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WHAT'S IN IT FOR US?

Gender issues in
Uganda's oil and
gas sector

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Abbreviations

CDO	Community development officer
CLO	Community liaison officer
CNOOC	China National Offshore Oil Corporation
CSO	Civil society organisation
CSR	Corporate social responsibility
EIA	Environmental impact assessment
EITI	Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative
ESIA	Environmental and social impact assessment
KII	Key informant interview
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MEMD	Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development
MGLSD	Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development
NEMA	National Environment Management Authority
NOGP	National Oil and Gas Policy
SGBV	Sexual and gender-based violence
STD	Sexually transmitted disease
UN	United Nations

Executive summary

In 2012, International Alert carried out a baseline study in Uganda's Albertine region (*Governance and Livelihoods in Uganda's Oil-rich Albertine Graben*) as part of the 'Harnessing the Potential of Oil to Contribute to Peace and Development in Uganda' project. The objective of the research was to establish baseline data needed to measure the degree and quality of change in the livelihoods of communities where oil exploration is taking place. One area of focus in the baseline was gender – specifically, women's role in decision-making, gender roles in the household, women's control over assets, and perceived changes in gender roles.

The main finding of the baseline with regards to gender relations was that household decision-making is male-dominated. Men control household assets, and women have a much higher household workload. On this basis, the researchers concluded that if gender relations remained the same, women stood to benefit less than men from the proceeds of oil exploration and exploitation. They also argued that as the oil sector develops into the commercial stage, it could have a significant impact on gender relations. Changes to family income, education and influence from other cultures could lead to conflict between the sexes.

This study intends to demonstrate how key stakeholders in the oil industry can play a role in insulating communities from its risks and ensuring its gains are equitable and inclusive. Women are often more vulnerable to the risks associated with extractive industries – for instance, environmental degradation and family disruption – whilst men are better positioned to take advantage of its benefits, such as employment or supplier contracts. Within this framework, 'gender' is understood as the social and cultural construct of roles, responsibilities, attributes, opportunities, privileges, status, access to and control over resources and benefits between men and women, boys and girls in a given society.

Key findings

Gender equality legislation

Gender equality is enshrined in Uganda's national laws and policies, including affirmative action clauses. This has resulted in modest success under development indicators such as Millennium Development Goal (MDG) 3 (promoting gender equality and empowering women). However, challenges remain in closing the gender gap. Limited access to and control over productive resources – notably land – is a primary example. The National Oil and Gas Policy (NOGP) has the eradication of poverty and creation of lasting value to society as its two overarching goals. However, it does not take into account gender-specific manifestations of poverty and the subsequent need to tackle it in a particularly gender-sensitive way. Laws governing the oil and gas industry in Uganda are similarly gender-blind, with only two provisions in the 2012 Upstream Act concerned with gender.

Oil exploration impacts and livelihoods

Oil exploration and exploitation have direct economic, social and cultural impacts on local communities. Oil activities can reduce people's access to traditional livelihood resources, but can also open up new opportunities. Women and men, girls and boys, play specific economic roles in their families and communities. The oil sector, therefore, has unique and gender-differentiated impacts on their livelihoods. For instance, the loss of food crops from surveying land has had specific and disproportionate consequences for women because they tend to play a greater role in

food crop cultivation and are responsible for ensuring household food security. This factor makes women less engaged in income generation and salaried employment, where they generally lack qualifications.

Compensation was given for the crops affected by exploration activities rather than for land surveyed, which did not adequately compensate for the long-term damage to people's livelihoods.

SGBV, sex work and conflict

Findings indicated a correlation between Uganda's oil industry and certain forms of violence and socially exploitative practices. Indeed, the development of extractive industries is often associated with 'boomtown' effects: increased investment accelerates modernisation and monetisation of the local economy, which can destabilise social relations by creating powerful new incentives.¹ Respondents to the study commonly identified a connection between the industry and increased prostitution, domestic violence, and sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) as well as alcoholism.

Related to this, oil company representatives mentioned casual labourers engaging in sexual relationships with girls as young as 13 years old in Buliisa district. Respondents also described girls forming relationships with oil workers, becoming pregnant, and dropping out of school as a result.

Natural resource conflict

As well as tension at the household level between partners, the study identified a link between the discovery of commercially viable oil and gas in Uganda and conflict over natural resources. The baseline survey found that pre-existing tension among communities was reignited by Uganda's oil discovery; the most serious related to conflict over land ownership and use. Whilst legislation is in place to protect the rights of married women, others – such as widows, divorcees, women in cohabitation and children – are poorly catered for under Uganda's present legal system.

Corporate social responsibility and the role of companies

In contexts where local governance structures are underdeveloped and very often poorly resourced, incoming oil companies are commonly confronted with a de facto governance role and high expectations from communities that benefits will be shared with them. In this regard, respondents reported that better access to health facilities had reduced the number of women giving birth at home. This is significant in light of poor national statistics on maternal health.

As well as direct community investments, local communities were also able to benefit from the expansion in economic infrastructure required by the sector. For instance, road construction was felt to have benefited women by giving them easier access to markets and information networks, although the study found that women were typically less mobile and less likely to access information than their male counterparts.

Environmental impacts

In contexts where people rely predominantly on subsistence farming, the quality of their livelihoods is directly dependent on that of their environment. Oil industry activities are associated with various environmental impacts, including water and air pollution, land loss and degradation. Women in this study reported significant fears about their children's safety and health as a result of environmental impacts.

¹ World Bank (2013). *Extracting Lessons on Gender in the Oil and Gas Sector*. Extractive Industries for Development Series, No. 28. Available at <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/2013/05/18064712/extracting-lessons-gender-oil-gas-sector>

The findings further indicated that scant attention has been paid to gender dynamics in the environmental impact assessments (EIAs) conducted so far. Key informant interviews (KIIs) with environmental officers at the local government level confirmed that gender was not a specific area of focus in the terms of reference developed for EIAs.

Key recommendations

Central government

A National Action Plan for Gender and the Extractives will help guide government in developing policy, programmes and legislation that will do a better job of addressing challenges facing women affected by – and hoping to benefit from – Uganda's oil sector. A strong and transparent monitoring and reporting system – including collection of gender-disaggregated data – will strengthen the likely impact of this plan.

Women's property rights should be better protected by national legislation. In the context of natural resource conflict and aggressive forms of land speculation in Uganda's oil regions, vulnerable groups such as widows, divorcees, women in cohabitation and children need greater legal protection. Government should build the capacity of local councils and district land boards to respond to gender needs when managing land conflicts.

Uganda needs local content policy, underpinned by acknowledgement of the different needs of men and women. This would provide a framework to develop legislation requiring companies and their contractors to commit to gender-smart local recruitment. For instance, it could set minimum gender requirements as part of contractor bids. It could also provide for training and capacity-building programmes in business development to help and encourage women's groups to set up viable enterprises.

Community development officers (CDOs) already have a mandate to encourage underprivileged social groups to take part in decision-making and to raise community awareness of existing legislation on gender and child rights, among others. On top of this, local women and girls must be protected from the misconduct of outside company workers by prioritising community development and probation offices in local government budget allocations. The capacity of local governance institutions should be strengthened in order to enforce national laws against trafficking, SGBV and defilement of minors.

Terms of reference for EIAs need to take into consideration the gender dynamics of the environment, including specific indicators to address gender inequalities and the divergent needs and experiences of men and women, boys and girls. They require gender-disaggregated data, and should pay due attention to the socioeconomic, socio-cultural and psychological aspects of environmental damage.

Local government

Local government should ensure that company consultation processes are inclusive and that women's interests are represented vis-à-vis companies. Women in local leadership positions – including councillors, entrepreneurs and cultural leaders – should participate in consultations between local government and oil companies. Local government needs to get involved in disseminating information about HIV/AIDS and the legal age of consent.

National laws against SGBV and defilement must be enforced, whether perpetrated by local citizens or migrant oil industry workers, to end the impunity often surrounding these acts.

Development partners

Organisations working with local farmers and women's groups should be supported to facilitate supply chain linkages between local producers and oil companies/their contractors to ensure that these producers meet the product standards set by companies.

Partnerships are needed to help expand local government community services to provide support – including legal, medical and counselling – for vulnerable groups affected by domestic violence, family abandonment and child trafficking.

Local capacity for environmental monitoring and civil society monitoring of social investment delivery and impacts should be developed.

Companies

Gender-disaggregated evaluation frameworks and gender-sensitive assessment indicators should be developed for assessing the impacts of sector activities and monitoring the quality of community investments.

Separate community consultations should be conducted with women to ensure that community investment projects are contextually appropriate.

Companies should operate a 'zero tolerance' policy for staff on violence against women and ensure contractors' compliance with company policies by including specific statements on these issues within sub-contracts.

Civil society

Assessments are needed to evaluate the capacity of local institutions and actors – local government, cultural leaders, civil society organisations (CSOs) and community liaison officers (CLOs) – to manage the risks and benefits of the oil and gas sector in the Albertine Graben, with a specific focus on gender bias.

Civil society should work with ministries other than the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development (MEMD) – such as the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (MGLSD) – to strengthen their engagement with, and interventions in, oil-bearing communities.

Gender training should be offered to oil company CLOs – with particular attention to ensuring women's participation in company consultation processes.

1. Introduction

Oil exploration has been under way in Uganda since the 1920s, but the presence of significant oil reserves for commercial extraction was only established in 2006. At that time, oil deposits were estimated at 2.5 billion barrels. This has since been revised to 3.5 billion, after appraisal activities in two further blocks revealed more crude deposits in 2012.² This quantity would place Uganda among the top 50 oil producers in the world, as it moves out of exploration into the production stage. Exporting oil could potentially double or triple Uganda's current annual export earnings of US\$2.5 billion. Such a boon could lift millions out of poverty, if managed responsibly.

Oil reserves have been discovered predominantly in the Lake Albertine Graben. This region is politically sensitive because it is shared by two countries – Uganda and the Democratic Republic of Congo – with long histories of violent conflict and border disputes. It is also an ecologically sensitive area of great biodiversity.³ About 79% of the land area in Albertine Graben is devoted to agriculture, settlement and other land uses, while the remainder encompasses national parks, wildlife reserves and forest reserves.⁴

The current Ugandan president, Yoweri Museveni, recently confirmed that his government had reached an agreement with oil companies on the direction the development of Uganda's oil fields would take. The joint venture partners – Tullow Oil, Total and China National Offshore Oil Corporation (CNOOC) – have openly favoured a pipeline, while the government has been pushing for the construction of a refinery for production in Hoima district. The oil companies have argued that the Ugandan economy would not provide a sufficient market for refined products. Museveni revealed in his 2013 State of the Nation Address that the government had finally accepted the oil companies' proposal to construct a pipeline to transport crude oil to the coast, whilst maintaining its plan to build a refinery. The government plans to fund its recently launched 30-year development plan largely through anticipated oil revenue and forecasts an initial refining capacity of 60,000 barrels of oil per day. The first oil is expected by 2017, and Museveni predicts that Uganda will have reached middle-income status by 2040.⁵

The oil and gas industry could have a dramatic impact – both positive and negative – on Uganda's socioeconomic development. The 'resource curse' theory suggests that oil and mineral production are associated with authoritarian rule, armed conflicts and corruption, thus resulting in slow economic growth. Others have gone further and argued that extractive industries can have a major impact on core social structures, particularly gender relations.⁶ The extractive industries have the potential to aggravate existing inequalities and exacerbate vulnerabilities among certain groups.

If we accept that the development needs of men and women are different – and are, therefore, likely to feel the socioeconomic impacts of the oil sector in Uganda differently – the risks and benefits to result from the country's oil discovery require gender-sensitive examination. Indeed, the World Bank has highlighted a 'gender bias' in the distribution of risks and benefits from

2 'UPDATE 1-Uganda ups oil reserves estimate 40 pct to 3.5 bln bbls', *Reuters*, 17 September 2012. Available at <http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/09/17/uganda-oil-idUSL5E8KH1MG20120917>

3 J. Katham and M. Shannon (2011). 'Oil extraction and the potential for domestic instability in Uganda', *African Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 12, No. 3.

4 International Alert (2013). *Governance and Livelihoods in Uganda's Oil-Rich Albertine Graben*. Kampala. Available at <http://international-alert.org/resources/publications/governance-and-livelihoods-ugandas-oil-rich-albertine-graben>

5 'Refinery for government, pipeline for the oil companies', *Oil in Uganda*, 7 June 2013. Available at <http://www.oilnuganda.org/features/infrastructure/refinery-for-government-pipeline-for-the-oil-companies.html>

6 M. Ross (2008). 'Oil, Islam and women', *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 102, No. 1.

extractive industry projects. It has found that, whilst men benefit from compensation money and employment, women are disproportionately affected by the costs, such as family and social disruption, and environmental degradation.⁷ In a context where there is growing recognition that the sustainability and effectiveness of extractive industries depend on their ability to obtain a ‘social licence’ to operate, consideration for gender-differentiated social impacts is central to any extractive industry projects’ success. Women play a key role in their communities’ social and economic development and a company’s social licence relies on good relations with the communities in which they operate. Understanding and consideration of how women and men will be uniquely affected by the oil sector in Uganda is, therefore, intimately connected to its sustainability and effectiveness. This, in turn, will contribute to ensuring that it has a positive socioeconomic impact on the country’s development as a whole.

In 2012, International Alert carried out a baseline study in Uganda’s Albertine region (*Governance and Livelihoods in Uganda’s Oil-rich Albertine Graben*) as part of the ‘Harnessing the Potential of Oil to Contribute to Peace and Development in Uganda’ project. The objective of the research was to establish baseline data needed to measure the degree and quality of change in the livelihoods of the communities where oil exploration is taking place. One area of focus in the baseline was gender – specifically, women’s role in decision-making, gender roles in the household, women’s control over assets, and perceived changes in gender roles. The main findings with regards to gender relations were that household decision-making is male-dominated. Men control household assets, and women have a much higher household workload. The conclusion was that, if gender relations remain the same, women stand to benefit far less than men from the proceeds of oil exploration and exploitation. It was also argued that the development of the oil sector, as it advances into its commercial stage, could play a role in altering gender relations. Such changes, for instance those in family income, education and influence from other cultures, could lead to conflict between the sexes.

In order to broaden the baseline’s gender findings, International Alert embarked on this further study with the aim of presenting more in-depth analysis of the oil sector’s current, developing and potential impacts on men, women and gender relations in Uganda. The study has built on these findings by carrying out further community consultation with men, women and young people in the Albertine Graben, as well as key informant interviews with government representatives and other officials with technical or direct knowledge and experience. Since Uganda’s oil and gas industry is still in its early stages, the study also examines relevant comparisons from other oil-producing countries. The aim is to influence the way in which the oil industry develops in Uganda in order to avoid ‘gender bias’ in the distribution of the extractive industry’s risks and benefits.

1.1 Objectives

The objectives of this research are as follows:

- To produce a discussion paper analysing the current, developing and potential impacts of the oil sector on men, women and gender relations in Uganda;
- To provide a research product incorporating case studies from comparable countries, key lessons and best international practice; and
- To provide practical recommendations to ensure that the social, environmental and economic impacts of the oil sector in Uganda are gender-balanced.

⁷ World Bank (2009). *Mainstreaming Gender into Extractive Industries Projects*. Guidance Note. Washington DC.

1.2 Methodology

The study built on the baseline gender findings by carrying out supplementary primary data collection in three of the original five sub-regions: Acholi, Bunyoro and West Nile. There were 15 community level focus group discussions, yielding a total of 152 respondents – 102 female and 50 male. Key informant interviews (KIIs) with women who had been directly affected, as well as with representatives of local government, oil companies and civil society in the regions, yielded 24 respondents – 10 female and 14 male. Data collection was also carried out at the national level with members of government ministries, oil company representatives, academics and civil society organisations. In addition, a literature review included key International Alert publications; academic literature; gender, poverty and development indices; key government oil legislation and policy; and oil company regulatory and corporate social responsibility (CSR) reports. It also incorporated relevant international case studies.

1.3 Scope and organisation of the report

The report is organised into five thematic sections. The first part looks at the national gender context, and reviews the legal, social and cultural conditions that influence gender relations in Uganda. The second section focuses on livelihoods, and examines divisions of labour, impacts of the oil sector on access to livelihoods, control over assets, employment, and the potential of local content policies to offer income-generating activities and alternative livelihoods to women. The third section analyses some of the industry's 'boomtown' impacts. It looks at the relationship between the oil sector and sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), domestic violence and conflict. It also examines the connection between the oil sector and the increasing commercialisation of sex. The fourth section looks at the impacts of oil company CSR strategies in Uganda, as well as some of the indirect benefits caused by improvements to economic infrastructure. Finally, the paper analyses some of the current and potential environmental impacts on women and gender relations, and highlights inadequacies in how these have been measured and analysed by government and private sector environmental and social impact assessments (ESIAs).

2. Legal, policy and cultural context

This study aims to identify both the current and foreseeable impacts of Uganda's oil industry on gender relations, with a particular focus on women in the Albertine Graben. The sector is still in its early stages, and there is still time to try and pre-empt any negative impacts in order to manage them in a timely and appropriate manner. Analysing the sector's potential impact and influence on the pre-existing socioeconomic and cultural context is, therefore, just as important as identifying the new risks and benefits. This requires analysis of the country's policies and legislation, as well as cultures and traditions that influence women's rights and gender relations. These frameworks will all play a significant role in determining how the oil sector impacts on women and gender relations as it develops.

2.1 Gender equality legislation

Uganda is signatory to various international and regional commitments to the protection of women's rights and gender equality. It ratified the Protocol to the African Charter on the Rights of Women in Africa in 2011. It is also signatory to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Beijing Platform of Action, and committed to attaining the third Millennium Development Goal (MDG) of promoting gender equality and empowering women. These commitments to gender equality are enshrined in Uganda's national laws.

Uganda's constitution explicitly recognises the necessity for women to be "accorded full and equal dignity of the person with men", and makes it incumbent on the state to ensure that women have equal rights and opportunities in political, economic and social activities. The threat posed by strong patriarchal social structures and traditions is addressed in the constitutional prohibition of any "laws, cultures, customs or traditions which are against the dignity, welfare or interest of women or which undermine their status". Moreover, Uganda's constitution goes further to include an affirmative action clause: "Women shall have the right to affirmative action for the purpose of redressing the imbalances created by history, tradition or custom."⁸ This clause provides Ugandan women with an opportunity that does not exist within the legal systems of many other countries – developing or developed.

To a certain extent, Uganda's legal system caters for the property rights of both men and women. For example, the Land Act (1998) "prohibits a landowner from selling, mortgaging, leasing, donating (except in a will), or entering into any other transaction in respect of land on which the family resides and earns a livelihood from without prior written consent of the landowner's spouse".⁹ The right of survivorship under the Land Act also supports widows' land rights by indicating that when a co-owner of a property dies, the deceased's claim over the land is eradicated, leaving co-owners with the sole remaining interests. Therefore, a widow would automatically take ownership of matrimonial property owned jointly when her husband dies.¹⁰ Finally, the Land Act makes illegal any customary practice that discriminates against women, children, or persons with disabilities with respect to owning, occupying or using customary land. This provision was enacted in response to complaints by women's rights campaigners that customary practice is often responsible for the marginalisation of women in Ugandan society, particularly in the case

8 Government of Uganda (1995). *Constitution of the Republic of Uganda*. Available at http://www.parliament.go.ug/new/images/stories/constitution/Constitution_of_Uganda_1995.pdf

9 Government of Uganda (1998). *Uganda Land Act 1998*. Available at <http://www.ulii.org/ug/legislation/consolidated-act/227>

10 S. Barnes, M. Hersh, M. Stricker and J. Takigawa (2009). *Measuring the Impact of a Paralegal Program on Women's Empowerment in Rural Uganda*. Uganda Community Based Association for Child Welfare, School of International and Public Affairs.

of land and property rights. However, customary practice in some areas of the country continues to override statutory law in recognising and enforcing women's land rights. Landgrabbing at the family level goes largely unnoticed by the public justice system. This is due in part to failure in implementation and enforcement, but also loopholes in the law itself. While the Land Act caters to some extent for spouses, it does not tackle properly the land rights of widows, divorcees, women in cohabitation and children.¹¹

Parliamentary debate in March and April 2013 over the Marriage and Divorce Bill shows how contentious women's property rights remain in Uganda. The bill, tabled in 2009, proposes to reform and consolidate the laws relating to civil, Christian, Hindu, Bahai and customary marriages, cohabitation, separation and divorce. It is a product of a study carried out by the Uganda Law Reform Commission and similar studies, including the 1965 Commission of Inquiry into the Marriage, Divorce and Status of Women.¹² Its provisions and proposed reforms have, therefore, been under consideration in Uganda for more than four decades. The bill was again shelved in 2013, after its most recent appearance in parliament, on the basis of "public pressure".¹³

One particular area of contention is the bill's recognition of shared property rights in the context of cohabitation. Although the bill does not differentiate between men and women under this provision, as most men are the owners of property in which cohabiting partners live, in the majority of cases it would result in increased property rights for the woman. One popular argument against this provision, from both within and outside of the women's movement, was that it would lead to increased domestic violence. These views played out strongly in the media, where newspapers such as *The New Vision* reported members of the public responding: "With the increased levels of poverty in Uganda, women will use this bill to take away their husbands' property. This would promote violence and murders as men would not concede that half of their property has gone."¹⁴ These responses capture the extreme nature of people's reactions to the proposal, and the degree to which cultural resistance to women owning land or property remains firmly entrenched in Ugandan society.

2.2 Gender and development

The connection between positive outcomes for women and positive outcomes for development as a whole has been widely asserted in development discourse. The Ugandan president himself has been quoted as saying that involving women is not only a question of social justice but also – and perhaps more importantly – a question of good economics.¹⁵ Studies in various sub-Saharan countries have identified the missed potential for increasing growth by not addressing gender issues.¹⁶ It has also been observed that women have a greater tendency to reinvest incomes back into their families and communities.

Uganda's National Gender Policy provides a framework for gender-sensitive development, which has resulted in "modest success"¹⁷ under MDG 3: promoting gender equality and empowering women. Uganda has achieved notable success in primary school enrolment, where gender parity

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² W.W. Kalema (1965). *Uganda Commission on Marriage, Divorce and the Status of Women*. Government Printer, South Africa.

¹³ 'Marriage and divorce bill shelved? Come on guys', *ActionAid*, 17 April 2013. Available at <http://www.actionaid.org/uganda/2013/04/marriage-and-divorce-bill-shelved-come-guys>

¹⁴ A. Ssenyonga (2013). 'Irked residents say marital bill is a death trap', *The New Vision*, 2 April 2013. Available at <http://www.newvision.co.ug/news/641267-irked-residents-say-marital-bill-is-a-death-trap.html>

¹⁵ J. Ahikire. *Gender and Poverty in Uganda Today*. Kampala: Uganda Martyrs University. Available at [http://www.eif.gov.cy/mlsi/dl/genderequality.nsf/0/12D2A22FAC60DA74C22579A6002D950A/\\$file/gender_and_poverty_in_uganda_today.pdf](http://www.eif.gov.cy/mlsi/dl/genderequality.nsf/0/12D2A22FAC60DA74C22579A6002D950A/$file/gender_and_poverty_in_uganda_today.pdf)

¹⁶ A. Ellis, C. Manuel and C.M. Blackden (2006). *Gender and Economic Growth in Uganda: Unleashing the Power of Women*. Washington DC: World Bank. Available at <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/7388>

¹⁷ Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development (MoFPED), Government of Uganda (2010). *Uganda Millennium Development Goals Report 2010: Accelerating Progress Towards Improving Maternal Health*. Kampala. Available at <http://planipolis.iiep.unesco.org/upload/Uganda/UgandaMDGReport2010.pdf>

has been reached. Progress in tertiary education due to Uganda's affirmative action policy of giving additional points to female university applicants also indicates that it is on track to reach gender parity for this indicator by 2015. Some progress has been made at secondary school level. However, with a girl-boy ratio of 0.84 in 2009, compared with 0.79 in 2000, the rate of progress is not sufficient to achieve the goal for this indicator.¹⁸

Gender disparity is entrenched in Uganda's labour market. Countrywide, 72% of all employed women and 90% of all rural women in Uganda work in agriculture, compared with only 53% of rural men.¹⁹ The share of women in waged employment in the non-agricultural sector is low, and declined from 39% in 2002/2003 to 28% in 2005/2006.²⁰ Such disparities are exacerbated by other factors confronting women, including less secure employment, lower skill levels and lower wages. Indeed, even when they are in a position to secure waged employment, women face discrimination in recruitment and retrenchment practices, sexual harassment at the workplace, challenges in attaining maternity leave and pay, and specific anomalies such as prohibition on women working at night.²¹ Finally, rural women's ability to move out of subsistence agriculture and increase productivity is severely hampered by their lack of control over important productive resources, such as land.²²

Affirmative action policies, including a female seat in parliament reserved for every district in Uganda, have had a positive influence on women's representation in political decision-making bodies. The proportion of women holding seats in parliament increased from 18% in 2000 to 30% in 2006²³ and 35% in 2011.²⁴ At local government level, Uganda's decentralisation policy has been made legally gender-sensitive. Parallel Women's Councils have been established, with Women's Council Executives running from village up to national level. Moreover, women are guaranteed one-third of all local council seats. These policies and structures have contributed to Uganda meeting the gender parity targets established in the African Union's Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa.

Despite advances, challenges remain in the protection of women's rights and implementation of gender-sensitive development policies in Uganda. One district community development officer (CDO) in this study noted that "development work is masculine",²⁵ in the sense that rather than attending to perceptions, social practices, cultures and traditions, government prefers to invest in the construction of infrastructure such as schools and hospitals. This results in limited budget allocations that inhibit development work in areas such as gender discrimination and gender-based violence. The same CDO pointed out that "it is not through lack of money, it is just the way we prioritise our activities".²⁶ When researchers for this study asked the percentage of national budget allocated to the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (MGLSD), the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development responded that it was "confidential". The MGLSD was likewise unable to share this information. The lack of transparency over the budget makes it difficult to monitor government prioritisation. In this context, local government testimonies indicate that gender issues such as domestic violence or women's political and economic empowerment are either sidelined, or considered the work of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and development partners.

18 Ibid.

19 International Fund for Agricultural Development (2000). *Gender Strengthening Programme in Eastern and Southern Africa*. Rome. Available at <http://www.ifad.org/pub/gender/genpfe.pdf>

20 MoFPED (2010). Op. cit.

21 A. Ellis, C. Manuel and C.M. Blackden (2006). Op. cit.

22 Ibid.

23 Ibid.

24 'Uganda Parliament: Last elections', *Inter-parliamentary Union*. Available at http://www.ipu.org/parline/reports/2329_E.htm

25 Key informant interview (KII), District community development officer (CDO), Nebbi district, 9 May 2013.

26 Ibid.

“[T]he other thing is prioritisation ... you know our development work is masculine. We want these things of structures ... when you talk about this thing of gender relations, conflicts, it doesn't sell ... for instance in education, they will say enrolment is increasing, therefore, we need more classrooms, performance is reducing, build more classrooms rather than try and look deeper at the problem. So that mind-set is a really big problem for our development work. People still think development means facilities, without facilities there is no development. And for us, working in this sector, we are not there to build facilities. That lack of prioritisation has an impact at all levels of government on the budgets allocated to these activities and the ability of community development officers to do their work...”²⁷

Indeed, Uganda still scores poorly on global gender indexes. It ranks 73rd out of 86 countries²⁸ in the 2012 Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Social Institutions and Gender Index, and its Human Development Indicator Gender Inequality Index score is 0.517.²⁹ Uganda may be on track under MDG 3, but its progress under MDG 5 (improving maternal health) has been slow; the maternal mortality ratio currently stands at 310 deaths per 100,000 live births. Its adolescent fertility rate is also high: 149.9 births per every 1,000 women aged 15–19.³⁰

2.3 Culture, traditions and SGBV

Legal and policy frameworks play a key role in determining women's access to economic opportunities, including credit, land and property. However, many observers have noted that legislative reform alone is not enough to tackle the deep-rooted inequalities facing women in Uganda. For instance, Uganda's land law is not discriminatory, but it does not address the highly unequal allocation of land between men and women, the legacy of patrilineal inheritance and ownership practices. The main issue is not legislative reform, but changes in customary practice and attitudes.³¹

The 2010 Uganda National Development Plan highlights “gender issues, negative attitudes, mind-set, cultural practices and perceptions” as key binding constraints to the country's socioeconomic development.³² Indeed, it has been argued that the traditional concept of women in Uganda places them in an inferior position in relation to men and leads to commonly held perceptions that women are not as capable or productive as men.³³ Women may have increased their presence in parliament, but decision-making at the household level is still very much male-dominated. In a 2011 demographic survey by the government, only 53% of married employed women reported being able to make independent decisions on how to spend their earnings; only 38% of married women reported participating in all three decisions pertaining to their own health care, major household purchases, and visits to their family or relatives.³⁴

Domestic violence also poses a serious challenge to socioeconomic development in Uganda. The same survey found that 60% of ever-married women and 40% of men aged 15–49 reported having experienced emotional, physical or sexual violence from a spouse. More women (28%) than men (9%) aged 15–49 reported having experienced sexual violence at least once in their lifetime.³⁵ Worryingly, close to six in 10 women (58%) believed that wife beating was justified. Indeed, elsewhere, it has been found that nearly 60% of women have experienced some form of

27 Ibid.

28 'Social Institutions and Gender Index: Uganda', *OECD Development Centre*. Available at <http://genderindex.org/country/uganda>

29 'Uganda: Human Development Indicators', *UNDP*. Available at <http://hdr.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/UGA>

30 Ibid.

31 A. Ellis, C. Manuel and C.M. Blackden (2006). Op. cit.

32 Government of Uganda (2010). *Uganda National Development Plan (2010/11–2014/15)*. Kampala.

Available at <http://opm.go.ug/assets/media/resources/30/National%20Development%20Plan%202010:11%20-%202014:15.pdf>

33 A. Ellis, C. Manuel and C.M. Blackden (2006). Op. cit.

34 Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS) (2011). *Uganda Demographic and Health Survey 2011*. Kampala.

35 Ibid.

physical violence in Uganda. In more than 87% of cases, the perpetrator was a current or former husband or partner.³⁶

In 2011, the United Nations (UN) Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women expressed concern that violence against women and girls was widespread in Uganda. Amnesty International's 2011 annual report found that domestic violence was rampant and perpetrators were rarely brought to justice, despite the president's approval of the Domestic Violence Act – a law specifically criminalising domestic violence – in April of that year.³⁷ Other harmful practices include female genital mutilation, which is widely practised in regions such as Karamoja despite being defined as a human rights violation under Ugandan law.³⁸ In 2010, the President approved the Prohibition of Female Genital Mutilation Act, a national law prohibiting and criminalising the practice, with punishments of up to 10 years for persons who carry it out.

Repeated studies have found wide social acceptance of SGBV in Uganda.³⁹ Despite adequate knowledge and understanding of SGBV and human rights issues, communities continue to harbour harmful values and beliefs that foster incidences of SGBV. Due to strong cultural beliefs, victims do not openly report SGBV violations; most cases are settled out of court, and mainly within the family. Those who manage to take cases to the police and courts face undue delay in legal actions and weak law enforcement mechanisms.⁴⁰ Indeed, Amnesty International has reported that female victims of rape and other forms of SGBV continue to face economic and social obstacles to justice, including the costs of criminal investigations and discrimination by government officials.⁴¹

Although culture plays a negative role in gender discrimination and inequality in Uganda, it can also be extremely beneficial. Culture, in the form of indigenous knowledge, provides the basis for problem-solving strategies for local communities, especially in poorer rural areas like those in which oil has been discovered in Uganda. Uganda's National Culture Policy defines indigenous knowledge as the “traditional local knowledge existing within and developed around the specific conditions of a community indigenous to a particular geographical area”. It is commonly applied in agriculture, traditional medicine, health care, food preparation, education and natural resource management in rural communities. The Policy highlights the relevance of indigenous knowledge for women because they use it to perform their traditional roles and responsibilities.

2.4 Gender in Uganda's oil and gas policy and legislation

Uganda's 1995 constitution did not initially envisage the need to address oil and gas industries. In 2005, Article 244 of the constitution, which had previously provided solely for minerals, was amended to include oil and gas. Three years later, in 2008, the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development (MEMD) published the National Oil and Gas Policy (NOGP). Oil and gas sector legislation and governing institutions were developed on the basis of this policy framework. The process culminated in the 2012 Upstream Petroleum (Exploration, Development and Production) Bill; the 2012 Midstream (Refining, Gas Processing and Conversion, Transportation and Storage) Bill; and the 2012 Public Finance Management Bill. Whilst both upstream and midstream bills have now been passed into law, the Public Finance Bill remains before parliament.

36 'Social Institutions and Gender Index: Uganda', *OECD Development Centre*. Op. cit.

37 Amnesty International (2011). *Annual Report 2011: Uganda*. Available at <http://www.amnesty.org/en/region/uganda/report-2011>

38 Ibid.

39 M.K. Kasembe (2011). *Gender-Based Violence in the Republic of Uganda: A Situation Analysis Report: Vol. 1*. Kampala: Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development/United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM).

40 Ibid.

41 'Uganda: Justice system fails victims of sexual violence', *Amnesty International*, 30 November 2007. Available at <http://www.amnesty.org/en/for-media/press-releases/uganda-justice-system-fails-victims-sexual-violence-20071130>

The upstream bill has been subject to fierce debate in parliament, and provoked concern from both national and international civil society organisations. One of their most significant fears was that control over the sector would be concentrated in the higher echelons of government, leaving limited influence for Uganda's parliament. They also expressed concern at the absence of any firm commitment to transparency over key contracts and other documents in the law, and argued that legislation related to the sector did not provide adequate protection from corruption and mismanagement. Civil society has voiced concern over "weak environmental and social protections, as well as the absence of any measures to include local communities in decision-making processes".⁴² It has also pointed to increased potential for human rights and environmental abuses in the sector. The lack of gender provision in national policy and legislation has received less attention.

The overarching goal of the NOGP is to "contribute to the early achievement of poverty eradication and create lasting value to society". Socioeconomic impacts are, therefore, at its core. The NOGP explicitly addresses the social impacts of changes to population distribution, energy availability, employment opportunities and patterns, environment and health. However, gender dynamics are not considered in these areas, and the sector's impact on gender relations as a discrete area of focus is entirely absent. Since each of these impacts is experienced differently by men and women, girls and boys, it is essential for the oil sector's guiding policy framework to be gender-sensitive. However, the 2013 Petroleum Exploration, Development and Production Act includes only two instances of gender sensitivity. The first appears in the context of local content provisions for the training of Ugandans; the Act requires licensees to submit annual training and recruitment programmes for all stages of petroleum activities that "take into account gender, equity, persons with disabilities and host communities". The second instance involves participation on the Board of the Petroleum Authority, of which at least three members must be women. Apart from this, there have been some attempts from within government to address gender in the oil and gas sector, notably on the part of the MGLSD itself.

The MGLSD, alongside the MEMD, is in the process of developing a project proposal for community engagement in the oil regions. A number of the goals under this proposed programme will be important for addressing the impacts of the sector on women and gender relations. These include increasing access to information and the capacity at all government levels to monitor and facilitate community engagement in the sector, including gender training. Notably, under its objective of strengthening communities' capacity to gain better access to, and utilise the benefits of, the oil and gas industry in Uganda, it recognises the different ways in which men and women participate in and can benefit from the sector. It states the need to increase the level of community participation and involvement in the oil and gas industry by gender, especially through training women to enable them to tap into economic opportunities offered by the sector.

42 'Inadequate oil laws a threat to Uganda's future development', *Africa Institute for Energy Governance*, undated 2012. Available at <http://www.afiego.org/index.php/media-centre/latest-news/14-inadequate-oil-laws-a-threat-to-uganda-s-future-development>

3. Livelihoods

Oil exploration and exploitation have a direct economic, social and cultural impact on local communities. Oil activities can reduce people's access to traditional livelihood resources, but can also offer new ones. Women and men, girls and boys, play specific economic roles in their families and communities. The oil sector therefore has unique and gender-differentiated impacts on their livelihoods. This section reviews gender dimensions of livelihoods in the Albertine Graben – including the division of labour, access to employment and control over resources. It is important to note that gender is multifarious and influenced by a number of other variables, including social class, age, urban/rural setting and marital status. This section presents some of the ways oil exploration in the Albertine has already impacted on livelihoods, and the gender dimensions of such impacts. For instance, the loss of food crops caused by surveying has had specific and disproportionate consequences for women because of their more prominent role in food crop cultivation and responsibility for ensuring household food security.

3.1 Division of labour

As analysis of the national context highlighted, women in Uganda are heavily engaged in agriculture, with 72% of all employed women and 90% of all rural women working in the sector, whilst only 53% of rural men do. Women are responsible for about 80% of the food crop production and contribute about 60% of the labour for cash crop production.⁴³ Cash crops include coffee, cotton, sugar cane, sunflower and tobacco. Dual-purpose crops – such as banana, beans, cassava, fruits, maize and vegetables – are also grown. Men tend to dominate the more remunerative activities in agriculture, whilst women's work is often characterised as unseen and unrewarded. Indeed, the average Ugandan woman spends nine hours a day on care labour activities such as fetching water, firewood and caring for the sick. This burden of care makes women particularly vulnerable when it comes to competing in the job market.⁴⁴ In cases where women work in non-farm activities to supplement household resources, younger females are often delegated additional domestic responsibilities in order to manage the double workload.

This study found that the division of labour between men and women differs by region and the principal forms of livelihood activities in which communities are engaged. For instance, in Buliisa the decisive factor in determining whether or not a woman engaged in tilling the land was which ethnic group she came from, although it was conceded that the mixing of different groups had reduced the rigidity of such cultural roles. In fishing communities, men are solely responsible for fishing, whilst women carry out fishmongering. However, respondents in all regions reported that labour was not divided equally, especially in rural areas, where women carry out most of the work. One male respondent noted that: "Sincerely speaking, a woman here has no leisure time."⁴⁵ This has been partly affected by changing gender roles. Whereas, in the past, women would have been predominantly assigned to domestic chores and looking after the children, they are now increasingly taking up work traditionally assigned to men. Respondents reported that women are playing larger roles in agricultural production and also engaging in micro-enterprise activities, predominantly selling garden crop produce in markets. According to the baseline results, more women (50%) than men (41%) reported being involved in farming/agriculture, and a higher proportion (26%) of female respondents reported being involved in business/self-employment compared with their male counterparts (20%).⁴⁶

⁴³ 'Gender and women's empowerment', *UNDP in Uganda*. Op. cit.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Focus group discussion (FGD), Male, Buliisa district, 14 May 2013.

⁴⁶ International Alert (2013). Op. cit.

The study identified a particularly strong spirit of entrepreneurship among women in the fishing communities of Kaiso Tonya. Here, women are engaging in fishmongering, where they buy fish from fishermen, dry or smoke it, and then take it to market. Respondents reported that some women have actually invested in boats and nets and employ fishermen as part of their fishmonger business. In many ways, these changing economic roles represent women's empowerment as they engage more and more in income-generating activities. However, women are still expected to carry out their domestic roles in addition to new economic ones, since men do not appear to be taking on women's work at the same pace. As a result, women's labour burden is increasing, rather than becoming more equal to men's.

“When you look at the way labour is divided between men and women, women do a lot more. Long ago men used to dig, but these days you find that women are digging, they are weeding, and then on top of that they are doing domestic work. So they do both a man's and a woman's role these days...”⁴⁷

“Women really do a lot of work ... [T]ake for example when a man and a woman are digging in the garden. After finishing digging the man will say ‘take my hoe’. A woman will take it and put it on her shoulder. She is also carrying firewood on her head; she is also carrying a baby on her back, and may be pregnant as well. When they arrive at home the man will say ‘where is my food?’ and ‘I want to bathe’. So the woman will have to cook food and collect water. So you will find that a lot of work is being done by women.”⁴⁸

These testimonies were supported by the baseline findings, where it was found that significantly higher proportions of women reported doing everything in terms of household tasks. For example, 57% of women compared with 15% of men reported being solely responsible for washing clothes and 54% of women compared with 12% of men for cleaning the house. The study also found that women are taking on roles traditionally assigned to men, such as repairing the house (19% of women compared with 30% of men). Less change was seen in the case of male respondents, who did not appear to be engaging in the work traditionally carried out by women; they scored lower on all household tasks, except repairing the house. In addition, the findings indicated that women play a larger role in providing food for the household, with 31% of women compared with 23% of men reporting that they were responsible for buying food, and 55% of women compared with 10% of men responsible for preparing it.⁴⁹

Women's heavy labour burden has implications for their ability to access economic opportunities arising from the growth of the oil sector. As will be explored in the following sections, a heavy load of domestic and subsistence work leaves women with less time, mobility and access to the education and training needed to acquire employable and income-generating skills. In addition, their primary responsibility for ensuring household food security means that loss of crops and environmental degradation caused by oil activities have specific and disproportionate impacts on their livelihood roles. However, the reported growth in the number of women who are managing micro-enterprises could have positive implications for their ability to benefit from the sector's supporting economies, for instance the provision of food to camps and hospitality services.

3.2 Control over assets

Despite increased engagement in productive and business activities, the findings pointed towards women's limited control over productive resources such as land and other household assets. This

⁴⁷ FGD, Women local leaders, Nwoya district, 8 May 2013.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ International Alert (2013). Op. cit.

constitutes a significant barrier to them benefiting from the income-generating activities in which they are engaged, as well as their ability to access new ones. The baseline study established that women in all regions required the permission of their husband or someone else to sell land (Acholi – 96%, Bunyoro – 100%, Kigezi – 93%, Rwenzori – 96% and West Nile – 85%). The same trend applied to selling joint dwelling places (Acholi – 96%, Bunyoro – 98%, Kigezi – 94%, Rwenzori – 95% and West Nile – 85%). The picture is no different regarding jointly-owned items such as livestock, farm tools and transport means. The findings also indicated that considerable proportions of female respondents needed permission from their husband to sell land owned solely by the women (Acholi – 38%, Bunyoro – 45%, Kigezi – 17%, Rwenzori – 32% and West Nile – 43%). However, the findings suggested that women were more at liberty to sell off other items not jointly owned without their husband's permission.⁵⁰

Community consultations for this study showed that decision-making is still very much male-dominated at the household level. Male respondents, particularly in the fishing communities of Nebbi and Hoima districts, felt that women hid their income from their husbands and spent it irresponsibly. Women, on the other hand, felt the need to either hand their incomes over to male partners to control, or to hide it in case they spent it on alcohol and other activities that did not contribute to the long-term wellbeing of the family. Similarly, male respondents resisted their female partners working outside of the home for fear that they would leave them for another man. In Kaiso Tonya, where the entrepreneurial spirit among women was strong, men presented feelings of emasculation, as they perceived themselves to be losing their status as 'providers'.

“Most activities here in Kaiso are being done by women; most of the business here is being carried out by women. Most people selling fish here are women; they are also the ones collecting firewood and the grass for thatching houses ... So we have a problem here; it is not balanced and somehow men are becoming lazy; they are resting. We want to get an alternative, but I don't know how you would change our women; it would be impossible...”⁵¹

The impact of compensation on gender relations presented a particular challenge. In Buliisa, during Tullow's exploration activities, compensation was predominantly allocated to women as the users of land and, therefore, they were most likely to be found on the land when the valuation process was being carried out. Respondents reported benefits to women as a result of this, including increased control over household assets and money to invest in the family, particularly school fees for children. Others felt that it had led to increased domestic violence and conflict between partners as it reversed traditional power relations. Even if women were recorded as the land owners during valuation, men still sought to control compensation once it was allocated.

“For me, as a man, if I realise a woman is becoming stubborn because of her business I will find all possible means of stopping her from doing that kind of business so that she comes back home and I will be the one who goes and finds food for the family...”⁵²

3.3 Access to livelihoods

Like many other regions of the country, communities in the Albertine Graben are particularly dependent on subsistence agriculture. For example, the baseline survey found that in Arua district, more than 81% of the total population is employed in agriculture, with the majority (79.9%) mainly involved in subsistence agriculture. Subsistence agriculture is generally dominated by peasant smallholders, based on crops such as bananas, cassava, maize and legumes. Cash crops

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ FGD, Male, Hoima district, 18 May 2013.

⁵² FGD, Male, Nebbi district, 11 May 2013.

such as coffee, cotton, tobacco and tea are also grown. Livestock (cattle, sheep, goats, pigs) is also an important agricultural activity and a source of livelihood for many communities in Uganda – including the Albertine region. Grazing land is communally owned. However, with the increasing population of both humans and livestock, land availability is becoming limited, which has led to overgrazing. Fishing is another prime source of livelihood for people in the Albertine Graben. Previous studies have shown that the region contributes 18.7% of the total national fish catch. About 15% is contributed by Lake Albert alone, which is the richest of the region's lakes in terms of fish biodiversity.⁵³ In addition, fish processing is an important source of employment for people in the region, especially women and young people.⁵⁴

However, over-fishing on Lake Albert is causing fish populations to decline. Communities such as Kaiso Tonya often rely solely on fishing for their livelihoods. This means that the fish are not given enough time to repopulate between catches. In a context of already dwindling livelihood resources, any negative environmental impact from the oil sector – for example, an oil spill in Lake Albert – has the potential to destroy the livelihoods of whole communities. Even the temporary impact on fish populations caused by chemicals emitted during drilling could have serious consequences for these fishing communities.⁵⁵ The need to diversify their economies in order to create alternative livelihood sources in advance of potential environmental impacts is, therefore, essential.

The livelihoods of men, women and their children in the Albertine Graben have already been touched by the consequences of oil exploration activities. The baseline survey established that the major source of food for households in the region is homegrown crops (48.3%) and purchases from markets (48.1%). With women playing such a big role in subsistence agriculture and, increasingly, selling crop produce in markets, as well as being primarily responsible for ensuring household food security, any restriction on this source of livelihood would have specific impacts on their livelihood roles. According to the baseline survey, 48.4% of female respondents reported restricted access to natural resources as a result of oil exploration activities. Over half (53.1%) of female respondents reported increased restriction to fishing activities and 59.3% reported restricted access to parts of the game reserve. More female (28.9%) than male (25.9%) respondents reported restricted access to cultural sites. In line with traditional divisions of labour whereby women are responsible for collecting firewood, more female (47.6%) than male (43.5%) respondents reported that access to this resource had been limited. This implies that women are more likely to feel the burden of reduced access to this form of fuel. The majority of the baseline respondents (74%) reported that firewood was their major source of energy for cooking, followed by charcoal (22%). Only 1% cited electricity as their main source of energy for cooking. As well as its impact on women's livelihoods, the heavy reliance on wood fuels has implications for the environment and for sustainable use of forest resources.⁵⁶

Consultations with women in the region showed access to agricultural land and crops had been affected by oil exploration activities. Women reported having crops destroyed by road construction to access drilling sites, and other surveying activities. In Buliisa district, where oil exploration has been intensive and close to communities, the impacts were felt particularly strongly. Respondents in this district reported that food security had been affected by the loss of food crops. Moreover, the temporary influx of oil workers and casual labourers, and increased income of residents who had found work in the sector or been allocated compensation, had led to commodity price inflation.

⁵³ National Environment Management Authority (NEMA) (2009). *Environmental Sensitivity Atlas for the Albertine Graben*. Kampala.

⁵⁴ International Alert (2013). Op. cit.

⁵⁵ KII, Ecologist, Department of Biological Sciences, Makerere University, Kampala, 22 May 2013.

⁵⁶ International Alert (2013). Op. cit.

3.4 Compensation

Respondents reported that, in the majority of cases, those who lost crops due to oil exploration were compensated. Women in Buliisa, as the primary users of land, were more likely to be found in their gardens during the valuation process and therefore more frequently recorded as receivers of compensation than men. However, the process used to allocate compensation was felt to be poorly managed, and the amount given to be inadequate. Compensation was given for crops affected rather than the land itself, which did not adequately compensate the long-term damage to people's livelihoods and had disproportionate consequences for women by adversely affecting their ability to secure food for the family.

Although women in Buliisa district were recorded as landowners during valuation, men frequently took control of compensation. This meant that although women were the primary users of the land, and those most affected by the loss of food crops and degradation of land quality, they were often not in a position to use the compensation to counter the damage done to their livelihoods. This was because cultural gender norms leave them with limited ownership and control over economic assets. Oil companies' lack of transparency and their reluctance to provide statistical information make it impossible to quantify this data.

Indeed, a recent and expansive environmental impact assessment (EIA) commissioned by the government makes just one specific mention of the sector's impact on gender relations, in the context of women's limited property rights and compensation. The Assessment states that: "Most property, especially land, is in the name of the man. Often, by the time the women realise that there has been compensation, the money has already been given to the man, who may have not put it to the right use."⁵⁷ It is also worth noting in this context that, whilst men have greater potential to move into other sectors, such as trade, women are often restricted to a single source of livelihood.

Box 1: Case study – Lucy

Lucy's field in Pakwach sub-county, Nebbi district, was identified as a drilling site for oil exploration. Lucy lives on the land with her husband and six children, one boy and five girls. The sub-contracted company that carried out the exploration had to build an access road through her field as well as a large drilling site. Although Lucy is the primary user of the land, her husband attended most of the meetings held during the compensation process and was the one who finally received the money for crops affected. Lucy was not present. She believes that the company did not find oil in her field, although she is still waiting to receive official confirmation of this. Lucy is worried that her field will sink into the hole, especially during rainy periods, or that someone – a member of her family – could fall into it. Lucy and her family used the compensation money to build more houses on their land and extend the area under cultivation. However, she did not feel that they had been compensated adequately. They were only given money for cassava, not maize. Moreover, rather than counting cassava stems, tape measures were used to approximate the number affected. Although the family was able to use the money for further cultivation, there has been less food available in her household as a result of the lost crops. Consequently, she felt that money combined with additional food products would have been a better form of compensation. Lucy and her family have been told by the contractor who carried out the work that they can now cultivate the land that was used for the access road. However, it has become very hard and difficult to dig. Lucy and her family have reported the issues to the LCIII in Pakwach but no action has been taken.

Lucy's case highlights the burden placed on women when oil exploration results in the destruction of crops and degradation of agricultural land. Lucy's ability to ensure household food security was negatively impacted and inadequately compensated, and her absence from the compensation process is notable. The case also points towards a lack of support from local governance structures, which has negative implications on the ability of local communities – both men and women – to defend themselves from harm caused by the oil industry.

⁵⁷ Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development (MEMD) (2013). *Strategic and Environmental Assessment (SEA) of Oil and Gas Activities in the Albertine Graben, Uganda*. Kampala.

In some instances, compensation was invested in livelihoods and led to an improvement in living conditions. One Tullow representative reported feeling encouraged by the visibly positive impact compensation was having on people's lives in Buliisa district – for instance, it enabled them to buy corrugated iron roofing for their houses or higher quality seeds for farming.

However, it was also pointed out that when Tullow returned months later, iron roofs had been sold and previous living conditions re-established. This testimony points towards the short-term nature and non-sustainability of benefits from compensation. It does not cover the long-term loss of livelihoods or impact on food security. In fact, it can contribute to food insecurity by potentially destabilising local economies through creating temporary commodity price inflation. Moreover, most of those who received compensation had never had so much cash before. Respondents reported that they did not receive training on how to manage or invest their money responsibly, and the majority did not have a bank account in which to store it securely and to control the pace of expenditure.

In its 2012 CSR report, Tullow admitted to “ongoing social and environmental challenges”⁵⁸ related to managing grievances caused by crop damage in Uganda. In Block EA2, where Buliisa district is located, the report noted that these challenges had stemmed from “inadequate assessment of potential social impacts during the environmental and social impact assessment (ESIA) process”.⁵⁹ Tullow admitted to underestimating the extent to which exploration and crop loss would affect communities and, as a result, the budget and complexity of the consultation process. However, its report is not specific about what went wrong with the compensation process in Block EA2, a subject which requires further in-depth and objective analysis.

3.5 Access to employment

The baseline study found that the highest proportion (45%) of respondents listed their main occupation as farming/agriculture, followed by business/self-employment (23%). More women (50%) than men (41%) reported being involved in farming/agriculture. Similarly, a higher proportion (26%) of female respondents reported being involved in business/self-employment compared with their male counterparts (20%).⁶⁰

It is widely acknowledged that, as a capital-intensive industry, the oil sector offers limited employment opportunities to local communities. The highly technical nature of most work in oil operations and the small number of overall jobs available can lead to over-supply of local labour and intense competition for jobs. In such contexts, women who wish to work face particular obstacles to securing employment and often face cultural hostility from co-workers and family members if they enter the workforce.⁶¹ According to testimonies of respondents in the Albertine Graben, very few had benefited from increased employment, despite it being the most commonly held expectation of the sector, with 57% of baseline study respondents presenting this view.⁶² Since the primary form of employment available to local communities has been casual labour – typical of the industry's earlier construction stages – even fewer women have benefited. The MEMD and Total noted that they did not have gender-disaggregated employment statistics for their contractors.

However, in order to avoid perceptions of favouritism in the allocation of casual labour jobs, Total now operates a ballot box system for recruitment. This should remove the barriers preventing

58 Tullow Oil PLC (2012). *Creating Shared Prosperity. 2012 Corporate Social Responsibility Report*. Available at http://www.tulloil.com/files/pdf/reports/tullow_cr_2013.pdf

59 Ibid.

60 International Alert (2013). Op. cit.

61 World Bank (2013). Op. cit.

62 Ibid.

women from being allocated positions. Total has gone further in ensuring this process is gender-sensitive by requiring the presence of a woman co-signer on the ballot application form. Impact assessment of this approach has not yet been carried out. However, both employers and employees seem to think that women are not capable of this kind of work, due to its physical nature. Both communities and oil companies reported that very few women turn up to recruitment and even fewer put their names forward in the ballot. Oil company representatives confirmed that their contractors generally prefer to employ men, due to the perception that they are physically stronger. This is especially the case for seismic surveys, which involve clearing large spaces of bush under quite harsh conditions.

“[It] is true it is a civil worker’s job, so normally you need men to lay fences, to dig trenches and normally the contractors want people who are strong, to do the work quickly ... [To] my mind, I would say out of eight casual labour jobs, one or two can be handled by a woman ... so this is a realistic limitation in the frame of the operation ... but naturally speaking I have a strong feeling that the community is pushing the woman away anyway by the pre-existing cultural context, from the beginning of the process...”⁶³

Unlike casual labour, the main positions available to women – such as catering and maid services in the camps – usually required some level of qualification or previous experience. This has held local women back even further as most are engaged in subsistence agriculture and few hold such qualifications or experience. In some instances, this has led to frustration and perception of neglect on the part of local women, who feel they are not being adequately supported to benefit from the sector. Oil has been discovered in remote areas of Uganda such as Buliisa district, where communities have for many years faced limited access to services and very few economic opportunities. In such contexts, communities have high expectations of gaining from Uganda’s oil discovery. When local people – both men and women – have not been able to engage with and benefit from the sector because they are underqualified or their services/produce do not meet industry standards, it has led to animosity and frustration. This has negative implications for the operational effectiveness of the industry by weakening its social licence to operate.

In the context of a national labour market where a low proportion of women are in waged employment, and they face less secure and lower waged employment, as well as having fewer employable skills, there is a risk that Uganda’s oil sector could exacerbate existing gender inequalities if it does not prioritise gender in its employment policies. However, interviews with key informants from oil companies such as Total indicated that there is a significant difference between the ability to implement gender-sensitive employment policies at the national and field levels. Whilst Total’s country office follows equal opportunity policies and practices, its contractors operating in the field are under no obligation to do so. In fact, aside from minimal due diligence in terms of reporting the details of their employees, including gender, there are no contractual stipulations between Total and its sub-contractors to ensure protection of its employees’ labour rights. Limited and weakly enforced labour laws mean that employees in Uganda – especially casual labourers – are vulnerable to inhumane labour conditions and exploitation.⁶⁴ The government has yet to establish a minimum wage, and workplace gender discrimination is widespread.

With the vast majority of oil operations in the Albertine Graben carried out by contractors, there are significant implications for the ability of oil companies such as Total to manage the social and environmental impacts of their activities. With few contractual obligations beyond timelines and costs, oil companies have little control over those who carry out the majority of their work in the field. This can result in different rules being applied to different kinds of employees; for instance, those working inside the camps and directly for the oil companies are required to follow much

63 KII, Head of Social Affairs, Total E&P Uganda, Kampala, 23 April 2013.

64 See: Foundation for Human Rights Initiative (2011). *The Long Road to Realising Labour Rights in Uganda*. Available at <http://www.fhri.or.ug/index.php/publication/thematic-reports.html>

stricter regulations than those who are moved from one operation area to the next but stay within the communities. Not only does this limit companies' ability to protect communities against human rights abuses and the harmful environmental impacts of their operations, it could present a reputational risk.

Most communities do not distinguish between oil companies and their contractors, meaning that blame for any misconduct on the part of the latter would fall on the former. Finally, there is also an opportunity for oil companies to displace responsibility for managing the social impacts of their activities by their heavy reliance on contractors. As will be discussed in Section 5.3, this has grave implications for the safety of communities in the Albertine Graben, particularly women and girls.

3.6 Women's access to information

Respondents noted that women's limited access to information constituted another factor inhibiting their ability to take advantage of employment opportunities in the oil sector because women often do not receive information about the recruitment processes. Notices are posted at sub-county offices; announcements are made on the radio; or local government CDOs are tasked with going directly to communities. However, one of the findings of this research is that women are often too busy in the fields or carrying out chores to listen to the radio, which is frequently the property of male partners. They are considerably less mobile and interact with people outside of the family and community far less frequently than men. Men often socialise together, in trading centres, and therefore share this type of information with each other. As a result, it was commonly reported that women's primary source of information is men – their male partners or other family members. Men's fear that a woman earning an income independently of her husband will change in character and start neglecting her household duties is another factor. In this context, it would be unlikely for a man to share such information with his wife or female partner.

Another factor limiting women's access to employment information was continual reports among local government that it (local government) does not have the resources to facilitate travel to and from villages. This has particularly negative implications for women, who have less access to the resources and time required to move beyond the village.

3.7 Local content

In consultations carried out for this study, respondents continually emphasised the need for stronger local content policies in order for women to benefit from the oil sector. It was felt that, rather than direct employment, women are in a better position to benefit indirectly through tapping into the sector's supply chain.

"[Now] when you look at business, right now if you go to Pakwach or Panyimur and you look at guys who have signed actual agreements with the oil companies or the service provider, they are all men. Direct beneficiaries are men; women may benefit, but indirectly through working in hotels, catering services for the camps ... or those who sell produce in the market..."⁶⁵

⁶⁵ KII, District CDO, Nebbi district, 9 May 2013.

The term 'local content' has been defined as "the added value brought to a host country through the procurement of goods and services and local workforce development".⁶⁶ 'Local' can refer to both the immediate vicinity in which operations are taking place and the host country as a whole. Some researchers estimate that over the next 20 years, 90% of new hydrocarbon will come from developing countries.⁶⁷ These countries have an understandable interest in ensuring the presence of the sector creates lasting socioeconomic benefits and positive developmental impacts, including job creation, enterprise development and the transfer and acquisition of new skills and technologies.

In a context of increasing competition over, and demand for, finite and dwindling energy and mineral resources, extractive industries face rising expectations to do more than simply mitigate negative impacts. For instance, the Indonesian government requires foreign bidders for energy services contracts to use a minimum of 35% of domestic content in their operations. Companies that do not document their compliance are subject to substantial fines. In Brazil, the semi-public multinational energy company, Petrobras, has a strategic investment plan calling for 65% of equipment and services to be sourced from domestic suppliers. In Kazakhstan, energy and mining legislation was reformed in 2007 to change local content from an informal expectation to a legal requirement. This law came into force in January 2010 and sets targets for the level of product procurement from Kazakhstan suppliers at 50% by 2012, and for services, up to 90%.⁶⁸

The development of Uganda's oil sector will result in the growth of supporting economic activities, such as hotels and restaurants, and the demand for products and services inside the camps. It will be accompanied by benefits to the development of economic infrastructure, such as roads, electricity networks, and telecommunication and banking systems. However, it is not always easy for local populations, especially women, to take advantage of such economic opportunities. As has been pointed out in the context of Ghana's oil sector, in order to benefit, the livelihood framework demands that "people are equipped with livelihood assets".⁶⁹ As analysis of the cultural context affecting gender relations shows, women's control over assets and productive resources is limited in Uganda and they face significant barriers to competing on the job market due to having fewer skills, experience and qualifications. The degree to which women can benefit from the oil industry's economic opportunities will, therefore, be reliant on the development of targeted policies, institutions and programmes by both the public and private sectors.

According to its latest local content figures, 88% of Tullow's 177 staff in Uganda are Ugandan, as is 67% of its management team. Out of US\$265 million invested in 2012, US\$48 million was spent on local content. It spent US\$145 million with suppliers and mostly companies owned by Ugandans.⁷⁰ In order to support skills transfer and standardisation, Tullow held 'closing-the-gap' seminars and funded the opening of an Enterprise Centre to support small and medium-sized businesses. In Buliisa district, Tullow has worked with the Masindi District Farmers' Association to support agro-enterprises for improved food security in the region.

However, communities living in close proximity to Tullow's onshore operations perceive 'local' differently. Most of the food supplied to camps is sourced from Kampala, as local produce does not meet the high-end market standards required by the companies. Similarly, respondents reported that jobs usually taken up by women, such as catering or maid services in the camps, were being given predominantly to people outside the districts in which oil operations were taking place. This has led to frustration on the part of local communities, who feel they are not being supported

66 M. Hackenbruch and J. Davis Pluess (2011). *Commercial Value from Sustainable Local Benefits in the Extractive Industries: Local Content*. Available at http://www.bsr.org/reports/BSR_LocalContent_March2011.pdf

67 The Global Oil and Gas Industry Association for Environmental and Social Issues (2011). *Local Content Strategy: A Guidance Document for the Oil and Gas Industry*. Available at <http://www.ipieca.org/publication/local-content-strategy-guidance-document-oil-and-gas-industry>

68 M. Hackenbruch and J. Davis Pluess (2011). Op. cit.

69 R. Boohene and J. Atta Peprah (2011). 'Women, livelihood and oil and gas discovery in Ghana: An exploratory study of Cape Three Points and surrounding communities', *Journal of Sustainable Development*, Vol. 4, No. 3.

70 Tullow Oil PLC (2012). Op. cit.

to benefit from such opportunities. With the camps set to expand as Uganda moves into the production stage, it will be essential to improve the local content capacity of local communities for a sustainable and effective oil and gas sector in Uganda.

“[Most] jobs are given to people from outside of the district, from Masindi, from Jinja. More priority should have been given to providing jobs for indigenous people here ... [We] are even wondering how they get to know about these jobs yet the local people lack that information...”⁷¹

The situation is even gloomier for women, as one respondent noted:

“[There] are benefits to be made from the oil sector, but people need to be prepared, especially women, on how they can do this ... [Even] if women are aware of the kinds of services and produce companies want, they do not have the income-generating skills needed to start supplying it...”⁷²

The Ugandan government has not yet developed a national local content policy but is in the process of doing so. However, a local content initiative led by a non-profit organisation, Traidlinks,⁷³ has begun in Hoima district. Traidlinks has been working with local farmers to improve their capacity to supply oil camps and local businesses such as hotels and restaurants. Farmers are being trained in business practices and on how to improve their standards to fulfil oil company requirements. The organisation uses a private sector approach that encourages farmers to start and invest in their own business rather than offering services for free. Traidlinks then buys the produce and sells it on to the oil companies and their contractors. It is currently working with Tullow Oil and Equator Catering, which manages Tullow's oil camps in Buliisa district and Kisinja (in Hoima district). According to the organisation, their initiative has resulted in improved standards, with rejections from camps reducing from 40% to 15% between February and September of 2012. However, the initiative is still in its pilot stage. At the end of 2012, fewer than 100 farmers were involved in Traidlinks initiatives, in a region of around 70,000 farmers. It is currently supplying 10%–15% of the food consumed in camps, and intends to reach the stated national target of 30% as the initiative develops.⁷⁴

At present, there is no specific gender focus to local content initiatives such as Traidlinks, but its stated values include non-discrimination in employment and ‘inclusive’ engagement with all stakeholders. As this section has discussed, women are increasingly engaging in productive activities such as agriculture and are heavily involved in the growing of the staple foods such as rice, maize, beans that the company is currently supplying to the camps. Many are already well placed to benefit from such activities by being part of economic groups such as village savings and loans associations; they are also increasingly managing micro-enterprises involving the selling of produce in markets. As the government develops its local content policy, a gender focus will be essential. This would ensure that women are economically empowered by the oil industry and their capacity to benefit from supplier opportunities offered by the sector is increased. Research on the gender division of labour in Uganda has shown that men tend to dominate the more remunerative activities in agriculture.⁷⁵ As the activities women currently benefit from become more lucrative, there is a risk they could be pushed out by men and lose access to the economic gains offered by local content.

⁷¹ FGD, Women adults, Buliisa district, 14 May 2013.

⁷² KII, Sub-county chairperson, Buliisa Town Council, 13 May 2013.

⁷³ Further information about Traidlinks is available at: <http://www.traidlinks.ie/about-us>

⁷⁴ ‘Private-sector approach brings oil opportunities to Hoima farmers’, *Oil in Uganda*, 24 September 2012. Available at <http://www.oilinuganda.org/features/economy/private-sector-approach-brings-oil-opportunities-to-hoima-farmers.html>

⁷⁵ International Fund for Agricultural Development (2000). Op. cit.

4. SGBV, sex work and conflict

The study responded to the findings of the baseline survey by expanding its hypothesis that socioeconomic changes caused by the oil sector – for instance, those in family income and influence from other cultures – could result in conflict between the sexes. Findings pointed towards a correlation between Uganda’s oil industry and certain forms of violence and socially exploitative practices. Indeed, the development of an extractive industry is frequently associated with ‘boomtown’ effects: increased investment accelerates modernisation and monetisation of the local economy, which can destabilise social relations by creating powerful new incentives. In this context, there is a relationship between the development of an extractive industry and rising levels of violence. Increased access to cash from extractive industry jobs and an influx of male workers often leads to increases in alcoholism, drug abuse and sex work. These factors can lead to a rise in domestic disputes, violence against women, and increased levels of HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted illnesses.⁷⁶ Indeed, respondents to the study commonly identified a connection between the industry and prostitution, domestic violence and SGBV. Rather than introducing new problems, however, the industry appears to be contributing to some of the social dynamics that already drive these practices.

4.1 Sex work

Geographically, oil has been discovered in areas where sex work is already prevalent. Landing sites – such as Kaiso Tonya – in the fishing communities along Lake Albert are particularly prone to commercial sexual practices due to the frequency with which traders pass through them. Oil and gas exploration has contributed to an increase in the number of people with cash to spend in these locations. Young girls as well as women are engaging in this activity. According to consultations with local government in Panyimur sub-county, children often travel a long way without their parents to practise sex work in fishing communities.

“[Defilement] is common here. If you had visited the market today, for example ... you get these young girls coming up to the landing sites because they know people there have money ... and you realise that these girls don’t have their parents with them. They are coming from very far; so you are left with no other option but to release them and let them go...”⁷⁷

Oil and gas exploration has contributed to an increase in the number of people on the move through these regions, especially oil workers with money to spend. Respondents in this study have noticed an increase in sex work as a result, both in urban areas of Pakwach, Hoima and Buliisa and landing sites along the lake. It appears that women who travelled to oil regions in search of jobs in the sector but did not find them turned to sex work. In other instances, it was reported that women had travelled from Kampala, other districts in Uganda, and even neighbouring countries, with the intention of practising sex work. These perceptions were linked to an observed increase in the number of bars and lodges where such activities take place. According to testimonies, people from outside districts have opened many of these establishments after being attracted by lucrative business opportunities created by the oil industry. The growing prevalence of the sex industry in these communities could make people, and especially women, vulnerable to the contraction of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs).

⁷⁶ ‘Improving the impact of extractive industries projects on women’, *World Bank*. Available at <http://go.worldbank.org/DCQKSPS130>

⁷⁷ KII, Sub-county chief, Panyimur sub-county, Nebbi district, 10 May 2013.

Studies have found that women are both more likely to contract HIV and to die of AIDS when they contract it.⁷⁸

The oil and gas sector is not to blame for the introduction of sex work to Uganda; rather, it risks exacerbating an already growing problem. At the national level, sex work is on the rise. A study commissioned by the government found that the number of girls going into sex work increased from 12,000 to 18,000 between 2004 and 2011 – many as a result of human trafficking.⁷⁹ The study established that children – mostly girls between the ages of 14 and 17 years – are being lured by traffickers from their village homes to urban centres such as Kampala on the promise of jobs. When they arrive, they are forced into prostitution or dancing in strip bars. Those most vulnerable were found to be children from families struggling financially and almost all (88%) were not attending school and had not gone beyond primary education.⁸⁰

Box 2: Extractive industries and insecurity in Peru and Colombia

In 2011, International Alert carried out a review of the gender dimensions of its 'Foro Andino' project, which it jointly implemented with regional partners: Indepaz (Colombia), Ecolex (Ecuador) and Socios Peru (Peru) between January 2010 and January 2013. Focusing on socio-environmental conflicts around natural resource management in the extractive industries of Colombia and Peru and the agroindustry in Ecuador, the project aimed to reduce conflicts between marginalised communities and those promoting national interests of development (authorities and the private sector) as well as promoting and protecting the rights and freedoms of marginalised groups of indigenous and African descent. Its aim was to strengthen the role of civil society in promoting human rights and democratic reform.

Within this review, Alert undertook a preliminary investigation into the divergent ways conflict impacts men and women in communities affected by extractive industry development in Colombia and Peru. It identified specific gender dimensions within two of the primary impacts of the mining industries in these communities:

1. The increased security presence in areas affected by extractive industry; and
2. Destabilisation of social relations caused by rapid monetisation of local economies and inwards migration.

Due to the vulnerability of extractive industry operations to armed attacks, whether politically or criminally motivated, the industry is often accompanied by a significant public and private security presence. This changes local power dynamics and the social atmosphere. Allegations of gender-based violence and harassment of women by armed groups and security forces were frequent in the affected communities, who emphasised the devastating psychosocial consequences for victims. The perception of this danger alone created an atmosphere of fear and limited freedom of movement for women and girls. The presence of armed forces and salaried experts was also found to create non-traditional role models for young male community members. Their aspirations were diverted from traditional farming to roles perceived to be more masculine and lucrative, often based on the ownership of guns as symbols of status and power. In the context of Colombia – with its protracted internal conflict – this contributed to increased insecurity in the affected areas. The review also found that women played a prominent role in indigenous resistance to extractive companies, but their demands for basic social services such as healthcare and education were at risk of being side-lined in male-dominated negotiations of resettlement and compensation packages.

The second form of insecurity within which strong gender dimensions were identified was that caused by an influx of cash and largely male workforce in the affected areas. Indigenous communities considered inwards migration as a threat to their language, cultural identity and 'family unity', over which women are primary custodians. Marked increases in teenage pregnancies, sex work and sexually transmitted

⁷⁸ World Bank (2013). Op. cit.

⁷⁹ Uganda Youth Development Link, Government of Uganda, et al (2011). *Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children in Uganda: A Critical Review of Efforts to Address CSEC 2005–2011*. Available at <http://www.uydel.org/downloads/CSEC%20in%20Uganda%202011%20-%20UYDEL%20booklet%20-23-08-2011pdf-20111206-115302.pdf>

⁸⁰ Ibid.

infections were observed following in-migration and the increase in monetised employment for local men (few women obtained employment in extractive industries). Furthermore, the influx of cash leads to price inflation and monetisation of local economies. For example, in the artisanal gold-mining areas of Peru, goods became valued in 'gold dust', increasing the cost of living and resulting in turn in some women from non-mining families resorting to sex work to support themselves.

Company and government community investment schemes embodied similar risks. In a mining area in Puna, a simple cash transfer scheme was initiated to share the mining revenue with local communities. A fixed amount of cash was paid annually to each registered local citizen. However, in a context where communities had little experience of dealing with cash, saving, investment or business strategies, the results were dismal. The annual stipend was often spent quickly and unstrategically, leaving some citizens in poverty and debt for the rest of the year awaiting the next annual pay-out. Substance abuse, gambling and sex work increased. Consequential impacts included a rise in violent crime and violence against women, teenage pregnancies, and family breakdowns with single mothers struggling to support their children. At the same time, civil society noted that the district population increased significantly as more people wanted to access the cash transfer scheme.

The testimonies and evidence gathered in Alert's review identified clear gender dimensions to the various forms of social and economic destabilisation caused by mining in Peru and Colombia. These cases offer important lessons for Uganda as its oil sector moves into the production stage:

1. Resistance to extractive industry development among indigenous communities can be active and turn violent, which can result in a rise in armed security forces – public and private – in the area of operations. This can have an adverse impact on the security of affected communities by making women vulnerable to gender-based violence. For men and boys, it can entail a cultural shift whereby traditional economic roles in agriculture become devalued in favour of the respect gained through forms of work perceived as more masculine, such as higher pay or access to weapons.
2. The development of an extractive industry results in increased investment, accelerating the monetisation of local economies. This can destabilise social relations by creating powerful new incentives. Even government and company reinvestment schemes designed to benefit communities directly can have adverse impacts if not managed appropriately. Utmost sensitivity to the specific socioeconomic and cultural dynamics of targeted communities must be applied to the design of such schemes and care taken that benefits reach all women and men, boys and girls. It is particularly apparent that schemes require complementary financial literacy training and support in developing sustainable income-generating activities.

4.2 Domestic violence and alcoholism

In the case of domestic violence, the oil sector has exacerbated pre-existing social tensions relating to limited resources and control over assets in low-income households. There appeared to be a fundamental lack of trust between the sexes in such contexts. This was particularly the case among male respondents whose female partners earned independent incomes. For instance, in Pakwach sub-county, men presented the perception that female partners would hide incomes and were more likely to share them with their birth families than their husbands. In this context, male respondents resisted their female partners working outside of the home for fear that they would leave them for another man. In Kaiso Tonya, where the entrepreneurial spirit among women was strong, men described feelings of emasculation, as they perceived themselves to be losing their status as 'providers'.

In a separate analysis of the impacts of the oil sector on gender relations, 'boomtown' impacts have been found to have an adverse effect on a society's 'social capital', which is measured by the strength of group membership, trust and informal social ties.⁸¹ In contexts where trust between the sexes is already strained by economic hardships, the study observed a destabilising

81 World Bank (2013). *Op. cit.*

impact on social relations caused by the introduction of new incentives resulting from increased economic activity. In Pakwach, the inability of men to find work in the oil sector was closely tied to their sense of insecurity in relation to female partners forming relationships with oil workers. Elsewhere, it has been argued that masculinity in oil areas is linked to the ability to secure work and income. When masculinity is threatened, alcohol abuse and violence occur.

In Buliisa, there were instances of family breakdown and fighting between partners as result of women forming relationships with oil workers. One respondent noted:

“[The] workers will offer a lot of money to these women, whose own husbands are not able to provide for them...”⁸²

The introduction of compensation money was said to have led to disputes within families, especially polygamous ones. In these contexts, land is often partitioned between separate wives for their individual use. When one of the wives' land has been compensated more than the others, accusations of favouritism arise. Besides, men who receive compensation were reported to have brought additional wives into the family – resulting in the neglect of previous ones and conflict within the home.

“[There] are cases where you will find that the man has got another woman, then he abandons the other one ... Another factor that is causing family breakdown is economic hardship; the responsibilities in terms of providing for the family are not matching the income level, and this leads to conflict...”⁸³

Respondents noted that, in most cases, families had been awarded more money in compensation than they had ever had at one time, and did not know how to manage it responsibly. This often resulted in men spending the money on temporary indulgences, including alcohol and prostitution. Domestic violence between partners ensued as a consequence.

However, in Buliisa district, women were the primary receivers of compensation money as they were the most likely to be found on the land when the valuation process took place. Some noted that this had increased women's economic empowerment in the district. For example, they were able to invest the money in the family by using it for school fees. Others, however, noted that it had led to conflict between partners by posing a perceived threat to the man's control over household assets. As with sex work, the oil sector does not introduce a new problem with domestic violence; rather, it is contributing to a number of the social dynamics that already drive it. These include changing gender roles – especially women's economic empowerment – economic hardships and poverty, alcoholism, and practices such as commercial sex and polygamy.

In the consultations carried out for this study, respondents noted that oil exploration had resulted in higher levels of alcohol consumption in areas where it already presented a major barrier to socioeconomic development. This was felt to be a consequence of the influx of oil workers and casual labourers with money to spend, resulting in a growing drinking culture evidenced by the rising number of bars being opened. Indeed, the oil industry's contribution to higher levels of alcohol consumption is commonly considered one of its 'boomtown' effects.

Alcohol consumption has been found to contribute to violence against women, risky sexual behaviour and lower levels of economic productivity. National studies have highlighted Uganda's particularly high level of alcohol consumption, and associated SGBV and poverty. In the 2004 World Health Organization *Global Status Report on Alcohol*, Uganda was ranked as the world's biggest consumer of alcohol (out of 185 countries), with a yearly per capita consumption of 19.47

⁸² FGD, Female youth, Buliisa district, 14 May 2013.

⁸³ KII, District CDO, Nebbi district, 9 May 2013.

litres per adult (aged 15 and above).⁸⁴ Similarly, a Ministry of Finance report from the 2002 Uganda Participatory Poverty Assessment Project emphasised the influence of excessive alcohol consumption on poverty, especially in the rural areas. Alcoholism was found to be the primary factor contributing to the downward mobility of households. Other studies have noted the combined impact of alcoholism on SGBV. In a 2007 study, it was found that 52% of the women who had recently experienced domestic violence in Uganda reported that their partner had consumed alcohol.⁸⁵ In such a context, the industry's potential to drive a growing drinking culture in Uganda's oil regions, and the specific vulnerability of women to its associated risks – including domestic violence and STD transmission – will deserve attention in sector policy interventions.

“[This] is a fishing community so the rate of other things like drinking is high and of course when a man drinks he comes back home and expects to get something and once that is not there, even if he has not contributed, it will result in a fight, with the man taking an upper hand physically...”⁸⁶

4.3 Female youth

Girls and young women are particularly vulnerable to the negative social impacts of the oil sector discussed here. Respondents in this study reported that oil exploration had contributed towards a culture whereby girls become sexually involved with older men in exchange for money or gifts. Indeed, even before oil activities began, a study carried out among secondary school girls aged 12–20 in rural Uganda found that 85% were currently or had been involved in a sexual relationship in exchange for money or gifts.⁸⁷

The researchers were told about girls forming sexual relationships with oil workers, becoming pregnant and dropping out of school as a result. Drop-out rates are already very high in Uganda, especially for girls. The universal primary education policy initiated by the government in 1997 has significantly narrowed the gender enrolment gap. However, only 42% of girls complete primary education, compared with 55% of boys.⁸⁸ In Nebbi district, primary school completion was as low as 24% for girls in 2012, compared with 54% for boys.⁸⁹ Socially constructed gender roles that place women in the domestic sphere – where they are financially dependent on men and responsible for taking care of the family – put pressure on girls to stay at home. They also entrench a perception that girls must rely on men to provide for them materially. As with women who engage in income-generating activities, girls who attend school, especially in rural areas, have a double workload because they remain responsible for the majority of domestic chores. Girls become overburdened by this workload, making them more likely to drop out of school and look for external financial support structures. Early pregnancy and marriage are, therefore, a common reason for girls to drop out of school.

“[If] a girl of school-going age becomes pregnant then that's the end of everything for her ... Her parents will neglect her education ... Most of the parents here, they don't care about education. So when a child finishes primary seven they take that as graduating ... so that is why some of these girls get into a relationship with men for the money/financial support they can offer, and they don't know about family planning so they get pregnant...”⁹⁰

84 World Health Organization (WHO) (2004). *Global Status Report on Alcohol 2004*. Geneva.

85 Development, Research and Training/Chronic Poverty Research Centre (2007). *Drinking Deeper Into Poverty: The New Frontier for Chronic Poverty in Uganda*. Kampala.

86 KII, Sub-county chief, Panyimur sub-county, Nebbi district, 10 May 2013.

87 N. Luke (2003). 'Age and economic asymmetries in the sexual relationships of adolescent girls in sub-Saharan Africa', *Studies in Family Planning*, Vol. 34, No. 2. pp.67–86.

88 'Gender and women's empowerment', *UNDP in Uganda*. Op. cit.

89 KII, District CDO, Nebbi district, 9 May 2013.

90 FGD, Female youth, Kaiso Tonya, Hoima district, 18 May 2013.

High drop-out rates contribute to lower levels of literacy, numeracy and income-generating skills among women, inhibiting their ability to benefit from the economic opportunities offered by the sector. A strong focus on education, and keeping girls in school, will be central to gender-sensitive policy and practice in Uganda's oil sector. As well as contributing to their economic empowerment – and ability to benefit from the growth of the oil sector – keeping girls in school could also make them less vulnerable to being engaged in sexually exploitative relationships.

4.4 Oil, gender and conflict

As the experience of African countries such as the Democratic Republic of Congo, Nigeria and Sudan/South Sudan has shown, the extractive industries carry a high risk of both internal and cross-border conflict, with dire human rights and developmental consequences. In Uganda, oil has been discovered in the western rift of the country. This is a politically sensitive area because it lies between two countries with a history of violent conflicts and border disputes. It is characterised by a number of conflicts, including violent rebellions, ethnic conflicts, land conflicts and insecurity. The Albertine region is also an area that embraces a multiplicity of local government authorities, traditional institutions and people of various ethnic groups. Given this fragmented identity, the discovery of oil has the potential to stir up tensions along a whole range of lines. In Uganda, where rural livelihoods largely derive from natural resources, careful management of the impact of oil exploration and exploitation is crucial.⁹¹

The baseline survey found that the most common causes of conflict in the Albertine Graben were land ownership (66%) and land use (62%). Those related to shared water sources (29%), community roads (13%) and shared sanitation facilities (11%) were also significant. It noted that such results were not surprising since land is a very strategic socioeconomic asset, particularly in poor societies where wealth and survival not only depend on but are also measured by control of and access to land. Tribal and ethnic conflicts were also identified. For example, in Nwoya district, the Acholi accuse the Alur people of taking over their land. Research identified potential conflict over the division of Kasese district along ethnic lines. The survey also found that pre-existing tension among communities has been reignited by the recent discovery of commercially viable oil and gas, and that the most serious conflicts related to land ownership and land use.⁹²

In consultations carried out for this study, respondents in Buliisa district observed that awareness of the increasing value of land following the district's oil discoveries had led to land speculation and competing ownership claims in a context of traditionally customary tenure systems. Respondents gave specific examples of intra-family feuds as exemplified below:

“[It] would have been better if the oil had not been discovered. People would be living together very peacefully ... but now there has been this problem of land disputes ... Our land used to be owned communally under customary ownership ... now with the discovery of oil, people have been grabbing land and selling it behind the community's back ... People were living together peacefully and now brothers and sisters are fighting ... There has been one case where a brother burnt two sisters to death in their home because it was suspected that there was an oil well on their land...”⁹³

A culture of patrilineal land tenure and inefficient protection of their property rights in existing legislation make women and children particularly vulnerable to land-grabbing at the family level in Uganda, and this goes largely unnoticed in the public justice system. Limited control over valuable economic assets such as land makes women less resilient to the negative externalities

⁹¹ International Alert (2013). Op. cit.

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ KII, Sub-county chairperson, Buliisa district, 13 May 2013.

of the oil industry, including this aggressive form of land speculation. Land loss also has specific implications for women by restricting their ability to fulfil their responsibility to ensure household food security.

Box 3: Case study – Gender and conflict in South Sudan

On a larger scale, the experience of countries such as South Sudan shows how competing sovereignty claims fuelled by the presence of large oil deposits can drive protracted conflicts, with specific and disproportionate consequences for women. South Sudan gained independence from Sudan on 9 July 2011 after a large majority of South Sudanese voted for secession in a referendum. The new nation inherited most of Sudan's oil wealth but continuing disputes with Khartoum have held South Sudan's oil sector back, and its economy is not developing at the pace it should. The referendum that led to South Sudan's independence was the result of a 2005 peace deal that ended Africa's then longest-running civil war. Since independence, relations between the two states continue to be marred by conflict over the Greater Nile Oil Pipeline and sovereignty disputes over border regions such as Abyei. South Sudan received 50% of the former united Sudan's oil proceeds under the 2005 peace accord. However, this agreement was set to expire with independence. In January 2012, South Sudan halted oil production after talks with Khartoum on the sharing of oil revenues broke down. South Sudan resumed production in May 2013 after reaching a deal that also established a demilitarised border zone.⁹⁴

Since the cessation of hostilities with Sudan and attaining independence, South Sudan has experienced large-scale displacement caused by continuing insecurity. The legacy of a long and violent civil war has led to the widespread availability of small arms and militarisation of historical cattle-raiding disputes and conflict over land, water and pasture between different ethnic groups in rural Jonglei State. At least 302 attacks took place in the state between January 2011 and September 2012, in which 200,000 people were displaced and 2,500 killed.⁹⁵ Both Sudan and South Sudan accuse each other of supporting rebel groups in the protracted conflict between the two countries, including claims that Sudan is arming militia in Jonglei. Humanitarian organisations have expressed concern that women and children are increasingly caught up in the violence of cattle-rustling disputes in Jonglei. There have been reports of indiscriminate attacks on women and children, and their abduction as a method of revenge in the region's cycles of violence. Women and children have also been disproportionately affected by displacement. The impact of over two decades of civil war, including the introduction of small arms, has increased the brutality of cattle-rustling feuds. Moreover, since the violence erupted in March 2013, tens of thousands have fled fighting, seeking refuge in hard-to-reach bush land and neighbouring countries.⁹⁶ In Uganda alone, some 2,700 refugees from Jonglei arrived in the first half of 2013, averaging at around 527 per month.⁹⁷ The majority of those displaced are women and children, as the men often stay behind to guard livestock. The emergence of sexual violence has added another dynamic to their vulnerability.

⁹⁴ 'South Sudan profile', *BBC News*. Available at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-14069082>

⁹⁵ 'South Sudan: Women and children bear brunt of Jonglei violence', *IRIN*, 5 December 2012. Available at <http://www.irinnews.org/report/96972/south-sudan-women-and-children-bear-brunt-of-jonglei-violence>

⁹⁶ 'Fighting in South Sudan's Jonglei state displaces tens of thousands', *United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR)*, 11 June 2013. Available at <http://www.unhcr.org/51b6f2916.html>

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

5. Corporate social responsibility and the role of companies

In contexts where local governance structures are weak and very often poorly resourced, incoming oil companies are commonly confronted with a de facto governance role and high expectations from communities to share benefits in various forms. In the interviews carried out for this study, local government and community members expressed the common perception that the development of the oil industry would result in improved social infrastructure as a result of company CSR projects. As powerful external actors, oil companies are well positioned to influence normative as well as material change in the communities in which they operate. If their community investments are suitably gender-sensitive, companies are in a unique position to reset social norms that disadvantage women. As well as direct community investments, local communities are also able to benefit from the growth of economic infrastructure required by the sector. For instance, road-building can benefit women by giving them easier access to markets and information networks.

5.1 Access to services

According to a strategic environmental impact assessment⁹⁸ commissioned by the government, there is generally low access to basic social services in the Albertine region. Access to safe water sources is not equally distributed between regions and districts. Whilst it is high in Hoima district, with 77.5% of the rural population having access, it is low in Buliisa district, where only 53% have access to safe water.⁹⁹ Women and children are disproportionately impacted by this because they are responsible for water collection. Community members in the sub-counties of Buseruka, Bugambe and Kigorobyia have to walk particularly long distances to get water.

The assessment also found generally low levels of literacy in the region. Approximately 37.1% of the population aged six and above has never attended school, with females dominating among this group.¹⁰⁰ High drop-out rates among girls were also noted, despite increased enrolment as a result of the universal primary education policy. The illiteracy rate in Hoima district, at 44% of people over the age of 10 years, was particularly high. This district has 188 primary schools, 32 secondary schools and one college at Butera. Hoima district has one hospital (government-aided and referral) and 37 health centres.¹⁰¹

According to its own figures, out of a total US\$265 million invested in Uganda by Tullow in 2012, US\$4.8 million was spent on 'social projects'.¹⁰² In the consultations carried out for this study, one of the primary benefits that respondents believed the oil sector would provide for communities was better access to social infrastructure as a result of oil company CSR projects. Deliberate efforts on the part of companies to improve basic services such as education and health were identified. The building of a Health Centre II in Kyehoro, Hoima district, was found to have had a positive impact on maternal health. Respondents in the remote fishing community of Kaiso Tonya reported that better access to health facilities had reduced the number of women giving birth at home. This is important in the context of poor national statistics on maternal health. Uganda's maternal mortality ratio currently stands at 310 deaths per 100,000 live births and it is unlikely to reach development targets under MDG 5 (improving maternal health). In other contexts, oil

⁹⁸ MEMD (2013). Op. cit.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² Tullow Oil PLC (2012). Op. cit.

company CSR projects were considered less successful. For example, Tullow has built a Health Centre IV in Buliisa district, which, despite being launched in 2011, is still not operational. There have been questions over the appropriateness of its location and the government's willingness to staff and resource it. Indeed, the 'de facto governance role' of oil companies has troubling implications.

Without local and national government backing, CSR projects can lack contextual appropriateness and sustainability. They may also incur a displacement of responsibility and reduced pressure on national governments to reinvest oil revenues, thus opening greater avenues for corruption.

Respondents also expected to benefit indirectly from improvements to economic infrastructure such as roads, electricity and water sources required for the oil companies to operate in the region. Road construction was felt to have benefited women by giving them easier access to markets and information networks. However, the study found that women are typically less mobile than their male counterparts, which has a significant impact on their ability to access information and, consequentially, economic opportunities within and around the sector. An improvement in economic infrastructure, therefore, has important implications for women's economic empowerment.

5.2 Oil company scholarship schemes

As powerful external actors, oil companies are well positioned to influence normative as well as material change in the communities in which they operate. If their community investments are suitably gender-sensitive, companies are in a unique position to reset social norms that disadvantage women. Tullow, CNOOC and Total have all provided scholarship opportunities for students in local communities. According to a recent CSR report, the Tullow Group allocated 90 scholarships across Africa in 2012 for study at universities in the UK, Ireland and France. The stated aim of the scheme is to "build capacity in our host countries and increase the pool of potential local employees, enabling more people to participate in the industry and related sectors".¹⁰³ According to information from Tullow representatives interviewed for this study, in the first year of the scheme, three students were sent from Uganda to study at universities abroad in finance and other industry-related subjects. Companies have also provided scholarships for higher-level education at institutions in Uganda's capital, Kampala.

Despite being a worthwhile initiative, by favouring science subjects and those directly related to the oil industry, there is an innate and unintentional gender bias in the scholarship scheme. At the national level, all those allocated scholarships to study abroad in 2012 were male. Similarly, Total awarded five scholarships for children at secondary level in Nwoya district to go on and study A-levels in Kampala, all of whom were boys. The preference was for science subjects, and students were awarded solely on the basis of merit. Although some girls have been given scholarships in Buliisa district for higher education studies, boys tended to perform better than girls in science subjects and the rate of A-level enrolment among girls for such subjects actually fell in 2012. Indeed, according to interviews with company representatives and local government, the majority of students who have benefited so far have been male. Despite nationwide progress in primary school enrolment, female students in Uganda already face a number of disadvantages compared with their male counterparts. This is primarily due to social norms that place lesser importance on the education of girls and pressure on them to leave school to take up domestic roles.

"[If] we can have a strategic plan for engaging the girl child in education at secondary and higher institutions, because without education there's no way they can get the jobs..."¹⁰⁴

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ KII, District vice-chairman, Nwoya district, 7 May 2013.

The scholarship scheme could present a unique opportunity to support girls in gaining an education and acquiring the skills they need to access economic and leadership opportunities both within and outside of the sector. However, at present, the scheme risks strengthening widening gender disparities in the education system by restricting itself to subjects in which Ugandan male students tend to perform better. A more gender-equality focused community investment policy by companies in Uganda could consider offering scholarship support for female students to attend secondary school without subject-specific requirements. Affirmative action could also be applied, whereby 50% of students selected would have to be female. Investment in training and apprenticeship schemes in the fields of business, hospitality, catering and tailoring should also be prioritised, in order to enhance women's ability to take advantage of local content opportunities.

Box 4: Application of the Global Memorandum of Understanding in the Niger Delta

The Global Memorandum of Understanding (GMOU) process came into place after decades of underdevelopment in communities hosting oil operations in the Niger Delta. Nigeria began drilling oil in the late 1950s and has since become Africa's leading oil producer, at around 2.53 million barrels per day (2011 estimate). However, over half of Nigeria's population lives in poverty and 68% live on less than US\$1.25 a day. One of the main grievances of people living in the oil-rich Niger Delta towards international oil companies and the Nigerian government is that oil extraction has not benefited local communities. Indeed, inequitable oil revenue management, severe environmental degradation, violent resistance from indigenous communities and human rights abuses have marred Nigeria's oil sector.

The Leadership Initiative for Transformation and Empowerment (LITE-Africa), a Nigerian NGO, has been operating in the Niger Delta since 1999 – working to improve the lives of people negatively affected by the oil industry, and to foster peaceful relations between affected communities, oil companies and government. LITE-Africa carried out research in more than 120 communities to understand the state of public services, health, education and development. It found that people in the Delta held very negative perceptions of the oil sector's impact on their communities, which included:

1. Degradation of social and environmental norms, leading to increased lack of trust amongst the community members;
2. A rise in militancy, including the vandalism of oil facilities, which has led to the loss of lives, displacement of peoples and loss of properties;
3. Depleted fish stocks and polluted agricultural soils due to system failure or sabotage (oil spills); and
4. Increased unemployment and alcoholism, a rise in sex work, HIV/AIDs and other sexually transmitted illnesses (STIs).

LITE-Africa observed specific impacts on women, particularly in terms of restricted access to their main sources of livelihood – fishing and farming – as a result of environmental degradation. There were testimonies of women being targeted as sex workers, thus increasing the spread of STIs in the region. Exacerbating these negative externalities, very poor social infrastructure in the Niger Delta leaves women with little or no access to important services such as healthcare.

Such negative impacts and perceptions constituted a serious threat to the social licence to operate of various oil companies operating in the Niger Delta. In 2006, Shell Nigeria and Chevron Nigeria Limited introduced a new way of working with communities called the 'Global Memorandum of Understanding'. A GMOU is an agreement between an oil company and a group ('cluster') of several communities. Clusters are based on local government areas or clan/historical affinity lines. The GMOU is the only platform that regularly brings communities together with representatives of state and local governments, oil companies and civil society organisations, such as development NGOs in the Niger Delta. Together, this group of stakeholders forms a decision-making committee called the Cluster Development Board (CDB) or Regional Development Council.

The purpose of the committee is to formulate an agreement – the GMOU – whereby oil companies provide funding for the implementation of community development plans. Within this framework, the communities elect 'leaders' to represent them and their development priorities on the committees. Through a participatory decision-making process, companies agree to a five-year funding period for these plans. The community leaders sign the agreement on behalf of the community and plan how projects will be carried out: budget allocations, modes of payment and delivery timeframes.

The use of GMoU agreements in Nigeria represents an important shift in approach by placing emphasis on regular communication with the grassroots through transparent and accountable processes. However, there have been a number of challenges involved in their implementation, especially in terms of ensuring gender equality.

Culturally, women do not normally take up decision-making leadership roles in their communities. It has, therefore, been difficult to get women to represent their communities on development committees and community leaders have not responded positively to the idea of having women take on this role. In terms of implementation, 20% of the budget for implementing community development plans under the GMoU is reserved for 'women's programmes'. Primarily, these include economic empowerment programmes focusing on micro-credit income-generating skills. However, there has been a general failure to implement this 20%. Reasons for this failure include underlying challenges resulting from a lack of coordination between implementing partners: local government, oil companies and community representatives. However, the lack of female participation among the community leadership carries its own specific challenge for the design and implementation of 'women's programmes'.

Despite such challenges, applying the GMoU has had positive outcomes for communities and women in particular in the Niger Delta:

1. There has been an increase in local businesses owned and managed by women;
2. Women entrepreneurs have improved their business management skills through attending bookkeeping and adult literacy courses;
3. A gradual increase has occurred in female participation in various committees constituted under the GMoU model;
4. A local network for community women has been created, where they share information such as market assessments and efforts to participate and be part of community decision-making; and
5. Trust has increased amongst the community and oil companies due to improved avenues for communication and information exchange.

Through engaging in this process as a non-governmental development organisation, LITE-Africa has learnt that it is not possible to overturn deep-rooted cultural norms that prevent women from participating in decision-making bodies and taking on leadership roles in their communities. However, through a consistent and persistent effort to involve women (such as making a deliberate effort to help women contribute to town hall meetings), women can gradually be brought on board and resistance to their participation reduced. In addition to consistent gender awareness in the management of community activities, specific structures can be put in place to encourage women's participation in the GMoU process. For instance, Chevron has set up a Gender Committee under its GMoU. Executives of this committee facilitate town hall meetings and encourage women to speak up. When issues are raised, they formulate plans – including targets and monitoring frameworks – to ensure their needs, priorities and concerns have an impact on the design and implementation of the GMoU. Shell Nigeria does not currently have anything comparable.

5.3 CSR, sex work and SGBV

Oil company key informants resisted admitting to a relationship between the oil sector and increasing levels of sex work in the Albertine Graben. In Buliisa district, it was argued that sex work already presented a major problem before oil was discovered, especially along the lake's landing sites. It was, therefore, difficult to lay blame on the oil sector. And despite resisting responsibility, companies are directly encouraging safer sex practices. Tullow operates HIV awareness campaigns where it operates, including the establishment of peer educators in the villages. Similarly, Total reported that it is in the process of reviewing proposals for a civil society organisation to carry out an HIV awareness campaign on its behalf. As discussed, the fact that sex work pre-existed the sector's arrival, and presented a particular challenge in some localities, does not negate the industry's social responsibility. Understanding how the sector impacts upon and influences a pre-existing socioeconomic and cultural context is just as important as identifying the introduction of new phenomena. The companies reported that they encourage those in the camps to practise safe sex and that workers are only allowed to

leave the camps at certain times in order to limit their exposure to commercial sex and alcohol. Full medical checks are required for direct employees of the oil companies, and sub-contracted workers are offered free HIV testing, although this is not obligatory. Much less diligence is applied to workers who live outside of the camps, however, even if they have been brought by Tullow from outside the area to carry out work.

In Hoima, a Tullow representative told of a male oil worker who had been brought with a team from another project to work in Buliisa. The man, employed by a Tullow sub-contractor, was not based in the camp; he lived in a nearby village, where he became sexually active with a 13-year-old girl. The mother informed a Tullow representative that her daughter was skipping school and secretly spending her days with this man, sometimes not coming home at all. She requested that the company help her end the relationship. A senior Tullow employee responsible for stakeholder relations in the region was brought in to make an intervention. The man was moved to another area of Tullow's operations and the girl was encouraged not to skip school in the future. Apparently, if this man had lived in the camp, or had been a direct employee of Tullow, he would have lost his job. But despite being closer and more exposed to the community, different rules apply to those working outside of the camps.¹⁰⁵ Tullow, therefore, tolerated the sexual abuse of a 13-year-old girl by a contractor. In a country where SGBV is widespread and measures against it and the legal framework are weakly enforced, this displacement of responsibility poses a serious threat to the safety of communities in the Albertine Graben.

5.4 Community-company relations

The operational effectiveness and sustainability of an oil project is heavily reliant on the quality of company-community relations. If this relationship is not well managed, indigenous resistance to oil activities can give rise to violent conflict and militarisation of oil regions. Similarly, without adequate and equitable consultation, project planning and community investments may not be sustainable or appropriate to the context. In terms of consequences for gender relations, poorly managed company-community relations risk exacerbating existing inequalities. For example, if managed without gender sensitivity, consultation processes and structures could strengthen the more dominant role played by men in community decision-making forums and fail to adequately address the needs and interests of women.

Taken together, gender-disaggregated baseline data and the consultations carried out for this study showed that women have generally participated less widely than men in oil company community engagement interventions. Most significantly, the proportion of women (7.6%) who had been involved in a dialogue with oil companies was almost half that of men (14%). Similarly, 65.1% of women compared with 77.6% of men in the baseline survey had heard or seen information about oil activities in the past 12 months. Only 15.9% of women compared with 21.3% of men agreed that oil companies had released a public statement addressing their concerns. Finally, when asked whether the views of women and children had been respected in the social services planning of prospecting oil companies, 40.1% of women and 42.5% of men responded with 'strongly disagree'; only 8.8% of men and 7.6% of women responded positively with 'agree'.¹⁰⁶ In the consultations carried out for this study, both oil company representatives (Tullow Oil and Total) and community members reported that women had participated in community dialogues and consultations. However, it was conceded that women are often less vocal than men and that separate consultations with women had not been carried out. As key beneficiaries of community investment schemes, as well as being primarily responsible for ensuring the health and wellbeing of their communities, this has negative implications for the quality of current company-community relations in the Albertine.

¹⁰⁵ KII, Block II supervisor, Stakeholder engagement, Tullow, Hoima district, 17 May 2013.

¹⁰⁶ International Alert (2013). *Op. cit.*

6. Gender dimensions of environmental impacts

The Albertine Graben is a rich natural environment of huge biodiversity. The region holds 10 of the country's 22 national parks and game reserves and includes a number of archaeological and historic national heritage sites. Oil exploration has been linked to negative environmental impacts resulting from oil spillage, gas flaring, blowouts, deforestation and ecological degradation. Uganda has yet to develop a comprehensive national waste management policy for its oil sector. The baseline study discovered that oil companies were allegedly piling wastes in gazetted places while waiting for the National Environment Management Authority (NEMA) to issue guidelines. Oil sector exploration and exploitation activities in the Albertine region, therefore, have the potential to do serious harm to the region's natural environment, which could significantly affect its biodiversity.¹⁰⁷

In contexts where people rely predominantly on subsistence farming, the quality of their livelihoods is directly dependent on that of their environment. According to the baseline survey, oil exploration by-products – such as mud cuttings, drill cuttings and waste – could contaminate underground aquifers. As a region with a high water table in many places, the environment is particularly vulnerable to this form of contamination. The practice of burying mud cuttings, drill cuttings and waste is likely to contaminate these water bodies and affect aquatic life. In addition, drill cuttings have barite and bentonite clays, which can prevent the growth of local plant life when dumped underground. The baseline survey further reported concerns about the waste disposal strategies used by oil companies among local government environmental officers. For example, the construction of pits was perceived to pollute the environment once it rains. The study also established that exploration techniques such as gas flaring had had significant impacts on local communities. The flaring had led to considerable air pollution from the smoke emitted.¹⁰⁸

In terms of knowledge of environmental protection mechanisms, 91% of respondents in the study reported that they did not know of any measures in place to address the effects on the environment. Gender disaggregation showed that slightly more women (92.4%) than men (90%) did not know of these measures. Almost half (49.5%) of the respondents reported that they had experienced restricted access to certain parts of the lake/river, especially in regions where oil discovery sites were located on the shores of the lake. In addition, two-thirds (64%) of the respondents reported that there had been restricted access to certain parts of the game reserve. In both cases, gender disaggregation showed that more men than women reported these forms of restriction.¹⁰⁹

The socioeconomic and sociocultural implications of the oil industry's environmental impact have the potential to endanger people's livelihoods. It has been argued that oil activities in the Albertine Graben have distorted nature and people's livelihoods, resulting in "transformations, crises and upheavals" that have been felt mostly by women because they are frequently tied to nature through their cultural roles.¹¹⁰ Indeed, consultations carried out for this study found the environmental impacts of oil exploration have had specific effects on women. The study observed a negative impact on food security caused by restricted access to agricultural land and damaged crops due to exploration activities in Buliisa district, which had specific and disproportionate impacts on women due to gendered divisions of labour that make them chiefly responsible for both growing and providing food for the family. Women in this study also reported significant fears about their children's safety and health as a result of environmental impacts. The degradation

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

of road quality and safety caused by heavy construction vehicles was of particular concern. Some reported the negative impact on air quality caused by large trucks creating vast amounts of dust. There were testimonies of an increase in road accidents, which women worried was a particular risk for children.

In its 2012 CSR report, Tullow conceded that “land transport represents one of the biggest safety risks in the oil and gas industry”.¹¹¹ In Uganda, Tullow has been trying to reduce the number of driving incidents by introducing a monthly recognition and reward scheme for drivers. It has also instated a vehicle tracking system to monitor driving performance and requires drivers to undergo competency assessments. In Kampala, Buliisa and Kisinja, Tullow has established Land Transport Safety Teams that are responsible for vehicle management, including vehicle acquisition. To reduce risks for vulnerable groups such as children, who are not used to this level of traffic passing through their homes, companies should consider supporting road safety training in schools.

Practices such as gas flaring on crops and cultural sites in the Albertine Graben have been found to have not only ecological but sociocultural and psychological impacts,¹¹² as shown in the Oluoch family's case outlined in the box below. Uganda National Cultural Policy emphasises the relevance of indigenous knowledge – “the traditional local knowledge existing within and developed around the specific conditions of a community indigenous to a particular geographical area” – for women. This form of knowledge – commonly applied in agriculture, traditional medicine, health care, food preparation, education and natural resource management in rural communities – is characteristically important for women because they rely on it to carry out their traditional roles and responsibilities. Indeed, the baseline study indicates that more women than men reported restricted access to cultural sites as a result of oil exploration.

Box 5: Case study – Oluoch family, Nwoya district

The case of the Oluoch family offers an example of how environmental impacts of the oil industry can have direct psychosocial affects – “transformations, crises and upheavals” – at the community and family level. In 2008, Heritage Oil, Tullow's predecessor, buried oil waste on Douglas Oluoch's land a few kilometres north of Murchison Falls National Park in Nwoya District. He agreed to have the waste stored on his land for the price of 750,000 shillings (US\$300). He was told that it would be placed there temporarily and was not harmful. However, Douglas and his family have since learnt otherwise: the waste could carry heavy metal particles that can contaminate water bodies and cause cancers and birth defects in human beings. The family is still waiting for NEMA to give them the results of tests they conducted in 2009, and for the waste to be removed for permanent disposal elsewhere.

The waste dumping has had a number of social impacts on the Oluoch family. Firstly, it has affected them psychologically. The wife interviewed reported, “[We] feel we are killing ourselves as we eat...” Moreover, the family fears that future children may be born with growth defects. Secondly, the waste has led to the breakdown of social relations within and outside of the family. As a result of health fears, most of the farmer's wives and family have left. The one wife who has remained says that she did not agree to the waste dumping agreement and this has resulted in conflict between her and her husband. Moreover, the family's neighbours believe they have brought death to the locality. The family's name has a stigma attached to it and they have been ostracised from a society to which they once belonged. According to the remaining wife, the Oluochs are blamed in meetings for anything that goes wrong in their community, and people are no longer willing to buy crops grown on their land. The waste has, therefore, had socioeconomic impacts as well.

Apart from environmental testing, the results of which are long overdue, the family has received little support and information to allay their fears and manage the impact of the waste dumping. VISO, a local civil society organisation, has played an important mediation and information dissemination

¹¹¹ Tullow Oil PLC (2012). Op. cit.

¹¹² M. Agena (2012). *Gender and Ecological Dimensions of Oil Exploration in the L. Albert Region*. Thesis for the degree of Master of Philosophy in Anthropology of Development, University of Bergen. Available at <https://bora.uib.no/bitstream/handle/1956/6404/98579590.pdf?sequence=1>

role around the oil sector in Nwoya district. The remaining wife reported that she had at first left the homestead after realising the potential harm caused by the waste to her and her family's health. However, VISO has played a mediation role between her and her husband that resulted in her deciding to return to the homestead.

6.1 Environmental impact assessments

Uganda's National Environment Act Cap 153 requires that all projects relating to oil and gas undergo an environmental impact assessment (EIA). These include projects at the exploration and development stages, such as drilling, waste handling, construction of refinery, storage, and so on. An EIA is the process of identifying the potential environmental and social consequences of an activity. At the end of the EIA, the developer puts together an environmental impact statement, which is a prescription of measures to mitigate the potential effects on the environment. The developer is required to take all practical measures to ensure that the requirements of the environmental impact statement are followed.¹¹³

Drawing from the baseline survey, information from NEMA indicated that more than 400 EIAs had been conducted in the oil and gas sector and that there had been widespread participation in the EIA consultations among key stakeholders in the region. Environmental officers in the regions reported that they were involved in the process of developing the terms of reference and monitoring of the EIA and that they were mandated to provide feedback to the stakeholders at the local government and community level. However, it was discovered that the process leading to the environmental impact statement had been less consultative and participatory, and that no public consultation had taken place for the oil sector EIAs. In addition, the EIAs and impact statements had not been made readily available to stakeholders and the public. Accessibility was further inhibited by their complexity and length. The study found that they were often too technical and difficult for the community leaders and the affected communities to understand. A major gap was, therefore, identified in the ability of local leaders and affected communities to monitor the implications of EIA findings with regard to people's livelihoods and other impacts.¹¹⁴

Similar findings arose in the current study, where a lack of knowledge with regard to the oil sector's environmental impacts was evident among local government respondents:

*"[Sincerely] speaking, we don't know yet what the environmental impacts will be. A lot of it is very scientific. For instance, the waste caused by drilling, the mud cuttings: how and where are they stored? And are they safe? Are they properly treated? At present we don't know..."*¹¹⁵

KIIs indicated that little focus has been given to gender dynamics in the EIAs conducted so far. However, a comprehensive gender audit is recommended, to establish the extent to which impacts on women and gender relations have been addressed. KIIs with environmental officers at local government levels confirmed that gender was not a specific area of focus in the terms of reference developed for EIAs. Indeed, in a recent and expansive EIA commissioned by the government, there is only one specific mention of the sector's impact on gender relations, in the context of women's limited property rights and compensation. The Assessment states that: "most of the property, especially land, is owned in the names of the man. Often by the time the women realise that there has been compensation, the money has already been given to the man, who may have not put it to the right use."¹¹⁶ However, this challenge is not explicitly or adequately addressed in the Assessment's corresponding recommendations where gender dynamics are not considered.

¹¹³ International Alert (2013). Op. cit.

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ KII, Sub-county chief, Biiso sub-county, Buliisa district, 13 May 2013.

¹¹⁶ MEMD (2013). Op. cit.

7. Information, transparency and accountability

Any progress towards gender equality can be undone without transparency, access to information and accountability. Interventions designed to empower and protect women living in oil regions are unlikely to succeed without the presence of governance structures to promote active community participation in decision-making and establish bonds of accountability between government, communities and oil companies. A transparently managed oil and gas sector, where important information can be accessed by all levels of society, will be essential for ensuring that oil revenues are not mismanaged and actually contribute to the sustainable development of Uganda and its people's welfare. Accountability, transparency and information are also the foundations for building trust between communities, government and the oil companies. This trust is crucial for allaying fears, doubt and suspicion that would otherwise cause tension and potentially lead to conflict in oil-bearing communities.

7.1 Local governance

In the Albertine Graben, local government plays a central role in representing the needs and interests of local communities vis-à-vis key decision-makers in Uganda's oil sector, whether central government or the companies themselves. To ensure their local leaders perform this function, both male and female constituents in oil-bearing regions must be able to participate meaningfully in local governance structures. Similarly, communities cannot hold their local leaders to account or make informed political, social and economic decisions without access to information.

In terms of structure, Uganda's decentralised government holds great potential for bringing decision-making and participation in the oil sector to the local level. It also provides a solid administrative structure – and relatively good system of accountability – through which to disburse oil revenues, when the time comes. Uganda introduced its decentralisation policy under the Local Government Act of 1997, which established local councils at the district (LCV), municipal (LCIV), and sub-county/division/town council (LCIII) levels. The Act devolved to these councils far-reaching powers and responsibilities in areas such as finance, legislation, politics, planning and personnel matters.¹¹⁷ As noted under analysis of gender equality legislation and policy in Uganda, decentralisation has been made legally gender-sensitive. A parallel Women's Council has been established with Women's Council Executives running from village up to national level. Moreover, women are guaranteed one-third of all local council seats.

However, broad challenges posed by under-resourcing and limited capacity among local councils to establish their own revenue base have meant that Uganda's decentralisation policy has largely failed to meet service delivery needs and alleviate poverty. In terms of affirmative action, although there has been increasing acceptance of women community leaders, their influence over public decision-making has remained limited.¹¹⁸ Primary challenges include insufficient resources to support the MGLSD and local departments; a cultural context that limits women councillors' confidence to express and assert their opinions; a lack of exposure to and understanding of local government procedures and subjects, which inhibits their ability to influence council outputs and budget decisions; and fear that increased freedom for women, and greater say in their communities, will result in negative changes to cultural norms and traditions.¹¹⁹

117 B. Bashaasha, M.N. Mangheni and E. Nkonya (2011). *Decentralization and Rural Service Delivery in Uganda*. International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI). Available at <http://www.ifpri.org/sites/default/files/publications/ifpridp01063.pdf>

118 D. Johnson, H. Kabuchu and S. Vusiya (2003). 'Women in Ugandan local government: The impact of affirmative action', *Gender and Development*, Vol. 11, No. 3. pp.8–18. Available at <http://www.gsdr.org/go/display&type=Document&id=913>

119 Ibid.

Community satisfaction with local government

In a quest to obtain information on the wider participation of vital government institutions at the community level, the baseline study adopted a number of parameters to study governance issues at local government level. Overall, local government ratings on most governance parameters were quite low. Across all the regions, a considerable percentage of people were dissatisfied with the level of integrity, transparency, participation, capacity and performance exhibited by leadership structures.

At sub-county level, three-quarters (75%) of the respondents expressed dissatisfaction because they were not consulted about governance of the oil sector. The same proportion were also dissatisfied that the sub-county leadership was not addressing community concerns about oil exploration. Assessment of governance at the village level had similar results. Overall, 77% of the respondents were dissatisfied with the level of integrity, transparency, accountability, participation, capacity and performance shown by the village leadership.¹²⁰

Community dissatisfaction in terms of key governance parameters carries serious implications for governance. It has the potential to hold communities back from participating actively in any development intervention – including the ongoing oil and gas exploration and exploitation in the Albertine Graben.¹²¹ It also implies a fairly strong lack of trust among communities towards their local leaders. This has worrying implications for community members' ability to express individual preferences freely, access information, articulate grievances and demand transparency from those in positions of power in order to build trusting relationships, improve the quality of potential oil-related benefits and prevent sector-related conflicts.

7.2 National governance

When the time comes, transparent and accountable governance structures will also play a key role in shaping how well government spends petroleum revenues. Indeed, badly managed oil revenues could be disastrous for Uganda's economy and the welfare of its people. It is no use designing women's empowerment and gender equality interventions if Uganda's oil boom destroys its prospects for development as it may have done in other oil-rich countries. Known as the 'resource curse', mismanaged oil revenues can fuel inflation, create waste and massive corruption, distort exchange rates, undermine the competitiveness of traditional sectors such as agriculture, and pre-empt the growth of manufacturing.¹²² Moreover, in the context of one-party regimes with deep-rooted systems of political patronage, such as Uganda's, oil wealth threatens to entrench the power and personal fortune of a ruling elite instead of contributing to the country's long-term wellbeing. When too much control is held at the centre, oil wealth – rather than fostering an entrepreneurial and educated middle class that will hold its government to account – can stifle the emergence of an independent business class and inflate the power of the state vis-à-vis civil society.¹²³

Indeed, Uganda's government has a poor track record in managing public funds, particularly foreign aid, which constitutes over half of the country's income. Massive corruption at the highest levels of government has recently come to light in a scandal where donor funding worth US\$12.7 million was stolen from the Office of the Prime Minister in late 2012. Similarly, in 2005, US\$4.5 million was diverted from the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, and

¹²⁰ International Alert (2013). Op. cit.

¹²¹ Ibid.

¹²² L. Diamond and J. Mosbacher. 'Petroleum to the people: Africa's coming resource curse – and how to avoid it', *Foreign Affairs*, 12 August 2013. Available at <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/139647/larry-diamond-and-jack-mosbacher/petroleum-to-the-people>

¹²³ Ibid.

US\$800,000 was stolen from the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunisations in 2006.¹²⁴ According to a recent report, the national government has failed to hold senior officials implicated in the theft to account. Such incidences do not bode well for the future management of Uganda's oil wealth and its ability to avoid the resource curse. Of significance for the future disbursement of oil revenues to local governments, analysts have already observed a process of 'recentralisation' taking place in Uganda. Officially under the auspice of service delivery inefficiencies, central government has increased its control over sub-national governments in oil-bearing regions.¹²⁵

Community satisfaction with central government

In relation to the oil sector, the baseline study identified a generally strong level of dissatisfaction with governance at central government level. Nearly half (49%) of respondents disagreed with the statement that "the central government addresses community concerns about the oil sector". In addition, over 41% of the respondents disagreed with the statement that "they are confident that government is going to manage oil activities well for the benefit of the community". At the same time, over 45% of the respondents disagreed with the statement that "the central government listens to community views about the oil sector".¹²⁶

The study findings indicated that there has been some community involvement in oil-related issues at the national level. A sizeable proportion (39%) of the respondents stated that their members of parliament (MPs) ask for their views, while 30% felt that central government listened to their views. However, almost half (48%) of the respondents disagreed with the statement that "the MP solicits for their views".¹²⁷ Baseline study informants claimed that MPs are still ignorant about oil and gas. Yet, responsive public policy and management principles are incompatible with vagueness in responding to people's practical needs and problems.¹²⁸

As noted under analysis of Uganda's policy and legal framework, affirmative action policies, including reserving a female seat in parliament for every district in Uganda, have positively influenced women's representation in political decision-making bodies and structures. However, increased participation has not necessarily led to better outcomes for gender equality. As one local government official in Hoima district pointed out during the consultations:

*"[Women parliamentarians] are there but they have not helped us much; we have not benefited yet much from their presence ... You know they don't even speak in parliament..."*¹²⁹

This study has not attempted to analyse the role played by female parliamentarians in oil legislation debates. However, this would be an essential next step in exploring the quality of women's participation at the higher levels of political decision-making concerning Uganda's oil industry.

Despite the potential benefits provided by the combination of decentralised government and affirmative action policies, the findings of this study raise serious doubts about whether Uganda's governance structures will be able to manage its oil sector's negative impact as far as gender is concerned, and whether they will be able to ensure the quality and equity of sector-related benefits. Implementing gender equality policies is already hampered by inefficient and poorly

124 Human Rights Watch and the Allard K. Lowenstein International Human Rights Clinic, Yale Law School (2013). *Letting the Big Fish Swim: Failures to Prosecute High Level Corruption in Uganda*. New York. Available at http://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/uganda1013_ForUpload_1.pdf

125 P. Vasquez. 'Uganda's oil: Good news or bad news – Assessing the gender dimensions of the oil and gas sector in Uganda and beyond'. Presentation made at International Alert workshop, Entebbe, Uganda, 15-16 October 2013.

126 International Alert (2013). Op. cit.

127 Ibid.

128 Ibid.

129 KII, District women councillor, Kahoora division and Secretary for Gender and Community Development, Hoima district, 17 May 2013.

resourced institutions at the local government level. Moreover, endemic corruption at the highest levels of government alongside apparent ‘recentralisation’ of power away from local councils in oil-bearing regions do not bode well for the quality of revenue management, or for local governments’ ability to access the funds needed to implement gender-responsive policies. On top of this, research indicates widespread community dissatisfaction with governance structures at all levels, and limited capacity among parliamentarians to engage in oil debates on behalf of their constituents.

7.3 ‘Oil-to-cash’: using direct cash transfers to combat the resource curse

Global governance efforts to improve revenue transparency in the extractive sectors – such as the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI), a public-private partnership that sets global standards for transparency and accountability in resource-rich countries – have an important role to play in combating the resource curse. President Museveni has expressed his government’s commitment to joining EITI, but has yet to take any meaningful steps towards it. However, analysts increasingly argue that transparency alone is not enough to ensure the equitable and sustainable management of oil booms in countries like Uganda. According to one such analyst: “The biggest mistake Africa’s new oil producers can make, one that several are already making, is to assume that their countries are different: that through good leadership, better statecraft, or incremental improvements in their legal systems, they can avoid the resource curse.”¹³⁰

One alternative – although largely untested – approach currently receiving a great deal of attention in academic circles is the use of direct cash transfers to disburse oil revenues equitably. Those who have developed this approach say that distributing a portion of oil revenues directly to citizens as taxable income builds a stronger bond of accountability between citizens and their government.¹³¹ Because the payments are treated as taxable income, the method creates a broad and active constituency of citizens, who are directly affected by the government’s management of their resources.

Beyond the context of extractive industries, direct cash transfers have been found to have positive outcomes for poverty alleviation and improving social security. Particularly when handed to women, social transfers have been shown to improve children’s health, nutrition and school attendance, as well as being effective in reducing hunger and inter-generational poverty.¹³² In Brazil, there is evidence that social transfer programmes have supported women’s labour market participation. In one programme, the participation rate of beneficiary women was 16% greater than for women in similar non-participating households. The programme also reduced the probability of employed women leaving their jobs by 8%. By linking to services such as pre-schools and day-care, encouraging girls to continue their education and otherwise easing the time burdens placed on women, it offered women greater opportunity to seek and remain in employment.¹³³

As Uganda’s oil sector moves towards the production stage, direct cash transfers could offer an effective method of disbursing oil revenues in a way that would contribute to its people’s welfare and the sustainable development of the national economy. If managed in a gender-responsive manner, oil-to-cash transfers could be one of the most direct and explicit ways for women – all across the country – to benefit from, and become individual stakeholders in, Uganda’s oil

¹³⁰ L. Diamond and J. Mosbacher (2013). Op. cit.

¹³¹ See: S. Devarajan and M. Giugale (2013). *The Case for Direct Transfers of Resource Revenues in Africa*. Working Paper 333. Center for Global Development.

¹³² S.G. Thakur, C. Arnold and T. Johnson (2009). ‘Gender and social protection’, in OECD *Promoting Pro-Poor Growth: Social Protection*. pp.167–182. Available at <http://www.oecd.org/dac/povertyreduction/43280899.pdf>

¹³³ Ibid.

wealth. Of course, there are challenges involved in implementing such an approach, including the infrastructure and technology needed to do so, as well as political challenges posed by the current corrupt government institutions. If the country were to consider using an oil-to-cash transfer system, a great deal of further analysis and research would be required.

8. Conclusions and recommendations

Uganda's oil discoveries constitute a major opportunity for the country's socioeconomic development; they could potentially lift millions out of poverty and create important avenues for the empowerment of disadvantaged groups such as rural women.

The sector may not be able to match high community expectations in terms of employment, but its supporting economic activities – hotels, restaurants, telecommunications and the demand for products and services inside the camps – could offer valuable supply chain opportunities in the growth of local economies.

However, significant barriers prevent local communities, and women in particular, from accessing these economic opportunities. Gendered divisions of labour among the mostly rural communities of the Albertine Graben prescribe women to a heavy load of undervalued household and agricultural work. Women are tied to the domestic domain, where they spend most of their day caring for the family, and are burdened with primary responsibility for ensuring household food security. As a result, they are typically less educated, have less access to information, are less mobile, and have limited control over household assets and productive resources. With fewer qualifications, income-generating skills and restricted ability to leverage important economic assets such as land, the majority of women in Uganda's oil-producing regions are significantly disadvantaged when it comes to accessing the industry's potential economic opportunities. This implies that Uganda's oil discovery could very easily represent a missed opportunity for local communities, and women in particular, if the institutions, laws, policies and programmes guiding the sector do not adequately address existing gender inequalities.

Despite significant barriers, the study found that women are playing a developing economic role in the Albertine Graben. Both male and female testimonies gathered for this study reflect a strong perception that women are increasingly engaging in income-generating activities, notably the management of micro-enterprises in fishing and agricultural sectors. Indeed, the baseline study established that just over a quarter of female respondents were engaged in self-employed business activities. Women interviewed were also commonly active members of initiatives to enhance saving, economic security, business and financial management in order to improve household income, such as village savings and loans associations. These findings indicate that, with appropriate guidance and support, some women in the Albertine Graben are already suitably placed to tap into the industry's supply chain and supporting economic activities. These may include the provision of food to camps and local hotels/restaurants, and also, if the right training is provided, services such as tailoring, catering and hospitality. This is not to say that such women do not face the same challenges posed by existing gender inequalities in terms of prescribed gender roles and divisions of labour; but they also represent an important opportunity to break down such barriers and advance women's economic empowerment through the industry-driven growth of local economies.

An additional barrier is posed by the limited capacity of local communities to meet high-end market standards and also reliably produce the required quantities at the required times. If local farmers and women, in particular, are not supported through targeted capacity-building programmes to strengthen the commercial viability of their activities and produce, then they are unlikely to benefit from supply chain opportunities such as the provision of food to camps.

Even when women are able to earn independent incomes, they face significant barriers to controlling their assets in households where decision-making is male-dominated. Indeed, the study established a connection between women's changing economic roles and conflict between male and female partners. There were strong perceptions of insecurity among male respondents whose female partners were engaged in income-generating activities, which was considered to threaten their role as 'providers'. Insecurity was heightened by a context of increased economic activity around the oil sector. Local men's inability to find work in the sector, alongside the introduction of oil workers from elsewhere, is a significant threat to their sense of masculinity. In certain contexts, this manifested itself in mistrust towards, and conflict with, their female partners, who they feared would leave them for oil workers.

Indeed, by accelerating the modernisation and monetisation of local economies, powerful new incentives will be introduced as the oil sector develops in Uganda. These incentives have the potential to destabilise social relations, including those between male and female partners. In the case of domestic violence, the study found that the oil sector has exacerbated pre-existing tensions relating to access to and control over assets in the context of low-income households, particularly mistrust between male and female partners.

In addition to domestic violence, the study has identified 'boomtown' characteristics, including sex work, a growing drinking culture and other forms of SGBV. Although the impact of this is felt across communities, women and girls are vulnerable in specific and often disproportionate ways to the oil sector's negative effects. For instance, as local economies grow, an increase in sex work alongside a growing drinking culture in oil-producing communities could result in increased risky sexual behaviour and a subsequent rise in STD transmission, including HIV/AIDS. Oil exploration has contributed to a culture whereby girls become sexually involved with older men in exchange for money or gifts. The study heard testimony of girls forming relationships with oil workers and dropping out of school after becoming pregnant. Drop-out rates are already very high in Uganda, especially for girls, often as a result of pregnancy or family pressures to work in the home. High drop-out rates contribute to lower levels of literacy, numeracy and income-generating skills among women. This, in turn, inhibits their ability to benefit from the economic opportunities offered by the sector.

Beyond 'boomtown' effects, oil and gas exploration activities have had direct impacts on the natural environments of communities in the Albertine Graben. Various forms of environmental degradation – including the destruction of food crops, waste dumping and long-term damage to agricultural land – have adversely affected people's livelihoods, with specific gender dimensions. The heavy engagement of women in subsistence farming alongside their primary responsibility for ensuring household food security means that loss of crops and land degradation have disproportionately negative consequences on their livelihoods and roles.

Specific gender dimensions were also found in the socio-cultural aspect of environmental impacts. For instance, women felt the loss of cultural sites – central to their prominent role in the practice of indigenous knowledge – more strongly. They also voiced concern for their children's safety on newly constructed roads.

The study established that key stakeholders – especially government and oil companies – with responsibility for managing the sector's economic, social and environmental impacts have not adequately addressed differentiated gender needs and experiences. Gender equality is clearly enshrined in Uganda's national laws and policies, including affirmative action clauses, which has resulted in modest success under development indicators such as MDG 3. However, significant challenges remain in closing the gender gap. Limited access to and control over productive resources – notably land – is a primary example. The NOGP states the eradication of poverty and creation of lasting value to society as its overarching goals. However, it does not take into account gender-specific manifestations of poverty and the subsequent need to tackle it with gender

sensitivity. As a result, the legal framework developed from this policy has only two provisions – in the Upstream Act – addressing gender. Similarly, scant attention has been paid to gender dynamics in the EIAs conducted so far by both government and oil companies.

Oil company CSR strategies have gone some way towards mitigating the negative social impacts of the sector, notably through HIV/AIDS awareness campaigns. The building of schools and hospitals has also been reported to have had positive impacts on women and girls, particularly through improving maternal health. However, community investments have so far lacked a specific gender focus and, in some cases, risk strengthening existing gender inequalities. For instance, the scholarship scheme embodies an innate gender bias by favouring science subjects relevant to the industry, which boys tend to perform better at in Uganda. Not only does this exacerbate gender disparities in the national education system – where boys already perform better than girls – it also perpetuates the image of the oil industry as a male-dominated arena.

Based on these findings, the following recommendations can be made:

Central government

- On the basis of a broadly consultative process, government should develop a long-term and multi-sector strategy for addressing gender in its extractive sectors. A National Action Plan for Gender and the Extractives would guide and provide a monitoring framework for its interventions. A National Action Plan would help guide government in developing policy, programmes and legislation that would do a better job of addressing challenges facing women affected by – and hoping to benefit from – Uganda's oil sector.
- Government should do more to protect women's property rights under national legislation, as well as enforcing existing legislation. In a context of natural resource conflict and aggressive forms of land speculation in Uganda's oil regions, greater legal protection must be provided for vulnerable groups such as widows, divorcees, women in cohabitation and children. Sincere and concerted efforts to push through the Marriage and Divorce Bill would be a start. Legal recognition of women's property rights, such as those of the spouse, must be matched by public awareness and information dissemination campaigns to address cultural barriers and limited knowledge of the law among rural women, local councils and community-based conflict resolution mechanisms.
- A national local content policy is needed, underpinned by recognition of the different needs of men and women – to provide a framework for legislation requiring companies and their contractors to commit to gender-smart local recruitment. This should include provisions for training and capacity-building programmes in the areas of business development for women's groups to form enterprises.
- Compensation mechanisms need to be much more gender-responsive. Findings point towards inadequate compensation for the damage done to people's livelihoods in the valuation process used during exploration activities. Compensation valuation processes should be based on inclusive and thorough consultations with both male and female landowners and users. Allocations to landowners should be made, whenever applicable, in the presence of a spousal co-signer and/or other co-user of the land.
- The capacity of local government institutions should be strengthened in order to handle grievances and to protect communities and represent their needs vis-à-vis companies. Women are particularly vulnerable, since they are typically less mobile, have less access to information and, therefore, rely more heavily on local institutions to represent their interests.
- Local institutions' capacity to govern needs to be expanded in order to regulate migration to oil regions, and to ensure that local women and girls are protected from the misconduct of outside company workers by prioritising community development and probation offices in local government budget allocations.

- The production and sale of alcohol should be restricted, especially very cheap forms such as those bought in sachets.
- Terms of reference for EIAs should take into consideration the gender dynamics of the environment – including specific indicators to reflect gender inequalities and the divergent needs and experiences of men and women, boys and girls; to gather gender-disaggregated data; and to include the socioeconomic, sociocultural and psychological aspects of environmental damage.

Local government

- Local government should facilitate links between local producers and oil contractors managing the camps by making available information about local small and medium enterprises and organisations supporting women's groups engaged in agricultural and enterprise activities.
- Women local leaders – including women councillors, women entrepreneurs and cultural leaders – should participate in consultations between local government and oil companies. Sufficient resources should be allocated to gender officers and women councillors or CDOs to reach women living in remote areas.
- There should be a mechanism for disseminating information about HIV/AIDS and the legal age of consent.
- National laws against SGBV and defilement must be enforced, whether perpetrated by local citizens or migrant oil industry workers, to end the impunity often surrounding SGBV.
- Local government needs to coordinate with the oil companies regarding their social investment (health/school/road infrastructure) to ensure they are gender-sensitive and reflect local priorities.

Development partners

- Development partners should support organisations working with local farmers and women's groups to facilitate supply chain linkages between local producers and oil companies/their contractors. More direct and open relationships between such organisations and the companies – making company requirements and standards more transparent – would place development partners in a better position to support local producers in meeting company standards.
- Support is needed to increase inclusive financial literacy that would encourage male and female partners to open bank accounts, especially for savings, and to plan their expenditure together to avoid conflict over oil sector revenue streams (compensation, employment, royalties). There should also be support for mobile banking in remote areas.
- Partnerships are needed to expand local government community services to provide support – including legal, medical, counselling – for vulnerable groups affected by domestic violence, family abandonment and child trafficking.

Companies

- Companies should establish micro-credit schemes for rural women and men by identifying lenders to facilitate concessionary, gender-fair loans. This is especially important in contexts where the legal system and/or local customs make it hard for local women to gain direct access to money from company benefit streams: compensation, royalties and employment.
- Gender-disaggregated evaluation frameworks and gender-sensitive assessment indicators are needed in order to assess the impacts of sector activities properly and to monitor the quality of community investments. Companies currently report how much they spend on community investments but very little on development impact.
- Community consultations should be conducted with women separately to ensure that community investment projects are contextually appropriate. Women are often more reliant on social services but have less input in consultation mechanisms.
- Information on the products and services needed in the camps should be made more readily

available to local government so that they can facilitate strategic partnerships between local producers – a good number of whom are women – NGOs and companies managing the camps.

- A local NGO should be entrusted to conduct health awareness campaigns in communities – including family planning services that would encourage girls to stay in school. Similarly, there is a need to raise awareness on national laws on SGBV/defilement amongst company staff and contractors alike. The ‘zero tolerance’ policy on staff violence against women must be implemented, and companies need to ensure better compliance with their policies by contractors through amending sub-contracts to reflect this.
- There should be a transparent, accessible and cost-free complaints procedure for communities (such as toll-free telephone numbers), with a transparent follow-up system.
- The accountability, policies and practices of contractors should be improved to ensure that their conduct does not affect companies’ social licence to operate.

Civil society

- Civil society should evaluate the capacity of local institutions and actors (local government, cultural leaders, civil society organisations (CSOs), community liaison officers (CLOs)) to manage the risks and benefits of the oil and gas sector in the Albertine Graben, with specific focus on gender bias in the way these impacts are felt by communities. Capacity gaps can then be identified and incorporated in capacity-building strategies.
- Further analysis of gender dimensions of environmental impacts (social, psychological) should be conducted, including how well these have been catered for in government and private sector terms of reference and assessment methods for EIAs/ESIAs.
- Civil society needs to work with ministries other than the MEMD – such as the MGLSD – to strengthen their engagement with, and interventions in, oil-bearing communities.
- Civil society should work with government to make information on environmental impacts available to communities, with a strong focus on reaching rural women and men in remote areas. It should use local organisations to disseminate information, for example, using theatre.
- There is a need to work with the private sector to incorporate gender into models for conflict-sensitive business practices and social investment.
- Gender-responsive indicators should be incorporated into future monitoring of governance and livelihoods in the Albertine Graben.
- Gender training should be offered to oil company CLOs, especially around ensuring women’s participation in company consultation processes.
- Civil society should help to establish a local council taskforce on gender and the oil sector (including CLOs, CSOs, local government CDOs, cultural leaders, women councillors and women entrepreneurs), with a strong reporting mechanism to feed information up to national level. Efforts should also be made to establish a parallel taskforce at national level.
- Civil society should advocate the national implementation of voluntary guidelines issued by the UN Food and Agriculture Organization.

