both the interviewer and interviewee in a therapeutic exchange. This relates well with this study in a way that, as I was interviewing, I also became a source of encouragement for my interviewees and vice versa.

In order to get the kind of data the study was looking for, there was a need to create a favourable climate for my respondents and myself as the researcher. I started off the interviews with general questions to make respondents feel as free and comfortable as possible and hopefully and envision me as an insider. I would then start asking questions from the interview guide following this process. Listening critically to the responses given enabled me to ask respondents to explain their given responses further in order to get more elaborations. As the interview went on, I was able to get the information that the study was seeking. The interview questions were open-ended and, therefore, left room for discussions and lots of revelations. An example of the questions was: "Can you please explain your experience as a female head of a household?" The interview guide was divided into different themes and categories.

The study also used semi-structured interviews, which were helpful in trying to put forward questions in the simplest vocabulary that the respondents would understand in order to break language barriers, especially because English is a second language to many of the respondents. In addition, the semi-structured interviews helped me gather information beyond the initial scope of study.

Coming from a country where English is a second language, I translated the interview guide to the most commonly used local language which is Luganda. This was fundamental as the study was carried out amongst respondents who preferred Luganda to

English. The questions in Luganda were directly phrased as those in English and this helped me when translating and transcribing the answers back to English.

While in the field, I used a tape recorder to record and store important information and to ensure I did not miss out on anything. Taking notes while talking can be challenging and, therefore, a tape recorder was helpful keeping the conversations flowing.

It should be noted that I always sought permission from respondents to use a tape recorder before starting the interview. In cases were such permission was not granted, responses were written down during the interview. I also left it to the respondents to choose the time and places for interviews and most were carried in their homes.

The study employed two sets of data collection methods: interviews and observations of the respondents.

4.3.1 The interview process
This study carried out in-depth interviews with women heading households and obtained information on the difficulties they go through to sustain their households. As Creswell (2009) and Silverman (2010) argue, interview situations enable the researcher to meet respondents face-to-face in their context so as to answer various open-ended and unstructured questions for a study such as the present. I found this useful especially in situations where I could not carry out observations and also in gaining deeper knowledge about the respondents' livelihood strategies and the situation of FHHs in general. The method is also helpful in a way that it motivates the respondents to share historical information about themselves, and this helps the researcher gain more data regardless of the area of study (Creswell, 2009; Silverman, 2006).

While in the field, I interviewed 15 FHoHs who were the major targets of the study. Five additional respondents were interviewed as they offered useful information especially on the background of the study. I also interviewed the LC members of the zones in Namuwongo. The zones where this study was carried out were Namuwongo B,

Kanyogoga and Soweto. In addition, I interviewed two men in Namuwongo slum to get their perspectives on FHHs thereof.

4.3.2 Observation

I also used observation as a method to get firsthand experience on the daily livelihood activities of the respondent, to see how they made ends meet in their daily lives. In situations where my informants felt shy to discus some topics or activities of their livelihoods, observation helped in revealing untold stories and the strategies they used for survival (Creswell, 2009).

During my research stay in Namuwongo slum, I observed the activities carried out by female heads of households both during the day and at nighttime. For example, Margaret, who owned a roadside restaurant, had many customers who ate her food on credit; they promised to pay her later. She later explained to me that she couldn't say no because they were her daily customers and that they paid after some time. In addition, I observed that some customers criticized her food and even insisted on paying less than the actual price. Sitting next to Margaret made me realise that she risked her life sitting by the roadside cooking because fire was close by and incase of misfortune, a stray car would hit her.

Most or all the respondents were aware that they were being observed; therefore, there was no need to disguise myself. I also carried out observations at night to get insight on the general activities carried out by the slum community in Namuwongo. Observations helped me to read the body language of the respondents and their emotions; for example, to see if they were tired or felt uncomfortable with some questions.

During the study, I observed that many residents in Namuwongo slum who lived within a certain distance from the Uganda Railway line were moving out of their houses at night because the Ugandan government, together with some countries in East Africa, is in the process of revamping the East African railway, which includes the Uganda railway. Therefore all persons who were very close to the railway line had to find new places to live.

4.4 Target population

This study focused on 15 FHHs living in the slum community of Namuwongo. The livelihoods of these households were crucial for the study. This determined the choice of women heads as respondents. The focus was on women heads of households aged 18 and above because the Ugandan constitution stipulates that one is an adult when they clock 18 years of age.

4.4.1 Selection of respondents for the study

Purposive sampling was used to select respondents. Women who were heads of households and independently took care of their households without any support from male counterparts were selected. In the slum communities of Namuwongo, cheap housing can be found by different groups of people. I used purposive sampling as it is "a form of non-probability sampling in which decisions concerning the individuals to be included in the sample are taken by the researcher, based upon a variety of criteria which may include specialist knowledge of the research issue, or capacity and willingness to participate in the research." (Oliver, 2006)

In addition, I used purposive sampling because of the prior knowledge I had about Namuwongo. Purposive sampling was suitable because it enabled me to study a group of people with common characteristics (Speck et al., 2012).

The respondents of the study were women who headed households in Namuwongo slum. Most of them had more than two children and some of them had extended family members to look after in their households. Some of them lived in rented shacks and shared communal bathrooms and toilets with their neighbours.

Getting in touch with the respondents was not a big problem because of my prior knowledge of the study area. I used local council chairmen of the Namuwongo zones as gatekeepers to identify suitable respondents. .

The local council chairmen had very good knowledge of their residents: they had authorized their residency in the zones and signed for them letters to attain national identity cards, passports and bank accounts. The local council chairmen also often act as

problem solvers in the communities, especially when it comes to issues of domestic violence, theft, murder, and rape; they are generally the first persons to be reported to before residents proceed to the police to report crime.

One of the LC I chairmen was a regular customer at a neighbourhood bar owned by one of my respondents that sold local brew. The LC I chairmen generally seemed to have in-depth knowledge of the community, and knowing most of the members personally. Being close to community members, the chairmen were seen as working for the people. Their local knowledge helped me identifying places to find potential respondents, such as markets.

The school director of a local school in Namuwongo slum also acted as a gatekeeper. Visiting the school in which most children in Namuwongo slum attended and with the help of the school administrators, I was able to access children from FHHs in the slum. I used the information to make contact with some of their mothers and guardians who later became respondents for my study.

4.5 Challenges faced during fieldwork

Being mainly qualitative, the study faced a number of challenges that arise from using the qualitative method of research. During the interviews, some of the questions were considered personal and heart-rending. This aroused some emotions and some respondents broke down into tears and the researcher was seen as the other and an intruder in the lives of those living the experience(Creswell, 2009). Studying people's lives is not easy, especially when the topic is in connection to their emotions. Some experiences were hard to talk about and it became hard to continue and cope with the interviews. Some of the respondents' experiences, such as being evicted from the slum when they had nowhere else to go, also overwhelmed me; yet there was need to keep a distance.

In-depth interviews became very hard at night partly because of the insecurity but also resistance from some of the respondents who never wanted to invite me to their homes at night.

Language was also a bit of a challenge; much as the researcher understood Luganda, some of the respondents had their own dialects and interviews became very time-consuming, as everything had to be carefully explained.

The study area is located in a slum and the environment was very filthy, polluted and unfriendly. When it rained, walking up and down became so difficult because the area was flooded and open trenches of sewage were hard to cope with. The weather was very hot on some days, which too was a challenge for the researcher, coming from Norway where the temperatures at that time were still low.

Since some of the interviews were carried out at respondents' homes and workplaces, customers and respondents' children frequently interrupted interviews. This was a big challenge and time-consuming.

The fact that I was in my country, I faced various interruptions from family members. Some of them wanted financial and emotional support and there was need to travel deep in the village to check on the extended family, all of which couldn't be ignored but was interference to the study.

4.6 Ethical considerations

In order to protect respondents from risk and show them utmost respect, I sought written and verbal informed consent from each one of them. The objectives and purposes of the research were clearly spelled out to them. Respondents participated voluntarily and were free to withdraw from the study any time they felt they did not want to be a part anymore. The study has been registered with the Norwegian Social Science Data Services (NSD) and the ethical principles of confidentiality and anonymity were followed according to the NSD guidelines throughout the research process.

I assured the respondents that I would use pseudonyms so that they would freely engage in the research study. All community leaders were given a clear explanation of the

research topic and they were requested for permission to carry out research. All protocols were observed.

I also introduced myself to the headquarters of Makindye division in which Namuwongo slum is administratively located. They advised me to seek permission and informed consent from the local council chairmen of the zones in Namuwongo. Written permission was then granted to carry out the research without any interference. This was very important because without permission from authorities, a researcher cannot carry out any research activities in Uganda.

4.7 Reflexivity and Positionality

Going back to Uganda to carry out research from abroad put me in a position of an outsider yet an insider by nationality. The words of Lal (1996), "I was confronting the other for the first time," aptly applied to me. The researcher's position as a young female studying abroad affected the study in so many ways: power hierarchies were created because unlike the respondents, the researcher was educated. In order to create a common ground, the researcher had to be very reflexive, mentioning to respondents her background of having been raised in a female-headed household. This gave respondents the determination to share their stories, now seeing the researcher as no longer an outsider but one of them. According to Finlay (2002), reflexivity is "where researchers engage in explicit, self-aware analysis of their own role"(Finlay, 2002).

My insider position was also highlighted by the use of the same language as the respondents. Since English is regarded as a language for the educated, I avoided it when informants were not able to use it as a medium of communication.

In addition, I was very flexible and carried out research at the places convenient for the respondents. This also helped the respondents realise that the researcher was willing to respect their demands; hence they welcomed the researcher into their lives to tell their stories.

One's appearance and dressing code can also determine one's positionality in the field and give one a bad or good reception amongst community members (Caplan (1993). In order to fit in with the respondents, wearing the appropriate dresses was vital. Dressing down helped me look more like them, which was very important. For example, I wore very long skirts and sandals, as opposed to miniskirts and high-heeled shoes, so as to create a similarity and oneness with respondents. Make-up and jewellery were not part of the dressing code in the field and this helped me get a good reception from the respondents. As a result of appropriate dressing, I was also met as an insider.

4.8 Data handling and analysis

All the interviews, dialogues and conversations for this study were conducted in both Luganda[4] and English. According to Atkinson (1998), analysis of data may follow the steps of transcription and interpretation of the data while relying on the objectives of the study. The interviews that were held in Luganda were transcribed first in Luganda and, to gain better understanding of the collected data, they were later translated into English. After a series of reading through the data, overlapping and major themes for the study were identified. This then guided me into further analysis of the findings of the study based on the theories, frameworks, and literature for this study. The findings of this study were also interpreted basing on the local and broader context for the study. The findings presented were based on the major themes that were analysed for this study. The equipment used for data collection and the notes written down were safely locked away in my room and cannot be accessed by anyone. This is because the data is confidential and only to be used for this particular study.

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[4] Luganda is the mostly used language in Kampala city where Namuwongo slum is located.

CHAPTER FIVE: FEMALE HEADS OF HOUSEHOLDS: REASONS AND TRAJECTORY TO THE NAMUWONGO SLUM.

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the personal life stories of women who are female heads of households (FHoHs) in Namuwongo slum whom I interviewed. Their early lives are detailed with emphasis on how they ended up living in the slum as FHoHs. The chapter also presents the women's level of education, the number of members in their households, and the various factors that have contributed to the increasing incidence of female-headed households in Uganda.

Ntozi and Zirimenya (1999) argue that FHHs are a product of domestic violence, separations and divorce, widowhood, migration and polygamy, among other factors. The factors mentioned by the quoted scholars somewhat relate to the findings of this study as shall be discussed below.

5.2 Reasons for living in the slum as FHoHs

5.2.1 Domestic violence

One of the prevalent reasons for headship of households by females according to this study is domestic violence. Happy, a 50-year-old director at a local nursery and primary school and an FHoH, explained to me how she ended up being a head of a household in the slum:

> I have two children of my own in my household and both of them completed university and are looking for jobs. I stopped school at senior four level after which I joined a teachers' institution. I graduated as a primary school teacher from the institution. I have eleven members to look after in my household. These include my parents, whom I live with, and the children of my siblings that travelled abroad. Before separating with my ex-husband, I was working on and off as a primary school teacher because my husband never allowed me to work. I had to be a good wife and I listened to him. However, I got tired and I wanted to build my career, which he was against. Every time I went to work without his permission, he would beat me. This was traumatizing. I felt worthless and undeserving. My children were

always witnessing their father beating and shouting at me. He was not a good example to them and they lived in fear when he was at home. My first-born child even tried to intervene when the father was battering me and this really broke me. Most of the time I would ask myself: "Why me?" I became very miserable but I was always giving him another chance until I felt I had had enough and my children and I deserved a better life. I decided to share my problems with my big sister who is now living abroad and she sympathized with me. She allowed me to move into her house in Namuwongo that she was renting out. Her children were also coming back from abroad to study in Uganda. My sister suggested that they stay with me as they would have proper guidance living with me in her house. I have lived in Namuwongo for 20 years now and I am growing strong each day. I was very lucky because I did not have to look for a house where I would have to pay rent expensively.

The story of Happy represents the stories of many women who rejected living as servile housewives at the beck and call of their husbands. They chose to find and create a better life as single women by finding employment and heading their own households.

Just like Happy above, Nakazzi, one of the respondents of this study, had this to say:

I am now partially deaf because my ex-husband had turned me into his drum and used to beat me day and night. At first, I thought that if a man didn't beat you he didn't care about you and I thought that by beating me, he was showing his love for me. My friends in Namuwongo told me that "akwagala nnyo,"[5] that's why he beats you. One of them even told me how she thought her partner did not love her because he had never beaten her. For some time, I thought this was an act of love. I sustained scars but my love for my husband still remained. This went on and on until I realised I was not happy and some people condemned him and me for staying with a man who beat me up day and night. I made a decision to report him after I became partially deaf and I realised he did not love me. He was just a violent man who did not appreciate me. I reported him to the LC I chairman and then to the police and he was arrested. This way, I was able to protect my children and myself

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[5] Akwagala nnyo is a Luganda word that implies that someone loves you very much.

from him. As a single woman now, I run my household.

Domestic violence, as this study found out, made many women to opt for single life and head their households. This was because the women felt insecure living with the men who used to beat them all the time as they claimed. Some of the women were left with permanent scars just like Nakazzi mentioned above.

Nakazzi was at her workplace in Namuwongo market when I interviewed her for this study. She also had this to say during the interview:

> I am 45 years old with two children both 16 years old. I come from eastern Uganda and that's where both my parents live with some of my other relatives. I did not go to school; therefore, I have no formal job. I rent the two-roomed house in Namuwongo that I share with my family; that is my daughter and granddaughter. We have no space and a curtain wall separates us. My son comes home once in a while because he does not like staying with us, saying that there is no room for him. He spends most of his time at his friends. I have to take care of my parents in the village because they are very old and need some financial support especially when it comes to hospital bills. Three of my siblings passed away and the only brother alive is an alcoholic. He doesn't seem to care about our parents. This leaves me to toil alone to support members of my household and my parents who are in the village. I became a single mother after I had my husband imprisoned for domestic violence. However, I believe I was still the head of the household even when he was around because he was always drinking alcohol and sleeping around with women. He did not contribute to the family. I was doing all that was necessary to put food on the table in our house and also taking care of my husband even with my meager resources.
>
> My ex-husband and I were staying in Ggaba [located in the capital city, Kampala], which was far away from his workplace, and he used to spend a lot of money on transport fares. We decided to look for cheap accommodation in the Namuwongo slum since it was nearer the city centre. After so many years of stomaching domestic violence, I had enough. I reported my husband to the police and he was imprisoned. I feel no remorse and though some women tell me I was wrong and

that I should never have reported the father of my children to the police, I do not despair because they forgot that my husband never felt sorry for me when he was beating me up day and night.

In this study, Nakazzi's story is representative of low-educated women who choose to say no to domestic violence and end up as single mothers heading their households. She also represents women who ended up in the slum by following their male partners. Some respondents, just like Nakazzi, initially viewed domestic violence as an act of love, but later reported their spouses to the police even with the risk of stigmatization and social exclusion.

According to Kyriacou et al. (1999) and Koenig et al. (2003), domestic violence causes so many injuries among women such as fractures and dislocations of their limbs, disfiguration of faces and general harm to the whole body. Domestic violence produced feelings of fear among some women in this study and many of them lost confidence in men and in the institution of marriage. The verbal and physical intimidation the women experienced led them to opt for single life and later headship of households because they developed feelings of distrust towards men. In respect to violence as a factor of FHoHs, Karamagi, Tumwine, Tylleskar, and Heggenhougen (2006) say that violence against women is common in Uganda. This is because of the gender inequality that tends to put men above women. Indeed, some respondents in this study stated that they had left their husbands because of domestic violence.

In relation to the findings of my study, Koenig et al. (2003) in a study on domestic violence in rural Uganda conclude that the violence suffered by women is in various forms. These include verbal abuse and physical abuse, which involves getting beaten by a stick, being pushed, kicked, slapped and even boxed by a spouse.

Violence against women cuts across borders and is suffered by many women all over the world. According to a domestic violence against women and girls report by Unicef (2000), violence against women and girls is a widespread problem that cuts across race, class and level of education, among other factors. The victims mostly experience the violence in their homes where they should feel safe. It is in their homes where the women succumb to violence by their partners; they are tortured both psychologically and

physically (ibid). In addition to domestic violence, this study subsequently discusses other reasons for the women becoming FHoHs and living in the slum.

5.2.2 HIV/AIDS and Death

This study found that death attributed to HIV/AIDS contributed to the escalation of FHHs in Namuwongo slum. Zikusooka, who is a local primary school teacher, living in Namuwongo slum told her story thus:

> After graduating as a primary school teacher, I got married to my late husband and I moved to Namuwongo where I had got a job as a teacher. The school offered me free housing in Namuwongo and we could not let the offer go because we did not have a lot of income. My stay in Namuwongo has been full of ups and downs because I lost my husband. When my husband fell sick, we both thought it was witchcraft at first and for a long time, we went to several traditional healers who gave us traditional medicines. At that time, we both did not listen to advice that my husband had HIV/AIDS. After some time and after a series of consultations with the medical doctors, we accepted his status and he started taking treatment. However, it was somewhat too late and after a few months, he died. I was left alone as a single mother to run the household and look after our children.

From Zikusooka's story, it is evident that the death of her husband due to HIV/AIDs led to her status as head of a household. Available literature that relates to my study indicates that the high rate of HIV/AIDS-related deaths of spouses in Africa has left some women as widows and heads of households. In relation to my study, Ntozi and Zirimenya (1999) report that the HIV/AIDS scourge destroyed many households, leading to a rise of female-headed households in Uganda. In a study by Horrell and Krishnan (2007) on poverty and productivity in female-headed households in Zimbabwe, it is observed that due to HIV/AIDS, some families were broken up as male partners died and women became widows.

5.2.3 Polygamy and multiple partners

In relation to HIV/AIDS, the factor of polygamy and having multiple partners by male spouses has increased FHHs.

Mastula, a Muslim, said:

> In my religion, a man is allowed to have more than one wife. However, that's only if he can provide for them. My ex-husband was not meeting his obligations. The household was deprived of many basic needs and I was going through so much emotional pain. It is not easy having co-wives threatening you all the time, gossiping about you and also claiming that you bewitch them and their children. I wanted peace of mind and I chose to leave Kibuli where my husband and I were staying. I looked for a house near my workplace and I found cheap accommodation in Namuwongo slum. I now live in Namuwongo with my children and it is not any different from Kibuli because it was also a slum.

The above respondent was living in a polygamous marriage; however, she decided to leave the marriage because she was both deprived and tired of the household conflicts between her and her co-wives. According to Rehman (2007), polygamy in Islam is an accepted practice, and husbands should tell their wives of their other polygamous marriages and take care of all wives justly. However, as exemplified by this study, some women like Mastula, chose not to conform to polygamy. This is because they did not want to put themselves at the risk of wrangles with co-wives, emotional distress, HIV/AIDS and related diseases. Polygamy in Uganda is a common practice and is one of the major factors for the cause of divorce and HIV/AIDS among marriages in Uganda (Ntozi & Zirimenya, 1999).

This study found that polygamy produces conflicts among women who are co-wives and some women tend to choose single motherhood instead of staying in polygamous marriages. In addition, some women said their husbands were not fully providing for their households and they opted for single motherhood as heads of their won households.

5.2.4 Military conflicts

Another major contribution to the escalation of women becoming FHoHs and living in the slum is military conflicts.

Nini, who is a refugee from Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) now living in Namuwongo as a head of a household, had this to say during an interview for this study:

> I came from Congo and I settled in Uganda to escape the war with my two children.

My husband was abducted and to-date, I don't know if he is alive or dead. When I moved to Uganda, I first stayed in a camp in Kisoro[6]. I became very familiar with Kisoro and I left the camp with my children to stay with a soldier in Kisoro town as his spouse. He started up a business for me in a market and with time, I started moving to the city to buy merchandise. Every time I visited Kampala, I admired the people who stayed in the big city and I hoped that one day I would be like them. My new husband[7] was later transferred to a barracks in Makindye in Kampala and we had to leave Kisoro. I started selling dried fish in Makindye market when we moved to Kampala. But soon I started having problems with my husband. One day, he threw me out of the house and told me never to come back. I packed my bags and looked for another house with my children. I found one in Namuwongo, which I could afford. I cannot go back to DRC now. Some of my relatives were also killed; so, I have no one to go back to. There is a lot of insecurity and yet Namuwongo is peaceful.

The above study demonstrates that some women migrated, without their husbands but with their children, from war-torn areas such as the Democratic Republic of Congo. The women later got into other relationships with other men in Kampala but still separated and became single mothers heading their households. Military conflicts have contributed to the separation of families and emergence of FHHs in the Namuwongo slum.

In a similar story to Nini, Magla exemplifies this scenario in her story:

I was born in Gulu district and I moved to Namuwongo slum when I was 22 years old. This was in 1996 while I was fleeing the war in northern Uganda. Most of my family members were killed and my sister and I had to run for our lives. We walked long hours with many people from the village and we found camps that had been set up for displaced people. Life in the camps was very desolate; we had lost everything. I only had my sister and mother. Food and water were not enough and,

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[6] Kisoro is one of the districts in western Uganda.
[7] Men are referred to as husbands even if the women they are living with are not legally married to them. As long as a woman stays with a man for a long time and they are involved in an intimate relationship, the man and woman are referred to as each other's husband and wife.

at night, I could not sleep at all as I was very scared that the camp was going to be attacked by the rebels at any time and they would kill us or even abduct us.

After living six months in the camp, my mother died. We felt lonely. However, after months, we made some friends and life moved on. One of the soldiers at the camp asked me to be his girlfriend and I agreed. My young sister would never have to go without food as the soldier would offer me extra food. He later asked me if I wanted to leave the camp to which I agreed to only if I would go with my sister. He was well-respected and one morning he told us to jump on a truck that had brought logistics from the Gulu town. Life in Gulu town was very hard, as we had nowhere to sleep except for the nightclubs and on verandahs. My sister and I were begging until I decided to use the little money we had accumulated as our transport fare to Kampala; we had decided to move to the city, Kampala.

For two months, while in the city, we slept under buses because we had no home. I decided to become a dancer in nightclubs in Kampala so that I could earn an income and find us a place to stay. I then discovered cheap housing in Namuwongo slum as advised by other girls in the city. It is in Namuwongo that I met my partner and we lived together for over 15 years and had four children. We separated because he became interested in another woman who he claimed was young and more hardworking than I am. Today, I work as a cook in a school and none of my children are able to work. I also wash clothes in and around Namuwongo for money. My younger sister also moved in with me after her failed relationship and she supplements my income with what she gets as a sex worker in Kampala. We live in a one-roomed house made out of mud. And there is no privacy between the elders and the young ones.

I never went to school and I think it's one of the reasons I am living such a life. Maybe I would have had a better job. My life is really hard but I see myself as a very strong woman because I have a very heavy burden on my shoulders but I still have hope. I am alone with no one to help me since my husband deserted me but my God will see me through (*She said with a smile on her face*). I sometimes think I am cursed because I suffered as a child and I am suffering once more as an adult.

Magla's story towards becoming a head of a household and a single mother is also

representative of some women who ended up as FHoHs as a result of war and their situations became worse after their spouses abandoned them for other women. This left them to take care of the households without any support from spouses.

This study found that war in northern Uganda left some women as widows and many had their husbands abducted and many other women ended living in the city. In this connection, Pham (2007) says that many individuals were abducted by the LRA rebels although some returned after the war. The fear of being abducted caused some of the respondents of this study to run and seek refuge in Kampala and later in the slum of Namuwongo. Magla's story is representative of some of the women who came from conflict and war-torn areas to settle in the slum. Some of the respondents moved to the slum as young girls seeking refuge and peace from war-torn areas. Magla and Nini, who sought refuge from northern Uganda and DRC respectively, are examples of such women.

Mann (2014) confirms that some of the women who settled in the Namuwongo slum came from conflict areas in and around Uganda. Similarly, Dimanin (2012) states that 12 per cent of the population in Namuwongo is of migrants from northern Uganda who were running away from the LRA war and seeking refuge. The two studies resonate with the findings of this study on this particular reason for FHHs living in the slum.

5.2.5 Rural-urban migration

This study found that rural-urban migration had influenced some women to live in the slum where they later became FHoHs. Beat, a 38-year-old woman who was living with her three children, brother in-law and aunt, narrated her story during an interview for this study:

> I moved to the slum from Masaka[8] district. I am the second born of four children and my family was very poor; so, I decided to move to the city for a better life. This was because when some people returned from the cities to the villages, they told us how they were living better lives. In fact they came back with so many gifts for their families and one of the women motivated and pushed me to move to the city.

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[8] Masaka is one of the districts in the central region of Uganda.

Furthermore, while in the village, I had lost two of my brothers to HIV/AIDS and the stigma towards my family was overwhelming.

I decided to leave Masaka and seek greener pastures in Kampala. I was also not married and I wanted a man from the city; so, I was ready to move. On reaching Kampala, I went to stay with one of the women who were from my village. She advised and helped me find a job as a live-in housemaid because it would be easier for me to find accommodation and at the same time a job. She advised me to find very cheap housing in Soweto, a slum in Namuwongo, and wake up every morning to knock at rich people's gates to ask for employment.

Working as a housemaid helped me secure accommodation, food and a salary. I also met my husband who was a primary school teacher in Namuwongo. I quit my job as a housemaid to live with my husband in the Namuwongo slum and I started a business, selling local brew. After seven years, my husband passed away and I was left alone with the burden of our children.

This study revealed that some women lived in Namuwongo slum as result of migration and search for better lives from the rural areas to the urban areas. They were looking for better opportunities. Some of the respondents of this study; for example Beat mentioned above, revealed that there was no use of them staying in the rural areas yet they knew the city had a lot to offer them as some of their peers had told them. In relation to my study, Todaro (1971) reveals that some of the reasons as to why individuals migrate from rural to urban areas is because urban areas seem to offer better economic opportunities such as employment and better pay. In addition, Brockerhoff and Eu (1993) state that migration from rural areas to urban areas by females in Africa is usually determined by their marital status and the number of children they have. Females with less than two children and unmarried are likely to migrate to urban areas (ibid).

5.2.6 Search for cheap housing

This study found that FHoHs lived in the slum of Namuwongo because the housing and land in the slum was relatively cheaper than elsewhere in Kampala.

Becca, an FHoH in Namuwongo, narrated:

My husband died and he left me with my daughter. She also later died and left three

children behind that I have to look after. My daughter died of HIV/AIDS. It has not been easy for me but I try to manage with the little income I get from my small business. I have lived in Namuwongo for a long time and worked as a housemaid and office messenger back then in surrounding suburbs of Namuwongo like Muyenga.

I saved up some money and I bought a small piece of land in the slum and I built a small house. I cannot afford to live elsewhere in the city except if I were to go back to the village. But I don't think I can manage village life anymore. The city life is much easier for me. I have my grandchildren with me; I cannot take them to the village to suffer more. My land also keeps me in the slum because I don't want to sell it.

Namuwongo slum, as I mentioned in the introduction chapter, is a low-lying area. It is susceptible to floods and, therefore, attracts people with low incomes. Hence in the above narration, Becca says she cannot afford to live elsewhere. She represents women who live in Namuwongo because of the affordable land and accommodation. This finding resonates with Mann (2014) when he says that Namuwongo offers cheap housing and accessibility to the main city.

5.3 Chapter summary

From the above case stories by respondents and findings, the following can be noted. The FHoHs interviewed for this study had lived in the slum for a long time and, as such, were credible respondents for this study; since the study was exploring the livelihoods of FHHs in Namuwongo slum. According to Mann (2014) and Slum Aid Project (2006), there is a growing number of female-headed households in slums in Kampala such as in Namuwongo. This study found that FHHs were a result of incidents such as domestic violence, HIV/AIDS-related deaths, military conflicts and polygamy. The mentioned factors pushed some women into heading their households and living without male partners.

Furthermore, some women who were living as FHoHs in the slum at the time of this

study narrated that they had moved to the slums for various reasons such as following their husbands, looking for cheap housing and running away from conflict areas.

Looking further at their family background, most of the women were from underprivileged family backgrounds and most of them were not highly educated[9]. They lived with and looked after their children and some extended family members of their households in Namuwongo slum. Most of the women were separated with no man as a breadwinner in their households and, therefore, they were the sole breadwinners of their households. Without having the support from male partners, FHHs were bound to face various challenges, as I shall discuss in the next chapter.

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[9] Education is very important because it earns a person skills, the ability to make proper decisions and qualifications for employment.

CHAPTER SIX: CHALLENGES IN THE LIVELIHOODS OF FHHS IN NAMUWONGO SLUM

6.1 Introduction

This chapter, applying the sustainable livelihood approach, discusses the livelihood challenges of FHHs as put forward by FHoHs, especially as they explained why they came to Namuwongo slum in the first place.

The chapter, therefore, attempts to answer the following questions. What are the challenges faced by female-headed households? What is their perception towards themselves? Why do they feel stuck or why are they unable to leave the slum? I used the SLA because it aided me in organizing the analysis of findings in a systematic way. The SLA components consisting of capitals (human, financial, social, and natural), context, conditions and trends were adopted as the analytical foci for the challenges face by FHHs in the slum. In order to gain further understanding on the livelihood challenges of FHHs and factors hindering their empowerment, I also used the empowerment approach to analyse the findings, which I present in this chapter.

6.2 Challenges faced by FHHs in relations to their capitals

Overall, in this study, the challenges faced by FHHs in Namuwongo slum revolve around human, financial, social and natural capital and the context, conditions and trends in the slum.

6.2.1 Human capital

According to the findings, human capital emerged as a significant factor in the livelihoods of FHHs in Namuwongo slum. Lack of adequate formal education, dependency, labour and the burden of children were critical issues of human capital in this study. From the narratives in the previous chapter, I noted that most of the women I interviewed had low or no formal education. Lack of an education challenged FHoHs and impacted on their livelihoods.

For example, Beat, who came to the city from a remote village in search of a better life, said:

My parents only sent my brothers to school although some of them did not even complete school because we did not have enough money. If I had had an education, I would not have suffered on reaching Kampala. I would have looked for professional jobs to better my life and my household. However, I have gone through so much suffering in my life. I have moved from job to job and house to house as a housemaid. I accepted to be ill-treated by bosses who used to verbally abuse me, and even exclude me as if I was less of a human being. As a housemaid, I would cook the best food for my bosses. However, I was told never to eat the same food as them. In fact, I would never share the same dining space as my bosses; I was always in the kitchen or servants' quarters. I went through all this because I did not have the foundation of an education to open up new and better opportunities for me. I had to stomach all that happened in my life. Much as I no longer work as a housemaid and I am my own boss, I want to leave Namuwongo but I cannot even afford anywhere else.

It is clear that lack of formal education led Beat to take up jobs that she never aspired to. Just like Appleton (1996) noted that women become more vulnerable to poverty not because of lack of access to assets but because of the lack of education, Beat's narrative is significant. Lack of formal employment mostly because of the low levels of education of respondents was a significant challenge, making it difficult for some women to raise income for their households and to change their livelihoods for the better. However, some respondents managed to devise means for better survival of their households as it will be highlighted in chapter seven.

Furthermore, lack of formal education partly contributed to poor decision-making on the part of some women and thus amplified their vulnerability. Apiyo's story is a case in point:

My uncle promised to take me to school when he brought me from the village. However, the promise was never fulfilled. When I reached the city, I instead became a housemaid for his family. I watched his children go to school while I

stayed home to clean the house and cook food. Every time I asked about school, I was given heavy beatings. I decided to run away with my ex-boyfriend that I had met and he brought me to Namuwongo. We had four children and after so many domestic problems, my partner decided to leave me because he found another woman. He claimed that she was young and more hardworking than me. I am now struggling to make ends meet but if I had gone to school maybe I would have met a reasonable man or I would have become a teacher and I would now have a stable job to support my family.

Due to vulnerability as a result of no formal education, Apiyo had followed her male partner to the slum because he had promised her a better life. Hers was not a decision made rationally. Even then, from her own story, she thinks lack of education played a role in getting the partner she had to live with. Due to lack of formal education, women like Apiyo were unable to seek formal employment to better their livelihoods. This is a point which Appleton (1996) underscores when he states that lack of education contributes to ignorance and inability of women to better their lives. Further, lack of employment due to no or low formal education contributed to a vicious cycle of household poverty in the FHHs in this study. FHoHs with fewer funds barely sent their children to school, which led them into the same vicious cycle of poverty as their mothers.

Happy's story is different from Apiyo's and gives fundamental significance to the importance of education in the lives of women who went to school. Happy, a school director in Namuwongo, said:

If I had not gone to school, my household and I would be eating dust, my children would not go to school, they would even walk naked and I would still be married to my abusive and dominating husband. Having an education helped me get a job and earn an income to sustain my household. My children are able to go to school and earn an education and I am also able to live a very decent life that I think I would never have if I had still been married or if I was not educated.

Noted from Happy's story is that she was able to gain employment and better support of her household's livelihood, in confirmation of a UNICEF (2011) report which stated that education is considered as a key development goal in the development perspective. Quality education is understood as contributing to empowerment and as a foundation to pursuing a good livelihood that may in the long run reduce levels of poverty(ibid).

With an education, women may have many alternatives to choose from to pursue their livelihoods and make right decisions for their own wellbeing and that of members in their households. As Atekyereza (2001) argues, a household is better off with an educated woman because women are very tactical in improving the wellbeing of households. On the other hand, a household with an uneducated wife or mother is not regarded highly in the society (ibid), as is the case of Apiyo cited above.

Some of the FHHs had a challenge of many dependants. The more members inhabited a household, the more constrained the household was. Yet the assets owned by the respondents were part of the tools they used for the survival and maintenance of their households. For example, Beat, who had five members to look after, said:

> We are very many and I am the only breadwinner. It is really straining to make ends meet and support everyone in the household. We, therefore, go without basic needs such as proper housing; we skip meals and have poor clothes. We don't even have proper beddings and some of the members sleep on the ground. The children often miss going to school due to lack of fees. I have nothing to do about our situation for now because my business can only bring in a small income.

A similar scenario of a dependency burden is captured through Margaret, who said:

> My now disabled husband cannot work as much as he used to; so, he cannot support the family. All he does is go to church hoping and praying for a miracle to gain strength in his right arm that was affected by the accident. I work so much to put food on the table, which is so frustrating for me because everyone in the household now looks up to me.

The stories above indicate that high levels of dependency in FHHs constrain them and contribute to their deprivation because they had limited resources to put to use. Indeed, in an earlier study by Dimanin (2012) in Uganda, it is shown that Namuwongo slum has the highest number of household members living together in one congested unit. Furthermore, according to the UBOS (2010) household survey, families with more members in the household are more likely to experience more financial constraints and lack in their daily basic needs.

In relation to dependency, Dungumaro (2008) states that FHHs that have very many dependants are constrained in their livelihoods. This is because they sometimes have low incomes and limited resources, which are shared by vey many persons (ibid).

A good number of FHHs in this study had many children who were too young and people who were too old to work. Although some FHoHs had their parents in the rural areas, some lived with them in the slum. Most of the very young and very old members in the households did not work. So, they contributed to the dependency burden in the households. Indeed, the very old and the very young were really the heaviest burdens because they required more resources in terms of medical care, education and nutrition. Some of the household heads had words close to the following said by Becca:

> I am the substantial breadwinner in my household. If all my grandchildren were old enough to work, the household would be in a much better position but everyone depends mostly on my little earnings from the shop and the public toilet that I own. However, at least I have a shop and toilet for my income unlike some of my neighbours who are in worse situations (*she laughed*).

Becca, a grandmother of three children, did all she could to sustain her household. While telling her story, she would even have moments to laugh. Becca was better off than some of her neighbours like she mentioned. She also had the advantage of her grandchildren who helped out with house chores. This brought me to understand that much as some of the women were going through various situations or challenges, they still managed to appreciate the little they had and could keep a positive attitude and laugh about it. Some household members were young, or orphaned due to HIV/AIDS. Therefore, they were

often in and out of hospital.

Human capital in terms of labour is important for the improvement of household livelihoods. Some respondents said that lack of male counterparts who would have provided labour contributed to the poverty in their households in terms of food production and other income-generating activities. Zikusooka, a primary school teacher in Namuwongo, said:

> If my husband were still part of the family, our food production and income would be higher. This is because we all would take time off to go and grow food crops in the village. The death of my husband caused a shortage in labour and this leaves our household deprived of basic needs such as proper housing. I want to leave the slum but it seems impossible. When in the field, only a man can clear a bigger piece of land in a short time; but because my husband is no longer part of our lives, we experience a shortage and low food production. This is because we are few and are not so strong and we take our time when tilling the land.

However, having a man in the household does not always help or even change the livelihood of the household, as Nakazzi testified:

> My husband was a casual worker and spent most of his money on alcohol. The household had irregular meals and the housing was in poor condition. We lived in a shack. He contributed nothing to our income; only buying alcohol for himself, abusing me and beating me up.

To Nakazzi, the past and the present were more or less the same. The only missing link was a man in her household. But Nakazzi said that she now had peace of mind without him since she was always nursing wounds of domestic violence because of a man's violence. I noted that some women who lived without men in their households were not so different economically from their counterparts who lived with men, men who contributed little or nothing to household livelihood.

In this study, human capital was related to child welfare. Some of the FHHs in the slum lacked most of the basic needs of a child such as proper health care, housing, good nutrition, good education and proper clothing. In as much as women from these households tried to provide for their children, not all basic needs were met. For example, I observed that children in the households I interviewed had scanty clothing on their bodies. Also, some of the children looked malnourished.

Margaret had this to say:

> I have so many demands; for example, paying rent and I do not earn a lot of money from my business. Sometimes, we even go without basic needs. In my house, one meal a day is enough. Otherwise, food is very expensive. In the morning, we have tea with my children but sometimes the tea doesn't have sugar. But my children do not complain and my husband cannot even start to complain because he does not contribute to the household.

Margaret's narrative suggests that the health of her children might have been compromised due to poor nutrition and irregular meals. However, much as this was a challenge, I observed her children were playing and during my stay no one complained of hunger. This is not to say all was well. I observed that many children in the slum looked malnourished, with sunken eyes and skinny small bodies. Some of the children were also picking food from rubbish pits, which is risky for their health.

Summary

As Scoone's sustainable livelihood approach states, human capital as a resource is useful for exploring the production of livelihood strategies and outcomes. In this study, I found human capital in relation to lack of formal education, dependency and labour in FHHs greatly significant as agencies of vulnerability of FHHs.

Since human capital is fundamental in production of livelihood strategies and stability, the more household members are able to contribute to the productivity of the household, the less their deprivation and vice versa. However, in this study, human capital also relies on other capitals such as financial capital as elaborated in the subsequent pages.

6.2.2 Financial capital

The key contingencies in financial capital are access to loans, credit funds, assets and technologies, working and living conditions. According to the SLA, financial capital involves liquid assets in the form of cash, credit or debt, savings, and other economic assets. It also includes basic infrastructure, and production equipment and technologies that enable one to make ends meet in the pursuit of a livelihood (Scoones, 1998, p. 8).

In this study, the focus was mainly on access to loans and credit as well as physical assets owned by individuals such as televisions and fridges. I also considered the living and working conditions of FHHs.

In order to access a loan, one must have assets. Apiyo, a single mother in Namuwongo, said:

> For a very long time, I have tried to access a loan to help me expand my salon into a better and more attractive one but I have been turned down. This is because I lack the security that is required. Once I offered my television as collateral but I was turned down because the loan officer said it was an old model. The most shocking thing also happened to me. One of the loan officers asked me if I was married and I said no. He then told me that I would never manage paying back. Most of the loan officers were biased and some even told me since I was a single mother, I would not manage to pay the money back, especially the loan interest. Some of them even advised me not to be so ambitious and manage with the little income I had.

According to Apiyo's story, it was hard for her to access loans because she had no male partner and lacked the collateral demanded by loan officers. This study found that lack of assets marked some respondents as unreliable to pay back the borrowed money, thus limiting their access to loans.

However, Becca, who managed to access loans, had a different story to tell:

> I have lived in Namuwongo for a long time and I am well-known by so many people; in fact almost everyone calls me 'grandmother'. Some of the loan officers respect me because I own the small piece of land on which my house sits. I do not always ask for loans but in situations where I need school fees for my

grandchildren and need to pay medical bills, I always seek for quick loans. Much as I have lived in Namuwongo for long and I am respected, I only get a loan because of the small piece of land I own.

From Becca's narrative, I established that some of the loans did not improve livelihoods but, instead, turned into a debt burden. In Uganda, for one to access credit facilities such as loans, assets are very important. In a study by Dolan (2002),in Uganda, it is confirmed that lack of access to assets such as land really constrains households headed by women and keeps them in the brackets of poverty. This greatly relates to the findings mentioned above. Lack of access and ownership of assets was really a setback to some of the households in this study in accessing loans for the betterment of their livelihoods.

Financial capital with regard to the working conditions of respondents was also an important tenet for this study. Some **r**espondents stated that their health was at stake, as they had to work under unfavourable conditions. One example is Mastula who works as a road sweeper with Kampala Capital City Authority (KCCA). She said:

I am always nursing colds because of the dusty roads that I sweep. I would love to get another job but I lack an education. One day, a public transport motorcycle knocked me down while I was at work. I hit my head on the ground but luckily I was not disabled. Many people surrounded me but no one was offering to take me to hospital. I was in pain but later a police car picked me up and instead of taking me to hospital, I was taken to the police to make a statement much as I was in pain. A good Samaritan offered to take me to hospital and paid for my bills, which I would not have managed to clear.

This study, therefore, finds that respondents such as Mastula lead very risky lives in their jobs, thereby affecting their livelihoods adversely. While collecting data for this study, I observed that many women in Uganda who sweep roads had no protective clothing and masks to keep dust away from their faces or reflective wear.

Tied closely to the working conditions are the living conditions of FHoHs. Most of the respondents lived in shacks they referred to as homes, which leaked and flooded whenever it rained, posing a challenge to their health. In addition, many members lived in one small unit, used poor beddings and some had no mattresses but slept on mats. Some FHoHs could not afford to move their households from the slum for decent housing elsewhere because of their low financial status. Beat said:

> Time and time again my children bump into me while I am naked because a curtain wall is what divides our house. This often leaves me feeling very embarrassed. However, I cannot change our situation right now. The rent is very affordable and at least we have a roof over our heads unlike some people living on the streets.

Many respondents shared unfavourable living conditions. Becca, like Beat, had a small housing unit about which she said:

> When I came to Kampala, it was not easy for me but after working on so many jobs, I saved some money and bought a tiny piece of land here in Namuwongo. It is very small as you can see it, but it is mine and that is very important to me (*said with a smile on her face*). I don't pay rent and I am my own landlord. I have no hope of leaving Namuwongo because anywhere else I would go, I would have to pay rent and yet I do not have enough money. Therefore, it is very important for me to use the little money I have on the basic needs of my household and my grandchildren.

Of course behind Becca and Beat's stories lies a basic truth. Living in a one-bedroom or two-bedroom house left the FHoHs with no personal privacy at all because they had to share with their children and neighbours. Children were exposed to their elders' nakedness, which is ominous in many cultures of Uganda. Zikusooka, for instance, revealed:

> My house is not self-contained and I share a bathroom and latrine with my neighbours. This is not easy especially because some neighbours do not like cleaning at all. The latrine is only cleaned by a few of us and also no one bothers

to smoke it[10] except for me. The children also peep in the bathrooms when an elder is bathing, which is embarrassing.

Crime and social problems aggravate unfavourable slum living conditions. I observed that the houses were very close to each other, because Namuwongo slum is densely populated, leaving very little space for pathways and walkways. This was very risky as criminals easily take advantage of such small pathways to rob and harm residents. In connection to congestion and its attendant crime, Becca said:

> Living in Namuwongo is not easy at all. We have no space and each night we have to move things in my shop to create space and room for the children to sleep. There is a lot of theft and I have been a victim of it. Back then, I did not own a bank account. I used to keep my little savings on me. One evening thieves broke into my tiny house and demanded all the money I had, which I gave them because I could not fight since I am an old woman and I did not want anything to happen to my grandchildren and myself.
>
> Even when you make an alarm at night seeking for help from neighbours, no one comes out to help because everyone fears for their lives. We have no security at all and survive by the grace of God. I also thank God that we at least have a roof over our heads because there are many people living on the streets.

I observed that Becca and her household members shared one big room divided by curtains. Their quality of housing was poor and the latrines were also not a good sight. In line with my study, Akinsola and Popovich (2002) observed that some FHHs in Botswana were leading poor-quality lives because of their low incomes. FHHs lived in overcrowded areas and with lack of proper latrines, which was risky for their livelihoods. This relates with the findings in my study (ibid).

Summary
Based on the SLA, the financial capital is the economic base, which is very significant in the achievement of livelihoods that are desired by individuals (Scoones, 1998). As

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[10] Smoking a latrine helps to reduce the bad stench that comes from it.

narrated by respondents, in this study, lack of financial capital greatly contributed to the deprivation of households and their livelihoods. The households could not even afford proper housing for the sustainability of their livelihoods because of their low incomes. The respondents who managed to have jobs suffered health risks due to poor working conditions and unhygienic surroundings. Thus some of the jobs were not sustainable for the livelihoods of FHHs, since they were hazardous to their health.

6.2.3 Social capital

In this study, social capital of FHHs involves various forms of social inclusion, exclusion or "othering" and self-image. Social capital involves many aspects that one leans on while pursuing a livelihood they want. According to Scoones (1998), Social capital may also be referred to as the shock absorbers that help poor people recover from adverse socio-economic situations. Social capital involves social networks, social relations, affiliations and associations, among others (ibid). When carrying out this study, I explored the role of informal saving community organizations and clubs, neighbours and religious groups to the livelihoods of respondents. In order to understand how social capital impacts on the challenges facing FHHs, I examined their relationships with their relatives as well. Apiyo once again revealed:

> My husband abandoned me and not even his relatives check up on my children to even support them emotionally. In fact, some of them avoid me, thinking I am always looking for financial help from them.

From Apiyo's story, it is evident that ex-husbands' relatives socially excluded her household. Her children lack the emotional support from not only their father but also other family members on their father's side. Perhaps it is in connection with such scenarios that Mulugeta (2009) argues that the exclusion FHHs face in their communities greatly affects their social capital and self-esteem.

It also emerged during this study that married women see FHoHs as the 'other' and they are and not well accepted in some of their local clubs. Happy, an unmarried respondent, narrated:

Much as I am the head of a school, I still cannot join Mothers Union[11] because I am not married. This organization is very strict against unmarried women and only supports married women yet it would also be very useful for us too who are not married to mingle with those who are married.

Happy is an example of some FHoHs who encountered social exclusion due to lack of a husband. She was treated as the 'other', and she could not join the Mothers Union and take part in their different activities. Yet the programmes of such groups could be empowering agencies to all women and enrich their livelihoods. In line with my study is Seddighi (2009) who puts forward that not meeting the set gender norms and expectations of a society can lead to marginalization and being treated as the 'other'. Otherness can also be among persons of the same gender, whereby some individuals feel they are superior and better off than others in different kinds of ways in society (ibid). This certainly relates to my study whereby married women treated unmarried women as the 'other'.

Even in churches, where bias is perhaps least expected, some FHoHs are still singled out and considered cursed due to their unmarried and single status. Apiyo, once again, exemplified this exclusion in the following narrative:

While in church when the pastor is praying, he asks us who are single mothers with no husbands to pray very much and hard because we are cursed and need to break the curse by praying hard and fasting so that we can get husbands. The pastor says we have demonic spirits that chase away men and only praying hard can change our situations.

From the above narrative it can be deduced that FHoHs are negatively perceived as the 'other' and excluded. FHoHs in this study revealed that they were socially excluded in very many ways. They disclosed that exclusion was from both internal sources such as close relatives and friends and external ones such as the communities they lived in. Therefore, it is a situation that validates what Rawal (2008) states in a study on social

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[11] Mothers Union is a church organisation that offers membership to married women only.

exclusion; that when individuals are not given a chance to participate fully in their communities, they are marginalized. In relation to this study, the exclusion of FHoHs stems from not meeting the conventional societal norms and customs of what a woman or mother should be.

The women feel the church, their community and financial institutions exclude them because they are not married; they are perceived to lack ability to pay back loans. Social exclusion of the respondents inhibited their empowerment to some extent. As mentioned earlier, Mosedale (2005) argues that institutions facilitate empowerment. However, in this study, some institutions that excluded FHoHs delayed their empowerment and prevented them from building their social capital for the improvement of their livelihoods.

Social capital in relation to the self-image of the FHoHs was also an important theme for the livelihoods of FHHs in this study. In an analysis of the interviews of the FHoHs in Namuwongo slum, the study showed that FHoHs had a negative perception of themselves because of being unmarried and having no man as a breadwinner in their households. Beat said:

> When I lost my husband, I was very depressed because I had lost my partner. Right now, my situation is not easy because I have so many people who look up to me and need my support, both emotionally and financially. Yet I let them down sometimes. I feel down because I don't have a man in my life like most of the neighbours. I don't feel there is any man who wants me because I am a widow.

Due to social exclusion, some women inhibit their sexuality and fear to be involved in new relationships with men. Becca, like Beat, said:

> I feel that my situation is irreversible. I am an old woman and I only wait for the day I will die and rest. All my life I have suffered and even now in my old age, I cannot smile as I see my grandchildren growing up in a very bad environment yet I cannot change it. I sometimes think I was cursed or bewitched because of my situation but then I thank God because at least I don't have to pay rent.

The respondents revealed that their households faced emotional distress in addition to

other challenges. Some of the women mentioned that the strength of the household was reduced the very moment they became female heads of households. They felt embarrassed, especially when the husbands left them for other women. Some women also said they were at times sad. Happy, for example, explains:

> Much as I am a school director, I still feel I am missing something. Society mostly respects married women, and not educational and employment titles. I miss having someone to share my problems with and also to go out to social occasions with. It hurts to see other female teachers who are even lower than me with their husbands and me as their boss always alone.

In a similar tone, Tracy, who owns a boutique that sells second-hand clothing in Namuwongo and has three children each by a different father, said:

> Some men and women do not respect me in my society because I am not married and some men are always asking me for sex. Some even call me everyone's dish, implying they can have sex with me especially because I have children from different fathers. In my face some throw insults and call me malaya[12] and nakyeyombekedde[13]. I feel so abused and ashamed when I hear them call me such names.

This study reveals that FHoHs are a disrespected category in the community of Namuwongo, often given derogatory names because of their status as single mothers and female heads of households.

Summary

Social capital is considered an important resource for the livelihoods of FHHs. Based on the findings and the aspects of exclusion of FHHs in this study, social capital was damaged and this posed a challenge on the livelihoods of respondents. In the next chapter, respondents revealed how their social capital was strengthened for their ability to

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[12] Malaya means a prostitute.

[13] "Nakyeyombekedde" is a derogatory Luganda word describing a woman who was married but separated or divorced. It may also be used to refer to women from all walks of life: rich or poor, educated or uneducated as long they are not officially known to be married.

access other capitals for the wellbeing of their livelihoods. So far, the human, financial and social capitals have been explored to analyse the challenges of FHHs in the slum. The natural capital in the slum context is also an important factor for the examination of the challenges of FHHs in Namuwongo slum.

6.2.4 Natural capital

In this study, natural capital in slums specifically revolves around the relationship between water and physical infrastructure. This study looked at infrastructure of Namuwongo slum in relation to the location of the slum and the drainage systems. Namuwongo slum is a low-lying area, which is susceptible to floods (Dimanin, 2012 and Mann, 2014). I observed Namuwongo had poor drainage systems. Excess water and floods were experienced after heavy rainfall. Flooded areas experience stagnation of water. One of the respondents, Apiyo, explained:

> I have witnessed so many children losing their lives during heavy rainfall and their bodies are found in the floods. My house also gets flooded when it rains heavily and we cannot even sleep but must stay up standing. The hygiene in Namuwongo is very bad and each and every year we often have an outbreak of cholera. The public toilets have no water; so, people do not wash their hands after toilet use, carrying germs everywhere. No one really cares around here. Foodstuffs are sold near open trenches that carry sewage and people still buy them, even with flies on them. We are surviving by chance!

Becca, who owns a retail shop in Namuwongo, had this to say:

> Every time it floods, I lose bags of sugar and maize flour in my shop because they get soaked in water. My poultry that I rear for special days like Christmas also never survive. The floods come to destroy. My grandchildren and I cannot even sleep because everywhere is just full of water. During the floods, so much rubbish is transported from other areas to my house, even from my neighbours, and most of it is not a good sight. We fall sick and yet I cannot easily afford treatment.

The stagnant water that collects after floods is a breeding place for many vectors, especially mosquitoes which cause malaria that kills so many children. Floods are also

dangerous because they may cause death, especially among young children who play in the rain and swim in the flood-water. In addition, slums are characterized by lack of enough clean water, especially tap water.

Water is a huge challenge to FHHs in Namuwongo. Lack of free and adequate piped water left so many households with poor hygiene and at the risk of catching diseases because they had to carefully use the little water they had for cooking food. Becca, who owned a public toilet, did not even have water for washing hands after people paid for using her toilet. Yet, she charged money for everyone who was to use her toilet. Margaret, who owned a roadside restaurant at the time of the interview, said:

> I fetch and store a lot of water when it rains; however, when I run out of water I have to walk long distances with my children to fetch water because I cannot afford to buy water all the time as it is very expensive for me.

Access to clean water was, indeed, a challenge to the respondents and this can be evidenced from Margaret's narrative. There was no piped water in many of the households, and some children and mothers had to walk long distances to fetch water. Nonetheless, during this study, I observed that some few respondents owned taps and sold water, using a jerrycan of 20 litres as the standard measure. This was the only way some respondents, besides the rainwater, accessed water. An example was Namazzi who owned a tap and she made some income after selling tap water to the residents in the slum.

In addition to the poor infrastructure, Namuwongo slum was filthy. Most of my respondents carried out economic activities in very unhygienic places, making them vulnerable to diseases. However, lack of adequate income limited their ability to go for monthly health checkup or seek medical attention. I observed that Margaret was carrying out her business next to stagnant water and heaps of rubbish. This was not healthy but this was her only way of making a living.

Summary

Poor drainage and dysfunctional trenches in Namuwongo slum contributed to floods and environmental degradation of the area and vulnerability of FHHs. Lack of piped water also challenges the FHHs in this study. Yet, based on Scoones' SLA, natural capital is important in the livelihoods of individuals because it supports and strengthens human capital (Scoones, 1998). However, as I observed and found in this study, the natural capital is somewhat destructive to the lives of the residents of Namuwongo slum including respondents of this study. Water, for instance, instead of being a resource, became a health hazard especially when it flooded. Unclean water aided the spread of diseases such as cholera, diarrhoea and typhoid amongst respondents and weakened the human capital in relation to labour when household members fell sick. In addition, capitals as I have discussed above, function in specific contexts, conditions and trends, which may also pose as a challenge to the livelihoods of FHHs.

6.2.5 Context conditions and trends

According to Scoones (1998), context, conditions and trends include the polices, economic conditions and politics that facilitate the livelihoods of people in a society. In this study, the context, conditions and trends in Namuwongo slum were explored to examine the challenges of FHHs in the slum, basing on the policies set by those in authority. Namuwongo is located in the low-lying areas of Kampala city. The Uganda railway also cuts through the slum, making it somewhat a busy area. Administratively, the Kampala Capital City Authority (KCCA) runs Namuwongo slum and sets the policies, rules and regulations to govern the whole city. The policies set may enhance or challenge the livelihoods of respondents. Namazzi, one of the respondents for this study, said:

> We have nowhere to go as our house was marked by KCCA as one of the houses to be broken down. My mother is sick and we cannot go back to the village since all we know is the slum life. The government is not even giving us any compensation or even helping in relocating us. I am only praying the government will at least relocate us. Otherwise, even money cannot help since we are so many in my house and only a new place to stay can be a solution to our outcry. My late father built the house we stay in and we do not know how he acquired the piece of

land; so, we cannot even stand on our ground and claim it. But the government should be sympathetic and help us.

Namazzi's story shows that the policies set by the government were a challenge to some of the respondents. The government of Uganda and neighbouring countries such as Kenya and Rwanda came up with a strategy to revamp the East African railway. This called for the eviction of many residents who lived within 30 metres of the railway line and some of the respondents were under that category. I observed very many houses in the slum that were marked with an "X", meaning they were to be demolished. Some of the respondents had built their houses within 30 metres of the Uganda railway line, which is prohibited. Many residents along the railway line faced possible eviction and most respondents complained that they had nowhere else to go. The authorities did not listen and insisted that the residents' settlements were illegal.

In addition, KCCA came up with strict policies against littering of the environment in Kampala. Becca, the grandmother of three children, noted:

> The income I earn for my household is not enough; therefore, I buy raw materials for my eldest grandchild to make fat cakes and boiled eggs for sale after school. This has not been easy because KCCA stopped all forms of vending anything in the city. However, we still try to carry out our small business (*she laughed*) in fact *muzukulu*[14] once reported to me that the officers of KCCA questioned her why and where she got the foodstuffs she was selling. They cautioned her to never do it again or they would take her merchandise and arrest her. This for sometime stopped us but we started again because, where shall we the poor eat?

The above narrative illustrates that respondents have to carry out some of their businesses against all odds because the policies put in place by the government do not favour them. Policies such as the ban on selling merchandise in the city have challenged very many petty traders and the financial capital of their households.

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[14] Muzukulu means grandchild in Luganda, one of the most common languages used in the central region in Uganda.

Summary

The context, conditions and trends greatly affect the livelihoods of respondents especially through policies that are set by those in authority. The policies may influence livelihood resources such as financial capital as mentioned above and even the housing of respondents. This reflects back on Kabeer (2005)'s notion of empowerment in a way that those in authority exercise power over those not in authority. In this case policies set up by those in authority limit the empowerment and exercising of livelihood strategies by the respondents of this study.

6.3 Chapter summary

In this chapter, I used the SLA to analyse the lives and challenges of FHHs in Namuwongo slum. FHHs in Namuwongo slum are among the poorest in Uganda. Household members live under deprived conditions. FHHs have limited access to assets to improve their lives. Even with the few resources accessed, resources such as physical, natural and financial capitals, their livelihoods were still underprivileged and they lived in risky conditions. The respondents lacked basic services such as clean piped water; they lacked security in spite of the high crime rate in the slum and floods that can contribute to the spread of diseases like cholera. And, in general, the slum conditions are challenging to a decent living.

Formal education, which is important for human capital, was not accessed by most of the respondents. This hindered their access to formal employment that could lead to betterment in their livelihoods. In addition, children in FHHs are subjects of the situations in their households in such a way that instead of enjoying their childhood, and earning an education, some stay home and others are involved in child labour. This in the long run leads to a vicious cycle of poverty among these households; because without an education, the children may end up taking the same unemployment pathways just as their mothers or guardians.

Different capitals interact to produce the livelihoods of the FHHs in Namuwongo slum. The availability of financial capital can help one achieve better living conditions in a better environment. However, most respondents were constrained. The relationship of the capitals also comes into play in such a way that without assets like land, it is very hard

for the FHoHs to access financial capital in terms of loans, which is the reality. Additionally, natural capital in the form of poor infrastructure and limited access to water challenged health and human capital of FHHs. Social capital is very much affected by all the other capitals and when there is a lack of or limited access to financial, natural and human capital, the social capital is adversely affected.

In conclusion, using the livelihood framework in relation to the capitals owned by the respondents, the study was able to explore the daily lifestyles and situations of FHHs in the slum.

FHHs in Namuwongo slum are faced with various challenges. The capitals are affected by the context, conditions and trends, which also challenge the livelihoods of respondents. The livelihoods of the households are vulnerable and are very much at risk due to the high levels of poverty in their households. Poverty in female-headed households affects their children and other members. Some children were not going to school, leading to a vicious cycle of poverty [15] in their lives. Overall, the FHHs of this study faced challenges in their livelihoods; however, they improvised strategies as shall be discussed in the next chapter.

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[15] See Chant (2003)

CHAPTER SEVEN: LIVELIHOOD STRATEGIES BY FHHS: SURVIVAL AND ACHIEVEMENTS

7.1 Introduction

The study revealed that FHHs face various challenges in sustaining their livelihoods. This chapter discusses what kind of livelihood strategies are adopted by FHHs for survival amidst such challenges. The chapter attempts to answer the following questions: What kind of activities do FHoHs perform to earn an income? Where else do they get help? What is the importance of social networks as a livelihood strategy?

In this chapter, I used the sustainable livelihood approach and the empowerment approach in relation to agency, resources and achievements for analysis. Noting that the resources in the empowerment approach are similar to livelihood capitals in terms of facilitating the livelihoods of people, some of the findings will be presented in accordance with the human, financial, social and natural capitals or resources. I also used the sustainable livelihood approach to examine the role of social networks in the livelihood strategies of FHHs. The focus was on elements of transforming structures and institutions as I examined the social networks. Finally, this chapter examines the achievements and other livelihood outcomes of FHHs.

The study found that though FHHs were disempowered by the structures in their community, they exercised agency and made empowering choices to improve their livelihoods. The women exercised agency without intervention of male partners. According to Kabeer (2005), agency is when a person exercises autonomy over their life choices and enjoys freedoms they desire without any compromise. In the process, they challenge the power relations. Accordingly, FHHs came up with various livelihood strategies, to which I now turn.

7.2 Livelihood strategies for survival

In the discussion of livelihood strategies by FHHs, this chapter introduces the notion of alternative measures, resting on the various capitals discussed in chapter six. Overall, emphasis is on the livelihood strategies for survival and achievements realised by FHHS in Namuwongo slum.

The key areas of analysis in the alternative measures of livelihood strategies include housing, schooling for children, petty trade and farming, casual labour, brewing of alcohol, making use of social networks and institutions including neighbourhood and kinship relations, and vocational training. The chapter also discusses livelihood outcomes and achievements of FHHs whereby the main direction is to demonstrate the survival strategies and achievements realised by FHHs. The livelihood strategies are presented in accordance with the human, natural, financial and social capitals chronologically.

7.2.1 Human capital

According to the findings of this study, in order to secure the livelihoods and overcome the challenges in relation to the human capital in FHHs; alternative measures for medical care, and education of their children was made a priority.

As mentioned in the previous chapter, some of the respondents could not afford all the basic needs of their households. And as a strategy for survival, they opted for alternative means. For instance, Margaret said:

> I cannot afford Western medicine most times but when I am fetching firewood for my business, I pick up herbs that we use in my household as medicine. The herbs really do help. For example, we use aloe vera and many other herbs, which I never run out of, for malaria, colds and coughs.

In Uganda, herbal medicine is used as an alternative to Western medicine. Some households that cannot afford hospital fees also opt for the traditional medicines in case of illnesses. From Margaret's story, which is similar to many others, this study finds that some of the respondents take alternative measures because they lack financial resources. In this regard, Margaret exercised passive agency, as mentioned by Kabeer (2005), as a strategy to get alternative treatments for her household's members. This helped her to protect the little human capital she had.

Women made many sacrifices to ensure that their children went to school. About schooling for children, Mastula said:

> I work hard and tirelessly to see that I can send my children to school. I do not enjoy sweeping roads because it's very risky for my life but I know for as long as I am alive, my children must go to school. I do not want them to suffer like me at all. I want them to get professional jobs, become teachers and doctors. Life is so hard when you do not go to school and my children should not go through the struggles that I have gone through.

Just like Mastula, Nakazzi said:

> I would rather wear torn clothes but pay my children's school fees. My children are going to be powerful because education is the key and I am very positive this will happen because they are clever. They speak English unlike me and it makes me proud to see my children take on this journey that will give them better opportunities in the future.

The respondents insisted that they desired new clothes, better housing, good food and so on. But they had to do without their desired needs in order to send their children to school so that they would earn better opportunities in the future. Much as respondents worked hard for long hours, they said that it was for the benefit of their children's education. Women hoped to change their future through educating their children. In fact, they said education was an investment that would bring them economic returns in the future. With an education, the cycle of poverty can be broken as the children acquire skills enabling them to get better jobs and more stability in their lives.

Some FHoHs said they cut down on the number of meals in their households. For example, they had only one meal a day so that they would save enough money to send their children to school; a phenomenon which Scoones' SLA notes (Scoones, 1998), in that livelihoods are enhanced when livelihoods strategies are adopted to ensure sustainability. From the aforementioned cases, educating children can be seen as a key tool for ensuring that children will earn skills that can help them achieve sustainable

employment, unlike their mothers. As articulated by Kabeer (2005), one is only empowered if they were disempowered at some point. Therefore, FHoHs who were not able to send their children before and now do so can be seen as empowered. By this process, the women were also empowering their children in attaining an education.

7.2.2 Natural capital

This study found that in respect to their natural capital, FHHs practised farming as a survival strategy for their households.

In Uganda, women, in general, play a great role in food production for their households. FHoHs in Namuwongo slum communities involved themselves in small-scale agricultural activities to ensure some level of food security for their households. Communities were found to rear some animals and grow some vegetables in sacks on their verandahs for the purpose of producing alternative food. In this direction, Happy, who had a poultry unit in her backyard, said:

> With my poultry, I am able to sell both eggs and birds in and around Namuwongo. I have managed to run my household and keep myself busy with the poultry project. My children also learn to work hard by getting involved in the poultry business. I am more independent than ever before and I am a role model for many female heads of households around Namuwongo. I also grow vegetables in sacks on my verandah, which we eat in my household.

Small-scale poultry farming is common practice in Namuwongo and this is mainly because with poultry, there were double profits from eggs and the birds. In other households, birds were reared but only for domestic consumption. For example, in Becca's household, the birds reared were mainly for consuming on special days such as Christmas. In relation to farming, Apiyo said:

> I do not own land but I managed to acquire temporary use of a small piece of land from the Catholic Church in Bunga[16]. I grow sweet potatoes and beans but this is only temporary because when the church asks me to leave it, I will definitely do so.

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[16] Bunga is a township in Kampala city that is not far away from Namuwongo.

Lack of personal land in Namuwongo was not such a hindering factor for some FHoHs like Apiyo above. This was because some respondents managed to acquire temporary use of land from the church so that they could grow some food crops. This is a situation which Kabeer (2005) observed when he said that in order for individuals to exercise choice for their empowerment, alternatives to choose from must exist in society. Apiyo's story contains alternatives to choose from. There was an alternative to her lack of land: the land provided by the church. She made the choice to get it and use it for improving the livelihood of her household.

Similarly, other respondents also practised farming. However, this was in their villages of origin. Zikusooka, for example, said:

> When schools break off for holiday, I travel back to the village and plant food crops. I make sure I plant as much as I can so that I can have enough food for my household. However, sometimes I also sell food to fellow teachers and neighbours, especially when the harvest is good. This has helped to at least secure food in my household especially in times when I have no income.

Like Zikusooka, Margaret practises farming, and she narrated thus:

> I try to do some little farming here in Namuwongo and I grow yams in the swamps. The process is hard because the swamps have snakes and other reptiles that are poisonous but I bought gumboots that I use to at least protect my legs and feet. With the company of some friends, I wake up early in the morning on weekends to go farming. It is not accepted to grow anything in the swamps but it is my way of survival and so far I have not been arrested for doing so. The yams that I grow help me secure food in my household and they are also part of the menu for my business.

Much as it was on a small scale, respondents used farming as alternative strategy for the survival of their households. Margaret can be seen as a representative of the women who

exercised passive agency.[17] This is because it was illegal to carry out agriculture in the swamps, but some respondents chose to do it for the survival of their households. According to Bigsten and Mugerwa (1992), most swamps in Uganda are perceived as government land and it is illegal to carry out any activities in them. In fact, the Kampala Capital City Authority is mandated to arrest anyone encroaching on government land inclusive of swamps. However, much as farming was practised on a small scale, the FHHs managed to produce food for their households and also earn some income.

7.2.3 Financial capital

FHoHs in Namuwongo slum were involved in various activities to secure their financial capital. This study found that petty trade, casual labour, brewing of alcohol and use of housing to generate income were the main livelihood strategies for income generation by FHHs.

Petty trade involved the selling of items such as food items, vegetables and fruits, second-hand clothes and shoes, and charcoal, among others.They stationed their businesses by the roadsides and in their homes. Thus, they used their physical capital as a resource for pursuing their livelihoods. On market days, some FHOHs put up stalls in the centre of the slum in order to target the big numbers of people who came to purchase items especially. Margaret, who owns a roadside restaurant, said:

> I want to send my children to school; that is why I started this business of selling food. My business attracts many bachelors and students who do not have the time to cook. I work day and night because I want to send my children to school. I do not want my children to become like me [who is uneducated and has to do odd jobs]. I wake up early in the morning to cook breakfast, which is mainly porridge, for my customers, and I work till night. I retire for the day after I have sold dinner. My business is by the roadside and it is accessible to anyone passing by.

In order to keep expenses at a minimum, Margaret revealed:

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[17] Passive agency as mentioned by Kabeer (2005) is when individuals have limited choice but they come up with various solutions and strategies to transform their lives which also relates to how the women in this study exercise their agency by going against all odds for the survival of their families.

> Since I cannot afford electricity, I use mainly firewood at home and charcoal for my business. I do not buy the firewood; I go out looking for it in the nearby bushes, which has helped me cut costs. I mainly cook all the food that I sell at home and I use charcoal to warm it up at the workstation. Therefore, I also spend less on charcoal, and I always use it again; I don't throw it away because the times are really hard.

Based on the above quotation, the study finds that Margaret used nature as a resource to run her household. This helped her save money and run her household and business. It is a situation similar to that of Malawi about which Kamanga et al. (2009) observed that nature can be used by FHHs as a way of obtaining resources and improving livelihoods.

Some households actively involved their children in income-generating activities so as to supplement their income. Becca said:

> My first grandchild wakes up very early in the morning to make fat cakes[18] with the help of her siblings, which she sells on her way from school. The income she brings in is very important to the household and she makes money every day. The front room of my house is where I have some few items that I sell, as you can see. However, at night, one of my grandchildren sleeps there because there is not enough room at the back.

The children engaged in activities like vending of cooked foodstuffs such as eggs and fat cakes. I observed children vending merchandise and this was supposedly to earn income for their households.

Therefore, petty trade is a strategy that was employed by FHOHs for the survival of their households. Not all households in the Namuwongo slum have access to electricity and many use charcoal or firewood instead. This provides a market for the women who sell charcoal and firewood, contributing to their income. It is worth noting that petty trade in

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[18] Fat cakes are also called *mandaazi* in Luganda and they are made out of flour and fried in oil.

the form of vending and hawking products is illegal in Kampala city. According to an article about the eviction of vendors from Kampala, written by Paulat (2014), Kampala Capital City Authority arrests anyone who practises such forms of trade in the city (ibid). Despite such risks, FHoHs in this study sold their merchandise in Kampala and tried to escape from the authorities.

This study found that FHoHs were involved in casual labour and performed different kinds of odd jobs in one day so as to raise income. The kinds of jobs performed earned respondents income immediately they finished their duties. For example, some worked as school cooks or as cleaners, washing clothes in the neighborhoods.

Magla, a cook in a school in Namuwongo, is an example. She said:

> I have to walk around the rich suburbs every weekend looking for families who want to have their clothes washed. Even when I should rest during the weekends from my weekdays' work, I choose not to because I need to send my children to school so that they do not end up like me.

And Mastula said:

> When I am carrying out my daily activities of sweeping streets and I notice construction sites, I always ask bosses for some weekend jobs, especially those that involve carrying sand and bricks. This helps me earn extra income for my household. The kind of work I do is tiresome; in addition to cooking at the construction sites, I also carry and fetch water for the sites. I get home when I am very exhausted but at the end of the day I have earned an income, which keeps me motivated.

The jobs that only men used to do are no longer gendered. Heavy work, such as carrying of sand and bricks, is an example of such work. Women are actively involved in them, strategising for the survival of their households. FHoHs exercised agency in the form of "power to" and ignored social practices such as leaving heavy-duty jobs for men. They put their desired goals first and made the choice to perform jobs where they were intimidated and ridiculed for the benefit of the livelihoods of their households. They were motivated and this inspired the decisions they made for the betterment of their lives. In

this regard, I witnessed the notion by Kabeer (2005) on power to and agency in empowerment, which should have meaning, motivation and purpose being acted out.

Brewing of alcohol is a lucrative business for some FHoHs and this helps them raise income. They mostly brewed sorghum locally called *malwa*. Beat, who owned a shack where she sold her local brew, stated that her business had helped her access some of the basic needs for her household members:

> It is a very tedious process especially when sorting the stones out of the sorghum because I never want my clients to bite onto stones since I dry the sorghum on the ground. However, I always manage with the help of some members of the household. My customers say they cannot afford beer and this makes it easy for me to sell more and more alcohol to them; my local brew is cheap. I have been able to own and maintain this pub and this is an achievement I am proud of. I am able to take care of my household. It is not so easy of course because there are times when clients want free alcohol and this strains my budget but I still find a way of getting my money back from them.

Local alcohol is sold on a daily basis. But on market days when many people visit the slum to buy different kinds of products, the FHoHs make more money. Since the raw materials for making local brew, such as sorghum, are affordable, it becomes easy for FHoHs to make some reasonable profits.

The housing owned by some FHoHs was also used as a livelihood strategy for their survival. For example, Becca, a grandmother of three, used the front room of her house as a retail shop and then in the night it was used as a bedroom. In addition, the few poultry birds that Becca kept shared the same housing with other household members. She used this livelihood strategy, of using her house alternatively as a retail shop and a shelter for her poultry, as a way of generating income and securing food. Much as some of the strategies looked uncomfortable to the outsider, some respondents were happy with their decisions.

7.2.4 Social capital

One important aspect of social capital is that of transforming structure and institutions. For instance, through NGOs and social networks such as churches, neighbours and kinship relations, FHoHs tried to transform the livelihoods of their households. NGOs such as Compassion Uganda and Meeting Point offered support to them, mostly in form of school fees for their children. In this connection, Apiyo, who moved to Namuwongo with a boyfriend at the age of seventeen after leaving her uncle's home, said her children were able to go to school because of Meeting Point and Compassion Uganda. The children receive school fees and other educational materials, which she would never have been able to provide.

Some organizations offer free vocational training to FHoHs in Namuwongo slum, aimed at enabling them to earn skills that can enable them to create self-employment. FHoHs in Namuwongo enroll in free vocational schools by NGOs such as the Sisterhood project. Apiyo is one of the women who acquired vocational skills. She had this to say:

> I own a small salon and I earned the skills of hair plating I use from vocational training. The training was free and I could not miss out on a free opportunity. I get some customers and through this I am managing to earn income for my household. I hope to learn more skills when given a second opportunity. I believe I will leave the slum and move to a better place.

Through the Sisterhood project[19], women got vocation training and created small businesses for their livelihoods. Hence, the FHoHs can be seen to have exercised passive agency to come up with life-changing strategies for the betterment of their livelihoods (Kabeer, 2005). Much as there were few alternatives in the community, they still

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[19]The Sisterhood project "is a women's group founded by women from Namuwongo slum's community in Kampala, Uganda. It is an independent group, created as an alternative to the exploitative employment of industries such as coffee factories and in labouring jobs in general" (Sisterhood Women for hope, 2007).

exercised their choice-making powers to earn skills and made decisions without any intervention from a male partner.

Social capital involves many aspects that one leans on while pursuing a livelihood one desires. This form of capital may also be referred to as the shock absorbers that help poor people recover from adverse situations. According to Scoones' article on SLA (Scoones, 1998), social capital involves social networks, social relations, affiliations, and associations. Social institutions like churches and social groups such as Nigiina[20] and local saving groups called merry-go-rounds[21], greatly impacted on the livelihoods of FHHs. Sisterhood project, Nigiina and merry-go-rounds are some of the local groups some respondents were a part of. The Sisterhood project helped many women gain skills such as hair braiding, tailoring and the making of arts and crafts such as necklaces and earrings. These skills helped the women to start up their own businesses to earn income. I investigated the role of informal saving community organizations and clubs, neighbours and churches towards the livelihoods of the respondents in order to understand their social capital as well as their interaction with their relatives and the larger community. For instance, Apiyo stated that she acquired her hair plaiting skills from the Sisterhood project in Namuwongo and that her salon was a living testimony of that training. With her salon, her children could not lack food because she makes a reasonable income to support her household members and she owed it all to the Sisterhood project.

Furthermore, Namazzi, a 30-year-old woman living in Namuwongo in her parents' house, revealed that their house had always hosted Nigiina parties and that the parties are very good for them because they celebrate life, share problems, eat good food and receive gifts. The women shared gifts on such special days and the host is always the recipient of the gifts. Many of the women save money to give good gifts because they want the same

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[20] Nigiina are local clubs for women where they buy each other gifts at every gathering; women save money to buy a particular person a gift at each meeting and it is a form of celebration.

[21] Merry-go-rounds are called so because women form groups where they save money and at the end of the week, one person takes the savings of the week; this goes on and on until the first person who received the savings gets again, and then the process continues.

gifts in return from the people they give. The gifts help in gaining household assets such as household dishes, charcoal stoves, and lamps.

Through "Nigiina" and "merry-go-rounds," FHoHs pool money together and then share it. This helps them save and use money when they need to, like during serious illnesses, paying rent and school fees. These clubs also provide moral support in times of loss of a loved one. Friends in the clubs help during times of sorrow such as in death and are also at hand in celebratory times. Some of the respondents said the clubs had greatly contributed to their livelihoods. In these clubs, they articulated their problems and found solutions.

Some respondents were born-again Christians[22] and religious norms and practices were present in their daily activities. Some FHoHs said that people were available to help them, just as they were available to help others, because religious teachings call upon them to do so. FHoHs stated that God knew their situations. They said that it was up to God to change their situation, especially through prayer. Margaret was one such woman:

> My husband suffered an accident while working in a newspaper printery and had two of his fingers of the right hand cut off. He lost his job. However, he has never lost his faith in God. He goes to church every Sunday and even for fellowships and Bible studies. He also goes for overnight prayers every Thursday. He is a very devoted believer and has hope in a miracle from God to take away the burden of his disability and give him strength in his hand and bless him with a job.

Religion is highly respected; Sunday was the day most respondents went to church. But they also went on some days during the week. They went for Bible studies and also overnight prayers. Margaret's husband, for example, went for overnight prayers every

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[22] Born-again Christians are Pentecostal Christians; they accept Jesus Christ as their personal saviour and believe that he died for them to be cleansed of their sins. They believe that by praying through him to the almighty God their problems are solved.

Thursday. This involved praising, praying, and worshiping God from evening until the morning of the next day. Apiyo said:

> If it hadn't been for church, I would be nowhere in this world after separating from my husband. I had lost all hope and I had lost my self-esteem because a man that I had truly loved had walked out on me and left me with very young children. When I started going to church and the pastor preached about God's love and kindness, I gained my peace and my confidence returned. I was no longer embarrassed because I knew God loved me so much, better than man. I gained the courage to start my business and look after my children and myself.

The respondents said that in church, they felt comfortable to talk to God about their problems and it was in church where they met people who had similar problems like themselves and who later became their friends and confidantes. It was also from church that they met long-lost childhood friends, relatives and members from other communities. This helped them build social capital. Church helped them to reduce on emotional distress especially for respondents who were going through very tough moments. Through church, they regained hope in their lives. Therefore, much as some FHoHs were sometimes rebuked in the church by pastors who believed they had some demonic spirits that chased away men in their lives, they were still called upon to pray for a change in their livelihood situations. Overall, they said they did experience support from the church.

According to Kanyamurwa and Ampek (2007), women heads of households receive support from NGOs as support for their livelihoods and livelihood strategies and this greatly resonates with the findings in this study. It should also be noted that the social networks, especially the NGOs, only facilitated the empowerment of the women and gave them the support they needed, but it was up to the women to use the skills and tools provided. Social networks from religious groups were important aspects in the lives of my respondents.

The neighbourhood and kinship relations were regarded highly by respondents. Beat, who owns a pub in the slum, said:

> I only access a loan when I need to pay rent and I always use my fridge or television as collateral because the moneylenders in Namuwongo told me that those are the only assets they can accept from me. My customers are also attracted to my pub because of the television and the cold drinks I serve unlike some other pubs that do not have these facilities. Getting the loan is not so difficult for me, but paying back sometimes is hard especially when I am not making a lot of profits from the business. I sometimes end up asking my loyal customers or neighbours to lend me some money to finance the loan and get my assets back.

The above quotation indicates that some FHoHs viewed relations with neighbours as important because neighbours were easy to run to in case of emergencies. Relationships with neighbours are regarded highly by some of the respondents because a neighbour is the first person to run to when there is a problem. Some respondents, like Beat above, acquired quick loans from their neighbours to take care of their immediate needs. This was mostly when a member of the household fell ill and there was need for quick medical attention. Loans between neighbours were based on mutual trust and willingness to pay back as agreed. Therefore, neighbours were problem solvers.

In addition to the relationships with neighbours, some respondents regarded kinship ties highly as resource to their livelihoods. Happy said:

> I earn a salary but the monthly remittances from my sisters and brother abroad help me to run my household without lacking any basic needs. The money I receive helps to pay for the water and electricity bills in my household that are normally very high mostly because we are very many in the household.

Zikusooka also said:

> I am able to go back to the village and till my father's land anytime I want to. This helps me very much to save money when it comes to food. My family in the

village is supportive and some of the relatives help in the growing of crops and also harvesting when I am not around and they send me the harvest.

Some FHoHs asked for and received support from their extended families. Some households had relatives abroad who supplemented their income to sustain them. With their kinship ties, some FHHs like Zikusooka's household, managed to access land for food production. Just like in my study Frayne (2004), observed that FHHs used kinships as a livelihood strategy. FHHs living in urban areas with strong social ties back in the rural areas of their origin may not face food deprivation. This is because they always rely on their ties in the rural areas to send them food (ibid).

7.3 Livelihood outcomes and achievements of FHHs

One of the livelihood outcomes and achievements of FHHs in Namuwongo was freedoms FHoHs enjoyed. The freedoms included speech, work and making of independent decisions important for their lives and other members of their households. Some FHoHs claimed they were free from dominant men in their lives and regained the power to make their own decisions, putting their best interests first. For instance, Happy said:

> I let myself be abused and lost my self-esteem because I listened to my ex-husband's demands which robbed me of my ability to grow my career. I was educated but I did not find work because my husband wanted me to be the ideal housewife that would cook, look after the children, and take care of him in all ways. Even when I was tired and he wanted something, he would not help me.
>
> He was dominant and wanted things done his way even when it came to the bedroom; my ex-husband was not understanding and wanted sex when I did not feel like it. I feel freer now. Ever since I left my ex-husband, my career has grown and I am sure I would not be where I am today if I was still with him. I am a school director, which I believe I would not be if I was still married. I can even afford to have some leisure time without worrying about what anyone will say. I am no longer answerable to anyone.

From Happy's story, it can be concluded that though some respondents felt marginalized in their community due to their status as FHoHs, they also felt liberated and free to plan

for their own futures. Some FHoHs stated that their single status provided them with more time to enjoy their leisure time without worrying about men who laid down rules on how to live their lives. They were able to maximise their agency. Resources such as the freedoms that were gained helped FHoHs to achieve growth in their various endeavours.

Secondly, some FHoHs stated that domestic violence was dealt away in their lives because the men who used to abuse them were no longer in their lives. Most of the respondents claimed that they had abusive ex male partners who were also alcoholics and promiscuous. In addition to physical torture, they also experienced emotional abuse from the unfaithful male partners.

Nakazzi, who reported her husband to the police, had sustained partial deafness from being physically abused by her husband. She got peace when he was imprisoned. In this way, FHoHs used passive agency and transformative agency to challenge the situations that brought distress in their lives and achieve justice; which in the end contributed to their well-being and improvement in their livelihoods.

Several FHoHs were struggling to make ends meet. With unemployment, lack of enough income, poor housing, exclusion in society, being called names greatly leaves one's mental capital at risk. Also according to McCoy et al. (2013) and Mulugeta.(2009), mental capital is greatly responsible and contributes to one's ability to access and relate to other capitals such as social, financial, and natural, among others, and in them construct a livelihood.

Mental capital can lead to one's success or failure and, therefore, it should be nourished and be well taken care of to avoid breakdowns in one's life and livelihood McCoy et al. (2013).The freedoms enjoyed by the women helped to nourish their mental capital and come up with possible strategies for their livelihoods without any hindrance.

Magla said:

> It is not easy for me but at least right now I don't have co-wives cursing my children and myself. I am doing all that is possible for our survival and I hope that one day I will leave the slum. I work very hard in tough conditions to educate my

children so that one day when they get jobs; they can take me out of the slum. It was tough living without my husband but with time I managed to cope and move on with my life.

FHoHs declared they wanted better lives and they hoped they would raise their children in a much better environment, an environment without male partners. Strengthening their social networks through church attendance and joining social groups in the neighbourhood were very important for their mental capital. Much as the women were still struggling to make ends meet, they, nonetheless, had financial autonomy over the money they earned and determined how it should be spent without any obstruction from anyone.

However, it should also be noted that FHoHs should not be treated as a homogenous category. Not all of them are struggling with financial problems. At the time of the study, Happy, of the sampled FHoHs, was educated and working as a school director. This indicated that some FHoHs had had a transformation in their socio-economic status after separation from men. Happy said:

> I now own a poultry unit that I would never have if I were still with my ex-husband. I make my own financial decisions; whether they are good or bad, no one determines what I should or should not do. I meet all the requirements of my children both for school and in their daily lives. I also can afford to take care of myself and buy myself the clothes that I want and take myself to the salon without having to ask anyone for money like I used to do in the past.

Beat also said:

> I am in charge of my small income because my ex-husband was always borrowing from me to look after his other women and I would not say no because I would be a bad wife then. However, with the autonomy I have over my income, I am managing to take care of my household alone. There were times when we fought over my own money and I would just give in because I also felt guilty if my ex-husband's children had no food because they were still siblings to my children. However, right now that is no longer my responsibility.

Happy's and Beat's stories display that there is a link between women and power[23]. The women, that is, the FHoHs had gained 'power over' their income and how to manage it. It was up to them to determine their own welfare and what to spend their money on (Kabeer, 2005).

Of course there were structural factors that seemed to challenge and disempower respondents to achieve their livelihoods. Some respondents can be seen as empowered because of the way they were seen to exercise agency. In situations where stress and shocks are experienced, strategies to come out were always sought by respondents. They realized various strategies for the betterment of their livelihoods, even with the lack of support from their male counterparts. Furthermore, some FHoHs were able to gain strong will and accept their situation as FHoHs. This is a reflection of the SLA which says that livelihood outcomes should be sustainable when individuals become resilient in their contexts to reduce their vulnerability (Scoones, 1998).

7.4 Chapter summary

As I discussed in the previous chapter, the challenges faced by FHHs vary and are mainly attributed to the lack of access to resources. The resources mentioned in this chapter are similar to the capitals and assets that the SLA emphasises and they are really significant to the livelihoods of FHHs. Formal education is one of the major assets in the human capital. However, formal education was not possessed by some of the respondents. Therefore, lack of education contributed to the formal unemployment of the FHoHs and hence they were somewhat disempowered. However, they exercised passive agency and created jobs for themselves to improve their household livelihoods. FHoHs worked hard to enforce positive change in their lives. Some worked against all odds through using different strategies to carry out jobs that were even dangerous to their health.

Many of the FHoHs were empowered by their status as heads of households and they used their freedom to make decisions and choices for the benefit of their livelihoods

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[23] Power in this aspect relates to ability to make independent choices for the betterment of their lives.

without obstruction from male counterparts. In addition, the FHoHs involved children in income-generating activities, such as petty trade.

FHoHs worked by involving themselves in different activities, mostly in the informal sector, to acquire an income to support the members of their households. They used the resources within their reach to exercise agency for the achievement of their livelihoods. Even with the risks they faced that may have brought stress and shocks in their lives, they devised various strategies so as to strengthen their financial capital, for example.

In order to reduce their vulnerability, FHoHs in Namuwongo slum came up with various livelihood strategies for the betterment of their lives and their households. They engaged in activities such as skill development supported by the NGOs in the slum. Social networks were also very significant to FHHs; in a way that women depended on some of them, such as NGOs, for the support of the education of their children. Kinship and neighbourhood relationships were very vital for FHHs by providing both economic and social support.

According to Scoones (1998), the livelihood strategies for survival should also be sustainable. This study found that some of the strategies employed by the FHoHs in Namuwongo proved sustainable to their livelihoods. For example, the vocational skills they acquired were a form of informal education that could help them sustain their lives. In addition, educating their children was also very sustainable as this would help to cut down the vicious cycle of poverty in their lives. Most members in the households where respondents were picked were dependent on FHoHs. This was a heavy burden for the FHoHs who earned little income.

CHAPTER EIGHT

8.1 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

This study set out to explore livelihoods of female-headed households (FHHs) in Namuwongo slum of Kampala, the capital city of Uganda. The study explored why female heads of households (FHoHs) settled in Namuwongo slum, the livelihood challenges, strategies and achievements of FHHs in Namuwongo.

In this chapter, I summarise the main findings, and provide conclusions of the study. I build the summary on the most important aspects of the study basing on the objectives of the study. The objectives were a guideline for the production of an extensive study. The first one is how the sampled women in the study area of Namuwongo ended up living in the slum as female heads of households. Secondly, I summarise the livelihood challenges of FHHs in Namuwongo slum. Finally, I sum up the livelihood strategies for survival and achievement adopted by FHoHs.

This study has shown that different scholars[24] have written about the phenomenon of female headship of households all over the world for decades. However, most of the studies about FHHs, as the reviewed literature in this study has shown, overly generalized the poverty in FHHs. The studies lacked a versatile approach towards the category of FHHs in the Ugandan context. Therefore, the sustainable livelihood approach (SLA), that focuses on people and their ways of life and generally situates individuals as a central point for examination, was used as a tool for analysis for this study. The SLA examines different crosscutting concepts in the livelihoods of people. For example, assets owned by individuals for the achievement or failures of a desired livelihood are a central pillar of the SLA. Aspects of social networks and transforming institutions that contribute to the livelihoods of the FHHs are also analyzed for the production of a dynamic study. Furthermore, using the SLA, the context, trends and conditions of Namuwongo were analyzed in order to understand the situations and the conditions in the slum that

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[24](Chant, 1997, 2003), (Buvinic & Gupta, 1997), and (Fuwa, 2000), among others.

contributed to the livelihoods of the respondents. This was very important in order to produce knowledge that is context-specific.

Further, the empowerment theory in relation to the aspects of agency, resources and achievements was used for the analysis of the findings in this study. This was to explore how the FHoHs exercised agency and used the resources accessible to them to achieve better livelihoods and brighter futures for their households.

This study revealed various reasons as to why some households ended up being female headed in the slum of Namuwongo. These reasons include deaths of male partners, migration and military conflicts, domestic violence, separation and divorce, among others. The choice for the women to settle in the slum was due to various reasons such as cheap housing, and the proximity of the slum to their workplaces. Some of the respondents claimed that they lived in the slum because they had moved in with their spouses who were already staying in Namuwongo slum.

Poverty, which contributed to a kind of 'imprisoned' status in the slum, was evidenced in most of the studied households. The incidence of poverty among the FHHs was a major finding for this study. Some households were found to lack basic needs such as simple proper beddings in their households. Regarding the challenges faced by FHHs in Namuwongo slum, this study revealed in chapter six, that limited resources in the form of capitals and assets greatly contributed to the livelihood constraints in FHHs. Natural, human, financial and social capitals in relation to the livelihoods of FHHs were discussed; to understand their life situations and the challenges they faced

Reviewing human capital, this study focused on the welfare of children in FHHs, education levels, dependency in the households and labour that challenged the livelihoods of FHHs. FHHs were found to have no or low levels of formal education especially among the heads of the households. This contributed to the unemployment of FHoHs. This lack of education among the heads of households can be attributed to poverty, gender discrimination among females and societal norms that traditionally privilege the boy child over the girl child. In conclusion the lack of education among respondents

greatly contributed to the livelihood challenges among FHHs. In addition to the life choices made by FHoHs that left their households stuck in the slum.

Many households had so many dependants that depended on one person – the female head of the household - that basic human needs such as food and clothing were in short supply. This study found that children of the FHHs were deprived of adequate food, clothing and shelter. Some children did not even go to school at all. Human capital in the form of labour was also inadequate, since many of the households had no male partners to contribute to the labour and production in their households. Some of the household members were either too young or too old to work, which adversely affected livelihoods of these households. However it can be concluded that much as male labour was lacking, female labour was still very important; and fundamental for the survival and livelihoods of the FHHs.

The challenges notwithstanding, FHoHs enlisted to gain vocational skills with the support of NGOs so as to become entrepreneurs and create their own jobs as a strategy for survival. In addition, FHHs improvised alternative means for survival such as use free herbal medicines to treat illnesses in their households. Some FHoHs used their housing units, poor as they were, for income generation by setting up retail shops, for instance. Some FHoHs sent their children to school as a strategy for their livelihoods, especially in terms of the future. This was based on the hope that the educated children will one day get jobs and change the destiny of their households when they get gainful employment.

In supplement, natural capital was significant to the livelihoods of FHHs in this study. Some respondents mentioned that they did not own land to grow crops from and lacked enough space to rear animals. They ended up sharing the same housing with animals. Nevertheless, as a survival strategy for their livelihoods, women without land sought permission to access and use church land to grow crops for a given time. In addition, others grew some food such as yams in the swamps much as it was prohibited. But, as Namuwongo is a low-lying area, floods were sometimes experienced. Floods negatively

affected the businesses and the overall health of the FHHs. FHHs also experienced a lack of adequate supply of safe piped water.

From the findings of this study I discussed social capital, especially social exclusion and self-image of FHoHs in FHHs. The study found that some respondents were ridiculed in their social circles, like the church where they were considered as cursed. In the community they were also given nicknames[25] that were derogatory to their self-image and implied they were prostitutes. As a strategy for survival, some FHoHs shared their problems with their neighbours and provided solutions to one another where possible. This helped to build their mental capital and strengthen one another emotionally. Furthermore, the FHoHs in this study helped one another financially and even in matters of taking care of one another's children for the benefit of their livelihoods.

In addition, networks such as churches managed to support FHoHs by praying for them and gave them hope for a better future, much as they sometimes were considered a cursed group. The local clubs such as the Nigiina and saving groups such as merry-go-rounds were also very essential for the livelihoods of the FHoHs. This is because during club meetings they shared some happy moments and saved money that they shared weekly. Therefore, their participation in the social networks helped to build their mental capital. Kinship ties were also found to be very significant in the study. Some of the respondents relied on the land owned by their parents in the villages of their origin for food production. In addition, some FHHs were also beneficiaries of institutions such as NGOs, which helped sponsor some of their children's education. NGOs were fundamental in helping some of the respondents acquire income-generating skills. From the findings of this study, it can be inferred that social capital is a very important aspect for the livelihoods of FHHs. And can greatly contribute to both success and failure of livelihoods.

Many respondents did not own assets and this hindered their access to credit for pursuing their livelihoods. Because many FHoHs were single mothers, some of them could not

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[25] Nicknames such as Malaya, which means prostitute.

access loans because their ability to pay back was doubted. Nonetheless, they started businesses such as brewing of alcohol, selling charcoal and firewood. Some even used part of their housing units as retail shops and this was all aimed at improving their livelihoods. FHHs were able to come up with constructive strategies for improving their financial capital and livelihoods. They were able to find possibilities to overcome the stress and shocks that had made them vulnerable.

All in all based on the primary findings of this study, it is worth noting that, the achievement of sustainable livelihoods amongst FHHs in Namuwongo slum is yet to be realised. This is because FHHs have limited access to assets / capitals for their livelihoods. And FHoHs had to grapple with inhibiting structures in the slum for the survival and betterment of their households. Nonetheless FHHs in Namuwongo slum hoped for better livelihoods; and exercised agency as a form of empowerment to come up with various livelihood strategies for their households. In this regard, more studies could be conducted. Some of the studies could focus on FHHs in other slums of Kampala and Uganda at large. In addition household members in FHHs could also be included as participants in future studies. This would contribute to a critical and comparative analysis of the livelihoods of FHHs in the slums of Uganda.

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Appendix

1. Consent for interviews

My name is Winniefred Nalule a Masters in Gender and Development student at the University of Bergen in Norway. I am inviting you to participate in a research study on livelihoods of Female headed households in Namuwongo Slum.

The study is going to take approximately II months from 1st of June 2014 to 1ST June 2015 of which 3 months are for data collection and 9 months shall be for the writing of the Masters thesis. Your involvement in the research study is voluntary and you may choose to pullout of the study at anytime incase you feel you are no longer interested to take part. All that is required of you is that you answer a few questions. The information will be very useful in the writing of my master's thesis and also my turn out as a useful source for public and private organizations to address the problems of female-headed households in the slum of Namuwongo. The study is not funded and respondents cannot be rewarded financially in any way for their participation, I would therefore love to ask your permission to interview you.

Before we start the interview;

I would like to assure you that all the information given to me will be confidential and all persons will be anonymised and non identifiable.

All information will be kept safe and only me shall be able to access it and after completion of the study all the collected data both written and recorded shall be deleted so that no one ever accesses it.

The interview will take an hour with a break in between and you are free to restrain from answering any questions that you may not feel comfortable with.

Please be truthful and ask for clarity if you don't understand any of the questions

If at any point you feel like dropping out of the interview you are free to do so.

In case you have any questions, I will be happy to respond to you.

Is it okay that I use a recorder?

Thank you very much.

2. Interview guide / Actual questions.

A. Financial capital

1) Can you tell me the economic position of the household?

2) What is your employment status and regular source of income?

3) Kindly elaborate on the economic challenges have you faced as a head of a household and a female head of a household?

4) How many dependents' are in the household and how many can work and what do they do?

5) What is the impact of human capital on the household?

6) Please kindly explain what your monthly expenditure per month is like and what do you spend on mostly?

7) Do you receive any economic support from anywhere else and for what reasons do you receive the support?

B. Social Capital

1) How long have you lived in Namuwongo?
2) Since when did you become a head of your household?

3) Can you please explain what the cause of your is the cause of your being a single parent?

4) Please tell me about your experience as a single parent

5) Can you explain the impact of Social networks on the household?

6) How do you fair with your neighbors and relatives?

7) Elaborate on   the condition of your friendship with your neighbors and relatives?

8) Do you belong to any social networks in your neighborhood and why?

9) Who is the most important Person in your life?

10) Are you a member of any religious groups in your neighborhood?

11) Do you feel that any of the religious groups and other networks are good for your household?

12) Do you ever feel excluded in some associations in the neighborhood that you think are important for the household?

13) Are you a member of Non-Government organizations' and do you receive any sort of help that contributes to your livelihood from any of the organizations'?

14) What do you know about the perception of the community about your household and how does it affect you?

C. Human capital

1) What is your level of education?

2) Can you explain the skills that you have that have helped you achieve the livelihood of your household?

3) Are you into any programs for skill development and what kind of skills

4) How do you manage when you are faced with such challenges?

5) Can you explain the cause of the challenges you face in your household?

6) Please describe the other activities do you engage in to maintain the livelihoods of the household?

7) What activities are your children and other members of the household involved in to help the family?

D. Natural Capital.

1) How can you best describe the environment that you live in?

2) How do you benefit from the environment that you live in?

3) Please explain the common environmental problems that you are faced with?

4) Can you please describe the hygiene of your neighborhood and how it contributes to your livelihood and those in you household?

5) Do you suppose there have been any illnesses in your household as a result of the nature of your environment and can you elaborate on the problem?

6) Do you own any Natural resources that contribute to your livelihood?

7) Do you own the house you live in or do you rent?

8) In what condition can you best describe the house that you live in?

9) Do you own any assets such as piece of Land and how beneficial are they to your household

F. Role of Institutions.

1) Do you participate in any politics and why?

2) What is your role in the community and how does it contribute to your livelihood and that of the household?

3) Do you belong to any women associations and clubs and how do they contribute to your livelihood?

4) In your own view what do you think about the work of those in authority in Namuwongo slum For example the chairpersons and so on?

5) How do authorities limit and enhance your livelihood strategies in Namuwongo slum?

6) Can you explain the relationship you have with your neighbours and their importance to your household?

7) Can you also explain the relationship with your relatives and their importance in your household?

G. Livelihood challenges and strategies

1) Please explain and elaborate on the times your household has faced a gap in terms consumption and basic needs.

2) How did you manage the times when the gap happened?

3) What do you suppose was the cause of the gap and lack of enough basic needs in your household?

4) Have you ever thought of leaving the slum and moving somewhere else?

5) Do you ever get depressed and what is the main cause of your depression?

6) Do you often feel really down and in away feel like you have let your family down and why?

7) In addition to the main source of income of your household what other activities do you engage in to maintain the livelihoods of the household and can you explain your experience?

8) Do you think there are anything those in power and other stakeholders should do to support female-headed households?

H) Empowerment/ Achievements.

1) Do you make decisions in your life on your own?

2) What do you think you have achieved in life?

3) What do you think is good for the wellbeing of your household?

4) Do you have any more to say about your life?

THANK YOU VERY MUCH!