“Dancing to the Tune of the Donor”: Donor Funding and Local Implementation of Initiatives to Assist Orphans and Other Vulnerable Children in Uganda, 1986 – 2011

by

Franziska Miriam Satzinger

A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
Dalla Lana School of Public Health
University of Toronto

© Copyright by Franziska Satzinger 2015
“Dancing to the Tune of the Donor”: Donor Funding and Local Implementation of Initiatives to Assist Orphans and Other Vulnerable Children in Uganda, 1986 – 2011

Franziska Satzinger
Doctor of Philosophy
Dalla Lana School of Public Health
University of Toronto
2015

Abstract

This study is an inquiry into the exercise of power in the mainstream development apparatus, drawing from the case example of the dynamics among local and foreign organizations and agencies working to assist orphans and other vulnerable children (OVC) in Uganda during the period 1986 to 2011. It examines the initiatives of locally-founded non-governmental organizations (NGOs), local chapters of international NGOs (INGO), and the government of Uganda to attend to the physical, social, and emotional needs of OVC (through the provision of food, education, health care, housing, and social support). This overall “response” to OVC illustrates the influences of donor-recipient relations of power and mainstream development discourse and practices in shaping governmental and non-governmental initiatives.

Drawing from Michel Foucault’s theory of governmentality, the study considers donor rules, regulations, and discursive practices in relation to NGO practices in a context of international development aid, conceptualizing these regulations and practices as illustrative of technologies of power and domination and technologies of the self. Through a historical analysis, it contextualizes, periodizes, and interprets the dynamics of the responses to the needs of OVC on
the part of the various players involved. It traces the emergence and consolidation of the
concepts of human rights, child rights, and community participation within mainstream
development discourse from World War II until the present to illustrate how this discourse plays
out in the field of OVC initiatives in Uganda.

The analysis suggests that donor conditions are constituted and perpetuated not through
hegemonic control over funding recipients but through often insidious power dynamics reflected
in everyday practices, interactions, and discourse. This implies active participation on the part of
NGOs in perpetuating as well as resisting the relations of power that push them to attend to
donor needs and requirements. The study finds that local representatives of NGOs (small and
large, locally- and foreign-founded and managed) are beginning to alter the character of heavily
donor-influenced OVC initiatives in Uganda through resisting, tweaking, and interpreting donor
rules, regulations, and discourses to meet their own needs. Their dance “to the tune of the
donor”, as NGO and government agency representatives termed it, is more complex than simply
following the donors’ lead, and necessitates NGOs’ continuous participation and resistance.
Although not revolutionary in the sense of concerted action against a powerful other, particularly
small locally-founded NGOs’ resistance has the potential to reorient the mainstream
development apparatus that dominates contemporary efforts to assist OVC in Uganda.
Acknowledgments

The process of getting this thesis from initially vague ideas about what’s “wrong” with “development” to a humble attempt at analyzing one small piece of this puzzle indebts me to an amalgamation of thought-provoking research interviewees, world-class mentorship, and profound encouragement. Without the support of the many people that have contributed in their own way to this process, I would still be rummaging around the library stacks and my own misgivings about my experiences in and perceptions of “development”, looking for a way to pinpoint one small element of what, exactly, I find so compelling about “development” issues.

First and foremost, I am grateful to the representatives of NGOs, government agencies, and non-governmental advocacy networks in and around Kampala, Uganda, who not only graciously gave me their time, but also showed me a piece of their world as service providers, policy makers, and activists in a global effort to attend to the needs of the many orphaned and vulnerable children in their country.

I am deeply indebted to my “dream team” committee, who has advised, encouraged, and challenged me from the start. In particular, this dissertation and my development in academia have benefited immeasurably through the tutelage of my advisor, Anne-Emanuelle Birn, who has tenaciously engaged with my work, always shown a keen eye for detail, and consistently pushed me to bring my attention back to the broader implications of the issues I grapple with. Despite numerous competing demands on her time and often from thousands of kilometres away, Anne-Emanuelle was always supportive and present for me, and I’m forever grateful for her commitment to me and my work.

I thank my committee member Stephanie Nixon, who has been one of my biggest critics and biggest cheerleaders. Stephanie has an exceptional capacity to offer incisive and poignant critique in an incredibly supportive and encouraging way, making it enjoyable to be her student. I also thank my committee member Thembela Kepe, who has continuously pushed me to clarify my thoughts and maintain my focus throughout my writing. I’m also extremely grateful for my on-site advisor Joseph Konde-Lule at the Makerere University School of Public Health in Kampala. Joseph oversaw my MSc work almost a decade ago, and again kindly offered his time,
experience, and knowledge to help guide the development of my research proposal, to facilitate the interviewing process, and to provide important input on the final draft. Special thanks also to my internal examiner Bianca Dahl, external examiner Susan Dicklitch, and departmental representative Donald Cole, for taking the time to review and engage with my work.

Straddling the domains of support from the academic to the personal are a number of colleagues who became dear friends over the period of this PhD process. For their enduring encouragement, insightful ideas, challenging suggestions, and shared misery and joy in my setbacks and progress, I am tremendously thankful to my comrades Kimberly Gray, Adrian Guta, Jeneviève Mannell, Erica Di Ruggiero, Catherine Maule, Amrita Daftary, Jeannie Samuel, Krista Maxwell, Laurie Corna, Sarah Steele, Sarah Sanford, Lauren Classen, and Suzanne Sicchia.

My ‘new’ (mom)-friends in our relocated home in Germany, most notably Steffi, Christiane, and Bettina, who – despite only knowing me for a relatively brief time and initially having little common ground apart from parenting young children – supported me throughout my juggling act, offered helpful tidbits to stave off the growing circles under my eyes, and showed me through their own lives that being present for work and being present for children/family is somehow doable.

My family has also been a great source of support in countless ways. I thank my father, Walter, who first introduced me to Africa at 18 years old – and then left me there to experience for myself the passion he had for the continent. I thank him for passing on his critical eye about all things “development”, and for offering his time for the mundane task of reviewing my work for typos and clarity, often under short time constraints. I also thank his wife Renate who, along with my father, provided me with nutritious food, thought-provoking conversation, and unwavering support on a series of self-imposed writing retreats in their home (away from adventures with my “boys”). My mother Beatrix always validated my juggling act of family and dissertation commitments amidst international relocations and new environments. I am eternally grateful for her loving support over the years. Thank you to my dear siblings, Katinka, Andrea, and Florian, who – from their homes across the globe – always showed their enthusiasm and support for my efforts.
I’m grateful for the way my dear son Benjamin taught me how to separate my work from my family life through all the ups and downs of infancy and toddlerhood, and for being patient with my seemingly never-ending “große Arbeit” (big work) which required many weekends at the library when all he wanted was to spend time with his Mama.

Most of all, I am forever grateful to my beloved husband, Scott, who not only completed his own PhD during this time, but managed to teach and research full-time while learning a new (and challenging!) language, all the while being the best father our young Benjamin could hope for. Scott’s patience, love, and unequivocal support over this decade+ together in graduate school were often the only thing that kept me going through sleep-deprived days of analyzing and writing “development” while mothering a young and energetic child. I’m also very thankful for accompanying me and my pregnant belly during the interviewing period in Uganda, and the nights toward the end when he stayed up late to review these chapters from beginning to end.

This endeavor would not have been possible without financial support from the Social Science and Humanities Research Council’s Canadian Graduate Scholarship and Michael Smith Foreign Study Supplement, and the Ontario Graduate Scholarship.
# Table of Contents

Acknowledgments......................................................................................................................... iv
List of Acronyms ............................................................................................................................... xii
List of Appendices .............................................................................................................................. xvi

**Chapter 1: Introduction** .................................................................................................................. 1

Initiatives to assist OVC in Uganda: working within the international development apparatus... 1

1.1 Study aim ........................................................................................................................................ 4
1.2 Theoretical underpinnings .............................................................................................................. 6
1.3 Research questions .......................................................................................................................... 7
1.4 Methodological approach ............................................................................................................. 8
1.5 Background of the literature on OVC care and the development apparatus:
   Understanding NGOs and INGOs in East Africa ............................................................................. 8
   1.5.1 Studies on INGOs targeting OVC in eastern Africa ............................................................... 9
   1.5.2 Critical evaluations of NGOs in development ..................................................................... 11
1.6 Overview of the dissertation chapters ......................................................................................... 15

**Chapter 2: Theoretical Foundations** .............................................................................................. 18

Introduction ......................................................................................................................................... 18

2.1 Chapter overview .......................................................................................................................... 19
2.2 Michel Foucault ............................................................................................................................ 19
2.3 Governmentality ............................................................................................................................ 21
   2.3.1 Discourse ............................................................................................................................... 26
   2.3.2 Resistance .............................................................................................................................. 29
   2.3.3 Potential limitations of Foucaultian theory .......................................................................... 30
2.4 Applying Foucault’s epistemology to the study of OVC initiatives ............................................. 35

**Chapter 3: The Study: Methodology and Methods** ........................................................................ 37

Introduction ......................................................................................................................................... 37

3.1 Study design ................................................................................................................................... 37
   3.1.1 Site selection: district case example .................................................................................... 37
   3.1.2 Data sources .......................................................................................................................... 38
   3.1.3 Research questions and methods ......................................................................................... 39
3.1.4 Sampling ........................................................................................................... 40
3.1.5 Recruitment.................................................................................................... 41
3.1.6 Information letters ....................................................................................... 42
3.2 Data collection .................................................................................................. 43
  3.2.1 Interviews and interview guides ................................................................. 43
  3.2.2 Transcription and preliminary data analysis ............................................. 45
3.3 Data analysis .................................................................................................... 46
  3.3.1 Analytic approach ...................................................................................... 46
  3.3.2 Data analysis steps ..................................................................................... 47
3.4 Researcher positionality .................................................................................. 53
3.5 Remarks on limitations, ethics, and data handling ......................................... 54
  3.5.1 Limitations and biases of the research methods ........................................ 54
  3.5.2 Ethical considerations ................................................................................ 55
  3.5.3 Knowledge transfer ................................................................................... 57
Chapter 4: Initiatives to Assist OVC in Uganda, 1986 – 2011 .................................. 59
Introduction ............................................................................................................. 59
  4.1 Historical background ................................................................................... 60
    4.1.1 Precursors to late 20th and early 21st century initiatives focused on OVC in
        Uganda ............................................................................................................. 60
  4.2 The emergence of focused OVC initiatives, 1986 – 2000 .............................. 70
    4.2.1 The centrality of Uganda’s women’s movement in promoting OVC initiatives.. 71
    4.2.2 Feeble government initiatives to address OVC issues ............................... 78
    4.2.3 Growing civil society initiatives, in number and size ............................. 84
    4.2.4 Popular marketing models for OVC initiatives ....................................... 86
    4.2.5 Residential versus familial care for OVC .............................................. 88
  4.3 Evolving roles among Uganda’s OVC initiatives, 2001 – 2011 .................... 91
    4.3.1 GOU efforts to increase its role in OVC initiatives ................................. 92
    4.3.2 Continued reliance on civil society for OVC initiatives ........................... 98
  4.4 Concluding remarks ....................................................................................... 100
Chapter 5: Perpetuating and Resisting the Asymmetrical Characteristics of Donor-Recipient Relations: Technologies of Power and Domination in OVC initiatives in Uganda

Introduction .................................................................................................................................................. 103

5.1 Applying Foucault’s technologies of power and domination ......................................................... 105

5.2 Context: Uganda and the donor-driven development agenda ...................................................... 106

5.2.1 The global development context .......................................................................................... 106

5.2.2 Donors monitoring and governing the NGO ‘partnership’ rules ........................................... 107

5.2.3 Donor conditions: influences on programme development ............................................... 109

5.2.4 Donor conditions: influences on programme implementation .......................................... 110

5.3 Descriptive results: NGOs working through bureaucratic hurdles ........................................... 112

5.3.1 “Dancing to the tune of the donor”: NGO acquiescence to donor conditions ... 113

5.3.2 Contrasting priorities: donor versus NGO aspirations ......................................................... 115

5.3.3 NGOs incorporating conditional and bureaucratic measures .............................................. 118

5.3.4 Donors defining NGO success ............................................................................................. 122

5.3.5 Cultural imperialism: imposing donor views on local initiatives ........................................ 124

5.3.6 Donor conditions: influencing GOU frameworks and policy development ...... 128

5.3.7 What about government coordination? .................................................................................. 130

5.3.8 Between a rock and a hard place: NGO dependence on donors ........................................ 137

5.3.9 NGOs resisting the mainstream development apparatus .................................................... 138

5.4 Interpretation: bureaucracy as a technology of domination ....................................................... 142

5.4.1 Donors and NGOs consolidating the asymmetry of donor-recipient ‘partnerships’ .............. 143

5.4.2 The mechanisms of maintaining asymmetrical relationships: domination through rules of engagement ........................................................................................................................................................................ 145

5.4.3 Cultural imperialism through standardized approaches ......................................................... 147

5.4.4 Implications of a donor-driven development agenda ............................................................. 148

5.5 Concluding remarks ........................................................................................................................ 151

Chapter 6: Technologies of the Self: Integrating Mainstream Development Discourse ... 154

Introduction .................................................................................................................................................. 154
6.1 Considering mainstream development discourse through Foucault’s technologies of the self ................................................................. 155
6.1.1 Discourse according to Foucault ................................................................. 156
6.2 Context: human rights, child rights, and community participation discourses .................................................... 159
6.2.1 The emergence of rights discourses ................................................................. 159
6.2.2 The emergence of community participation discourse in the development sector ................................................................. 166
6.3 Results: integrating mainstream development discourse .................................................... 173
6.3.1 Integrating the concepts of human rights and child rights ................................................................. 173
6.3.2 Integrating the concept of community participation ................................................................. 177
6.3.3 Perpetuating mainstream development discourse? ................................................................. 182
6.4 Interpretation: heeding the development line by dancing to the tune of the donor through discursive practices ........................................................................... 184
6.4.1 The power of discourse ........................................................................... 185
6.4.2 Resistance as an expression of power, agency, and technologies of the self ..... 191
6.5 Concluding remarks ........................................................................... 194

Chapter 7: Conclusion: Imagining Alternatives to the Mainstream Development

Apparatus ........................................................................... 196

Brief summary of the thesis and introduction to chapter seven ........................................................................... 196

7.1 OVC initiatives in Uganda, 1986 – 2011: insights from this study ........................................................................... 197
7.1.1 Efforts to identify and address the needs of OVC: foreign involvement by design ........................................................................... 198
7.1.2 The drive for human rights, child rights, and community participation in development ........................................................................... 199

7.2 NGO engagement with donor agencies: examining the influence of donors’ regulatory and discursive practices ........................................................................... 201
7.2.1 Potentially liberating implications of (the necessity of) participation in governance ........................................................................... 202

7.3 Implications ........................................................................... 203
7.3.1 Implications for the field ........................................................................... 205
7.3.2 Potential areas for further research ........................................................................... 207
7.4 Concluding remarks .................................................................................................................. 209
References .................................................................................................................................. 213
Appendices ................................................................................................................................. 241
List of Acronyms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACRWC</td>
<td>African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AIDS</td>
<td>Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANPPCAN</td>
<td>African Network for the Prevention and Protection of Children Against Abuse and Neglect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AU</td>
<td>African Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLRC</td>
<td>Child Law Review Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSO</td>
<td>Civil Society Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAC</td>
<td>Development Assistance Committee (of the OECD)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DANIDA</td>
<td>Danish International Development Agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECOSOC</td>
<td>Economic and Social Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAO</td>
<td>Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOU</td>
<td>Government of Uganda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIPC</td>
<td>Heavily Indebted Poor Country</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIV</td>
<td>Human Immunodeficiency Virus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HRAP</td>
<td>Human Rights-based Approach to Programming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IFAD</td>
<td>International Fund for Agricultural Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IGA</td>
<td>Income-generating activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IIPC</td>
<td>International Institute for the Protection of Childhood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMF</td>
<td>International Monetary Fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acronym</td>
<td>Full Form</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INGO</td>
<td>International non-governmental organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KI</td>
<td>Key informant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LC</td>
<td>Local Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MGLSD</td>
<td>Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NCC</td>
<td>National Council for Children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-governmental organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NNGO</td>
<td>Northern non-governmental organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOP</td>
<td>National Orphans and Other Vulnerable Children Policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NRA</td>
<td>National Resistance Army</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NRM</td>
<td>National Resistance Movement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSPPI</td>
<td>National Policy and Strategic Programme Plan of Interventions for Orphans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OECD</td>
<td>Organization for Economic Co-ordination and Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OVC</td>
<td>Orphans and other vulnerable children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OVC MIS</td>
<td>Management Information and Evaluation System for Orphans and Vulnerable Children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OVCS</td>
<td>Orphans and Vulnerable Children Secretariat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OXFAM</td>
<td>Oxford Committee for Famine Relief</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAPSCA</td>
<td>Programme for the Alleviation of Poverty and Social Costs of Adjustment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PCE</td>
<td>Participation and Civic Engagement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PEPFAR</td>
<td>President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acronym</td>
<td>Full Form</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHC</td>
<td>Primary Health Care</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PTA</td>
<td>Parent Teacher Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RAAAP</td>
<td>Rapid Country Assessment, Analysis and Action Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RBA</td>
<td>Rights-based approach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAP</td>
<td>Structural Adjustment Programmes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCF</td>
<td>Save the Children Fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SIDA</td>
<td>Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UCRNN</td>
<td>Uganda Child Rights NGO Network</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UDHR</td>
<td>Universal Declaration of Human Rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNAIDS</td>
<td>Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNCRC</td>
<td>United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNDP</td>
<td>United Nations Development Programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNICEF</td>
<td>United Nations Children’s Fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNPAC</td>
<td>Uganda National Program of Action for Children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UPC</td>
<td>Uganda People’s Congress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UPE</td>
<td>Universal Primary Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USAID</td>
<td>United States Agency for International Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USE</td>
<td>Universal Secondary Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UWESO</td>
<td>Uganda Women’s Efforts to Save Orphans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHO</td>
<td>World Health Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----</td>
<td>----------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WV</td>
<td>World Vision</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
List of Appendices

Appendix 1: A typology of non-governmental organizations

Appendix 2: Interviewee and NGO descriptors

Appendix 3: Information letters for interviewees

Appendix 4: Consent form for interviewees

Appendix 5: Interview guide for NGO representatives

Appendix 6: Interview guide for key informants from government agencies and non-governmental advocacy networks

Appendix 7: Coding framework

Appendix 8: Organizing themes and networks (global themes)

Appendix 9: Ethics approval letters

Appendix 10: Timeline of key developments in Uganda, 1986 – 2011
Chapter 1
Introduction

1 Initiatives to assist OVC in Uganda: working within the international development apparatus

As the AIDS epidemic\(^1\) was growing at an alarming speed in sub-Saharan Africa in the late 1980s, the parallel issue of orphans and other vulnerable children (OVC)\(^2\) was garnering local – and later international – attention. Although orphanhood was not new to the east African country of Uganda, the soaring rates of OVC during this period pushed state, civil society, and international actors to act through a new set of policies, organizations, and programmes. Uganda, one of the countries hardest hit by the health and social issues of HIV, AIDS and OVC, offers an important illustration of these developments in the context of local and national mobilization and a surge in involvement with foreign donor agencies and philanthropies. Yet the OVC situation in Uganda remains understudied in a national historical context or in terms of the relations of power that emerged through these interactions.

Indeed, given that Uganda has had staggering rates of orphanhood\(^3\) reaching upwards of one million in 1990 and 2.7 million in 2012 (Republic of Uganda 1995; UNICEF 2013a), there is surprisingly little peer-reviewed research pertaining specifically to NGO and government of Uganda (GOU) activities and policies targeting OVC. Accounts of OVC issues in Uganda centre primarily on the war in the northern region and the psychological implications of child soldiers (Derluyn et al. 2004; Oleke et al. 2005). Although these are certainly emergencies in their own right, these issues and their attendant “solutions” are not representative of concerns related to

---

\(^1\) In this dissertation, I use the term epidemic to refer to the high prevalence of HIV and AIDS within a confined geographical region such as Uganda, and the term pandemic more generally in its form as a worldwide phenomenon.

\(^2\) Development practitioners initially coined the term “OVC” to expand the concept of orphans to all children experiencing challenges related to HIV and AIDS in their households, including those whose parents are still living. Over time, “OVC” became ubiquitous in development parlance to describe a multiplicity of children facing difficult circumstances. This expanded definition has led to an apparent proliferation of OVC, which remains a contested term (Cheney 2012). Despite its shortcomings, I use the terminology of “OVC” in accordance with contemporary rhetoric in this domain.

\(^3\) UNICEF defines an orphan as any child under the age of 18 years who has one or more deceased parents (UNICEF 2008).
OVC throughout the remainder of the country, the latter of which, like in other sub-Saharan African countries, stem less from conflict and more from poverty and AIDS-related deaths (Morisky et al. 2006).

In contrast to the attention on OVC (which is both a related and distinct issue from the epidemic, requiring specific attention in its own right), HIV and AIDS in Uganda received worldwide attention throughout peak prevalence rates in the late 1980s and early 1990s. In 1986-1987, HIV prevalence among pregnant women in urban antenatal clinics was 15%, among blood donors 14%, among lorry (heavy truck) drivers 33%, and among sex workers 86% (Slutkin et al. 2006). In the late 1990s the country garnered renewed interest when HIV prevalence at sentinel surveillance sites throughout the country – which Uganda’s Ministry of Health had established early on to track HIV prevalence among women attending urban antenatal clinics, to much praise – began to decline from 30.2% in 1992 to 10.9% in 1998 at one monitoring site in Mbarara (Parkhurst 2001).

Although some have since questioned the validity and interpretation of these data (Kiweewa 2008), the rise and subsequent fall of HIV incidence and HIV-related mortality in Uganda made headlines in Uganda and internationally throughout the 1990s. As much as half of the orphans in Uganda are estimated to be orphaned because of a loss of one or both parents due to AIDS-related death (the other half due mostly to civil strife and poverty-related deaths) (UNICEF 2013a; Oleke et al. 2005). Despite this, public media and scholarly attention tended to view OVC as a far subsidiary priority compared with the AIDS epidemic, and reports relating to initiatives associated with OVC have been mostly limited to narrow examinations of the effects of individual NGOs or community groups.

This case study provides a timely analysis of initiatives to assist OVC in Uganda at an important juncture in the country’s historical trajectory. Foreign-funded initiatives concerning OVC have undergone a number of transformations in recent decades in response to both domestic factors (including periods of civil conflict and authoritarian rule), and international factors such as the transition to a post-colonial state. During the late colonial period in Uganda (particularly from the 1920s through the early 1960s), OVC initiatives began as primarily small, church-based and self-help initiatives to support children orphaned and made vulnerable by violence, high maternal mortality, and poverty-related deaths (Dicklitch 1998). As AIDS and the civil war in the north
contributed to high death rates among the adult population into the 1980s and 1990s, the GOU relied heavily on civil society initiatives to address the physical and emotional needs of the surging number of OVC. During this period, new global initiatives emerged to complement domestic efforts through ‘partnerships’ (at least rhetorically) between “north-” and “south”-based NGOs.

Two decades later, into the early 2000s, such initiatives in Uganda grew in intensity and scope when local and foreign governments increasingly focused their attention on the issue of OVC. While for instance in 2003 United States President George W Bush’s USAID-funded President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) undertook to develop evidence-based policies and implement “sound practices” (PEPFAR 2006: 3) for supporting and caring for AIDS orphans, the GOU began to develop plans geared towards OVC more generally. The frameworks and policies the GOU created focused particularly on coordinating and monitoring a committed and active civil society sector that provided the bulk of services.

The GOU’s efforts to step up its involvement in OVC initiatives following decades of relatively autonomous operation on the part of locally- and foreign-founded NGOs created new tensions between and among government agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) of all types and sizes. These tensions pervade the GOU’s and NGOs’ efforts towards establishing their respective roles as co-planners of an overall response to Uganda’s OVC situation, while both remain subject to considerable pressures and influences from donor agencies. This thesis takes into consideration this confluence of historical and political dimensions of OVC initiatives in Uganda and examines them through a critical lens.

Through analysis of the historical development of initiatives to assist OVC in Uganda over the foregoing quarter-century, I observe that foreign donor interests have played a significant role in determining the operations of GOU and NGO initiatives to address the needs of OVC in Uganda. Based on the findings of this study, I suggest that donors practice power significantly through regulatory and discursive practices, and establish a hierarchy between themselves and funding recipients through a process of systematizing and regulating a mode of power that is difficult to escape. I argue that these power dynamics are constituted primarily through quotidian practices (or the microphysics) of power between donors and funding recipients, rather than through large-scale hegemonic forces dominating local implementers of OVC initiatives.
Moreover, I observe a variation in the extent to which NGOs acquiesce to, engage with, and resist external pressures with regard to their OVC work, depending on the size, origin, and source/location of funding of a variety of NGOs. While I find that locally-founded NGOs, local chapters of international NGOs (INGOs), and government agencies in Uganda have largely acquiesced to external influences that shape the character of their initiatives related to OVC, I also observe a considerable degree of NGO agency as active participants in an overall OVC response through instances of resistance against a largely donor-driven development agenda. Specifically, I note that – ironically, given the perceived power of INGOs to contribute to shaping the development sector largely through extensive connections and ample financial and human resources – small, poorly funded and locally run organizations have more freedom to maneuver within the confines of the development apparatus than can their large, foreign-based counterparts. This dynamic places these smaller organizations in a favourable position to resist, alter, or find alternatives to the mainstream development apparatus.

1.1 Study aim

This study is an inquiry into the exercise of power in the mainstream development apparatus, drawing from the case example of the dynamics among local and foreign organizations and agencies working from Uganda’s capital district, Kampala, to assist OVC throughout the country during the period 1986 to 2011. I aim to understand the influence of donor-recipient power relations and mainstream development discourses and practices on shaping governmental and non-governmental initiatives. Identifying these influences and their expression through everyday practices can point to possible avenues for reimagining a donor-driven development agenda that – as I demonstrate in this dissertation – often has deleterious effects on the OVC (and their social surroundings) that they endeavor to assist.

The time period under consideration represents a particular era of recent history in Uganda that merits exploration. The year 1986 marks the end of decades of liberation struggle and post-colonial civil unrest under authoritarian rule as former rebel leader Yoweri Kaguta Museveni assumed the Presidency of Uganda. It also coincides with an emerging awareness of and concern about the social dimensions of a rapidly growing AIDS epidemic (including, for instance, effects on societal relations due to fear of contagion and moralizing discourses; and concerns around early age of sexual initiation, male circumcision, and sexual partners outside marriage etc.),
which contributed significantly to the growing number of OVC at the time. The analysis of events and conditions ends in 2011, the year the interviews for this study and the bulk of the primary documentary research took place. I explore these issues in greater detail in *chapter four*, but it is important to note that in the context being considered in this dissertation, hundreds of organizations, from large bilateral donor agencies and philanthropies to local grassroots organizations, worked mostly in the absence of concerted government initiative to address the staggering numbers – growing by 2012 to upwards of 2.7 million (cumulatively) and representing among the highest proportion of AIDS orphaned children worldwide – of OVC in Uganda (UNICEF 2013a).

This research exposes the construction of and resistance to the power dynamics operating between almost exclusively foreign donors funding OVC initiatives in Uganda, and those working locally to implement these initiatives. I consider these processes through a new lens that builds on but departs from previous studies that critically evaluated the roles of NGOs in development (Kapoor 2008; Barr et al. 2003; Parkhurst 2002; Amutabi 2006) or examined (often through ethnographic research) the harmful effects of foreign-developed interventions on OVC (Dahl 2009; Epstein 2005; Reynolds 2014). My study aims to consider how the influence of donors occurs through quotidian practices (through the *microphysics* of power) and discourse, and examine the deleterious effects of donor-recipient relations at the level of implementing NGOs. I argue that in order to understand the limits and possibilities of OVC initiatives in Uganda it is crucial to go beyond the budgetary and administrative dimensions of foreign involvement to consider the regulatory and discursive dimensions affecting these undertakings.

A central component of my analysis involves examining the discourses evident among local- and foreign-founded NGO⁴ and the GOU in describing, marketing, and operationalizing their initiatives to attend to the physical, social, and emotional needs of OVC (through the provision of food, education, health care, housing, and social support). I conceptualize these discourses as a measure of the influences of donor-recipient relations of power and mainstream development discourse in shaping governmental and non-governmental efforts to address social issues. This

---

⁴ See appendix 1 for the NGO typology I use in this dissertation.
examination of development agency power and local policies and practices is particularly novel for the following reasons:

1. The OVC story remains largely unexplored, particularly in historical context and in relation to the mainstream development apparatus.
2. It exposes the influences of foreign regulatory and discursive practices on governmental and non-governmental programming related to OVC.
3. It reveals the ways in which governmental agencies and various sizes of NGOs engage with and/or resist these external factors.

Through an examination of donor regulations and discursive practices, I consider the development apparatus in relation to OVC initiatives in Uganda, and the forms of subjectivity that these practices engender. I demonstrate how the deployment of discourse through “concrete practices of thinking” and talking (Escobar 1995: 11) has real consequences in terms of the relations between and behaviours of donors and recipients. I suggest that a particularly elucidatory way of framing these issues is to consider the discursive practices that contextualize and contribute to the character of governmental and non-governmental initiatives focused on OVC. In order to pursue this, I employ a theoretical framework drawing from the work of Michel Foucault.

1.2 Theoretical underpinnings

To theoretically frame this study, I draw from French philosopher and historian Michel Foucault’s concept of governmentality – especially technologies of power and domination and technologies of the self – to elucidate the conditions contextualizing the evolution of GOU and NGO programming approaches, and to identify implications for future work with OVC. A Foucault-inspired critical lens informs the study in its entirety, from the conception of the research objectives, interview design, analysis of texts, presentation of ‘findings’, and ideas for future work concerning OVC in Uganda. Most saliently, however, I employ this perspective to examine donor regulatory and discursive practices in relation to OVC initiatives in Uganda.

Through this lens, I remain attuned to the power of language and discourse in shaping everyday practices, as has been eloquently done in the anthropological literature (see, for instance, Classen 2013; Cheney 2007; Cole and Durham 2007; Tsing 2005). This is important as donor agencies,
international institutions, and INGOs represent a “key site for the construction and maintenance of discourses about people, places, and cultures that perpetuate particular balances (or imbalances) of power” (Caton and Santos 2009: 191-2). The discourses these organizations produce and with which they engage are in a critical position of mediating the discursive construction of OVC, their needs, and interventions to reduce the challenges they experience. Van Dijk (2003: 357) has suggested that ‘recipients’ of texts and discourses – particularly those with limited personal experience, knowledge, or beliefs in the contexts they are exploring – “tend to accept beliefs, knowledge, and opinions… through discourse from what they see as authoritative, trustworthy, or credible sources”. This drives my awareness of and attention to these discursive practices and the construction of OVC initiatives and development efforts more broadly. Employing a Foucaultian lens, I suggest that the structure of the aid regime – through the construction of asymmetrical relationships and systematization of donor interests in relation to locally-founded NGOs, local chapters of INGOs, and beneficiaries – reflects a form of governmentality (Williams 1998). I cover the main elements of this theoretical perspective and comment further on its suitability for this study in chapter two.

1.3 Research questions

To understand recent initiatives addressing OVC in Uganda, and the dynamics of power characterizing relations between domestic and international influences on these initiatives, my dissertation explores two main research questions:

1. In what social and political context did efforts to assist OVC in Uganda emerge and develop, and what have been the dynamics influencing these activities over time?

2. How have the regulatory and discursive practices of foreign and international donor agencies and donor nations contributed to shaping the character of locally- and foreign-founded NGOs and government sectors involved in OVC services between 1986 to 2011?

Throughout my exploration of these guiding questions, I pay close attention to the power relations embedded in the regulatory and discursive practices shaping OVC initiatives. I address the first question primarily through a historical chapter (chapter four) which contextualizes, periodizes, and interprets the dynamics of the responses to the needs of OVC on the part of the
various players involved. I investigate the external factors contributing to the character of OVC initiatives alluded to in the second research question through analyses of regulatory and discursive influences in chapters five and six.

1.4 Methodological approach

In addition to historical analysis, the principal methodological approach of this case study is discourse analysis, involving systematic identification of patterns and themes based on Attride-Stirling’s (2001) thematic network analysis, and critical interpretation of these themes through a discursive lens. The methods and activities employed include:

1. Semi-structured interviews with representatives of OVC-focused (locally- and foreign-founded) NGOs, key informants from government of Uganda ministries, and NGO advocacy networks in Uganda.
2. Identification and collection of a wide array of primary and secondary documentary materials.
3. Analysis of interviews and documents reflecting the experiences of NGO, advocacy network, and government representatives involved in OVC initiatives in Uganda.

1.5 Background of the literature on OVC care and the development apparatus: Understanding NGOs and INGOs in East Africa

In this section, I review two main bodies of literature: (1) studies on INGOs targeting OVC in eastern Africa, and (2) critical evaluations of the role of NGOs of all types in development more broadly. These literatures cover two primary interests in my study, which are to explore the case of OVC initiatives in Uganda and to do so through a critical lens that exposes the influence of the mainstream development apparatus on their local implementation.

I first outline the studies that focus specifically on INGOs addressing OVC issues in this region in order to illustrate the nature of such investigations, which are for the most part undertaken in the absence of adequate historical and political contextualization. I follow this review with an overview of broader evaluations of NGOs in development to demonstrate the historical contingency of such efforts. Together, these two bodies of literature reveal a gap in knowledge
regarding a historically and politically situated analysis of OVC initiatives in eastern Africa generally, and Uganda specifically.

1.5.1 Studies on INGOs targeting OVC in eastern Africa

The vast majority of analyses and reviews of health and development issues in Uganda since the 1990s reflect a preoccupation with policies and activities around prevention and treatment of HIV and AIDS, to the neglect of other concurrent issues such as disability, primary health care, agricultural development, and – importantly for this study – OVC. As I explain in chapter four, OVC first appeared as a concern both among scholars as well as donor agencies in 1990, by which point the number of orphaned children (defined as children under 18 years of age with at least one deceased parent) had reached over one million – or almost 12 percent of all children under 18 years of age in Uganda – among the highest proportion of orphaned children worldwide (Republic of Uganda 1995; Hunter 1990).

Few studies examining OVC initiatives consider non-governmental initiatives in a critical light – particularly in symbolic and political terms – as I seek to do here. I note three significant exceptions to this. Lindsey Reynolds (2014) undertakes a policy analysis of the OVC component of the PEFPAR programme established in 2003. Using the case of South Africa, Reynolds locates the domains of OVC initiatives and NGO efforts in a politically and historically situated context and interrogates the effects of applying mostly public health policies on ‘social’ elements of society, including the provision of services and support to OVC. Bianca Dahl (2009) examines the anthropology of humanitarianism in connection with kinship studies and the anthropology of childhood. Dahl’s ethnographic research considers how foreign-directed orphan care programmes in Botswana not only misconstrue the social realities within which orphans reside, but create new problems – even Botswana’s “orphan problem” itself – in their culturally insensitive programming approaches. Helen Epstein, in her journalistic and anthropological work on “The Lost Children of AIDS” (2005) in Uganda, questions the appropriateness and effectiveness of the surge in foreign funding to address Uganda’s and South Africa’s AIDS epidemics and their sequelae – including OVC – in the 1990s, much of which gets caught among Ugandan elites halfway along the pipeline from donors to intended recipients.

Despite these valuable contributions to a historically and politically contextualized analysis of OVC initiatives in this region, the focus of these studies is not on analyzing the regulatory and
discursive elements of OVC initiatives, as I seek to do here. My thesis builds on these efforts to contextualize OVC initiatives by situating them historically and politically, and by critically examining the case of foreign interventions in this context. I extend these efforts by adding the dimensions of regulation and discourse to deepen the analysis of these situations.

Apart from the important work of Reynolds, Dahl, and Epstein in this area, OVC literature in the context of Uganda and neighbouring countries largely consists of case studies documenting the effects of a particular NGO’s work with OVC, most notably in Rwanda where the aftermath of the 1994 genocide continues to be an important focus of research in part through the high number of OVC that ensued from it, but also throughout the region. These studies mainly highlight the adverse social consequences that can result when NGOs target individual OVC for assistance (Thurman et al. 2008; Satzinger 2006), and note the jealousy and resentment within communities towards OVC receiving official NGO or government support (Luzze 2002). For instance, a 2008 study of the impediments to community care for orphaned children in Rwanda demonstrates some unintended consequences of INGO involvement in orphan care, noting how World Vision Rwanda’s assistance to orphaned children can lead community members to perceive supported children as ‘lucky’ or even ‘rich’ and marginalize rather than empathize with OVC as a result (Thurman et al. 2008).

An earlier joint UNICEF and Rwandan government study (Veale et al. 2001) on OVC in Rwanda reports Rwandans’ concerns about the exploitation of children that can result from increased external assistance, as extended family and community members foster orphaned relatives in the hopes of receiving support from the government or foreign-founded child sponsorship NGOs. Another study in Uganda’s Rakai District notes how targeted NGO initiatives can encourage families to create child-headed households (despite the capacity to house children among extended family) in order to maintain sponsorship that is only available to children in such living arrangements (Luzze 2002).

These studies highlight the difficulty in finding appropriate solutions to support OVC. This is a challenge that many foreign-founded NGOs have not met and – more seriously – have perhaps exacerbated. Indeed, critics caution that donor demand for rapid results may not sufficiently engage communities in OVC care (Thurman et al. 2008). Instead, as Thurman and colleagues (2008) demonstrate, donor focus on measurable outcomes may perpetuate dependence on INGOs
that have displaced support initiated by communities, primarily in the form of community-based organizations. Foster (2002: 1909) warns that “once international agencies become involved in complex areas of social development, they may inadvertently undermine local efforts to address the problem and exacerbate dependency on outside help”.

Among the research most relevant to this dissertation on the unintended consequences of OVC initiatives in Africa is anthropologist Erica Bornstein’s (2001a) in-depth study of the child sponsorship model as a means of addressing the needs of OVC. Focusing on the case of World Vision in Zimbabwe, she demonstrates the contrasts between transnational sponsorship processes and local interpretations of assistance in the context of growing local inequities. As I demonstrate in chapter five, Bornstein’s concerns about the imposition of Western conceptions of culture and family are confirmed in the current dissertation. However, this dissertation differs from Bornstein’s in its specific focus on the regulatory and discursive influences of donor and government agencies, which did not factor prominently into Bornstein’s analyses. I also do not focus on the child sponsorship model of OVC care. Given its importance to the study of OVC initiatives in Uganda specifically and sub-Saharan Africa more generally, I note the child sponsorship model as a critical area for future study in the conclusion in chapter seven.

Aside from Bornstein (2001a), the above descriptive case studies of INGOs’ unintended consequences (Thurman et al. 2008; Satzinger 2006; Luzze 2002; Veale et al. 2001) tend to frame their analyses as targeted monitoring and evaluation exercises aimed at improving the practices of a particular organization. This analytical approach has come at the expense of contextualizing NGO involvement with OVC within political, social, and historical context. Throughout this dissertation I argue that historical, political, and social contexts factor decisively into the nature and character of OVC initiatives. To set the stage for contextualizing development initiatives, I next provide a review of literature critical of NGOs’ role in development more broadly.

1.5.2 Critical evaluations of NGOs in development

In this study, I am interested in how the mainstream development apparatus has influenced OVC initiatives in Uganda over the past quarter century. Within development literature there is a critical literature on NGO engagement in health and development. In contrast to the circumscribed case studies of OVC-focused INGOs outlined above, this literature is acutely
attuned to the larger context of political and international power dynamics shaping non-governmental work internationally.

Critics of NGOs’ deep entrenchment in the ‘business’ of aid have suggested that despite their often progressive and grassroots intentions, NGOs (particularly INGOs) end up pushing forward donor interests and loyalties. They argue that this complicity in “building a type of civil society that conforms to a neoliberal form of governance” (Jenkins 2001: 263 cited in Kapoor 2008: 31) fails to challenge – and instead promotes – prevailing modes of development. Such critiques of donor influences on NGO activities in developing countries focus largely on “local NGOs’ de facto operat[ion] as agents for international NGOs and donors” (Barr et al. 2003: 7) and their dependence on and subjection to powerful funders in donor nations (Parkhurst 2002; Amutabi 2006). These critiques in part historicize INGOs “in their tripartite paradoxical roles as agents of colonialism, globalization and development” (Amutabi 2005: 1) and begin to shed light on the external pressures and influences contributing to the shape of locally-founded NGOs, local chapters of INGOs, and government initiatives. These observations factor into my analysis of the rules and regulations shaping OVC initiatives in Uganda in chapter five.

In particular, the publications of a number of scholars critical of mainstream development have influenced my study. These include:

- Chari and Corbridge (2008), who problematize the taken-for-granted concept of ‘development’ through a compilation of key development scholars’ contributions. Exploring theories, histories, and policies of development, they demonstrate the historical antecedents to contemporary development concerns.
- Munck and O’Hearn (1999), who tackle development debates at a fundamental level in an effort to transcend critiques that fully dismiss the development enterprise and, instead, offer a more nuanced perspective for engaging with the ‘reality’ of development. Covering a range of what they term critical perspectives, political economy, and polemical perspectives throughout the book, they move from defining to analyzing to offering alternatives (such as that of sustainability) to development problems which – contributing author Richard Douthwaite argues – requires a profound shift in thinking.
- Wolfgang Sachs (1992), who in his Development Dictionary: A Guide to Knowledge as Power endeavors to expose the historical contingency of concepts central to the
development paradigm. Comprised of a collection of leading development critics’ contributions, the Dictionary explores key concepts of post-war era development discourse from historical and anthropological perspectives, calling for a departure from a Eurocentric idea of development.

- James Ferguson (2005), who is concerned with development politics and the organization of discourses of development and modernity within people’s everyday lives. Ferguson foregrounds questions relating to inequality and power and urges for a curious and open-minded attitude towards global issues of development and shedding of assumptions and certainties.

- Arturo Escobar (2006), who takes a critical poststructuralist approach to Western development practices, which he argues are problematic because of their dependence on the industrialized world as a model rather than locally-developed models.

I draw particular inspiration from Ferguson’s (2005, 1990) studies of the politics of ‘development’ and ‘modernity’ through a Foucault-inspired critical lens, which emphasizes the discourses established and promoted through these concepts. A central theme of Ferguson’s work is a concern with the ways in which social and cultural processes are known and understood through such notions of ‘development’ and ‘modernity’.

Similarly central to this dissertation is Arturo Escobar’s critical work on the development enterprise’s Western reassertion of its cultural and moral superiority (see especially Escobar 1995). Also influenced by Foucault, Escobar questions the unchallenged, insidious, and culturally imperialist notion of ‘development’, concluding that development has been not only problematic because of its widespread failure, but also because of its self-defined ‘successes’, which dictates the terms of living for people in poor countries, making those people subjects of development with prescriptions for social, political, and health behaviour.

These critical development scholars’ works (unlike the OVC studies mentioned earlier, which with few noted exceptions do not explicitly factor into their work the political and historical influences on OVC-focused NGO initiatives) begin to offer examples of critical analyses of the influence of discursive practices on local programming. Their critiques of mainstream development discourse are more broadly interested in the entire development enterprise, rather than the particular case of OVC initiatives in Uganda I seek to address in the current dissertation.
A brief description of mainstream development discourse as I use it in this dissertation is warranted here. Mainstream development discourse refers to the set of terms, concepts, and (ultimately) policies characterizing the prevailing mode of development as promulgated by influential international and multilateral agencies such as the World Bank, the United Nations, the World Health Organization, and a slew of high-income country governments and bilateral agencies engaged in development efforts worldwide.

While development scholars typically locate the origins of modern development discourse in Truman’s Point IV speech (at his 1949 US presidency inauguration) wherein he defined development in relation to modernization and industrialization (Birn et al. 2009), its origins may be more accurately traced to the interwar period, when colonial governance patterns began to shift in the face of incipient liberation movements. In particular, the United Kingdom’s 1940 Colonial Development and Welfare Act represented “the first great materialization of the development idea” (Escobar 1995: 26), which departed from the view that colonial territories should be self-reliant on their resources, and instead emphasized the need for social development (primarily through education) and long-term planning (Cornwall 2006). In the post-World War II period, mainstream development discourse was rooted in concepts from modernization theory, focusing on ‘modernizing’ or ‘developing’ ‘underdeveloped’ countries according to the path tread by those who had already achieved ‘development’ (Handelman 1996). In that conceptualization, mainstream development discourse emphasized capitalist economic expansion, free trade, and democratized governance systems as a route to achieving this ‘First World’ status (Rostow 1960).

Beginning in the 1980s but more ardently in the 1990s, this discourse shifted away from “modernist state-centred” development (Maral-Hanak 2009) towards a neoliberal model that emphasizes reduced government spending, privatization, economic liberalization, and deregulation. This discursive turn occurred alongside the accelerated growth in the numbers of NGOs in development initiatives. It included coopting concepts development practitioners largely perceived as new and until then characteristic of alternative models to development (Pieterse 1998), such as community participation, rights, empowerment, gender and others. For example, the IMF/World Bank’s Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) and the accompanying WB Comprehensive Development Framework of the late 1990s – calling for civil society’s participation in development policies and processes, and country ownership of
programmes (World Bank 2013a) – reiterated the 1940 Colonial Development and Welfare Act’s plans of making mandatory comprehensive plans that would provide grants and loans towards development (Cornwall 2006) and were essentially “old wine [structural adjustment programmes] in new bottles [PRSPs]” (Pfeiffer 2013, radio interview). In chapter six I explore the concepts of rights (human rights in general, and child rights specifically) and community participation in detail, and demonstrate through historical evidence that these ‘modern’ concepts of mainstream development discourse are anything but new.

In sum, the above review shows that researchers have yet to fully examine or firmly establish a link between mainstream development discourse and the practices characterizing the various types of NGOs targeting OVC. Research in this area mostly leaves unexplored the interactions between external influences and governmental and non-governmental policies and programmes, particularly the ways in which governmental agencies and NGOs engage with or resist these external factors. What remains unknown is how, to what extent, and through what mechanisms these agencies and organizations integrate or resist larger funding dynamics and political factors contributing to the overall development of OVC initiatives in Uganda. This dissertation seeks to fill this gap in knowledge by examining evidence of mainstream development operations and discourse in the practices of locally-founded NGOs and local chapters of INGOs, and the ways these organizations promote, avoid, or challenge these influences. Analyses of NGO integration or resistance to the funding dynamics and political factors contributing to the overall development of OVC initiatives in Uganda factor into chapters five, six, and seven.

1.6 Overview of the dissertation chapters

The chapters in this dissertation sequentially outline the theoretical orientation and methodological approach I take, historicize the evolution of OVC initiatives in Uganda, present and critically interpret the study findings, and conclude with possible directions for future work in this area.

In particular, chapter two details the theoretical orientation underpinning this work. I outline Foucault’s work on governmentality, specifically his concepts of technologies of power and domination and technologies of the self, which I use to theoretically guide and interpret my research and findings.
In *chapter three* I describe the study methodology and methods. I begin by describing the study setting of Uganda in relation to the study’s focus. This is followed by a thorough description of the methods of data collection, including the groups of interviewees involved and the tools I employ. I describe Attride-Stirling’s thematic network analysis, which I use to systematically analyze the data. I conclude *chapter three* with reflections on my own positionality in the research process.

In *chapter four* I address the first research question concerning the emergence and development of OVC initiatives in Uganda. I provide a brief overview of historical antecedents (beginning in the 1920s) to the more recent context of Uganda’s government and civil society activities related to OVC, which I analyze over two time periods: from 1986 to 2000 and from 2001 to 2011. I explore the connections between President Museveni’s election to the presidency and the progression of Uganda’s women’s movement in the late 1980s, which drew international attention to the country’s OVC situation and was central to stimulating the multiple civil society initiatives that ensued. I discuss both the GOU’s and local and international NGOs’ involvement with OVC issues throughout the 1990s. I then turn to the emergence of GOU engagement with OVC affairs in the early 2000s, which prioritized monitoring and coordinating civil society actors providing OVC services. I end the chapter with a review of locally- and foreign-founded NGOs’ involvement with OVC since the turn of the millennium. The narrative ends in 2011, the year the interviews and main data collection period for this study took place.

*Chapter five* tackles the first part of the second research question, which addresses the role of international donor agencies and donor nations in shaping the practices of organizations and government sectors involved in OVC initiatives from 1986 to 2011. I draw on the experiences of NGO representatives and representatives from government agencies and non-governmental advocacy networks, all of whom have been involved over the last ten or more years in some aspect of service provision, policy development and implementation, and/or child protection in relation to OVC. I examine the power dynamics operating in the ‘community’ of actors (governmental, non-governmental, local, international) engaging in such initiatives. I consider the external pressures and influences contributing to the shape of initiatives among locally-founded NGOs, local chapters of INGOs, and the GOU, and note multiple examples of NGOs’ resistance to these influences.
Chapter six contains part two of the response to the second research question (see above). In this chapter, I interrogate NGO incorporation of mainstream development discourse, and draw on Foucault’s concept of technologies of the self to unearth the discursive practices at an international level that influence initiatives related to OVC in Uganda. I contextualize the discourse that has come to shape OVC initiatives in Uganda over the past quarter century, with a view to understanding NGOs’ active involvement in perpetuating the relations of power that facilitate their enactment of donor needs and requirements. To illustrate the ways in which this discourse plays out in the field of OVC initiatives in Uganda, I trace the emergence and consolidation of key terms (human rights, child rights, and community participation) within mainstream development discourse throughout the period following World War II through the present. I also offer accounts of NGOs’ discursive acts of resistance to the development apparatus.

In chapter seven, I consider the metaphor of dancing to the donor’s tune in an interactive sense, which recognizes the participation of NGOs in maintaining and promoting the dynamics of power I outline. I note biases and limitations in the study design and conclude with the contributions and implications of the study findings for global OVC initiatives.
Chapter 2
Theoretical Foundations

2 Introduction

In this study I explore the factors that shape the nature and character of initiatives designed to assist orphans and other vulnerable children (OVC) in Uganda between 1986 and 2011. In examining these issues, I apply a conceptual framework that highlights the subtleties of the power dynamics that characterize the relations between donor agencies and the local NGOs and local chapters of INGOs implementing OVC initiatives “on the ground”. To uncover these subtleties, I focus on the regulatory and discursive elements that influence and reflect the power dynamics in Uganda, rather than material relations of power, economy, capitalism, and imperialism, which are more characteristic of structuralist analyses of West-‘Third World’ relations (Kapoor 2002). I shed light on a domain of influence with regard to OVC initiatives in Uganda that, I argue, is as equally influential as these structuralist concerns, yet fits uneasily into analysts’ search for tangible, quantifiable evidence of power inequities to explicate these dynamics. My research demonstrates how mainstream development regulatory and discursive practices have contributed to shaping the character of OVC initiatives in Uganda.

The overall approach I take in this dissertation is discursive, in recognition of the importance of accounting for power and discourse dynamics in studies of development (as done convincingly by Said 1978). Working through the issues presented in this study in terms of discourse enables me to consider the conditions that made the approaches to OVC initiatives in Uganda possible as they developed during the period 1986 to 2011. This approach also provides an opportunity to consider why and how those engaged in OVC initiatives locally have become subject to increasingly systematic and far-reaching donor rules and regulations.

Employing a Foucaultian theoretical perspective unearths the international-level regulatory and discursive practices that influence OVC-related initiatives. Foucault’s work in the area of power and discourse has contributed greatly to unveiling the “mechanisms by which a certain order of discourse produces permissible modes of being and thinking while disqualifying and even making others impossible” in the development sector (Escobar 1995: 5). To fill the gaps left by a Foucaultian framework in analyzing low- and middle-income country settings, I also note the
contributions of postcolonial perspectives on power and discourse in this context. Because these primarily discursive perspectives are missing from analyses of OVC initiatives, I offer a new lens on a decades-long concern for the situation of OVC particularly in low- and middle-income countries.

2.1 Chapter overview

In this chapter, I outline the theoretical framework that grounds and orients the entire dissertation. I consider Foucault’s work on governmentality and the diffusion of power through macro- and micro-level relations and processes, specifically through technologies of power and domination (which I take up in chapter five) and technologies of the self (which I explore in chapter six). I interpret Foucault’s critical epistemological approach as creating a space to consider forms of resistance within subtle and diffuse relations of power. Where a strict interpretation of Foucault falls short of providing analytical tools applicable to the context of non-Western nation states, I supplement my conceptual framework with postcolonial perspectives that bridge the gap. I conclude the chapter by considering the implications of applying Foucault’s epistemological approach to the study of OVC initiatives in Uganda and related settings.

2.2 Michel Foucault

French philosopher Michel Foucault’s critical historicization of modernity works within sociological terms yet at the same time attempts to remain outside the social and human sciences by attacking them. His work has significantly influenced post-structuralist interpretations of knowledge, power, the relationship between them, and the social control they facilitate through societal institutions and social relations. Refusing to be confined to any particular scholastic or philosophical tradition, Foucault vehemently rejected the label of post-structuralist and preferred to be viewed as a critical historian of modernity (Choat 2010).

Foucault’s concept of governmentality, which forms the basis of the analytical approach I take in this study, is rooted in and expands on his earlier concepts focused on power and disciplinary

---

5 Foucault’s approach is ‘critical’ in the sense that he questions “how we can understand the self as both constituted by power and yet still capable of being autonomously self-constituting” (Allen 2001: 52).
techniques of the self. In that early work (e.g., *Madness and Civilization*, 1961; *The Birth of the Clinic*, 1963; *The Order of Things*, 1966; *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, 1969; and *Discipline and Punish*, 1975), his theoretical interests were primarily in the concept of power – specifically with what he called the “microphysics” of power – which he explores in relation to disciplinary techniques that permeate the construction and function of the institutions of medicine, psychiatry, and the human sciences. The influential concept of power/knowledge emerged from this early work.

Power/knowledge refers to a dually entangled concept that attempts to emphasize the interconnectedness of power and knowledge with one another, while simultaneously retaining their own characteristics. Knowledge facilitates and maintains power, which in turn facilitates further knowledge. For Foucault, power and knowledge are inseparable, each constituting and constituted by the other (Rouse 2005). Discipline is the second concept underlying the idea of governmentality. For Foucault, it is a mechanism of power that regulates individual and collective behaviour within the social body by ordering the organization of space, time, and behaviour (Lemke 2000). Although discipline is launched and operated through a powerful entity, it is not enforced by that entity but rather through systems of surveillance.

Foucault’s subsequent shift to understanding how certain kinds of subjectivity are created ultimately gave emergence to his ideas on governmentality (Gutting 2005). In other words, he wanted to explain how individuals were made into certain kinds of governable subjects (Rose 1999; Turner 1997). Governmentality integrates Foucault’s views on subjectivity and disciplinary technologies “into a single theory of power” (Turner 1997: xi). In the next section, I describe Foucault’s work on governmentality and in particular his distinction between various types of technologies through which governmentality functions. For Foucault, there are four types of technologies circulating through society and rendering individuals into particular kinds of subjects. These are technologies of production, technologies of sign systems, technologies of power and domination, and technologies of the self. I draw on the latter two of these types of technologies (technologies of power and domination and technologies of the self) to shape the presentation of my research findings in *chapters five and six*. 
2.3 Governmentality

Foucault’s concept of government does not refer to its primarily political meaning in contemporary parlance, but to the older and more general usage of the term. This older/general usage, common until the early to mid-1700s, delineates a concept discussed outside the official realm of politics in the areas of philosophy, religion, medicine, and pedagogy. It addresses such matters as “problems of self-control, guidance for the family and for children, management of the household, directing the soul, and other questions” (Lemke 2002: 3). Indeed, Foucault conceptualizes power as being primarily about guidance (as in the German “Führung”), which relates to “governing the forms of self-government, structuring and shaping the field of possible action of subjects” (ibid.). His semantic joining of governing (in French, ‘gouverner’) with “modes of thought (‘mentalité’)” (ibid.: 2) highlights the necessity of analyzing the political rationality underlying technologies of power and domination in the study of governmentality. Foucault clarified the distinction between these interpretations of governance by defining the older, broader notion of government to which he adheres as “the problem of government in general” in contrast to more recent conceptualization of government as “the political form of government” (Foucault 1991: 88).

For Foucault, government is a relational concept, a continuum that ranges from self-governance (technologies of the self) to the political governance of others, and something that is practiced in order to shape the conduct of individuals to attain desired objectives or, simply, to conduct conduct (Rose 1999; Ferguson and Gupta 2002; Lemke 2007; Lemke 2002). The way in which “the modern sovereign state and the modern autonomous individual co-determine each other’s emergence” (Lemke 2007: 2) is a central Foucaultian concern.

The concept of governmentality allows us to view power through a perspective beyond those that centre on violence or consensus (Lemke 2002). Government, in this conceptualization, involves “all endeavours to shape, guide, [and] direct the conduct of others” (ibid.: 3), structuring “the possible field of action of others” (Foucault 1982a: 221), and includes governing through a combination of technologies or techniques. Notably, this occurs through a form of hegemony highlighting social techniques, which Foucault conceptualizes – distinct from a Gramscian iteration emphasizing coercion and consent – as “contribut[ing] to or constitute[ing] a form of social cohesion not through force or coercion, nor necessarily through consent, but most
effectively by way of practices, techniques, and methods which infiltrate minds and bodies, cultural practices which cultivate behaviours and beliefs” (Smart 2002: 210).

Foucault reveals the complexity of the processes that contribute to hegemonic forms of governance by focusing on the constitutive roles of ‘truth’ and ‘power’ in hegemony (Smart 2002). Rather than observing an increase in consent following a reduction in violence (as Gramsci does), Foucault identifies the complex nature of governmentalization of relations of power, “techniques and practices which are reducible neither to force nor to consent” (Smart 2002: 212). Foucault’s concept of the governmentalization of power relations adds to and departs from the Gramscian notion of hegemony. Not only does it offer “a more open conception of social structure” (Olssen 1999: 104), it also provides insight into the constitution and operation of social practices involved in constructing “identities, values, and political settlements” (ibid.).

Secondary literature on governmentality typically uses the term in two principal ways: First as “a particular way of thinking about and exercising power” (Larner and Walters 2004: 496) in a particular historical context, with the intended logic of optimizing population health and welfare. Second, in a more general sense that emphasizes the power/knowledge element of governmentality, namely “as an approach that explores how governing always involves particular representations, knowledges, and expertise regarding that which is to be governed” (ibid.). The latter of these uses of governmentality highlights the element of thought in governance, the practice of government, and the necessary “production of particular ‘truths’ about these entities” (ibid.).

According to Foucault, governmentality encompasses four major technologies external to the state that circulate through society and render people as particular kinds of subjects. These are:

1. Technologies of production, which permit us to produce, transform, or manipulate things.
2. Technologies of sign systems, which permit us to use signs, meanings, symbols, or signification.

The governmentalization of power relations refers to the process of bringing something under governing control.
3. Technologies of power [and domination], which [through disciplinary techniques] determine the conduct of individuals and submit them to certain ends or domination, an objectivizing of the subject.

4. Technologies of the self, which permit individuals to effect by their own means or with the help of others a certain number of operations on their own bodies and souls, thoughts, conduct, and way of being. (Foucault 1988a: 1)

Each of these technologies is a way of revealing truth and involves some form of domination that trains, changes, or shapes the individual in some way (Besley 2005).

While each of these technologies has its own distinct characteristics and implies particular modes of individual modification, they are constantly in interaction with one another and rarely operate independently. Foucault notes that technologies of production and technologies of sign systems are particularly apparent in linguistic and scientific studies. It is technologies of power and domination and technologies of the self that spurred him to attempt to understand the “history of the organization of knowledge” (Foucault 1988a: 1), incorporating the elements of power and the self into his analysis in order to reveal the conditions of possibility of particular circumstances emerging from particular discourses (in his case, the management of ‘mad’ individuals in asylums).

The presence of technologies of power and domination and technologies of the self in the human sciences constitutes a central component of Foucault’s intellectual efforts during his career. It is the contrast between these two forms of domination (of others and of the self), which Foucault sought to capture and link together in the term ‘governmentality’. In this regard, Foucault’s initial interest was in the technologies of power and domination, which only later shifted to the technologies of the self, or “how an individual acts upon himself [sic]” (Foucault 1988a: 1). Technologies of power and domination are “the ubiquitous mechanisms of normalization and the mode of subjectivization (assujettissement)” (Zalloua 2004: 232). These technologies involve producing knowledge about individuals and populations, providing information about their physical conditions and “other forms of knowledge that [make] objects visible and [render] them into a calculable and programmable form” (Lemke 2007: 6) that can be used by state agencies for strategic purposes. Such knowledge often comes in the form of “statistical accounts, medical expertise, scientific reports, architectural plans, bureaucratic rules and guidelines, surveys,
graphs, and so on to represent events and entities as information and data for political action” (ibid.), which make it possible to delineate problem areas, identify possible interventions, estimate resources, and establish goals.

Technologies of the self, in contrast, are techniques that enable individuals to affect their own bodies, souls, thoughts, and conduct, in a process of transforming and modifying themselves. Foucault (1984: 10-11) describes them thus: Techniques/technologies of the self are those reflective and voluntary practices by which men not only set themselves rules of conduct, but seek to transform themselves, to change themselves in their singular being, and to make of their life into an oeuvre that carries certain aesthetic values and meets certain stylistic criteria.

On the surface, the concepts of technologies of power and domination and technologies of the self seem incongruent with one another. They reflect two distinct projects and modes of thought central to Foucault’s work beyond the late 1970s. On one hand, Foucault was deeply interested in “political rationalities and the ‘genealogy of the state’” (Lemke 2002: 2); on the other hand, he showed increasing interest in the ‘genealogy of the subject’, which he explores in depth in History of Sexuality (1978). Yet as Besley (2005: 77) explains,

For Foucault both technologies of [power and] domination and technologies of the self produce effects that constitute the self. They define the individual and control their conduct, as they make the individual a significant element for the state through the exercise of a form of power – which Foucault termed ‘governmentality’ – to produce useful, docile, practical citizens.

Governmentality links these two concepts by analyzing the connections between technologies of power and domination and technologies of the self and demonstrating how the modern autonomous individual and the modern sovereign state actively co-determine one another’s emergence (Lemke 2002).

While many forms of contemporary critique still rely on the dualism of freedom and constraint, consensus and violence, from the perspective of governmentality the polarity of subjectivity and power ceases to be plausible:
government refers to a continuum, which extends from political government right through to forms of self-regulation, namely “technologies of the self”.  

(ibid.: 12)

The position of governmentality at the intersection between technologies of power and domination and technologies of the self allows a simultaneous exploration of micro- and macro-political practices of power, and the links between them. For the purposes of this dissertation, I take micropractices of power to mean those practices not necessarily at the level of an individual person, but at the level of individual local NGOs and local chapters of international NGOs (INGOs). This is in line with Foucault’s understanding of micropractices of power also relating to “collectives, such as families [and] associations” (Lemke 2002: 12) because it involves shifting government responsibility for “social risks such as illness, unemployment, poverty etc.” (ibid.) to the domain of self care, including the self care of households, communities, and other groupings of people in relation to government.

In my research, I use the concept of governmentality – and specifically the technologies of power and domination and technologies of the self – to frame my findings in line with these two concepts. I outline these two types of technologies that I see involved in shaping the character of OVC initiatives in Uganda. From one angle, I observe technologies of power and domination, wherein governing bodies or institutions (in this case, donor bodies, international agencies, and governments) prescribe the mandates and functioning of local NGOs, local chapters of INGOs, and the GOU through guidelines, restrictions, and accountability mechanisms. I conceptualize this as exemplary of technologies of power and domination, which serve to subjectivize NGOs and GOU ministries. From another angle I observe discursive practices reflective of mainstream development discourse more broadly among NGOs and the GOU. I see this as a reflection of an active participation on the part of the implementing organizations and government agencies in the practice of integrating mainstream discursive practices through micropractices of power. This demonstrates technologies of the self at the level of collectives of individuals in organizations and ministries.

Accordingly, in chapter five I discuss the technologies of power and domination – the nature of the relationship between donors and funding recipients – that make local NGOs and local chapters of INGOs into particular kinds of subjects that must accord with donor rules and
regulations. In that chapter, I extend Foucault’s concern about the conditions of possibility that have allowed individuals to become particular kinds of subjects, to consider how these NGOs have been used to serve strategic interests of international donor agencies and governments engaging in development efforts. Such interests are transmitted through explicit rules and regulations (i.e., through technologies of power and domination) of what is required of NGOs in terms of working in accordance with donor rules and regulations.

I also suggest that these NGOs themselves become active participants in the perpetuation of mainstream development discourse as they integrate it into their everyday practices and actively promote such discourse as a means of accessing and securing funding. Institutional interests are thus transmitted through micro-level relations (i.e., technologies of the self), which I address in chapter six. These observations illustrate expressions of power through techniques of inclusion and cooperation rather than force or domination (Abrahamsen 2004). I argue that these forms of power relations are facilitated through discursive practices and discourse, a concept I outline next.

2.3.1 Discourse

In my research, I define governing bodies as foreign government agencies, multinational institutions, donor agencies, and foreign-based INGO headquarters or foreign managers of local NGOs. For Foucault, the operation of power through governing bodies is enabled through discourse and discursive practices. As Lemke (2007: 2) writes,

> Government defines a discursive field in which exercising power is “rationalized.” Ways in which this occurs include the delineation of concepts, the specification of objects and borders, and the provision of arguments and justifications. In this manner, government makes it possible to address a problem and offers certain strategies for managing or solving the problem.

Foucault’s concern is with both the theoretical applications of discourse as well as the “materiality of language”, a term that identifies the material effects of discourses “and the practices they made possible” (Abrahamsen 2003: 200). Considering how reality is thought about and talked about makes it possible to identify the link between power/knowledge and discourse (Cheek 2000). For Foucault, discourse involves “the relationships between meanings,
definitions and statements and the institutional and social networks that give them their authority and validity” (O’Brien and Penna 1998: 110). Discourse is ultimately a form of power “insofar as it invests actions and objects with meaning, and it bestows people with morally charged identities” (Rossi 2004: 2).

Indeed, for Foucault, ‘truth’ does not exist outside of historical construction and relations of discourse: “We are subjected to the production of truth through power and we cannot exercise power except through the production of truth” (Foucault 1980a: 92). The review of OVC initiatives in Uganda from 1986 to 2011 in chapter four provides historical context that is, as per Foucault, central to understanding relations of discourse. Although I intentionally framed this study through a Foucaultian lens not in pursuit of a ‘truth’ about NGO and government initiatives in relation to OVC but rather as a means of exploring the discursive practices shaping these initiatives, this historical review also reflects a historicized construction of ‘truth’ through my interpretation and presentation of historical events and processes. Discourse is a practice that is made possible through real, material, institutional conditions, and – in turn – has material effects. Viewed through an analysis of local NGOs’ and local chapters of INGOs’ discursive practices in chapter six, I interrogate and expose the conditions that facilitated the particular character of OVC initiatives in Uganda and enabled the rise of certain forms of knowledge about how to structure these initiatives.

For Foucault, discourse is produced by power, which he conceptualizes as productive, not repressive. Foucault insists that the positive and technical functions of power – which have been altogether ignored in Western analyses of power that view power as “juridical and negative” (Foucault 1980a: 121) – need to be investigated.

If power were never anything but repressive, if it never did anything but to say no, do you really think one would be brought to obey it? What makes power hold good, what makes it accepted, is simply the fact that it doesn’t only weigh on us as a force that says no, but that it traverses and produces things, it induces pleasure, forms knowledge, produces discourse. It needs to be considered as a productive network which runs through the whole social body, much more than as a negative instance whose function is repression. (Foucault 1984: 61)
Like with Hegel’s dialectic, which observed the construction of a concept through two opposing elements, and Karl Marx’s dialectical materialism, which noted the continuously evolving nature of material reality, the dialectic of power involves both repressive and liberating qualities, both holding a productive function, regardless of power’s normative outcome.

In addition to its productive qualities, Foucault also recognizes the insidious qualities of power. It does not function overtly through force but covertly through micro practices. Power operates in particularly insidious forms as governance because it is not coercively imposed or achieved through repression, but rather because it is normalized (Kothari 2001; Gastaldo 1997). Discursive practices in the development sector involve such strategies of governmentality. NGOs, for instance, become governmental when they are made technical (Rose 1999) by assuming the role of fulfilling the strategic agendas of donor agencies and foreign governments rather than harking back to their usually ideologically-driven roots as revolutionary collectives challenging the status quo.

A Foucault-inspired lens urges an exploration of the point at which particular discourses emerged from particular techniques and how they came to be seen as true (Rabinow 1984): That is, it analyzes and identifies the conditions of possibility that allow certain discourses to gain prominence. In my research, I analyze discourse through such a lens to highlight important questions regarding how local NGOs and local chapters of INGOs focusing on OVC were made into particular kinds of subjects used strategically for development purposes in the preceding two-and-a-half decades in Uganda, and how this affects their incorporation of particular elements of mainstream development discourse.

Disciplinary technologies function effectively because of the subtlety of their coercion, the efficacy in producing their desired results of establishing conformity, and their integration in everyday existence, which delicately change our relationships with the world (Barns 1999). As I show in chapters five and six, the relational nature of power requires NGO cooperation in order to function. This illustrates the participation of NGOs of all types in integrating and perpetuating mainstream development discourse, and it highlights the importance of NGO integration of discourses in order for these discourses to maintain traction. In chapter six I argue that it is precisely this characteristic of power relations that offers avenues for resistance, which I explore next.
2.3.2 Resistance

Foucault’s appreciation of the relational aspect of interactions of power creates space for resistance. Foucault demonstrates that events of the past and the circumstances of today are not inevitable and “[his] histories aim to show the contingency – and hence surpassability – of what history has given us” (Gutting 2005: 10). Within Foucault’s work there is a strong undercurrent of ideas on resistance, which – although less recognized than his other concepts of power/knowledge, governmentality, and discourse – constitute an important component of his work and become a central analytic focus of this study’s analysis.

Applied to the context of OVC initiatives in Uganda, the dialectical nature of power as Foucault describes it implies active participation on the part of local NGOs and local chapters of INGOs in practicing self-governing techniques. Because it is translation⁷ rather than direct imposition that transforms ideas into practices of government, ideas are susceptible to “innumerable pressures and distortions” (Rose 1999: 51). Rose (1999: 51) explains,

[This] is not a process in which rule extends itself unproblematically across a territory, but a matter of fragile relays, contested locales and fissiparous affiliations.

Thus for Foucault, power is not a dominating system but a process that is exercised through someone’s actions “only to the extent that other agents’ actions remain appropriately aligned with them” (Rouse 2005: 111). At the same time, resistance is not external to power, but actually arises through it, reflecting the multiple sites of power. This means that power can be understood to be deeply intertwined with discourse, which can in turn be reconstructed and resisted. Indeed, powerful sources of resistance can emerge from grassroots micropolitics (Gastaldo 1997).

In a Foucaultian sense, the dependence on local NGOs’ and local chapters of INGOs’ incorporation of ideas suggests that there is room for resistance to these subjectifications. These NGOs can and do engage with power relations for their own ends and determine at least in part the extent to which they incorporate such discourses and propose alternative discourses (Lupton

---

⁷ “Translation” is defined as that which links the general to the particular in terms of transforming, for instance, “abstract political critique” into specific economic policies and strategies (Rose 1999: 51).
1995). Although local NGOs and local chapters of INGOs are always functioning within larger culturally and socially defined contexts and discourses that are inseparable from the reproduction of inequitable power dynamics, this does not preclude them from – and indeed can coexist alongside – appropriating this dependence for their own ends. Indeed, “people on the ground can twist and bend the constraints imposed upon them” (O’Manique 2004: 44-5). The political nature of knowledge and discourse thus holds potentially emancipatory implications due to its mutually constituted character. I provide examples of such resistance in chapters five and six, and discuss their implications in chapter seven.

2.3.3 Potential limitations of Foucaultian theory

Foucault’s concept of governmentality, which was profoundly informed by his concept of power/knowledge and central to understanding discourse, has spurred considerable theoretical debate, revolving primarily around two key frustrations. First, critics argue that Foucault’s decentred views on power and his failure to acknowledge that some forms of power are more dominant than others make it impossible to find any path for systematic resistance (Loomba 2005). Foucault’s focus on deconstructing the past and his reluctance to offer a normative stance regarding the best way to proceed in the future concerns those seeking clear theoretical models and suggestions for how to improve current conditions (Patton 1998). Critics also perceive Foucault’s apparent disinclination to move beyond the theoretical domain into areas of practice as paralyzing.

Indeed, Foucault’s reluctance to propose an alternative solution to the problems he analyzes signifies a strong departure from Marxist-informed ideas about class struggle that promote acts of resistance. However, a Foucaultian approach helps us understand our present in new ways by diagnosing the problems of the world. Foucault for his part maintains that critically analyzing the history of the present by acknowledging and elucidating the historical roots of contemporary issues is in itself sufficient and important, and that it is not the task of researchers to offer concrete solutions. As I suggest in this chapter, despite his aversion to offering concrete solutions to the problems of the present, Foucault contributes an important theory regarding how ideas change existing power dynamics. I see this as particularly evident in his ideas on possibilities for resistance that punctuate his work. While not offering concrete examples of such actions, he offers sufficient material to delineate a direction through which to proceed. Indeed, Foucault’s
conceptualization of power as consisting of multiple sites, and not as an entity or institutions but as something that flows around and through all relations between people, suggests that power not only allows for resistance, but indeed requires it. Viewed this way, the criticism that Foucault’s approach lacks action-oriented recommendations loses traction. In this study I implement Foucault’s approach by acknowledging the value in diagnosing the conditions that have made possible the particular character of OVC initiatives in Uganda. Yet I am not agnostic on the question of solutions: in chapter six, I offer some insights for policy implications and ways to proceed based on the analyses offered in chapters five and six.

A second critique of Foucault’s governmentality is that most of the literature on this concept takes a sovereign nation state as its frame of reference (both explicitly and implicitly), which is based on a Eurocentric perspective that excludes so-called ‘fragmented’ states more common outside of Europe (Lemke 2007). Foucault’s theories of power do not explicitly take up colonial or postcolonial relations, but rather take Western/imperial nations as a frame of reference. His most significant contribution to analyses outside of these contexts – that is, within the context of low- and middle-income nation states – comes in the form of postcolonial perspectives. These perspectives draw heavily on Foucault’s work and extend it by moving beyond the confines of Western/imperial nations, offering antidotes to his conceptually limited perspective in this regard. These perspectives offer an additional analytical dimension that more directly embraces ‘developing’-country contexts and contributes to the critical analysis within this dissertation.

Postcolonial perspectives “emerge out of a fundamental belief that colonialism has been, and remains, one of the most compelling influences on the West’s interpretations of and interactions with people from different (mainly non-Western) cultures” (Echtner and Prasad 2003: 666) in the modern period. At the most basic level, adherents of these positions argue that post-colonial societies continue to experience subtle and overt forms of neo-colonialism in economic, political and cultural dimensions, perpetuating an inequitable power dynamic that has not ended with formal political independence (Ashcroft et al. 2006). As a field of scholarship, postcolonialism aims to focus attention on the implicit dangers in common thinking patterns, and to suggest

---

8 Notable exceptions are applications of the concept by Lippert (1999), Larner and Walters (2004), Ferguson and Gupta (2002).
alternative worldviews (Caton and Santos 2009). Postcolonialism takes a poststructuralist perspective that highlights the centrality of “discourse and the politics of representation” (ibid.: xiv), a reflection of Foucault’s analysis of power.

Key postcolonialist theorists include Frantz Fanon, Homi Bhabha, Gayatri Spivak, and Edward Said. All of these theorists draw on previous post-structuralist work (especially that of Jacques Derrida, Jacques Lacan, and – notably – Michel Foucault), conducting textual analyses to inform their anti-positivist and critical perspectives. Fanon first raised the issue of the psychological ramifications of colonialism (Fanon 1952/2008) and began an exploration of hybridity and ambivalence within cultures (Goss 1996). Following Fanon, Bhabha similarly draws on psychoanalytic thought, but departs from Fanon’s emphasis on the psychological to shift to the written text and colonial discourse. Exemplifying poststructuralists’ reneging of grand narratives, Bhabha argues that colonial discourse is characterized by ‘hybridity’ and instability (Ashcroft et al. 2006) and resists the idea of “holistic social explanation” (Bhabha 1992: 49) in an effort to force recognition of the complexity of cultural and political spheres. He explores forms of resistance against colonialism (historically) and uses post-structuralist methodologies (involving an emphasis on discursivity) in analyzing colonial textual material (Kapoor 2002). These methodologies enable him to see how colonial dynamics of oppression and resistance continue to the present day. Spivak (1988) questions the West’s engagement with the ‘Other’ and challenges the idea that the subaltern can be represented or spoken for (Goss 1996).

Fanon (1952/2008), and moreso Bhabha (1992) and Spivak (1998) form the foundation for the development of postcolonial studies. Postcolonial scholars widely agree that Edward Said’s influential book, Orientalism (1978), was the catalyst for popularizing postcolonial theory in general and (post)colonial discourse analysis in particular. Said’s most significant contribution to the field was to show how the ‘Orient’ is central to the West’s understanding of itself and its creation of identity (Abrahamsen 2003). His project was ultimately to demonstrate how ‘knowledge’ about the ‘Other’ (i.e., non-Europeans, which Europeans viewed as ranging from exotic to primitive) is central to the process of maintaining power over them. This involves examining the construction of the Orient in relation to the West (Goss 1996) and uncovering the “discursive aspects of power and control present in First World representations of the Third World” (Echtner and Prasad 2003: 668). Said (1978: 3) maintains that,
Without examining Orientalism as a discourse one cannot possibly understand the enormously systematic discipline by which European culture was able to manage – and even produce – the Orient politically, sociologically, militarily, ideologically, scientifically, and imaginatively during the post-Enlightenment period.

Said uses Foucault’s work suggesting that knowledge is profoundly imbricated with power to support his contention that Europe’s representation of the Orient was an ideological component of colonial power (Loomba 2005). Following Foucault, Said draws particular attention “to the intimacy of power and knowledge” (Abrahamsen 2003: 200) in an effort to destabilize discursive practices constructing the ‘Other’ by challenging Western hegemonic narratives. He also draws heavily on Foucault’s work on discourse analysis for his deconstructive analysis, recognizing the historical contingency of all experience. Foucault, as explained above, explores the dynamic between knowledge and power, and “the ways in which discourses are implicated in relations of power” (Kincheloe and McLaren 2007: 405). From Foucault’s work, Said develops the notion that, “what is thought, said, or even done about the Orient follows (perhaps occurs within) certain distinct and intellectually knowable lines” (Said 1978: 13).

The power of language to name, understand, control, and ultimately to ‘know’ another place or people through discourse is a central concern in postcolonialism, as it is for Foucault (Ashcroft et al. 2006). Where postcolonial analyses transcend Foucault’s initial Eurocentric tendencies comes in its quest to “undermine and transform the dominance of eurocentrist colonial discourses” in such a way that reveals the heterogeneity of societies’ discourses (Goss 1996: 242). As part of this process, postcolonial theorists work to “draw attention to the persistence of colonialism on an ideological level” (Echtner and Prasad 2003: 668) by uncovering the discursive and textual practices through which power continues to be present in Western representations of non-Western worlds.

Although in India a subaltern studies group initially used postcolonial perspectives to (re)examine the country’s history and historiography and applications of post-colonial perspectives in South Asia abound (Abrahamsen 2003), critics of postcolonialism have suggested that postcolonialism’s overly theoretical preoccupation with the esoteric tendencies of discourse and text offers little to the predominantly empirical study of African politics, which they view as

Three examples of explicit applications of a postcolonial lens to frame studies in an African context are particularly instructive:

1. Abrahamsen (2003) uses Foucault-inspired postcolonial conceptualizations of power to critique development discourse for its legitimization of interventions in developing countries, which she argues aim to “remodel [the ‘Third World’] according to Western norms of progress, growth and efficiency” (ibid.). Drawing also from Escobar’s (1995) work on the “making and unmaking of the Third World”, she expands the conceptual boundaries of development critiques and argues that development and its counterpart, underdevelopment, are discursively constructed. Abrahamsen is sure not to deny the “material condition of poverty” (Abrahamsen 2003: 202) or rich/poor inequities in Africa. She problematizes the conceptualization of these constructions “and the political practices that they make possible” (ibid.), arguing that a postcolonial perspective can more fully elucidate the construction and maintenance of inequitable relations (both historical and contemporary) than can African studies.

2. Jones (2004) challenges Western-centric notions of health and development by applying a postcolonial lens to destabilize prevailing Western ‘rationalities’ and representations of donor responses to the AIDS epidemic in Africa. Using the case example of the UK Department for International Development (DFID) and the Norwegian Agency for Development Co-operation (NORAD) donor policies on HIV and AIDS as illustrations of “cultural and political exchanges framed by prevailing representations of Africa” (385), he considers how donor agencies’ tendency to view Africa through a ‘developmentalist’ lens contributes to shaping health-related policies. By this he means the “tendency to reduce the problems of improving life in poor countries to one of a compulsion to promote ‘development’ by looking at [the ‘Other’] and knowing them only
through the lens of ‘developmentalism’ and what they are not” (393). This lens exposes the role of ‘Othering’ as a way of highlighting differences in race and culture and informing the way in which donors take ‘discursive cues’ in relation to the continent.

3. Tourism researchers Caton and Santos (2009) use colonial discourse analysis to interrogate the photographs used in the marketing materials of the non-governmental self-proclaimed humanitarian agency, Semester at Sea. The authors find that the agency’s use of images essentializes other cultures and reinforces colonial stereotypes. For the authors, this suggests that the discourse of colonialism has become so entrenched in understandings of developing countries “that it is able to penetrate even the imagery of tourism brokers that exist specifically to promote complex thinking, stereotype reduction, global awareness, and a global citizenship ethic” (Caton and Santos 2009: 201). As I explain in chapter six, the mainstream development discourse on which I centre the discussion has become similarly ubiquitous among development actors at all levels.

In this study, I employ the Foucaultian perspective outlined above in accordance with the ways in which this has been applied through postcolonial-infused analyses of ‘developing’-country contexts. I work through a Foucaultian-inspired perspective while keeping in mind the contributions of postcolonial thinking with regard to analyses of culture and development in ‘developing’-country settings. Together, these complementary perspectives provide a backdrop to my study.

2.4 Applying Foucault’s epistemology to the study of OVC initiatives

An empirical investigation from a Foucaultian perspective requires historical specificity. This specifically delineates what context and conditions enabled particular ideas to be thought and verbalized to understand what made a particular character of OVC initiatives in Uganda possible. Central to this investigation are questions relating to how it became possible to “make truths about persons, their conduct, the means of action upon this and the reasons for such action” (Rose 1999: 19). My aim is not to locate a particular ‘truth’ about these OVC initiatives (for instance, comparing interviewees’ descriptions of what they say they do with ethnographic evidence of their actions), but rather to highlight their discursive practices. For instance, in
relation to a foreigner in an interaction, interviewees may view my presence as an opportunity to market their work and adapt their discourse accordingly.

Specifically, using a Foucault-inspired approach leads me to consider what characterizes the discursive practices of donor agencies and foreign governments involved in efforts to address the needs of OVC in Uganda, and how these discursive practices become part of the mandates and policies of locally-founded NGOs, local chapters of INGOs, and GOU efforts. This study establishes how control is no longer only exerted through direct influence (as I demonstrate in chapter five), but also through technologies of the self; that is, through various multilateral institutions “working within a broad consensus or through willing intermediaries in the form of international NGOs [through their local-level implementing ‘chapters’]” (Mohan 2002: 147) (as I outline in chapter six).

Guided by the theoretical perspective outlined in this chapter, in this dissertation I examine and contextualize OVC initiatives in Uganda through the discourses that have allowed inequitable conditions and relations of power to emerge, gain prominence, and continue to pervade the development apparatus. Through my analysis, I also elucidate the opportunities for resistance of these dynamics that pervade the very relations that contribute to such power dynamics. In chapter three, I describe the methodological approach I take to examining these issues.
Chapter 3
The Study: Methodology and Methods

3 Introduction

This study uses a qualitative case study research design to examine NGO and government of Uganda (GOU) initiatives that are designed to attend to the physical, social, and emotional needs of OVC through the provision of food, education, health care, housing, and social support. I conceptualize this scenario as a measure of the influences of donor-recipient relations of power and mainstream development discourse in shaping governmental and non-governmental initiatives. In this chapter, I outline the details of the methods used to investigate this topic. After an overview of the study design, I outline the site selection, data sources, sampling, and recruiting methods. I describe the details of the interviewing and transcribing approaches, and I outline the analytic approach I took to work through the study materials in detail. I comment on my positionality as a foreign researcher in Uganda and, in closing, consider the limitations and biases of the research methods, the ethical considerations that factored into this study, and steps for knowledge transfer of my findings.

3.1 Study design

3.1.1 Site selection: district case example

This study took place in Kampala District (one of Uganda’s 111 districts, and home to Uganda’s capital city, Kampala). I chose Kampala District (population ca. 1.7 million; consisting of approximately 60% from the Baganda ethnic group, with the remainder comprised of Banyankole and ten other ethnic groups) for this study because it serves as the base for the majority of international and national NGOs operating in Uganda and has the largest concentration of foreign-founded NGOs addressing child issues the country (Fafchamps and Owens 2009).^9

---

^9Conducting the interviews in another major urban centre in Uganda, such as Jinja or Mbarara, might have resulted in slightly different results. NGO employees in these centres work under the direction of Kampala headquarters, and are therefore not directly in contact with international headquarters. For this reason, they may be comparably more focused on local-level politics and concerns, and demonstrate slightly less engagement with mainstream development discourse than their Kampala counterparts. Alternatively, the similarly elite status of the NGO staff
Kampala is administratively divided into five divisions (or boroughs), 100 parishes, and 802 villages or ‘zones’ – the smallest administrative unit in any district (UN Habitat 2014). The Kampala City Council’s Gender and Community Services Department is responsible for the operationalization of the 2000 Children Act as well as the provision of services targeting youth in the city. Children under 18 years of age comprise more than half the city’s population (City Council of Kampala 2010).

During a preliminary visit to Uganda in June 2010, I discovered that four NGOs listed under Kampala District maintain postal addresses in Kampala although they are physically located in and around Entebbe (about 35 kilometres from Kampala and the capital of Uganda until independence in 1962) in Wakiso District (formerly part of Mpigi District until 2000). Entebbe’s lower building and rent costs make it a desirable site for some NGO offices. Although four organizations operating in and around Entebbe were included in this study, for the sake of simplicity I henceforth refer to the study setting as Kampala District.

3.1.2 Data sources

I used a combination of primary and secondary data sources. Primary data sources consisted of:

1. Transcriptions of semi-structured interviews with two groups of interviewees: NGO representatives, and key informants from government agencies and non-governmental advocacy networks concerned with OVC in Uganda. Appendix 2 shows relevant demographic information of these two interviewee groups.

2. Publicly available marketing material from NGOs, and Ugandan records related to OVC responses and strategies (primarily from the Ministry of Gender’s OVC Secretariat, the Uganda National NGO Forum, and the Ugandan Child Rights NGO Network). I also included documents relating to civil society engagement in OVC responses outlined by UNICEF, USAID, the World Bank, the World Health Organization, and other international agencies.
Secondary data sources consisted of peer-reviewed and grey literature pertaining to the events and processes that constituted and historically contextualized the developments in OVC initiatives over the past quarter century.

3.1.3 Research questions and methods

The first research question of this study (In what social and political context did efforts to assist OVC in Uganda emerge and develop, and what have been the dynamics influencing these activities over time?) called for an account of initiatives to address the situation of OVC in Uganda over the time period in question, which I base on a compilation of academic and publicly available information regarding this context. The second research question (How have the regulatory and discursive practices of foreign and international donor agencies and donor nations contributed to shaping the character of locally- and foreign-founded NGOs and government sectors involved in OVC services between 1986 to 2011?) concerns the discourses factoring into OVC initiatives in Uganda, which are in part discernable through the verbal communication of NGO representatives regarding the purpose and activities of their work. This necessitated the collection of first-hand accounts of OVC initiatives in Uganda in order to reveal the influence of discursive practices. An integral component of addressing these research questions thus involved selecting individuals intimately involved (in various capacities) in OVC initiatives in Uganda as study interviewees.

I conducted individual semi-structured interviews with interviewees from three groups:

1. Representatives\(^{10}\) of 18 NGOs.\(^{11}\)

---

\(^{10}\) Twenty-two of the 23 interviewees representing these 18 NGOs are Ugandans. One interviewee is British.

\(^{11}\) Determining the precise number of active NGOs working with OVC in Uganda is challenging. In part, this is because Uganda’s National NGO Board records do not categorize NGOs (rather, they note only the following: “file number, name of NGO, origin of NGO, overseer, postal address, telephone”) (personal photocopy of NGO Board registration record 2011). The Board’s records are not routinely updated and verified, and the records include countless organizations that are no longer operating. The Uganda NGO Directory, operated by the Uganda National NGO Forum, identifies 168 NGOs as working with “children and youth” (www.ugandangodirectory.org). This broad category includes organizations promoting behaviour change among youth, community development projects, youth with disabilities, poverty alleviation, art with children, and other such activities not directly focused on OVC, yet at the same time does not account for (unregistered) OVC organizations working less formally. The Uganda Child Rights NGO Network (UCRNN) lists 106 member organizations (as of 2014). Given that UCRNN membership is voluntary, this number certainly does not represent all OVC-focused NGOs in the country,
2. Three key informants from Ugandan government agencies.

3. Two key informants from non-governmental advocacy networks.

All of these interviewees were concerned with OVC in some shape or form.\(^\text{12}\)

These interviewee groups offer unique insight into the questions raised by this study. Interviews with those providing services to OVC in this setting allow me to address the study’s aim to uncover the discourses influencing OVC initiatives in Uganda. The inclusion of five key informants from government agencies and non-governmental advocacy networks provides an important counterpoint to NGO representatives’ tendency to be preoccupied with the quotidian tasks of their organizations, and helps to contextualize NGO representatives’ ideas. Combining all of the above interviews with the interviewee groups provides “information-rich” (Patton 2002: 230) accounts of experiences with OVC initiatives in Uganda.

3.1.4 Sampling

I selected interviewees using purposive sampling methods. Qualitative researchers often use purposive sampling to help inform the researcher’s understanding of the central focus of the study, but only provides a rough estimate of organizations actively interested in networking with regard to child-related services.

Despite these challenges in determining the precise number of active OVC-focused NGOs, the 18 NGOs I included in the present study include virtually all the key INGOs specifically addressing OVC (as a main component of their work). To ensure balance in representation of various NGO types, I also included an equal number of locally-founded NGOs. For the purposes of this study (which involved determining the influence of the mainstream development agenda on OVC-focused NGOs in Uganda, rather than to draw conclusions about percentages of NGOs providing various types of services), this sample size was sufficient.

In addition to the respondent groups I included in my study, OVC themselves could certainly play an important role in integrating and resisting the discourses I discuss in this dissertation. In this study, I consulted with five young adults who had been orphaned as children or youth and had received material (and emotional) support from an NGO during that time. After careful consideration, however, I discarded these interviews due to ethical and methodological reasons. These included the inability to acquire what I deemed truly informed consent; the inherent bias in the selection of interviewees through NGO directors; and, in two cases, the inability to accurately discern between respondents’ expressions of their own experiences as formerly supported OVC, and their current positions as employees of the NGOs that supported them. For insight into the role of youth in integrating and resisting development discourse, see Classen’s (2013) work for an examination of youth’s integration of mainstream development discourse in northern Malawi, which highlights how youth integrate and appropriate rights discourse to justify their desire to be “modern”.\(^\text{12}\)
study (Creswell 2007). Below, I describe the sampling and recruitment methods for both groups of interviewees.

(1) NGO representatives

My primary means of identifying NGOs for this study included the ‘Child Actors Directory’ of the Uganda Child Rights NGO Network (UCRNN), word of mouth, and internet searches. I included only NGOs focusing on OVC as a central part of their mandate and/or activities. In each organization, I spoke with the local director or an individual specifically responsible for the child-focused aspects of the organization.

(2) Government agency and non-governmental advocacy network informants

Five individuals (three at government agencies, and two at non-governmental advocacy networks) actively involved in OVC-related initiatives in Uganda participated in interviews. I purposely selected these interviewees based on their inclusion in UCRNN’s ‘Child Actors Directory’ and/or reputations as key individuals involved in OVC-related issues in Uganda.

3.1.5 Recruitment

Prior to conducting each interview, in every email, telephone, or in-person communication with interviewees or their co-workers (for instance, an administrative assistant speaking on behalf of an NGO’s national director) I asked to speak with one particular individual whom I had identified earlier. Upon arrival at three of the interviews, the pre-selected interviewee asked me to include a colleague in our discussion; at one interview the interviewee asked me to speak with three individuals simultaneously; and at another meeting, the interviewee asked me to interview two NGO staff (himself included), separately. In each case, I conceded to the request, capitalizing on the opportunity to hear additional individuals speak about their work with OVC initiatives, yet remaining mindful of the potential for ‘group think’ to occur or individual interviewees to alter the tone of their discussion in the presence of (a) colleague(s). Because the presence of the additional individuals was unplanned and did not drastically change the interview dynamics in the sense of forming a large group, I treated these interviews as individual interviews, and did not alter the format of the interview to resemble a focus group discussion. This meant that I was able to analyze them according to the same principles and methods as the
remaining interviews, while noting any particularities about distinctions or congruence between colleagues from the same organization or ministry.

(1) NGO representatives

I recruited NGO representatives in two phases, commencing in June 2010 and continuing in the period from December 2010 to February 2011. In each case, I made written (email) or telephone contact with the organization to provide information about the study and request an interview.

(2) Government agency and non-governmental advocacy network informants

In June 2010, I met in person with three key informants from government agencies and non-governmental advocacy networks to provide information about the proposed study and ask for input about issues relevant to OVC initiatives in Uganda. Their insight and guidance helped to inform the study protocol. During the data collection stage, I emailed, telephoned, or visited in person all the key informants to provide further information about the study and request a formal interview, to which they all conceded.

3.1.6 Information letters

I provided English-language information letters and consent forms for all interviewees in this study (appendices 3 and 4). 13 Prior to implementing the interview guides in practice, I discussed and validated them with my host advisor and his colleagues at the Makerere University School of Public Health in Kampala. I then began interviews using these guides. After I had completed interviews with two NGO representatives and one key informant from a government agency, I discussed with my host advisor some minor changes I felt were necessary to fine-tune the interview guides. (I identify the additions made to the interview guides in italics in appendices 5 and 6.) The scope of these revisions was limited to a small number of minor additions/probing questions, such as adding to the question “What is your assessment of this increased government interest [in OVC issues] (if applicable)?” the following probes: How would you assess (a) the

13 English is one of Uganda’s two official national languages (in addition to Swahili, although the vernacular languages Luganda, Southern Luo, Runyankore, Runyoro, Ateso, Lumasaba, Lusoga, and Samia are more commonly spoken throughout the country than Swahili). English is widely spoken among government officials and NGO staff in urban areas.
Ugandan government’s, (b) large umbrella organizations’ attention to orphan issues, when compared to other social issues in Uganda, such as people living with disabilities, HIV and AIDS, malaria, tuberculosis? Why? Based on the relatively small nature of these changes, and also due to the openness with which I approached our discussions, which implied that all interviews differed slightly from one another, my host advisor and I felt it was not necessary to discard the initial interviews as a means of using those as a ‘pilot’ study. Instead, I included all interviews as ‘data’ and analyzed them according to the principles described below.

3.2 Data collection

The first phase of the study consisted of collecting data through in-depth individual interviews. Below, I describe details of the data collection methods.

3.2.1 Interviews and interview guides

I conducted each interview in person, at a place of the interviewee’s choosing. All interviews with NGO representatives and key informants took place during regular office hours at the interviewee’s place of work, either in his/her private office or, where this was not available, in an empty meeting room or courtyard at the interviewee’s place of work.

Prior to beginning each interview, together with each interviewee I reviewed an information letter outlining the purpose of the study (appendix 3). I then requested the interviewee’s involvement and informed him/her of his/her rights as an interviewee. We discussed any questions, concerns, or misunderstandings that arose from the information letter to ensure the interviewee felt well-informed about his/her involvement in the study. Once this was clarified and the interviewee’s willingness to be part of the study was established, we reviewed the consent form (appendix 4).

I then asked interviewees to provide their choice of written or verbal consent to be interviewed for the study, to which all interviewees agreed. I also asked each interviewee to provide consent for audiorecording the interview. At three of the 18 NGO interviews, interviewees did not agree to my request to audiorecord the interview. In these instances, the interview proceeded without audiorecording and I took particularly detailed field notes instead (to which the respondents consented). Prior to each interview, I documented the interviewee name(s), name of organization, and other relevant demographic information by hand in my notes, not in the
audiorecordings. During and immediately after every consultation, I wrote field notes documenting my observations (Mayan 2009), which I treat according to the same rules of anonymity and confidentiality as the remainder of the interview data.

In-depth interviews were based around a pre-established list of topics for discussion, which allowed an openness to exploring additional ideas as they arose (appendices 5 and 6). I created these interview guides as much with the intention of mapping out the kinds of activities and approaches taken by various models to the issues facing OVC in Uganda, as with the goal of providing an opportunity for interviewees (particularly with the NGO representatives) to describe their NGOs in their own words. To allow for this kind of description, I remained flexible with the interview guide, especially with the opening section where I asked interviewees to outline their NGO’s main goals etc. This allowed interviewees to speak freely about what they prioritized in terms of NGO objectives, missions, and activities.

Using this approach and based on earlier research I conducted in Malawi and Uganda, I anticipated that interviewees would use the opportunity of speaking with a foreigner about their NGO to promote their work and describe their motivations and practices using a discourse they felt would position their NGO favourably in my eyes. I intentionally created this opportunity for describing OVC initiatives through the interviewee’s own words in order to contribute towards formulating a response to the second research question, which concerns the discursive influences on OVC initiatives in Uganda. My suspicion about interviewees’ use of our discussion as an opportunity to promote their work was confirmed. Numerous NGO representatives seemed to carefully select their choice of words and descriptions to accord with their NGO’s official rhetoric as used in their written texts (see chapter six). It is worth noting that three years later, I am still occasionally contacted by interviewees hoping for a funding opportunity. Although overall it is more orphans (some related to this study, others from previous research and volunteering experiences in this region) making such requests, these respondent requests substantiate my supposition that some may use the interview as an opportunity to market their work and possibly establish a funding connection through me.

I carried out all interviews in English. Based on previous experience interacting with these interviewee groups, my host advisor and I did not anticipate that in-person translation would be
necessary. In effect, the level of English spoken at the interviews was excellent and concerns about English fluency did not factor into the interviews or analysis whatsoever.

Below, I briefly outline the main topics addressed with both interviewee groups.

(1) NGO representatives

Appendix 5 shows the protocol for interviews with NGO representatives. These interviews foregrounded an examination of each organization’s underlying principles that have informed its particular approach to OVC. I asked interviewees about their organization’s values and understandings of the causes of and solutions to Uganda’s orphan situation; the historical development of the approach or model guiding the organization’s initiatives in relation to OVC; and the influences shaping the organization’s approach to OVC care and service provision.

(2) Government agency and non-governmental advocacy network informants

Appendix 6 shows the protocol for interviews with key informants from government agencies and non-governmental advocacy networks. These interviews helped to contextualize OVC initiatives at a national scale. I asked interviewees from this group to comment on their experiences working in this sector and to offer their assessment of both governmental and non-governmental OVC initiatives in Uganda.

3.2.2 Transcription and preliminary data analysis

I transcribed verbatim all audiorecorded interviews beginning within 72 hours of each interview, in order to maximize recall of potentially inaudible comments. This involved a first round of listening to the recording at regular speed while word-processing the interviews on a computer, distinguishing between interviewer and interviewee(s). During this initial write-up, I used dotted spaces (“…”) to indicate inaudible parts, and added notes about emphasis or gestures I recalled from the interview (e.g., “[interviewee slams hand on desk]”). Before continuing on to the next interview transcription, I ensured that I had written documentation of any particularities about the interviewee, the setting, or any other notable piece to help me contextualize the interview transcript.
I completed a process of more thorough transcription after I had interviewed all individuals. In this process, I first listened to each interview on a slower-than-normal setting while following along with the written transcript. At that time, I edited inaccuracies and missing words/phrases. This process ultimately led to several revisions of each transcript until I felt I had word-processed the words (and gestures, laughs, sighs etc.) to the best of my ability.

Within days of conducting each interview, I also carried out preliminary data analysis of the data that was available. This consisted of recording demographic information, responses to closed questions, and basic identification of dominant themes, and enabled me to identify questions or responses in the interviews that necessitated further probing or investigation. I began comprehensive analysis of the data after returning from maternity leave in October 2012.

### 3.3 Data analysis

#### 3.3.1 Analytic approach

The methodological approach guiding this study consists of two levels of data analysis:


2. Critical interpretation of these themes through discourse analysis, a method consistent with the Foucaultian theoretical framing of this study.

Attride-Stirling’s (2001) approach to data analysis through a six-step process of identifying and coding themes allows me to systematically capture NGOs’ and the GOU’s initiatives in relation to OVC care (to address my first research question, which was concerned with the evolution of OVC initiatives in Uganda over the previous two and a half decades). This method also enabled me to begin to unearth the influence of the regulatory and discursive practices of international donor agencies in shaping the practices of actors to respond to the second research question, which focused on uncovering the influences shaping OVC initiatives during the same time period. Below, I describe the details of this level of data analysis.

Critical discourse analysis is an approach to analyzing text that – akin to much qualitative inquiry – undertakes to identify recurring themes or ideas (Palmer 2003), but additionally aims to elucidate the power dynamics embedded within those texts (Kincheloe and McLaren 2007). This
is done by investigating texts “to understand how they help to create and reproduce meanings which in turn shape our knowledge of the social world” (Pritchard and Morgan 2001: 172). Discourse analysis involves an examination of “discursive content available from the wider culture” (Palmer 2003: 4) including the historical and social conditions that made possible particular representations of peoples. Using this approach focuses my attention on the roles of mainstream development discourse, highlighting political factors and donor agency agendas shaping OVC initiatives in Uganda.

At the second level of analysis, I prioritize the “awareness of context” (Echtner and Prasad 2003: 680) that is central to my study. I explore the “power dynamics embedded in social and cultural texts” (Caton and Santos 2009: 198) and try to identify “the relationship between the appearance of particular structures in … textual passages and the larger social contexts of production, circulation, and consumption in which they are nested” (ibid.). The centrality of discursive and textual practices in this form of analysis is also important. This approach allows me to consider how NGO representatives describe their organizations, which is central to my aim of deconstructing the textual and discursive practices shaping OVC initiatives. Using this approach leads to insights into the sources and persistence of the mainstream development discourse entrenched in development work related to OVC in sub-Saharan Africa (Echtner and Prasad 2003). Through this analytical approach, I identify “discursive and material practices” (Kamat 2002: 43) around Uganda’s OVC initiatives. Focusing particularly on the use of language, I look for ways in which power is embedded in discursive practices and texts (Mayan 2009).

3.3.2 Data analysis steps

After data collection, the second methodological phase of this study involved:

1. Developing narratives of Uganda’s evolving OVC response (1986 – 2011)

2. Analyzing all interview transcripts.

(1) Developing narratives

To begin the process of developing narratives, I gathered information from academic and non-academic materials about key events in relation to the rights of children (internationally), Uganda’s historical trajectory, and the state of governmental and non-governmental involvement
in OVC initiatives between 1986 and 2011 (including, where necessary, precursors to events that took place during this time period). In formulating the narratives, I also drew from the information present in the corpus of textual materials to first outline the evolution of NGO activity related to OVC in Uganda between 1986 and 2011, and then note the involvement of the Ugandan government (through various sectors and ministries) in OVC initiatives, as well as its relationship with the NGO sector in the country over the same time period. After completion of these two narratives, I wrote a third narrative that looks at these chronologies as interactive. This narrative is contextualized by key events taking place in Uganda and internationally during the given time period, and appears in full in chapter four.

(2) Analysis of interview transcripts

The next step in data analysis involved critically engaging with all interview transcripts. This began with a systematic analysis of all textual material through a system of repeatedly reviewing the texts in their entirety, following Attride-Stirling’s approach of thematic network analysis. Analysis of interview transcripts and documents followed an inductive thematic process (Bryman 2001), allowing themes of importance to interviewees to emerge naturally (Guruge et al. 2009). In the thematic network analysis, I focused on the language employed by NGO representatives to describe their work, and their concerns about their relations with donor agencies and/or NGO headquarters.

Attride-Stirling’s thematic network analysis involves a six-step analytical process of organizing transcript data into themes and examining how these themes interact with one another. Below, I show how I used this step-by-step process to identify the themes relating to NGO and government experiences of OVC initiatives in Uganda, the influence of foreign agencies and institutions, and the dynamic relationships between these actors.

The first five steps involve coding material, identifying themes, constructing thematic networks, describing and exploring thematic networks, and summarizing thematic networks. In the sixth and final step of the analysis, I interpret the patterns and themes identified with Attride-Stirling’s thematic network analysis through the lens of my research questions and Foucaultian theoretical perspective. I present the outcomes of this analysis in chapters five and six. Before doing so, I offer a detailed description of the process I applied in analyzing the material in accordance with Attride-Stirling’s thematic network analysis.
3.3.2.1 Step 1: coding material

As a first step I developed a coding framework in order to identify particular ways interviewees described their experiences with OVC initiatives in Uganda, and to begin to uncover NGO representatives’ discursive practices in portraying their work. I developed this coding framework sequentially, beginning first with an inductive process (allowing codes to arise from within the data) and continuing with a deductive process (working from my research questions to identify additional codes).

As part of the inductive process of developing codes, I began by making notes of any terms or phrases that came up repeatedly during the interviews. Through this process, I identified codes such as community, participation, rights, and sustainability etc. I explain these in more detail in chapters five and six.

To complement these codes with additional themes of interest based on my research questions, I then tried to elucidate from the transcripts ideas about relevant issues as seen through the lens of my research questions and theoretical position. In doing so, I was particularly attuned to comments about the role of donors in shaping OVC initiatives, funding dynamics, and international instruments and institutions. Through this deductive approach, codes such as ‘dancing to the tune’ of the donor, conditionalities, ‘being seen’, and the influence/role of international institutions arose. Over time, additional codes continued to develop. This required me to return to earlier transcripts to again review those for signs of the new code that I had identified. I made numerous such revisions until I felt I had ‘read’ all transcripts for all codes. The complete coding framework is appended (appendix 7).

3.3.2.2 Step 2: identifying themes

In the second step I sifted through the text segments to abstract themes (which Attride-Stirling refers to as ‘basic themes’) from the codes and to begin to identify patterns underlying the text. During this stage, my analysis was guided by a number of specific questions that were informed by my theoretical commitments and research questions:

1. How do representatives of NGOs and government agencies experience and view OVC initiatives in Uganda?
2. How do representatives of NGOs experience and describe their relations with one another, as well as with donors?

3. What international influences factor into NGOs’ and government agencies’ decision-making, activities, and funding dynamics?

4. What discourses do NGO and government representatives use to describe their (organizations’ or ministries’) work?

Analyzing and reanalyzing the data with these questions in mind allowed me to discern the discourses used to represent OVC-related initiatives, and the often tense relations and exchanges among NGOs, the GOU, and donors as they work to address the needs of OVC. Through this process I uncovered the depth of foreign influences on efforts to address concerns related to OVC, and the effects of the competitive environment for donor funding within which NGOs operate. This step facilitated an investigation into the various roles of NGOs and the Ugandan government in relation to OVC initiatives, the trends in NGO discursive practices, and the relations between the various actors involved. I used the themes that emerged most frequently, emphasized most emphatically by the interviewees, and which most directly addressed my research questions to construct the thematic networks, as outlined below.

3.3.2.3 Step 3: constructing thematic networks

The third step in analyzing interview transcripts involved grouping together the basic themes into ‘organizing themes’. These organizing themes represent the common threads among basic themes across the codes I initially used to analyze the transcripts. The organizing themes are found in appendix 8.

The final component of this process involved grouping these organizing themes into five ‘global themes’ or networks. The networks encompass thematic commonalities among the organizing themes. To arrive at these global themes, I reflected on the elements of the organizing themes that surfaced through the theoretical lens that shapes the study, and specifically referred back to my research questions that sought information about discourses and international influences on OVC initiatives in Uganda. I constructed five networks that arose from the data.
I present a table showing the organizing themes and their arrangement into networks/global themes in appendix 8. Note that although these are listed in point form and numbered, the themes are non-hierarchical, and I initially illustrated them (by hand) as non-hierarchical web-like maps.

3.3.2.4 Step 4: describing and exploring thematic networks

Step 4 commenced a higher level of abstraction and analytical engagement with the data through an exploration of the themes arising from the text and the identification of underlying patterns. In this step, I first revisited the theoretical framework and research questions outlined in my research proposal. I then returned to read the original transcripts to reinterpret the data through the lens of the varying levels of themes (basic, organizing, and global) I had developed. During this process I also reviewed the field notes I had written during the interview process and additional notes I had created through reviewing articles on the politics of development and the NGO sector.

I tracked these processes through separate files I kept for each ‘global theme’, noting a combination of direct quotes from transcripts, comments/ideas stemming from the research questions and theoretical framework that endeavor to ‘make sense of’ those ideas, and relevant literature speaking to their significance. The links between these issues and ‘results’ surfaced more clearly throughout the process of writing the chapters (chapters five and six) presenting this analysis.

3.3.2.5 Step 5: summarizing the thematic networks

The penultimate step in Attride-Sterling’s thematic network analysis involved summarizing the distinguishing elements of each thematic network. In this step I paid particular attention to the discursive practices interviewees used in discussing OVC initiatives in Uganda, and highlighted the varying roles, responsibilities, and influences of diverse actors involved in these initiatives. I analyzed the thematic networks (through a Foucaultian lens) and present them as research findings in chapters five and six. The following are brief summaries of each of the thematic networks I constructed, beginning with interviewees’ personal experiences and appraisals of OVC care in Uganda, transitioning to more abstract ideas regarding the factors influencing this context, and ending with evidence of resistance to these influences.

(1) Experiences and appraisals of OVC care in Uganda
The first thematic network outlines respondents’ experiences of OVC initiatives in Uganda and the setting within which these initiatives occur. One defining characteristic of this network is their experiences of what they described as “dancing to someone else’s tune”. Interviewees reported frequently adapting and creating their programmes and projects in order to concede to donor conditions and requests. This begins to make apparent NGOs’ and the GOU’s often subjugated position in relation to donors, to whom they are ultimately accountable, and whose bottom line must be prioritized over the needs of those the NGOs or GOU seek to serve. I present this network together with networks #2 and #3 in chapter five.

(2) Ugandan government role and initiatives

The second network focuses on the involvement of the GOU in relation to the OVC situation in Uganda. In chapter five I highlight the gap between policy development and implementation as the major shortcoming of the Ugandan government in relation to this issue.

(3) Foreign influences on OVC initiatives in Uganda

This section looks at the influences of foreign involvement in OVC initiatives in Uganda through NGOs of all types. Foreign funding is the mainstay of services provided for OVC, regardless of the origin of the NGO (i.e. international NGOs headquartered and also operating outside of Uganda or local NGOs founded and operated exclusively within Uganda). This network considers foreign involvement in financing NGOs involved with OVC. I analyze this network and present it together with networks #1 and #2 in chapters five and six.

(4) Discursive framings of OVC initiatives

This network examines the discursive practices of representatives of locally- and foreign-founded NGOs in relation to their programmes and projects, and the “beneficiaries” they intend to affect with their services. The data reveal an extensive use of vaguely-defined and varyingly interpreted terms prevalent in mainstream development discourse. In chapter six, I analyze this finding in light of these NGO representatives’ awareness (or lack thereof) about the value of such terms in garnering attention, respect, and support internationally. This addresses the second research question about the influences of the discursive practices of international donor agencies
in shaping the practices of organizations and government sectors involved in OVC-focused efforts.

(5) Resisting the dominant paradigm; optimism in the face of challenges

The fifth network uncovers some optimistic assessments (on the part of representatives from a range of NGOs) of OVC initiatives in Uganda. Interviewees provide multiple examples of resisting the inequitable nature of their relations with donors, and offer suggestions for addressing the challenges mentioned in the previous sections, which I present in chapters six and seven.

3.3.2.6 Step 6: interpreting patterns

The last step in Attride-Stirling’s thematic network analysis involved exploring the deductions made in the network summaries in conjunction with the research questions and Foucaultian perspective used to frame the study. This process formed the foundation for the research findings presented in chapters five and six, as indicated above.

3.4 Researcher positionality

Throughout the research process, I was repeatedly confronted with my privileged position as a white Western researcher in a ‘developing’-country setting. It was important for me to acknowledge the inherently political nature of my interactions with the interviewee groups in Uganda and to shed any misguided assumptions on my own part about my encounter with these individuals as occurring “on a level playing field” (Kapoor 2008: 45).

For example, one representative of a locally-founded NGO viewed me as a possible means of connecting to other Westerners who may be in a position to assist financially in the care of orphans in his private home. Another foreign director of a locally-operated NGO openly acknowledged the ‘marketing’ of NGOs that inherently occurs through the creation of new connections or the sharing of information about NGO activities, and spoke to me on those terms. These examples reveal the backdrop of a colonial history that plays into the power dynamics between a middle-class, white Westerner, and an individual from a post-colonial setting. Counteracting these power relations, however, was (most) interviewees’ positions as directors or
high-level employees of NGOs or government agencies, and my status as a (university) student. In most instances, this seemed to neutralize the inequity in our relationship.

Based on previous experience in this setting and in anticipation of NGO representatives’ efforts to portray their work favorably as a form of marketing their work to me as a potential funding source (as discussed in chapters five and six), I shaped my study to capitalize on such interactions. I specifically framed the research questions using a Foucaultian lens not in pursuit of a ‘truth’ about the activities carried out by NGOs in comparison to what they say they do, but rather to consider the discourses interviewees use in interactions with individuals they may deem potentially helpful in furthering their cause. Foucault’s work on governmentality (which frames this study) is not a general theory of government that can or should be widely applied (Rose 1999). It is rather an ethos with which to inquire about the ‘history of the present’. In accordance with prominent Foucaultian scholar Nikolas Rose, I aim for a relationship with Foucault’s work that is “less concerned with being faithful to a source of authority than with working within a certain ethos of enquiry” (1999: 5).

Moreover, as a Western researcher seeking to produce knowledge about relations in and affecting developing countries, in my presentation of the research findings I have tried to be particularly cautious about further contributing to imperialist relations of power. Critics have warned that attempts by Western university researchers to ‘collect data’ in the developing world may reflect Western imperialist methods that also seek to transform ‘raw facts’ retrieved in the ‘field’ into ‘knowledge’ through theoretical engagement (Kapoor 2008). These considerations have required of me a continuously reflexive process about my positionality as a researcher throughout the research process, including data analysis and dissemination. This has underscored the need for transparency about the data analysis process and how I work with the material (verbal and textual) provided to me by the interviewees, so as not to create any confusion about what they said or how I have interpreted their words through theoretical analysis.

### 3.5 Remarks on limitations, ethics, and data handling

#### 3.5.1 Limitations and biases of the research methods

The methods I use in this study reflect the theoretical approach framing the research and the influence of logistical and organizational limitations. Notable limitations and potential biases
arose in the selection of the study site. First, although I settled on Kampala District as the primary study site because of its situation as home to the largest concentration of NGO headquarters in Uganda, I initially felt it was important to also include two rural districts in this study to offset the potential urban bias of focusing exclusively on this urban district. Upon reconsideration, I did not include two rural districts, although there were reasons to suggest I should: The vast majority (87%) of Uganda’s population lives in rural areas (UNICEF 2013a), implying that sampling from an urban centre that represents only 13% of the population limits the generalizability of study findings. This was a concern in the development of my study plan, particularly given differences between extended family and kin relations in rural versus urban areas. In my preliminary research, I discovered that although participating NGOs were headquartered in an urban district, most provide services to communities throughout rural Uganda (see appendix 2 for a list of districts targeted by participating NGOs). As such, my early concerns about an urban bias in terms of NGO service provision appear to be unwarranted.

Second, my focus on discourse and discursive practices in this study in lieu of other elements that may influence and reflect relations of power (i.e. funding patterns) may have led me to exclude several influential and valid factors contributing to the character of OVC initiatives in Uganda. However, moving away from the preponderance of analyses of funding practices and the like opened up a wider discussion of the intricacies of donor practices that enabled an analysis of discursive influences, not strictly those of money and power in a conventional sense.

Finally, some may view my application of a Foucaultian lens to this research as a limitation, particularly given his arguably Eurocentric perspective that excludes ‘fragmented’ states such as Uganda. I addressed these limitations in chapter two.

3.5.2 Ethical considerations

Efforts to address ethical sensitivities involved particular care around interviewee privacy and anonymity in data collection and data reporting, as well as the manner in which I dealt and

---

14 Geoff Foster (2000) suggests that extended family networks are weaker in urban areas, as the frequency of contact between family members is reduced and relations become more defined by economic dependence. Urbanized communities maintain fewer traditional values than their rural counterparts, which contributes to the weakening of the family safety net in urban areas. In this study, evidence of interviewees’ acceptance (and appreciation) of NGO interventions for OVC may thus reflect, in part, this relative weakness in the OVC safety net in urban areas.
continue to deal with the data. In being involved in this study, interviewees may have felt that they were placing themselves in a precarious position in relation to their employer, their loyalty to their place of work (especially government agency or locally- or foreign-founded NGO), or their future relations with other organizations and individuals. In interviews, I asked respondents to relay their experiences and opinions on a range of subjects, which often raised concerns about tensions with other NGOs (in general, as well as with specific organizations), government agencies, or donors. All of this had the potential to jeopardize interviewee relations with other organizations if evidence of their opinions and expressions of experience become public. As such, it was critical for me to maintain the interviewees’ privacy and anonymity to the extent possible. Given the reasonably compact size of the ‘community’ of organizations and agencies involved with OVC in Uganda, however, it is likely that some readers may be able to identify particular organizations based simply on descriptions of those organizations by other interviewees. I have therefore refrained from numbering study interviewees’ comments and ideas throughout the dissertation (and instead rely on general descriptions of comments’ origins) to mask interviewees’ identities. I also have not listed the job titles of the five key informants from government agencies and non-governmental advocacy networks involved in this study, in order to mask their identities. Moreover, while I have endeavored to keep the source of comments about particular organizations confidential, I have been explicit about the naming of particular organizations or institutions that arose, if doing so adds context or credibility to the information provided. That is, I have not named the individual who spoke of a particular organization, but I have named the organization of which the individual spoke.

My efforts towards addressing ethical sensitivities were substantiated a priori by ethics approval that I obtained from: the University of Toronto’s Health Science Research Ethics Board, Makerere University School of Public Health, and Uganda National Council for Science and Technology (Office of the President of Uganda) (see appendix 9).

I kept identifiers such as interviewee or organization names separate from audiorecordings and transcripts of interviews in order to protect interviewee privacy. Because critically reporting detailed information regarding the provision of support and services to OVC can have negative repercussions for local NGO directors as well as civil servants, I am not divulging names or revealing descriptors in any reports, presentations, or final documents that ensue from the study.
I am keeping a record of the name-transcript associations but will not disclose this information to anyone other than my academic advisors.

3.5.2.1 Data handling

I used an encrypted date/site/interviewee type identifier to file audiorecordings of interviews and field notes taken throughout the study period. I kept all records on my person during research days and transferred them onto my personal computer at the end of each day. All stored electronic files (computer, USB drive, voice recorder etc.) are password protected and only I have access to them. I stored all hand-written files in a locked cabinet at my place of residence in Kampala, and currently store them in a locked cabinet in my home. To ensure against loss of data, I made duplicates of all new materials/data during data collection on a daily basis, and store(d) and handle(d) these according to the same methods. In addition, I am saving all files online through a secure, online storage location, ‘Drop Box’. Five years after completing this dissertation, I will remove all identifying markers from digital and electronic recordings and transcripts, and will destroy all signed consent forms. These precautions are in accordance with the ethics approvals I obtained.

3.5.3 Knowledge transfer

I intend to disseminate the findings of this study to a number of audiences, including activists and those involved in OVC initiatives in Uganda, other actors in a position to influence policy in Uganda, and critical development scholars and researchers focusing on OVC and/or aid in development more broadly. My priority is to bring the findings back to the setting in which the study is based. This will involve a short trip to Uganda in early 2015 to speak at the Makerere University School of Public Health, which graciously provided logistical and scholarly support during my study. I will also make efforts to secure an opportunity to speak at the Ministry of Gender, Labour, and Social Development (which houses, among others, the OVC Secretariat and the National Council for Children) to share my study findings with interested government representatives there. Finally, I intend to visit the National NGO Forum and the Uganda Child Rights NGO Network (UCRNN) to share with them some findings from my research. I will also provide all study interviewees with a brief summary of my main findings and the implications of the study. Beyond that, I will work towards publishing my research findings in peer-reviewed journals in order to reach a broader academic audience, including donors whose practices are
integral to the situation I have analyzed. Throughout, I will endeavor to contribute towards the multiple avenues of resistance to the mainstream development enterprise I outline in *chapters five and six*. 
Chapter 4
Initiatives to Assist OVC in Uganda, 1986 – 2011

4 Introduction

In this chapter, I address the first research question: *In what social and political context did efforts to assist OVC in Uganda emerge and develop, and what have been the dynamics influencing these activities over time?* I demonstrate how the evolution of OVC initiatives in Uganda in the past quarter century illustrates a shift from strong state dependence on civil society organizations (CSOs) to tend to a series of social issues (including OVC) in the 1980s and throughout the 1990s, to more earnest government of Uganda (GOU) efforts to address the OVC issue beginning in the early 2000s. The GOU’s initiatives have remained primarily at the level of coordinating and monitoring the civil society sector in relation to their work with OVC, rather than contributing to initiatives that provide services and support for OVC. I suggest that this has contributed to the heavy influence of foreign donors’ rules and regulations on OVC initiatives in Uganda, which rely on these donors for almost all of their funding.

In order to provide the necessary background for understanding OVC initiatives in Uganda during this period, I trace the historical trajectory of Uganda’s political climate and civil society initiatives in the decades leading up to and including the country’s political independence from British rule in 1962 and Museveni’s claim of the presidency in 1986. I then outline the chronology of Uganda’s government and civil society activities related to OVC over two periods: from 1986 to 2000 and from 2001 to 2011.15 These periods reflect two chapters in efforts to address the situation of OVC in Uganda:

1. 1986 to 2000 marks a period of burgeoning civil society engagement alongside minimal and inconsequential GOU involvement.

2. 2001 to 2011 marks a period of strengthened GOU efforts in regulating civil society initiatives (including those targeting OVC), with continued heavy reliance on civil society and foreign donors for programme implementation and service provision.

---

15 See appendix 10 for a condensed timeline of the key developments in Uganda during these periods.
During the 1980s and early 1990s, local and foreign governments often funded the operating costs of CSOs. This tangentially involved governments in the development efforts in Uganda. Nevertheless, a strong civil society sector bolstered by familial and community support almost single-handedly and aggressively addressed society’s most urgent social and health matters.

The central focus of this chapter involves an exploration of the connections between Museveni’s early years of presidency and the progression of Uganda’s women’s movement in the second half of the 1980s. It was the women’s movement that drew international attention to the country’s OVC situation and was central to the civil society initiatives that ensued. I discuss both GOU and civil society involvement with OVC issues throughout the 1990s, and then turn to the emergence of GOU engagement with OVC affairs in the early 2000s. At this time, the GOU had started to prioritize monitoring and coordinating civil society actors providing OVC services. I then examine civil society involvement with OVC starting in the year 2001. The narrative ends in 2011, when the interviews for this study took place. This chapter sets the stage for the subsequent two chapters in which I integrate the historical narrative of this chapter with analysis of my study findings.

4.1 Historical background

4.1.1 Precursors to late 20th and early 21st century initiatives focused on OVC in Uganda

In 1893, the Imperial British East Africa Company negotiated transfer of territorial administration rights of the Buganda Kingdom to the British Government, making Uganda a protectorate of the British Empire beginning in 1894, which it remained until independence from Britain in 1962. The 1894 establishment of the Uganda Protectorate extended beyond the Buganda borders to cover the area roughly corresponding with present-day Uganda. In contrast to colonies like neighbouring Kenya, Uganda was able to retain some of the character of its late-nineteenth century African society as well as a level of social self-government as a protectorate that colonies could not. Its status as a protectorate respected the significance of kingdoms among

---

16 This involved, for instance, maintaining kingdoms such as the Kabaka – king of the large Bantu ethnic group, the Baganda – which allowed them to secure land.
the Buganda, and allowed them to maintain their kingdoms and chieftainships, through which the British government exercised administrative control.

Starting in 1900, Uganda experienced an unrivaled epidemic of trypanosomiasis (sleeping sickness), which lasted for two decades. The response to the epidemic, which was the major public health crisis of the time, became the most potent illustration of public health governance and the role of health and medicine among colonial relations during the protectorate period. The trypanosomiasis epidemic was due to a range of factors including the disruption of colonialism, taxation systems causing labourers to relocate, reduced livestock populations due to a rinderpest outbreak, and the failure of government to take concerted action (Berrang-Ford et al. 2006). In finding and developing methods to control and treat the disease, European scientists and doctors not only provided medical services but also transposed their beliefs about European superiority (scientifically, technologically, and racially) and practiced a form of colonial medicine in Africa that was as much oppressive as it was helpful (Neill 2012). The importance of this epidemic to European colonial conquest of sub-Saharan Africa attracted considerable attention among researchers and politicians.

The outbreak, which was focused particularly in the Buganda region around Lake Victoria and its drainage rivers, killed an estimated 250,000 people, representing one-third of the region’s population at the time (Fèvre et al. 2004). In 1908 the protectorate government evacuated inhabitants within 24 kilometres of the affected lakeshore area and enacted a series of repressive measures in an effort to stem the rate of transmission (Berrang-Ford et al. 2006). Led by the Governor of Uganda, Hesketh Bell, the protectorate government worked through local leaders in these efforts. This represented the kind of ‘indirect rule’ characteristic of the early 1900s in Uganda, wherein governors and administrators worked through “the political structures and social relations of indigenous communities” (Worboys 1994: 92-3). The local people resisted but ultimately succumbed to the evacuation, accepting compensation payments and taking a long period of time to execute the evacuation (ibid.). The protectorate government established detention camps on the Ssese Islands of lake Victoria to isolate those suspected of being infected. There, medical professionals injected most inhabitants with the compound atoxyl (a putative treatment that often caused blindness) and posted soldiers to ensure the sick did not escape (Headrick 2014). Due to “the painful treatment, poor conditions, lack of food, and permanent separation of patients from their families,” these camps were highly unpopular among residents.
The colonial and Eurocentric attitudes about the superiority of European knowledge in the medical domain that characterized the response to the sleeping sickness epidemic continue to infiltrate development activities today, though under the guise of ‘partnerships’ and ‘community-driven development’.

Although largely unsuccessful in preventing the evacuation orders of the protectorate government, locals’ efforts to resist these impositions provide an example of local resistance against the imposition of protectorate rule. More saliently, however, the protectorate government’s administration using indigenous communities and local structures of political and social rule reflects an important distinction between Uganda’s status as a protectorate in comparison to neighbouring colonies. In part because Uganda was a protectorate rather than a colony per se and therefore maintained more local control over administrative governing procedures, civil society developed more than in neighbouring colonies. Indeed, local civil society flourished throughout this period and into independence.

In the first half of the 20th century in Uganda, CSOs emerged in four main categories:

1. Mass-based membership organizations such as peasant co-operatives, trade unions [in the agricultural industry], and other formal civil society associations working to resist colonial monopolization of agricultural trade products and address labour issues such as poor conditions in the workplace.

2. Elite-led membership organizations formed by middle-class Ugandans aggrieving colonial policies [and rallying around issues pertaining to women’s rights, citizenship, voting etc.].

3. Cultural/ethnic-based organizations [for instance, representing the Buganda Kingdom] focused on advancing interests of Churches and Parishes in the country.

4. Welfare and charitable organizations (often church-run) representing the early versions of NGOs as they arose in the decades to follow. (Thue et al. 2002: 11)

Another indicator of a vibrant civil society was the establishment of an independent media, including Uganda’s first newspaper, the Uganda Herald (1918), and other newspapers that
“grappled with issues of colonial governance, exposing the exploitative and oppressive nature of its system” (Thue et al. 2002: 21).

While CSOs experienced a relatively hospitable operating space in protectorate Uganda during the pre-independence period, they were mostly concerned with poverty alleviation, anti-colonialism, and anti-exploitation. Children in general and vulnerable children in particular were barely visible on CSO agendas. In the rare instances where children were noticeable on CSOs’ priority lists, this was only insofar as they showcased widespread poverty and poor health outcomes that plagued the population as a whole.

A notable exception to the limited attention to children’s concerns was the establishment and rapid growth of the child sponsorship model of care for orphaned and abandoned children. This model emerged as early as 1919 with the founding of the Save the Children Fund (SCF) in the United Kingdom (and its counterpart in Geneva established in 1920), an INGO that now comprises 30 member organizations working in 120 countries (see also section 6.2.1.2). From its inception, the child sponsorship model involved individual sponsors (almost exclusively in high-income and some middle-income countries) sending monthly remittances towards the education and in some cases provision of food, clothing, and/or shelter of a child (initially mostly to children in orphanages, and later also to children living with extended family or in other non-residential care settings). This model rapidly gained popularity while remaining essentially unchanged over the subsequent two decades, with other large INGOs following SCF’s lead.17

As Uganda transitioned closer to political independence from Britain, Uganda’s Episcopal Conference (the Catholic Church in Uganda) began efforts to respond to children’s needs at a national level through the formation of the Child Welfare Adoption Society as part of an effort to coordinate social work activities in Catholic childcare institutions throughout the country in

---

17 Among the largest child sponsorship organizations that arose during this period are: Plan USA and Christian Children’s Fund (now ChildFund International), which emerged in 1937 and 1938, respectively; SOS Kinderdorf International (founded in Austria in 1949 in an effort to provide support to children whose families had been devastated in World War II); two deeply religious organizations, Compassion International (in 1952) and World Vision (in 1953), both of which continue to dominate the child sponsorship domain more than half a century later; Food for the Hungry (in 1971); and Children International (in 1980). While these organizations continue to employ the model of child sponsorship as a potent marketing and fundraising tool, over the previous two decades many have been influenced by emerging ‘best aid practices’ and have increasingly focused their programmes and activities on ‘community’ projects and ‘participatory’ approaches, accordingly. I discuss the discourses influencing strategic changes in INGO programme design in chapter six.
1958. In addition to managing and monitoring funds raised for these institutions, the Society traced relatives of abandoned children, placed children in foster families, and made efforts to find adoptive parents for orphaned children (activities it continues to carry out in the present day).

This Church-led effort exemplifies the nature of non-governmental activity during the protectorate period in Uganda, which at the time consisted mainly of humanitarian and missionary programmes, medical services, educational programmes, and evangelism, all of which were led by large churches based in Uganda (Endfield 2006; Dicklitch 1998). The presence of the Catholic Church was strong during this time, with organizations often using government grants intended for educational work through missions for “evangelical, medical, and social work” (Sandgren 2000: 492). This was also a time when ‘purposeful’ child fostering, a notion coined by anthropologists, emerged in Uganda. This is the practice of families taking non-orphaned child relatives into their homes to strengthen kin ties, exchange labour, or teach skills (Oleke et al. 2005).

Deep communal traditions and a strong civil society sector prior to the protectorate era formed the backdrop against which civil society institutions provided an important organizational base for Uganda’s movement towards independence from British rule, which it achieved in 1962.

4.1.1.1 Independence and early post-independence years: limiting civil society mobilization

In 1962, Uganda gained independence from Britain in a relatively smooth process compared to in its East African neighbours: Kenya suffered violent conflict, Tanzania lacked sufficient natural resources with which to establish a strong independent economy, and Zaire (now Democratic Republic of the Congo) descended into chaos upon independence from Belgium. The transition to independence had negative implications for the previously strong civil society sector, as a series of authoritarian governments held a strong grip on society and curtailed anything resembling collective assemblies that they feared may challenge their power.

An alliance between the Uganda People’s Congress (UPC) political party and the monarchist political party Kabaka Yekka won the first post-independence election and formed a government with Ugandan socialist Apolo Milton Obote as Prime Minister. (Obote served as Prime Minister
of Uganda from 1962 to 1966 and President from 1966 to 1971, at which point Idi Amin overthrew him. Obote re-assumed the presidency after Amin was overthrown in 1979, and regained power from 1980 to 1985 through what the opposition claimed was a rigged election.)\(^{18}\) Obote’s term as Prime Minister (1962 – 1966) was characterized by only minor civil society mobilization as Obote feared and repressed opposition politics (Tripp 2004). Obote started out believing in the importance of Uganda’s international image and held that foreign aid would assist in the country’s economic growth. Accordingly, during his second period as President between 1980 and 1985, Obote implemented IMF advice to devalue the Ugandan shilling by 100%, assist cash crop exportation, and encourage democracy by delaying plans to re-establish one-party rule.

Uganda’s series of post-colonial presidents (Obote, Amin, Museveni) reflected contrasting ideologies in relation to the Cold War: Obote tried to introduce a socialist economy, briefly receiving military support from the Soviet Union in 1969 while maintaining ties with the West; Amin distanced himself from the West by flirting with the Soviet Union in foreign policy while trying to indigenize capitalism; and Museveni pushed for unrestricted capitalism at home in conjunction with pro-Western foreign policy (Mazrui 2009).

Despite Obote’s low prioritization of children on his national Agenda, in 1963 Uganda’s Parliament took a decisive, although limited, step towards formalizing state support of children through its enactment of the Probation Act. This Act created the role of Probation Officers (POs), tasked with the responsibility of protecting orphaned children as wards of the state (Uganda Legal Information Institute 2013a).\(^{19}\) POs faced great challenges in meeting these responsibilities, given the tense political climate of these early post-independence years, which only grew more tense as the years progressed.

\(^{18}\) In Uganda, the Prime Minister is responsible for chairing the Cabinet of Uganda, while the President is the effective head of government. Upon independence from Britain in 1962, Uganda established the post of Prime Minister. Obote held this position until 1966, when he suspended the Constitution and abolished the post of Prime Minister, declaring himself as President. Only in 1980 was the post of Prime Minister reestablished while the post of President remained.

\(^{19}\) To this day, POs continue to play a central role in managing the cases of children who become wards of the State, yet their capacity to fulfill this role remains limited and threatened by insufficient funding and government resources.
4.1.1.2 Late 1960s and 1970s: economic collapse, conflict, growing numbers of OVC, and further limits to CSOs

Starting in 1966, Uganda underwent a twenty-year period of “politically inspired violence” (Tripp 2004: 4) causing mass internal displacement, more than 800,000 deaths (ibid.), and the shattering of the country’s economy, which had been heavily reliant on cotton as a cash crop since the early 1900s (Baffes 2009). It was a period of “a total breakdown of law and order” (Thue et al. 2002: 21) in Uganda. This was also a time of substantial expansion of the state’s role in social affairs, and “the subjugation of independent civil society organization activity by a series of authoritarian regimes” (Nyangabyaki et al. 2004: 140). Both Amin’s and Obote’s dictatorships essentially abridged the existence of CSOs. Freedom of the press and voluntary associations were drastically weakened, and the government paid little or no attention to the few civil society actors (e.g., trade unions, cooperative societies) in their processes of political and socio-economic policy making (Thue et al. 2002).

Despite this challenging political climate during these early post-independence years, NGOs and community groups developed activities – small and large – to support and care for children affected by parental death, disability, and extreme poverty. This continued throughout the 1970s, when Uganda experienced its “first major wave of orphans” (Oleke et al. 2005: 2630) due mostly to politically inspired civil violence, and into the early 1980s when the numbers of orphans continued to rise.

4.1.1.3 Early 1980s: civil conflict, growth in HIV and AIDS, OVC, and non-governmental initiatives

Up until the 1970s, Uganda had relied heavily on cotton farming as a main cash crop (particularly in northern and eastern regions, but also throughout the country). Beginning in the early 1980s, dramatic falls in prices for raw materials (including cotton and coffee) combined with political instability, high prices resulting from World Bank and IMF structural adjustment programmes (SAPs) brought in by Obote, and poor economic and social policy choices

20 As I outline more thoroughly in section 4.3.1.1, the GOU was the first to officially identify the problem of orphans in the country. After the Tanzanian war of 1979, the GOU counted the number of deceased veterans’ widows and offspring with the hopes of providing school fees and other assistance. Although the systematic delivery of assistance was limited because of economic strain, this enumeration remains in public consciousness as an initial attempt to publicly identify orphans as a ‘problem’ in Uganda (Hunter 1990).
introduced by Amin led to drastic reductions in Uganda’s cotton output, with detrimental effects on its economy (Baffes 2009; Oleke et al. 2005). Families had to find alternative income sources, such as selling food crops intended for their own consumption, which dramatically reduced their household food reserves. These conditions combined to create an economically difficult environment and provided a suitable climate for the rapid spread of HIV as many girls and women were compelled to exchange sex for food, housing, and other daily needs. The epidemic accelerated the magnitude of OVC numbers towards crisis proportions, which had already begun to climb due to civil strife (Oleke et al. 2005).

Adding to the effects of Uganda’s years of government-led political persecution and armed struggles during the 1970s, widespread violence and bloodshed during the National Resistance Army’s (NRA) guerrilla war waged against Obote’s government took hold in the early 1980s (1981 – 1986). Believing the elections leading to Obote’s claim of presidency to be rigged, Museveni’s NRA and a number of other military groups waged a guerrilla war against Obote’s UPC party. In 1983, Obote’s military expedition “Operation Bonanza” killed tens of thousands of people and led to widespread displacement among the population (Doom and Vlassenroot 1999). Regional tensions escalated as northern Ugandans were blamed for supporting Obote’s action. In all, an estimated 100,000 to 500,000 people died during the fighting between the guerillas and Obote’s Uganda National Liberation Army during the early 1980s (US Central Intelligence Agency 2014).

Compounded by the breakdown of social services during the war, Uganda experienced unparalleled HIV infection rates, which in the 1980s made the country a popular site for intensive HIV research in the pandemic’s early years. As the number of orphaned children due to the epidemic increased, NGOs played a critical role in leading efforts to ease the burden of orphanhood on children, families, and communities. Still building on the work of large churches – as had been commonplace during the 1950s prior to independence – a growing local NGO sector continued to fill the social services gap left by the government (Barr et al. 2005). The political instability and need for humanitarian assistance began to make space for the proliferation of international relief agencies (Okuonzi and Macrae 1995). A growing number of new local NGOs, encouraged by the relatively “more tolerant [Obote] regime” (Nyangabyaki et al. 2004: 140) of this period joined forces with the protectorate institutions that had survived and provided services during the earlier years of independence (in the 1960s and 1970s).
As only minimal amounts of government revenue were drawn from the local economy during the 1980s, the GOU relied on donor aid for almost 70 percent of its functioning costs (Fowler 1992). Between 1980 and 1990, Uganda experienced five times more growth in aid to NGOs from high-income countries than other low- and middle-income countries, most of which are African. This is evidence of the changing strategies that donors took to provide financial support directly to NGOs rather than what the donors perceived to be incompetent national governments.

Funded predominantly by bi- and multi-lateral international actors and financial institutions (that simultaneously pushed for state withdrawal from the social sector) (Kamat 2004), throughout the 1980s NGO efforts focused on relief and emergency aid (Okuonzi and Macrae 1995). These efforts consisted primarily of selective and vertical approaches that narrowly addressed individual health issues through technical solutions, rather than integrating social elements of health issues and focusing on strengthening health systems more comprehensively. Despite an ever-growing number of NGOs and external donors (Okuonzi and Macrae 1995) such as USAID and the World Bank, which “increasingly channeled aid to the health sector in poor countries through NGOs” (Pfeiffer 2003: 725), the GOU’s Ministry of Health and religious missionaries were heavily involved in OVC issues. When the country had another change in presidency again in 1986, OVC continued to be low on the political agenda and civil society experienced renewed interest on behalf of the government, which needed help in rebuilding the country and introduced a series of restructuring policies that limited the states’ role in providing social services.

4.1.1.4 1986: President Museveni’s social and economic policies

By 22 January 1986, following growing criticisms of Obote’s violent regime (that Amnesty International had named as responsible for at least 300,000 civilian deaths) and the concomitant increased support for Yoweri Kaguta Museveni’s rebel force, Museveni’s rebel troops gained ground and Obote’s government staff fled en masse. On 25 January, Museveni conquered Kampala with the help of the roughly 10,000 male, female, and child soldiers under his command (Schubert 2006). The next day, the NRA declared victory, and on 29 January Museveni was sworn in as president. Museveni’s acquisition of power marked a turning point in Uganda’s political trajectory, signaling the commencement of law and order, and a growing
respect for human rights. It also contributed to the strengthening of Uganda’s civil society sector. Museveni’s claim of the presidency was the first time in post-colonial Africa that a rebel movement gained military victory and then assumed legitimate political power without considerable external support (Schubert 2006).

Upon assuming his new role as President of Uganda, Museveni faced the considerable challenge of social, economic, and infrastructure reconstruction. For him, rural wellbeing in the context of pro-business policies was a high priority. This included increasing water supplies particularly in rural areas (i.e. drilling wells, protecting springs, replacing and repairing water pumps, and training community workers to oversee water systems), sewage systems in small towns, and housing projects to deal with population growth (which faced challenges of limited investment funds and expensive imported construction materials). Other main priorities included reopening sugar, coffee, textile, and cement industries, increasing access to credit, improving transportation facilities, and using financial assistance from Austria, Britain, Finland, and the Netherlands, improving building materials for housing in rural areas (Boyd 1989). At this point in the late 1980s, OVC had not made it onto Museveni’s long list of economic reconstruction priorities.

Against the backdrop of the economically troubled years of early post-colonialism, proponents of the World Bank and IMF neoliberal SAPs of privatization and cutting social spending welcomed Museveni’s promotion of business and non-interference with private property ownership. The

21 Recent events – particularly the February 2014 anti-gay legislation that Museveni signed into law that constricted the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) individuals and threatened life imprisonment for contraventions of this law – certainly place into question any claims of Museveni’s respect for human rights. At the time of his claim of the Presidency in 1986, however, he represented a refreshing move towards a respect for human rights not witnessed in the governments of his post-colonial dictatorial predecessors Obote and Amin.

22 International observers praised Museveni for aggressively combating hyperinflation and engaging in economic reforms and economic liberalization in all sectors. Devaluation of the Ugandan shilling resulted in currency stabilization in 1993. Inflation dropped steeply, and the 1990s saw drastic reductions in levels of poverty (from 56% to 35% between 1992 and 2000) (Tripp 2004). Despite these economic developments, poverty continues to be a primary concern as poverty rates began to increase again, and wealth continued to be disproportionately distributed in favour of the southern part of the country. Many international observers (foreign correspondents, diplomats, academics) acclaimed Museveni as “a new-style African leader, to be emulated in his almost single-minded pursuit of economic development, fiscal discipline, and the free market” (ibid.: 3) and appreciated his desire to “bring African solutions to African problems by making Uganda a ‘beacon of hope’ in an otherwise unstable region” (ibid.). Museveni’s comparatively aggressive approach to HIV and AIDS also won him many admirers. Lukewarm admirers of Museveni’s regime applauded his move towards a new democracy, and others went so far as to hail Uganda as a model of power reconfiguration in Africa during this period because of its enthusiastic adoption of SAPs, the introduction of political liberalization, the emphasis on human rights and local popular participation, the securing of state cohesion through military without overtly oppressive force, and the benefits from considerable
introduction of SAPs and other liberal economic policies that emphasized government downsizing, privatization of services, and overall re-structuring, was a key development that diminished the role of the state and provided space for civil society in previously unreachable areas (Thue et al. 2002).

Museveni’s approach to rebuilding the country involved the introduction of economic recovery programmes in conjunction with the IMF, the World Bank, and bilateral donors (Thue et al. 2002). Following a classic model of neoliberalism, the National Resistance Movement (NRM) (Uganda’s ruling political organization) undertook trade liberalizations, lifted previously controlled producer prices on crops for export, liberalized investment laws to encourage foreign investment, and opened up capital markets (Tripp 2004). These initiatives reflected the regime’s efforts towards providing relative stability and economic growth and putting an end to government corruption as part of a Ten-Point Programme of political reform, which ultimately receded into obscurity (Nyeko and Lucima 2002). The neoliberal imperative to reduce government involvement in service provision also contributed to a renewed importance of the civil society sector to address social issues throughout the 1980s and 1990s, and became a central component of the OVC response in Uganda.

4.2 The emergence of focused OVC initiatives, 1986 – 2000

The NRM’s restructuring in the late 1980s exacerbated the problem of social services availability in Uganda. In an effort to come to terms with the state’s reluctance to provide sufficient public services, a rapidly growing civil society emerged (Thue et al. 2002). Concurrently, a growing number of CSOs – almost doubling in number in the late 1980s and into the 1990s to roughly development aid. As scholars focused heavily on questions of economic recovery “and the political reordering of Uganda” (Schubert 2006: 96), however, displacement and violence continued. Since 1987, conflict between the government and the militant Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA) compounded experiences of political violence in Uganda’s north. Rebel activity led to thousands of deaths and major (estimated 1.6 million people) internal civilian displacement, many entering IDPs (Internally Displaced People’s camps). 2005 estimates suggest almost 40% of population of Lira District internally displaced (Oleke et al. 2005). For many Ugandans, these appraisals of Uganda’s political and economic state were too sanguine. For those non-elites lacking protection from the government’s unilateral authority, the (largely foreign) idea of Uganda as a haven of stability, democracy, and economic progress is inaccurate and deceptive. The reality was somewhere in between these two contrasts: Uganda in fact served as a barometer for the transformation in authoritarian regimes in Africa, “for which the rules changed to make later regimes differ markedly from earlier ones” (Tripp 2004: 4).
750 active HIV and/or AIDS-focused organizations in Uganda – worked actively to address the unparalleled HIV rates in the country, which had reached roughly 15% of the Ugandan population (Muhangi 2004). At this point in the late 1980s and then throughout the 1990s, Uganda effectively became a “honey pot” (Webb 2004: 22) for donors seeking to address the unrelenting AIDS epidemic. NGOs focusing on issues related to poverty, debt, hunger, and land (i.e., rallying – unsuccessfully – for a clause in the 1998 Land Act that would allow spousal co-ownership of land) grew in number and geographical reach. And, importantly for efforts to address the situation of OVC, women’s organizations began to proliferate (Tripp 2004).

4.2.1 The centrality of Uganda’s women’s movement in promoting OVC initiatives

The steady increase of women’s organizations in Uganda during the late 1980s paralleled a movement advocating female visibility in politics and civil society taking place in other low- and middle-income countries. It also coincided with growing recognition on the part of international donors of the value of women’s associations in addressing social development concerns (Boyd 1989; Berger 2013). Concurrently, international agencies such as the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) increasingly emphasized the importance of women’s health, particularly as it relates to child-bearing; that is, maternal mortality, maternal morbidity, and safe motherhood (McCarthy 2002; UNICEF 2013b).

Although the African women’s movement had been gaining momentum throughout the continent for several decades prior to the mid-1990s (Berger 2013), Uganda lagged behind: during the breakdown of law and order and the curtailing of CSOs during Amin’s rule, the government had banned virtually all women’s independent organizations.23

23 Early women’s organizations in the late 1800s and early 1900s were led by White western women and rarely integrated the experiences and voices of Black Africans into their efforts. Not until post-World War II did a new form of transnational women’s groups include African women, spurred by the UN’s emphasis on establishing organizations of international scope alongside efforts to strengthen civil society through community development, support of local women’s organizations, and initiatives for social welfare (Berger 2013). Women’s central role in independence struggles across the continent and in the UN’s 1958 Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) also provided a platform for the formation of African women’s organizations prior to the Western European and North American feminist movements of the 1960s and 1970s, and lay the foundation for the UN’s declaration of the Decade for Women in 1975 and the Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 1979 (entered into force in 1981, Uganda signed without reservations in 1985). The United Nations thus provided a venue for networking among women’s groups in Africa before the movement took off in North America and Western Europe.
Immediately after Museveni claimed the presidency, women’s rights organizations (which viewed Museveni’s government as more responsive to their cause than previous governments) became actively engaged in public lobbying (including representatives of these organizations visiting the President’s office), demanding political appointments for women, a ministry for women, a women’s desk in every ministry, and female representation in local government at all levels (Tripp 2001). During their visit to the President’s office, organization members actively reminded NRM members of their advocacy for women prior to the NRM’s acquisition of power. The GOU rewarded these organizations’ efforts by immediately adopting many of their recommendations. For example, the government appointed nine female ministers, and by the year 2000, 53 of the 276 members of parliament were women, with 39 seats in parliament designated for women (ibid.). Many of these gains were illusory. Women’s political gains only become firmly established after 1997, with the passage of the Local Government Act that specified that one-third of local government council membership must consist of women, and stipulated a minimum number of female appointees on many local government statutory committees and commissions (Johnson et al. 2003).

Feminist scholars debate whether Museveni’s support for women was genuine. Most observers attribute the growth in Uganda’s women’s movement during the late 1980s to Museveni’s openness to and support of women’s involvement and activism in all sectors of public and political life, and his regime’s affirmative action policies and support of women’s mobilization (Johnson et al. 2003). Ugandan women traditionally constituted a significant support group and voting contingent for the NRM, and also supported the NRA as army soldiers or through supplying food and providing intelligence information the army required for strategic planning (Boyd 1989). Women positively received the NRM’s supportive stance on the advancement of women in education, politics, and economics upon its acquisition of power. Many were

24 Critics debate the extent to which the NRM was genuinely open to and supportive of women’s groups and organizations in Uganda, with some concerned the NRM was merely co-opting women’s organizations and female leaders, and others suggesting the women’s movement was an NRM creation. Tripp (2001) argues that women have certainly been a part of the NRM’s agenda (which views female empowerment as a means of garnering political support). She nevertheless contends that although the NRM regime has used the women’s movement for its own purposes, the women’s movement has been able to use the political space provided through Museveni’s governance to its advantage. In comparison to experiences in other African and previous Ugandan regimes, the Ugandan women’s movement of the 1980s/1990s claimed comparably more autonomy from the state, a feature which has been central to the movement’s success.
encouraged by Museveni’s observation regarding the universality of women’s subordination and his vow to encourage the legitimization (both politically and socio-economically) of women’s role in development (Boyd 1989).

The authenticity of the NRM’s stance towards women did not go unquestioned, however. Indeed, critics suggest that Museveni’s support of the women’s movement was based mostly on women’s long-standing backing of the NRM, which forced Museveni to tolerate the women’s movement despite conflicting goals among women’s groups and Museveni’s regime, and means of achieving them. Uganda’s women’s movement enthusiastically took advantage of the political space that his semi-authoritarian rule presented to non-state actors (Tripp 2001).²⁵ The women’s movement, building on the underground work it had been doing prior to the NRM’s acquisition of power, quickly became particularly active and well coordinated in Uganda relative to other African countries: it was arguably the best coordinated sector of the country’s civil society, and one of the most effective such movements across the continent.²⁶

By the late 1980s, within Uganda and around the world, women’s organizations had shifted away from a concentrated focus on women’s equity under the law to focus on culture, children, women’s rights, gender equity, development, as well as the advancement of women’s status in political, economic, legal, and social realms (Berger 2013). In Uganda, women’s organizations

---

²⁵ Uganda is no exception to the rule that most leaders undertook political reforms only so far as they deemed necessary to satisfy domestic pressures and international donors (Tripp 2004). In the 1990s, many African countries transitioned towards electoral democratization yet remained essentially authoritarian, only incorporating to greater and lesser degrees some democratic innovations. These regimes were markedly different from earlier post-independence autocracies. Uganda offers an example of the softening of authoritarianism after 1986 (under Museveni’s rule) when compared to his post-colonial predecessors, Amin and Obote. During the transition to electoral democratization in Africa in the 1990s, Uganda essentially remained authoritarian, with some incorporation of democratic innovations, making it semi-authoritarian rather than purely democratic. Suggesting there was no overt oppression in Uganda at the time negates the reality of continued free speech and rights of association violations occurring at the time. Nevertheless, focusing only on these limits misses the important changes in the behaviour of autocratic African rules that occurred since the early 1990s.

²⁶ Throughout the 1980s and early 1990s, Uganda’s women’s movement made considerable progress in affecting political and social life. From virtually zero visibility for women in politics pre-1986, Uganda transitioned to a country with women taking on key roles in all levels of government, including a female vice-president, and securing 25% female representation in parliament and one third of local level governance (Johnson et al. 2003). In the mid-1990s, the scope of the NRM’s leadership base began to shrink, and in the late 1990s and early 2000s, women’s support for the NRM waned following Museveni’s removal of support for the amendment of the 1998 Land Act (which would allow spouses to co-own land). Women’s growing dissatisfaction with Museveni’s regime resulted in some women’s organizations supporting opposition parties. In return, Museveni retaliated on women’s organizations (as well as other NGOs and the media) by subjecting them to government restrictions (i.e., closing or threatening to close workshops and complicating the registration process) (Tripp 2004).
were especially vocal around areas of legislation concerning “inheritance and property rights, domestic violence, rape, disabled women’s rights, female genital cutting, and numerous other issues affecting women and other politically marginalized people” (Tripp 2004: 13). The outspoken voices of women in Uganda were instrumental in enabling them to take on the heretofore under-recognized problem of OVC.

4.2.1.1 Fostering initiatives to assist OVC

In the late 1980s, the culmination of years of civil strife, authoritarian rule, and a growing AIDS epidemic that decimated large segments of the adult population resulted in a ballooning of the number of orphaned children (defined as children with at least one deceased parent) to over one million, or almost 12 percent of all children under 18 years of age in Uganda: according to the 1991 population and housing census there were 1,037,228 orphaned children (Republic of Uganda 1995). Around the same time, most of the estimated 3,000 child soldiers – previously hidden from public consciousness as they served in remote regions of the country – came out of the bushes and flooded urban areas. The child soldiers’ migration into the cities (primarily into the capital Kampala, but also to Masaka and Jinja) increased their visibility, forcing public recognition of the atrocities inflicted on children during the war. While the NRA had paid little attention to child soldiers prior to 1986, their visibility in Kampala solicited criticism from abroad, and their physical presence became an important political problem for Museveni’s new government (Schubert 2006). Concomitantly, the Ugandan women’s movement’s interest in issues affecting traditionally disadvantaged segments of society increasingly focused on child welfare, specifically the welfare of children who were displaced, abandoned, parentless, or otherwise destitute as a consequence of civil strife or the rising death toll from the AIDS epidemic (Boyd 1989).

27 Questionnaires from the previous housing census in 1980 were lost, hence there is no earlier estimate from this source.

28 According to a 1990 Save the Children estimate, this figure was somewhere between 620,000 and 1.2 million orphaned children (Hunter 1990), the discrepancy in numbers due to irregularities in the precise definition of orphan. Until 1991, the definition of orphan referred to children up to the age of 15. In 1991, the Uganda census increased this age to 18, reflecting the Ugandan law defining persons below 18 years as children or minors. This extended definition of orphan may account for a part of the increase in orphan numbers during this period.

29 According to Museveni’s government, in June 1986 children constituted 25-30% of the NRA’s soldiers, although the age limit used to define ‘child’ soldier in this estimate is unclear (Schubert 2006).
The Ugandan women’s movement’s growing interest in child welfare came to centre stage when, in 1986, First Lady Janet Museveni publicly announced her support for the newly formed Uganda Women’s Efforts to Save Orphans (UWESO) organization. UWESO was one of the first NGOs officially formed after Museveni’s rise to presidency, founded by a group of Ugandan women (while in exile in Sweden) to provide relief for children whose parents had died of AIDS-related illness or violence (the latter primarily in northern Uganda). Over the years, UWESO shifted away from relief services to development programmes that reflected a growing global trend towards sustainability in development efforts. In the late 1990s, UWESO programmes focused on improving the wellbeing of OVC by maximizing the sustainability of UWESO initiatives through providing basic needs, sponsoring beyond primary to secondary and vocational training, and emphasizing families’ self-reliance, particularly through supporting women in IGAs. UWESO prides itself on its strong partnerships with a variety of donor agencies, government, CSOs, and communities.

UWESO now employs what it refers to as a “family-targeted approach” (as opposed to clinic- or community-based approach) to assist OVC. This involves providing household-level moral support, vocational training, and encouraging ‘beneficiaries’ to initiate small businesses or find employment. The organization also provides some health- and education-related services directly to vulnerable children. UWESO receives funding from USAID, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA), the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and individual donors. To date, it maintains a position among the most prominent OVC organizations in Uganda (UWESO 2013).

Mrs. Museveni’s patronage of this organization represented a decisive moment in the trajectory of Uganda’s women’s movement (Boyd 1989), and came to have considerable implications for the country’s efforts to address the situation of OVC in the years that followed.30 Spurred on by

30 Mrs. Museveni’s political backing of UWESO was a patronage that reflected the early days of politicians’ wives becoming patrons of NGOs instead of only large umbrella or mass women’s organizations. Predating this were most notably Argentine First Lady Eva Perón’s establishment of the Eva Perón Foundation for orphans and homeless women (1948-1955) alongside her support of women’s suffrage and creation of the first large female political party in Argentina (the Female Peronist Party), and Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis’ position as honorary chairwoman of Plan (Foster Parents Plan Inc. at the time) during its Silver Jubilee in 1962. This trend grew throughout the 1990s.
Mrs. Museveni’s public support of UWESO, local and international newspapers printed (often exaggerated) reports of the numbers of orphans in Uganda. In one instance, reporters claimed that more than half (120,000) of the children in Uganda’s Rakai District (which had particularly high rates of HIV infections and AIDS) were orphans; in another, reporters exaggerated that “40,000 orphans could be found in an area the size of the English city of Manchester” (Hunter 1990: 683). These reports on the tail end of Mrs. Museveni’s publicized patronage of UWESO effectively brought the problem of orphans into the limelight, making it difficult to continue to ignore either domestically or internationally. The magnitude of the orphan ‘problem’ carved out a spot in social consciousness, and international donors began to give the situation of orphans in Uganda their serious attention (ibid.).

4.2.1.2 Orphans in the spotlight

Although growing international recognition of OVC in Uganda in the late 1980s led only to minimal government action, it spurred a flurry of international activity among UN institutions, private agencies, and foreign governments. In 1986, UNICEF conducted a study comparing the circumstances of children in war-torn Luwero district with children in a non-war district, and recommended both institutional and non-institutional care for children orphaned or handicapped as a result of the war (Nalwanga-Sebina and Sengendo 1987). In 1987, following President Museveni’s and UNICEF’s acknowledgment of the problem of orphans that had resulted from the Luwero Triangle war, NGOs removed some children from the area to protect them from extermination and relocated them only after peace had been restored. In part to stem growing public discontent with the lack of government support for OVC, Museveni promised to cover school fees for all orphans resulting from the AIDS epidemic (with no particular mention of children orphaned due to the war), though a weak economy and misplaced prioritization meant that this promise never materialized (Hunter 1990). Instead, Museveni’s new government

31 The GOU first identified orphans as a ‘problem’ in the early 1980s when it enumerated orphans and widows of veterans in order to allocate school fees and other support. Scholars consider this enumeration a benchmark for identifying the situation of orphans in the country as a ‘problem’ (Hunter 1990).

32 The Luwero Triangle refers to seven districts north of Uganda’s capital, Kampala, in which Museveni waged a guerrilla war in 1981 against Milton Obote’s government, ultimately propelling Museveni to political power in 1986.
provided only a handful of boarding schools and access to primary education for the several thousand children who had worked as child soldiers.

In 1989, the World Bank’s Programme for the Alleviation of Poverty and Social Costs of Adjustment (PAPSCA) sent a mission to Kampala, tasked with identifying disadvantaged groups to be compensated for the negative impacts of IMF economic adjustment schemes (World Bank 1990a). Discovering significant needs among all impoverished Ugandans, PAPSCA chose to prioritize orphans as those in most dire need of assistance, and – allegedly recognizing that government would be overburdened with limited resources available to allocate to the compensation project (World Bank 1990a) – urged NGOs to submit proposals to PAPSCA so that it could develop a well-informed plan regarding the financial resources and capacities required from Ugandan institutions as well as NGOs and foreign donors to assist the orphans (Hunter 1990).

Given the lack of reliable data regarding the precise magnitude of the needs of orphans and the concomitant inability to determine the scale of the response required, the child-focused INGO Save the Children Fund (SCF) identified the accurate enumeration of orphans and clear description of their circumstances as the first order of business. Uganda’s Ministry of Relief and Social Rehabilitation then officially commissioned this enumeration using logistical and advisory support from SCF and asking the Administrators in each of the (then) 34 districts to provide a complete list of orphans in their jurisdictions (Hunter 1990; World Bank 1990b).

The results showed a range of orphan figures, from 4.4% (ranging by county from 2% to 7%) of children orphaned in the control district, Hoima, to 12.8% (ranging by county from 10% to 17%) in Rakai District, which was suspected (along with Masaka District) to have the highest proportion of AIDS cases nationwide. Together, these studies helped reveal the magnitude of orphans in Uganda and further cemented the awareness of the situation into public consciousness.

33 The World Bank also viewed the involvement of communities and NGOs in addressing their most urgent problems as a means of enhancing the sustainability and acceptability of Uganda’s Economic Recovery Program (ERP), with positive participatory benefits for Uganda’s recovery efforts (World Bank 1990a).

34 Hoima District was used as a control based on the assumption that it would represent the least number of orphaned children in the country, given that it had the lowest number of AIDS cases nationwide at the time, and had been only minimally affected by war.
While these findings confirmed and provided more accurate information than the 1991 census figures and alerted international donors to the ‘crisis’ proportions of the situation of OVC in Uganda, the GOU only slowly and minimally became involved in formulating cohesive initiatives. Their focus was instead on other national concerns. Through the 1990s the GOU relied heavily on traditional extended family structures and a flourishing civil society sector to carry the bulk of the burden of tending to the needs of OVC.

4.2.2 Feeble government initiatives to address OVC issues

At the height of the orphan ‘crisis’ in Uganda in the early 1990s, the GOU’s political agenda was dominated by health sector reforms (or market reforms in the health sector, as the World Bank termed them) it introduced in 1994, and the issue of OVC found little resonance with the government (Okuonzi 2004). Uganda’s health sector reforms were guided by four cardinal market-based principles that:

1. Made individuals, charities and private organizations responsible for healthcare delivery.
2. Restricted public health sector funding to health promotion and disease prevention.
3. Restricted the central government’s role to formulating policy and providing technical guidance whereas service delivery was to remain the responsibility of the private sector and local authorities.
4. Established the private sector and NGOs as key providers of social and health services. (Okuonzi 2004)

---

35 SCF was not unilaterally supported in its endeavor to systematically enumerate and document the orphan problem in Uganda. The World Bank, for instance, strongly disagreed with the need for enumeration, and refused to provide funding for such an undertaking. Other large NGOs (World Vision, The AIDS Support Organization, and UWESO) similarly resisted involvement with SCF’s documentation process, possibly due to a perceived loss of control to SCF, contending instead that orphans required immediate assistance, and that through provision of this assistance the magnitude of the problem would become apparent (Hunter 1990). Furthermore, foreign donors funded neither World Vision’s $3 million community development proposal nor TASO’s $3.2 million school fees proposal at PAPSCA’s 1989 conference, criticizing both proposals for being high-cost, and either benefiting too few orphans (albeit over a long time period) (WV’s proposal), or being too short-sighted, limited geographically, and having minimal impact (TASO’s proposal).
Although these market-based principles were targeted specifically to the health sector, the neoliberal ideology underlying their formation was reflected in the GOU’s dealings with the country’s OVC situation: the government relied on families, communities, and CSOs to provide OVC care, while restricting its own role to providing technical guidance to organizations and very limited healthcare services (such as basic childhood immunizations) to children.

A handful of activities in which the GOU engaged in the first half of the 1990s nevertheless demonstrated its acknowledgment of and response to the growing global attention to the orphan problem in Uganda. Initially, government efforts remained geared towards the broader NGO sector or the wellbeing of children in general, rather than focusing on the issues affecting OVC specifically. To address issues of NGO governance, as a start in 1989, the government responded to the rapid rise in civil society’s involvement in health and development issues in Uganda by establishing the NGO Statute, designed to govern the registration of all NGOs operating in Uganda, to minimize duplication and malpractice, and to ensure quality services.

Other initiatives that demonstrated the GOU’s concern for the welfare of disadvantaged children occurred contemporaneously with a number of international developments related to child welfare. On 17 August 1990, Uganda signed and ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC),36 more or less concurrently with several of its east African neighbours. In 1992, the GOU followed up on its UNCRC commitments, making a concrete plan to address the issues raised in the UNCRC through the establishment of the Uganda National Program of Action for Children (UNPAC). UNPAC declared goals for responding to children’s issues, and outlined specific strategies for achieving these goals (MGLSD 2004b). Included in this Program was the provision for the establishment of a Secretariat focused on OVC, which eventually came to fruition in 2003 (see below).

---

36 The UNCRC came about amidst the UNICEF-led Child Survival Revolution that aimed to directly address infant and child mortality primarily through a two-pronged approach involving childhood immunizations and oral rehydration therapy. It is a human rights treaty that functions as an international law among all parties to the Convention (i.e., all United Nations states except Somalia, South Sudan, and the United States of America, who did not ratify the Convention) and sets out children’s rights through a list of “civil and political and social, cultural and economic rights” (Save the Children 2013), which it endeavours to protect and fulfill (Woll 2001). Countries ratifying the Convention are required to always act in the child’s best interest, which may include providing a child with separate legal representation in cases of judicial dispute regarding their care.
Concurrent with the enactment of the UNCRC in 1990, the Organisation of African Unity ('African Union', AU, since 2001) adopted the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC),\(^37\) which Uganda ratified on 17 August 1994. The ACRWC, like the UNCRC, comprehensively outlined the rights of children in terms of civil, economic, social, political, and cultural rights. The ACRWC differed from the UNCRC in its focus specifically on the socio-cultural and economic context of Africa, which AU members felt the UNCRC had failed to capture, in part due to the under-representation of African countries in the UNCRC’s drafting process. The ACRWC’s African contextualization entailed, for instance, incorporating mentions of “harmful practices against the girl child, … internal conflicts and displacement, … poor and unsanitary living conditions, the African conception of communities’ responsibilities and duties, weak enforcement and monitoring mechanisms, [and the] role of the family in adoption and fostering” (UNICEF 2013c). Also in 1994, participants at an international gender and AIDS workshop in Zambia adopted the Lusaka Declaration, which focused heavily on AIDS in sub-Saharan Africa, but also noted affected families’ need for financial and material support, “survival skills and vocational training for OVC” (UNICEF 2004a: 35), and the rights of OVC to education.

The 1995 Constitution of the Republic of Uganda furthered the cause of disadvantaged children in Uganda, at least rhetorically. Integrating sections on OVC and drawing from the UNCRC and the ACRWC, the Constitution specifically stated that OVC shall be accorded special protections under the law, and provided a legal framework intended to ensure children’s rights are protected and safe from abuse and exploitation (MGLSD 2004a). Legislation in the decade that followed did not include special protection for OVC, however (MGLSD 2004b).\(^38\)

At the national level, government action geared specifically towards children began in earnest in 1996, when – building on the 1992 establishment of UNPAC (the Uganda National Program of Action for Children) – the GOU created the National Council for Children (NCC) with a

\(^{37}\) The ACRWC was entered into force in November 1999.

\(^{38}\) In effect, the 1995 Constitution assisted the NRM’s efforts to centralize its political power and constrain political space both within the Movement as well as within the country by enshrining the NRM’s no-party political system and furthering the regime’s dominance (Tripp 2004). Appointments to government positions again became regionally and ethnically influenced, and the broad base of support for the NRM began to shrink, leaving only a select group of loyalists operating in secrecy.
mandate to coordinate, monitor, and evaluate all child-related programmes in Uganda. Specifically, the government tasked the NCC with:

1. Communicating children’s needs to government and other decision-making bodies in Uganda.
2. Coordinating child-based activities to cut down on duplication and wasted resources and encourage multi-sectoral responses.
3. Supporting monitoring systems development and district plans of action.
4. Maintaining a database of children’s situation in Uganda. (Uganda Legal Information Institute 2013a)

Almost two decades later, the Council continues to work towards these goals, with varying success. The NCC has successfully coordinated a number of thematic stakeholder forums for organizations and agencies focusing on children, promoted awareness and advocacy on child rights issues, and compiled regular reports for national and international purposes, among other achievements. Nevertheless, the Council remains challenged with securing adequate operational funds, adequately coordinating and providing strong linkages between child actors in the country, and ensuring clear understanding of its role. With positive legislative and policy environments, and among strong local and international support, the NCC now intends to prioritize the establishment of a National Resource Centre for Children, restructure the Council’s coordination capacities, and implement a strategy for resource mobilization (MGLSD 2013).

Despite its challenges, a notable achievement of the NCC was the promulgation of the Children Act (formerly, the Children Statute), which it formulated in 1996 and officially commenced on 1 August 1997. The Children Act offered a means of reforming and consolidating child-related laws in the country – it incorporated the standards of the 1994 ACRWC (the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child) and the 1990 UNCRC (United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child) (Government of Uganda 1997) – and providing for their care and protection (Uganda Legal Information Institute 2013b). Through the promulgation of the Children Act,

---

39 This Act gave Local Councils (LCs) the authority and responsibility to protect the rights of the child. Failure to resolve a case of child protection through these Local Councils would result in bringing the case before the family and children court, which was also established through this Act.
Uganda became one of the first African countries to harmonize a child-related law with international standards (African Child Policy Forum 2012). At the same time, the GOU actively encouraged communities to continue to take orphaned children into their homes.

The same year the Children Act commenced (1997), the government introduced Universal Primary Education (UPE), a policy intended to tackle some of the challenges of widespread poverty in the country and by doing so address the vulnerability of children.40 The UPE policy abolished all tuition fees and charges for Parent Teacher Associations for primary education, but costs for scholastic materials (pens, books etc.), the required uniforms, and construction supplies for building classrooms remained the responsibility of the parents.41 Despite these shortcomings of UPE, donors continued to promote the policy as a model for the continent, and avoided public debate that could expose the program’s considerable flaws, fearing that such exposure could discredit the NRM (Tripp 2004).42

The coordination and implementation of state protection of OVC was facilitated by Uganda’s system of decentralization (issued through a Presidential Policy in 1992 and formalized in the 1995 Constitution of Uganda), which had devolved administrative and implementation powers to the district level while retaining matters of law and order, and defense at the centre. This stood in contrast to neighbouring countries such as Kenya, which had a centralized governing structure at the time and needed to rely on less formal and voluntary advisory councils, committees, and sub-committees to implement, monitor, and supervise OVC programmes at the district and sub-county levels. At the district level in Uganda, the GOU supported OVC through the work of

40 Some critics have suggested the programme was developed as a means of gaining votes in the 1996 presidential election (Tripp 2004).

41 This caveat in the ‘universality’ of UPE resulted in continued inaccessibility of primary education for many families. A number of other obstacles diminished the success of this programme: the distances between children and schools, the quality of education provided, “gender issues (early marriage, teenage pregnancy, sexual harassment and the heavy burden of household chores on girls), physical insecurity, poor nutrition, disabilities, and the fact that it is not yet illegal to keep a child home from school” (MGLSD 2004b: 9).

42 Despite the challenges in making UPE truly ‘universal’ and accessible to all, the GOU saw the introduction of UPE as an important tool in its efforts to achieve reductions in poverty and promote human development by “equipping every individual with basic skills” (Bategeka and Okurut 2006: 1). To its credit, primary school enrollment more than doubled between 1996 and 2003 (from 3.1 million to 7.6 million children), a considerable gain compared to the previous ten years’ growth of 39% between 1986 and 1996 (Bategeka and Okurut 2006). While school attendance still poses multiple challenges to OVC that carry a disproportionate burden of tending to household chores and income-generating activities, these government efforts directly impacted the lives of OVC, and represented an important step towards addressing their circumstances (Bryant et al. 2012; Shann et al. 2013).
Probation Officers, judges, police, and child welfare officers. At the sub-county level, Community Development Officers held responsibility for supporting OVC. Village-level Local Council 1s (LC1s) through to district-level Local Council 5s (LC5s) worked closely with district-level MGLSD (Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development) representatives (District Probation and Social Welfare Officers), who in turn worked in collaboration with the Secretary for Children’s Affairs at LC5 offices. This system was designed to enable Ugandans to access the government system through village-level access points (i.e., LC1s), who could bring up child protection and OVC vulnerability issues through increasing levels of authority, as necessary.

Despite these protective provisions, the primary responsibility of providing material and emotional support for OVC remained with the extended family, as it did in Kenya (Nyambedha et al. 2003). The order of frequency of caretakers taking on these tasks in mid-1990s Uganda were the child’s remaining parent, grandparent, other relatives such as aunts and uncles, and children themselves, i.e., child-headed households. In a negligible number of cases, friends and NGOs took on this role (Ntozi 1997). The former group (extended family) often lacked sufficient financial resources to adequately care for orphaned children but acted consistently with this role as a cultural obligation. The latter group (friends and NGOs) voluntarily fostered children and thus generally experienced fewer financial constraints, taking on only the numbers they could manage (ibid.).

The GOU had certainly undertaken some OVC-related initiatives during the latter half of the 1990s, including high-profile measures involving ratification of international agreements, the establishment of a council to monitor activity related to children, and the creation of UPE and the Constitution of Uganda. Nevertheless, civil society’s OVC initiatives far surpassed GOU initiatives. Although local and foreign governments often funded CSO operating costs, a strong civil society sector (bolstered by familial and community support) almost single-handedly and aggressively addressed society’s most urgent social and health matters during the 1980s and early 1990s.

43 In addition to the UNCRC and ACRWC, Uganda joined other African countries at the inaugural East and Southern African regional meeting on OVC in Lusaka, Zambia in November 2000, to commit to and make plans for tackling the OVC problem (UNICEF 2004a).
4.2.3 Growing civil society initiatives, in number and size

In the 1990s, academic, activist, and service provider debates over the most effective support mechanisms for OVC in low- and middle-income countries emphasized ‘traditional’ coping mechanisms centred on familial or community-based care.\(^{44}\) Certainly, the extended family and community assumed the bulk of the burden of addressing the needs of OVC during this period and, in comparison, the contribution of civil society and government was negligible. A 1992-1993 study in Uganda revealed that the majority of orphaned children resided within kinship households: 40.9% cared for by a surviving parent, 25.1% by a grandparent, and 19.5% by another member of the extended family, with considerable variation by district (Ntozi 1997). Family support generally involved supporting OVC through regular visits, assisting with food provision and meal preparation, providing emotional support and guidance, and/or offering financial assistance.\(^{45}\) As the 1990s progressed, growing numbers of aunts and uncles – and more and more grandparents as aunts and uncles themselves were dying in large numbers – cared for orphaned children within their homes, engaging in ‘purposive fostering’ as the growing number of parents’ deaths continued to challenge and overwhelm family and community capacity to provide care and support for OVC (Foster 2000).

Yet the peak of the orphan ‘problem’ in Uganda in the late 1980s early 1990s and the further weakening of extended family support networks coincided with a huge increase in the involvement of civil society in development and poverty alleviation efforts more broadly. This opened the space for CSOs to step in where families and communities no longer could.\(^{46}\) During this period, increasing numbers of CSOs endeavored to address the urgent needs of children

---

\(^{44}\) As in many other African nations, most Ugandan ethnic groups are built around a patrilineal kinship system, which emphasizes descent through males (Katabarwa et al. 2000). All the brothers of a child’s father are traditionally considered to be the child’s fathers, and it has been common practice to incorporate orphaned children into their extended families, particularly into the families of their paternal aunts and uncles (Foster 2000). To this day, family/community options continue to be touted as culturally preferable over the alternative of institutional initiatives or orphanages (Thurman et al. 2008; Foster 2002; Drew et al. 1998). OVC ‘experts’ view the extended family as the most suitable social security system, and place with it the responsibilities of protecting the vulnerable, caring for the sick, and transmitting “traditional social values and education” (Foster 2000: 56).

\(^{45}\) ‘Community’ initiatives related to OVC may also consist of small-scale local initiatives, such as groups of widows tending to the needs of OVC through a sampling of the above activities.

\(^{46}\) Between 1989 and 1999, NGOs in Uganda increased their share of World Bank-financed projects from 20% to 52% (Pfeiffer 2003).
orphaned by war and AIDS. In the 1980s, international child-focused NGOs significantly accelerated their rate of expansion and accelerated their movement into Africa. Many of these had been founded between the 1930s and the 1950s and had expanded over the intervening decades to address wars within Europe, then Asia, and subsequently poverty and famine in Latin America and Africa. Starting in the 1980s, these INGOs also accelerated their expansion in terms of adding to their roster ‘partner’ countries and country offices in developing countries.

The trend towards donor-NGO relationships overlapped with the development sector’s growing emphasis on ‘partnerships’ between donors and implementing NGOs and led to increased allocation of funding to NGOs, with proportionately less going to governments. This shift was further legitimized by the World Bank president Sir James Wolfensohn’s 1995 speech to the Bank’s Board of Governors, vowing to ramp up the Bank’s partnerships with NGOs, civil society, and the private sector (World Bank 2013b). As a result, African governments found themselves in competition with civil society organizations for donor funding (Dicklitch 1998; Williams 1998), a scenario repeated in Uganda. Working under the assumption that the emerging NGO sectors in many low- and middle-income countries required organizational, training, and financial support (Lewis 1998), Northern NGOs (NNGOs) increasingly distanced themselves from direct on-the-ground engagement. Instead, NNGOs redefined their identities and their relationships with local partners to become donors rather than direct implementers of development/aid projects. With heavy reliance on expatriate staffing, NNGOs previously accustomed to roles in implementation began to engage in ‘partnerships’, funding and providing organizational support for local partner organizations to implement projects (Lewis 1998).

---

47 Proponents of this form of fund transfer justified the trend to bypass developing-country governments as more effectively reaching the poor at a ‘grassroots’ level. International NGOs saw this shift as a way to offer more direct communication between donors and rural project offices, allowing donors to more directly monitor the provision of services (Bornstein 2001a). The world’s largest child sponsorship organization, World Vision, had adopted such a model two decades earlier (in the early 1970s) to maximize fund management efficiency, changing its office support structure to allow national offices to focus on programme implementation while support offices worked with donors and claimed exclusive responsibility for fundraising (World Vision 2013).

48 NNGOs have their roots in the industrialized countries but undertake development or emergency relief work in aid-recipient countries. They are distinct from international NGOs (INGOs), which are “any international organization[s] which [are] not established by intergovernmental agreement” (Global Policy Forum 1968).
4.2.4 Popular marketing models for OVC initiatives

In addition to the growth in the numbers of locally- and foreign-founded NGOs during the 1980s ‘NGO decade’ and in the early 1990s,\(^49\) the visibility and role of NGO-driven OVC initiatives were heightened by two particular marketing strategies:

1. The involvement of public figures and celebrities in awareness raising and fundraising efforts.

2. The child sponsorship model.

Both of these strategies had a history dating back to child-focused organizations’ inceptions in the early- to mid-twentieth century. At the time of their founding, several prominent INGOs had made efforts to engage public figures in their cause, in order to increase knowledge of and support for their work and attract additional sponsors. As early as 1933, Save the Children Fund’s (SCF) first annual dinner in New York included U.S. First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt as a notable guest, followed six years later by former U.S. President Herbert Hoover at the organization’s annual meeting, also in New York (Save the Children 2013). Beginning in 1942, Mrs. Roosevelt sponsored three children through the organization Plan\(^50\) during its expansion in England and mainland Europe. In the decades that followed, Plan continued to engage public figures as a fundraising gimmick.

This strategy’s success in garnering public interest in and support for children living in particularly difficult circumstances increased its popularity with INGOs as well as with agencies such as UNICEF. For instance, Plan recruited U.S. First Lady Jacqueline Kennedy as honorary chairwoman during its Silver Jubilee in 1962 and in the 1970s included actress Ingrid Bergman

\(^49\) Many prominent NGOs received financing from governments to carry out work the government was unable/unwilling to do (Rosenberg et al. 2008; Tvedt 2006). During the 1990s, NGOs managed to increase amounts of external aid from less than US$1 billion in 1990; US$3.5 billion by the end of the decade (Hearn 2007). Without this financial support from governments, most NGOs would not have been able to survive. Although many NGOs do operate exclusively from private donations, state grants and subsidies have considerably contributed to the development of the civil society sector (Reiman 2006). Nevertheless, the growing predominance of state financing of civil society development initiatives in the 1990s (which entailed civil society’s required adherence to state-issued regulations) was largely ignored in NGO analyses of the time, an oversight Tvedt (2006) laments as it inaccurately portrays NGOs as independent voices representing the people.

in a shoe drive to collect shoes for impoverished children. UNICEF appointed celebrity Danny Kaye as its first ambassador in 1954, followed by Peter Ustinov (1968) and Audrey Hepburn (1989) as well as numerous others to the present day. As the decades progressed, SCF proved to be a leader in the field of child-focused INGOs in attracting and pursuing patronages of this sort. 51

The second marketing tool and care model for OVC that saw growing success was that of child sponsorship. Plan conceived the idea in 1937 involving sponsors sending monthly remittances for an individual child’s school fees and sometimes healthcare, shelter, or nutrition costs. This method was especially successful. In the mid-1980s, the INGO World Vision (WV), which had been founded in 1950 as a child sponsorship organization for children affected by the Korean war, engaged in an experiment with this principal marketing strategy. Having since 1953 employed one-to-one sponsorships and emphasized the relationship and bond that develops between a sponsor and a child, WV responded to inflation and high administrative costs in the mid-1980s by briefly marketing sponsorship of children as that of becoming a ‘childcare partner’ of a ‘representative child’. This change in marketing strategy from ‘direct’ child sponsorship for an identified child to sponsorship for an unidentified ‘representative child’ (implying that funds are pooled to assist several children rather than supporting the sponsor’s chosen child in particular) had significant effects on WV’s fundraising success. For the first time in the organization’s history, sponsorship rates dropped. WV quickly reacted to this downturn in sponsorship and again promoted one-to-one sponsorships, while making efforts to streamline and improve administrative operations (World Vision 2013).

51 In the 1980s, SCF accelerated its use of this marketing tool, hosting British Princess Royal Anne during a visit to programmes for Native Americans in New Mexico in 1987, employing director Steven Spielberg as host of a benefit premier of Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade to support SCF’s Africa programmes in 1989, and engaging television personality Oprah Winfrey in urging Americans to donate (by phone) one dollar to SCF and UNICEF. In the 1990s, SCF’s patrons included actress Sally Field (who represented the organization at the fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995), the White House (which hosted SCF’s humanitarian aid event for Bosnia in 1996), and US First Lady Hillary Clinton (who hosted SCF’s chief executive officer Charles MacCormack at the launch of the “Do Good. Mentor a Child” national mentoring initiative in 1999). After a short interlude in the early 2000s during which time SCF focused on responding to the war in Iraq, civil conflict in Darfur, and the Asian tsunami, SCF initiatives in this regard would again experience a revival in 2005, when actor Brad Pitt toured a SCF programme for the ONE global campaign against poverty and HIV/AIDS (also attended by actor George Clooney).
In sum, the INGOs incorporating these marketing strategies became integral players in OVC care, even as they produced and promoted an oversimplified, ahistorical, and apolitical discourse around children, the needs of OVC, and the ways in which they could be addressed. Their marketing and programming approaches negated the complexities of the challenges OVC faced, and implied that financial remittances could adequately address their needs. In chapters five and six I consider the implications of INGOs’ influential role in promoting particular discourses and approaches for OVC care.

The growing popularity of child-focused NGOs and their increasing visibility into the late 1990s was accompanied by misgivings from critics about the value and suitability of NGOs’ prominent role in development efforts (Dicklitch 1998). Nevertheless, small CSOs and a growing number of foreign-founded organizations continued to provide the bulk of non-familial support for development and poverty alleviation initiatives in Uganda.

4.2.5 Residential versus familial care for OVC

As the number and public visibility of orphaned children continued to rise, some of the world’s leading child-focused charity organizations focused more specifically on providing services for orphaned and vulnerable children in their operations worldwide, including in Uganda. These civil society services generally fell into one of two categories: residential care in children’s homes/institutions; or financial, material, and/or emotional support within families and communities where children resided. In 1992, roughly 2,900 children (of over a million orphaned children) in Uganda were housed in residential care (Adugna et al. 1994).

52 World Vision, for instance, began to focus on children orphaned by AIDS in Uganda after having been involved in relief and community development efforts focused on children since 1950. The misguided impulse to target ‘orphans’ because of their presumed higher vulnerability overlooked evidence emerging from the enumeration exercises of the 1980s, which indicated that the conceptual basis for such an approach is foreign to local Ugandans, as it overlooks notions of clan ownership of children and much more flexible notions of extended families’ parenting role than do Western-centric social welfare models (Webb 2005).

53 Of the 2,900 children, roughly 50% had a living father and mother, 20% had one alive parent, and 25% had living extended family members (Williamson and Greenberg 2010).

54 Acknowledging the associated costs to children’s emotional and physical developmental, SCF together with the GOU’s (then) Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare reinvigorated and enforced national policies related to institutional care, ultimately reuniting more than 1,200 of these children with their parents or extended family members with considerable success (one year later, an evaluation confirmed that 86% of these children were well integrated into their families) and leading to the closure of several sub-standard residential care homes (Williamson and Greenberg 2010).
children were taken into residential institutions or ‘orphanages’ due to extreme poverty in their households, not necessarily or exclusively because of their orphaned status. By then, many high-income countries had largely abandoned the residential care system that had become a common response to assist orphaned and particularly vulnerable children in the late 1940s and 1950s (the first Austrian-founded SOS Children’s Village to house orphaned and abused children was built in Austria in 1949) out of recognition of the developmental inappropriateness of this practice.\(^{55}\) Nonetheless, high-income countries continued to support this form of care in low- and middle-income countries.\(^{56}\)

In Uganda, NGOs maintained this decades-old practice, modeled by colonial governments and missionaries, of placing orphaned children in institutional/residential care. They built and filled homes for orphaned children as a means of efficiently tending to orphaned, abandoned, and/or abused children.\(^{57}\) This practice of institutionalizing children ignored the GOU recommendations to the contrary, as well as the well-documented shortcomings of residential care.\(^{58}\) By the 1990s, scholars recognized the link between institutional care for orphans and severe developmental problems (Williamson and Greenberg 2010).\(^{59}\) Primarily high-income country proponents of the institutional care model continued to insist that this model ensured comprehensive attendance to children’s physical and developmental needs such as shelter, food, clothing, security, and most often education.

---

\(^{55}\) A notable exception to this is Russia, where efforts to transfer children out of residential institutions into families did not begin until 2007, the Year of the Child in Russia (Schmidt 2009).

\(^{56}\) Williamson and Greenberg (2010) suggest that a major factor in promoting the continued use of institutional care for orphaned children has been the rise of AIDS, which has led both local groups and foreign donors to inaccurately conclude that the only option for orphaned children is institutional care. Care within the extended family, the authors argue, remains an important and viable option for the vast majority of children orphaned by AIDS.

\(^{57}\) Due to inadequate monitoring systems throughout the 1990s, determining accurate numbers of children housed in residential care over time is challenging, and evidence is primarily based on informed estimates.

\(^{58}\) In 1996, the MGLSD declared residential care for children as a last resort, only to be implemented if all other forms of (familial and community) care have been exhausted (Wakhweya et al. 2002). At the 2009 ‘First International Conference in Africa on Family-Based Care’ in Nairobi, the 400+ participants from across the region reinstated the family as the best choice for raising children in Africa, acknowledging the role of temporary institutional care as a last resort (Williamson and Greenberg 2010).

\(^{59}\) Evidence, beginning in World War II London with Anna Freud and Dorothy Burlingham’s *War and Children* (1943) and continuing with John Bowlby’s WHO publication, *Maternal Care and Mental Health* (1951), has repeatedly shown that institutional responses fail to meet children’s attachment needs and their needs for social integration and acculturation (Williamson and Greenberg 2010).
In Uganda, civil society efforts to support OVC outside of institutions (i.e., in families) could only focus on a selection of these services, primarily in efforts to raise OVC living standards. By and large, CSOs prioritized the provision of material goods (e.g., household items, food, clothing, and scholastic materials) and services (e.g., access to healthcare, and formal education, as well as counseling and emotional guidance), rather than housing children in residential care facilities. Other related civil society initiatives in Uganda that flourished during this time included the establishment of youth and child recreation centres, early learning centres, and local health clinics, all of which were targeted at children and communities more generally, not OVC specifically.

A confluence of political developments in the late 1970s through the early 1990s led to income-generating and ‘community-led’ projects that were aimed at maximizing the self-sufficiency and long-term well being of families (United Nations 1987). Chief among these, within the domain of health, was the Alma Ata Declaration which emphasized “community and individual self-reliance and participation in the planning, organization, operation and control of primary health care” (WHO 1978: 2). It also encouraged local activism and the desire of donors to shift away from the unsustainable model of providing handouts. Several prominent child-focused INGOs sought to demonstrate their commitment to this emphasis on local participation by engaging in ‘community-based’ development and sustainability efforts. For instance, in 1989 World Vision began its practice of drilling wells in communities in an attempt to reduce infant mortality. Its clean water approach opened doors for its entry into communities for years to come. Organizations like SCF (Save the Children Fund) introduced ‘U5’ initiatives, focusing on child survival for children in the first five years of life, a major 1980s international health initiative that grew out of UNICEF’s targeted response to the Alma-Ata Declaration (Birn, Pillay, and Holtz 2009). In 1982, UNICEF developed the GOBI strategy focusing on four child health

---

60 Civil society’s focus on local/community participation and sustainability had seen earlier iterations in the 1960s and 1970s, but without the force it had in the 1990s. Organizations that had essentially been providing handouts for decades slowly began to shift their approaches during the 1960s and 1970s. ChildFund, formerly Christian Children’s Fund, had adopted a new policy of involving local leaders as program leads whenever possible as early as 1967. Save the Children began to incorporate ‘child-focused community development programmes’ in 1972, and developed a Community-Based Integrated Rural Development (C-BIRD) program overseas in 1973. World Vision transitioned from providing relief services and handouts to incorporating goals of sustainability into its programming in the mid-1970s, a transition which the organization feels was completed by the late 1970s, and which ultimately led to its current community development work.
interventions (growth monitoring, oral rehydration therapy for diarrhoea, the promotion of breastfeeding, and childhood immunizations) and later GOBI-FFF (adding the components of birth spacing/family planning, food supplementation, and the promotion of female literacy). Part of this focus on infancy and early childhood included a growing focus on mothers as a way to indirectly support children, reflected in initiatives around safe motherhood and reducing maternal mortality and morbidity in CSO programming.

During this time of immense growth in the civil society sector, CSOs in Uganda began to establish a number of NGO networks designed to improve their capacities through cross-organization linkages and to unite in efforts to influence government policies. Chief among these was the Uganda National NGO Forum (founded in 1997), which strove to serve as “a broad-based national body for NGOs to unite in their diversity, in pursuit of a collective agenda of engagement with government and other development actors” (Uganda National NGO Forum 2013). Such networks were primarily designed to allow CSOs to learn from each other through the exchange of ideas, and to provide a platform from which to work towards effecting national-level policy change.

While civil society initiatives continued to play an integral part in addressing the needs of OVC in Uganda in the years that followed, the end of the 1990s was also the end of mostly independent civil society-led initiatives in relation to the OVC situation in Uganda, as from the 2000s onwards the government itself began to make efforts to rise to its role as duty bearer of the wellbeing of its child citizens.

4.3 Evolving roles among Uganda’s OVC initiatives, 2001 – 2011

For nearly two decades, the GOU had relied heavily on civil society to carry most of the burden of addressing the needs of OVC in Uganda. In the year 2001, the character of this dependence on non-governmental actors began to shift. Responding to pressure from foreign governments and

---

61 For example, the Development Network of Indigenous Voluntary Associations (DENIVA), Uganda Debt Network (UDN), and National Association of Women’s Organisations in Uganda (NAWOU), Human Rights Network (HURINET), the Uganda NGO Forum, and the National Association of Trade Unions (NOTU), Anti-Corruption Coalition of Uganda (ACCU), and the Coalition for Political Accountability to Women (Thue et al. 2002).

donor agencies, the GOU initiated decisive action towards establishing a role alongside civil society to address the needs of OVC, while civil society continued to navigate the ever-evolving landscape of development aid and donor priorities.

### 4.3.1 GOU efforts to increase its role in OVC initiatives

In the early 2000s, facing growing international attention and civil society pressure to address the staggering OVC ‘crisis’ in Uganda that had been mounting throughout the 1990s, the GOU began to take concerted action to address OVC. This coincided with new international pressures to address critical elements of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), including the aims of reducing child mortality and ensuring that boys and girls can “complete a full course of primary schooling” (Uganda Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development 2013: iii). Given the correlation between orphanhood and high rates of child mortality, and in light of the considerable obstacles OVC face to completing primary education, the GOU recognized that better addressing the situation of OVC was an important step towards addressing these aims.

Among the GOU’s first priorities was a situation analysis of OVC in collaboration with the Uganda AIDS Commission (Wakhweya et al. 2002). The resulting report provided further evidence of the crisis proportions of the OVC situation in Uganda. The study findings estimated that one in four households housed at least one of an estimated 2.3 million orphans in the country, and found that many of these children were also affected by trauma, food insecurity, poverty, and/or life on the streets (MGLSD 2004a). In its evaluation of existing interventions in OVC care at local and national levels, the report identified significant gaps in the government’s and NGOs’ institutional capacity to address children’s needs.

The SCF/UNICEF enumeration exercises of the late 1980s/early 1990s had coincided with the height of the AIDS epidemic in Uganda, which consumed the bulk of research attention and funding. The enumeration thus did little in terms of facilitating concrete GOU plans of action tailored specifically to OVC. In contrast, the 2001 analysis, which occurred during a time of

---

63 This remained a challenge in Uganda despite its 1997 policy of Universal Primary Education (see section 4.3.2).

64 This report, based on household surveys, was co-authored by representatives from Boston University School of Public Health, UNICEF-Kampala, Makerere University’s Institute of Public Health (IPH), and the Makerere Institute for Social Research (MISR).
declining HIV infections and growing complacency in efforts to stem the epidemic, explicitly aimed to improve service delivery and provide data for a national policy and action plan. (The results of this analysis became the foundation for the later formulation of a national plan of interventions for orphans, which I describe below.)

Recognizing that a national plan of interventions would require managerial support if it was to have any notable effect on the situation of OVC and initiatives to address it, in 2003 the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (MGLSD)\(^{65}\) established the Orphans and Vulnerable Children Secretariat (OVCS) within the Department of Children Services to support and guide the implementation of the plan and related OVC policies. This Secretariat assumed responsibility for coordinating national initiatives related to OVC, and the Management Information and Evaluation System for Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVCMIS) implemented in 2010 (see below).\(^{66}\)

In May 2004, with input from 17 countries as well as USAID, UNICEF, UNAIDS, and the World Food Programme (Cheney 2010) which provided “moral, technical and financial support” (MGLSD 2004a: iii), this plan was translated into policy when the MGLSD released the National Orphans and Other Vulnerable Children Policy (NOP) (MGLSD 2004a). The NOP provided a framework to guide Uganda’s approach to improving the quality of life for OVC (including orphaned children, children living on the street, children at risk of abuse, and children exposed to armed conflict). It aimed to address the gaps in the Children Act and to ameliorate the physical and emotional circumstances of OVC and their extended families through the application of a rights-based programming approach that highlights and strengthens the integral role of the family and the community as well as partnerships across households, government, NGOs, and other development actors (MGLSD2004a). An important component of this involved government

---

\(^{65}\) The Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development was formed in 1998 as an amalgamation of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare and the Ministry of Community Development. This was based on the GOU’s realization that human progress and development were lagging behind economic progress in the country (MGLSD 2013).

\(^{66}\) Also in 2003, the GOU revised the Children Act – the legal instrument dealing with constitutional issues relating to children (Government of Uganda 2003) – in part as a response to criticism that its previous iteration had failed to adequately address the vulnerability of children, and that OVC protections were inadequate. The revised Act continued to provide only limited protection for children against violence and abuse, and maintained the lawfulness of corporal punishment within the home (Newell 2008). At the time of writing, the Act is again under review.
officials (specifically, Probation and Social Welfare Officers)\(^{67}\) considering various factors such as nutrition, economic security, and education contributing to children’s health and wellbeing when dealing with OVC.

The ensuing National Policy and Strategic Programme Plan of Interventions for Orphans (NSPPI) officially established in October 2004 (MGLSD 2004b)\(^{68}\) complemented the NOP’s principles through the addition of specific frameworks (i.e., programme, strategic, intervention, implementation, costing and financing, and monitoring and evaluation frameworks). The NSPPI was an attempt to guide NGOs and government agencies in providing comprehensive and well-integrated services to children (Kalibala and Elson 2009). The overall goal of the NSPPI was to scale-up effective interventions that directly or indirectly (through households) reach OVC by 2010 (MGLSD 2004b).

Among its key strategies, the NSPPI’s strategic framework included the provision of “financial, material and training support directly to vulnerable children and households so that their capacity to take care of themselves may be strengthened over the long term” (MGLSD 2004b: 35). The remaining strategies emphasized collaboration with a range of networks and leaders across “political, economic, social, academic, entertainment, business, children’s rights and faith-based [arenas]”) (MGLSD 2004b: 36) in order to bring further attention to OVC. This reflected the centrality of sustainability concerns that had begun to characterize development rhetoric in the early 1990s, and by the early 2000s was securely positioned at the forefront of national government and NGO efforts. These focuses demonstrated anew the government’s self-ascribed role as coordinator and manager of initiatives addressing the needs of OVC that rely on civil society to implement services and provide direct assistance to OVC.

A flurry of legislation and policy activity followed the establishment of the NOP and NSPPI, adding to existing international child rights frameworks and transforming the rhetoric of the

\(^{67}\) The 1963 Probation Act established the posts of Probation Officers (Probation and Social Welfare Officers as of the 1997 Children Act), assigning one Probation Officer per district. The Act tasks these officers with acting as a custodian of the laws and policies concerning children, ensuring these laws and policies are implemented at national and local levels, and assisting children through the court system, as required.

\(^{68}\) With financial and technical support from Boston University School of Public Health, USAID, UNICEF, World Vision and Save the Children USA.
NSPPI into a number of policies geared towards children.\textsuperscript{69} Prior to the development of these plans and policies, at the time of implementation of the Children Act in 1997, the GOU had only minimally monitored NGO activity related to OVC. This activity reflected in part the GOU’s view that NGOs played a necessary role in filling the gaps left by government (congruent with the prevailing neoliberal paradigm at the time). It also illustrated the widespread assumption that NGOs had the advantage of having a “closeness” to the people and communities with which they worked in a way that the government did not.

In the early 2000s, the government’s nascent focus on monitoring and coordinating the OVC response in Uganda gained momentum, reflecting the GOU’s growing unease with the nature of NGOs as advocacy groups that sought to challenge the status quo. Compounding the fear of an activist-oriented civil society sector, the GOU felt pressure to adhere to the newly established MDGs that required concrete and demonstrable improvements in a variety of health and social welfare sectors. The GOU worked towards the MDGs by limiting NGOs’ duplication of services and identifying areas requiring additional investment. This involved monitoring and coordinating the NGOs on which the GOU relied heavily to provide a wide array of services to its population.

Civil society quickly felt the squeeze of increased GOU monitoring and attempts at coordination, and lobbied the government to create an operating space for NGOs that legally allows them to more effectively act without government interference. In response, on 7 April 2006 the NGO Registration (Amendment) Act introduced a series of changes to the 1989 NGO Registration Act.\textsuperscript{70} In stark contrast to the requests of civil society, this amendment enabled the government to further control and ‘reign in’ NGOs that presented a threat to national security (Coalition on the NGO Bill 2006). The two most far-reaching changes to the Act were:

\begin{itemize}
\item These included (1) Uganda’s 2006 Child Labour Policy, which regulates children’s involvement in the labour force. (2) Education policies (for Pre-Primary, Primary, and Secondary) and policies for disadvantaged children, which aim to increase access to education for OVC. (3) The 2004 National Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) Policy, which protects children as a marginalized group. (4) Uganda’s National Health Policy, which includes children in its health provisions. (5) The National Youth Policy, which guides youth-related planning. (6) The National Adolescent Health Policy, which addresses adolescent reproductive health problems and aims to address these through multi-sectoral responses. (7) The Reproductive Health Policy, which focuses on promoting safe motherhood and investing in reproductive health. (8) The National Policy on Young People and HIV and AIDS, which encourages adolescents to become involved in efforts to stem the scourge of AIDS. (MGLSD 2011)
\item New NGO regulations were again attended to the Act in 2008 (Uganda National NGO Forum 2009).
\end{itemize}
1. The new requirement for NGOs to secure a valid and time-sensitive operating permit (not simply a certificate) from the NGO Board in order to operate as an NGO in Uganda.
2. The new requirement for NGOs to include in their documentation a dissolution clause that prescribes its intended process of ceasing operations, should that occur. (Uganda Gazette 2006)

For civil society, these new requirements represented retrogression on the gains in liberty and freedom guaranteed under the 1995 constitution, threatened democratic participation, and implied far-reaching consequences that strained NGO-GOU relations.

In 2007, the following year and fully ten years after introducing UPE the GOU introduced Universal Secondary Education (USE) (Molyneaux 2012). This made Uganda the first African nation to eliminate secondary school tuition fees for qualifying students (based on Primary School examinations). The GOU presented this as a natural outcome of the education policies growing out of the first NSPPI that identified attendance at secondary schools as a key indicator of its efforts to promote “essential social sector linkages” (MGLSD 2004b). Based on the understanding that increasing national literacy rates and education can address development challenges of high rates of fertility and poverty, this enabled the GOU to renew its efforts to introduce World Bank- and USAID-promoted ‘pro-poor’ policies intended to contribute towards Uganda’s gender parity in secondary education and development goals (Molyneaux 2012).

Education scholars Chapman et al. (2010) challenge this narrative and suggest, instead, that the GOU’s introduction of USE was not driven by laudable goals of adhering to the plans the government had established, but rather by the confluence of growing demands by parents, the need for a better educated workforce, “and a national presidential election in which the incumbent President [Museveni] again recognized that a promise of ‘free’ education could draw votes” (77). Despite significantly increased access to secondary education, public concerns about educational standards, quality of education, and teacher morale also limited praise for this policy, and critics suggest “free, universal education was neither free nor universal” (ibid.: 78).

CSOs had anticipated these amendments with much trepidation, fearing an invasion and narrowing of NGOs’ operating space through the tightening of requirements for NGO registration and regulation in the country (Thue et al. 2002). Upon its dissemination, they lamented the failure of the NGO Act to recognize the contribution of NGOs, whether in practice or in spirit (Uganda National NGO Forum 2009).
In 2009 the government conducted another situation analysis of vulnerable children in Uganda to update its assessment of the situation of OVC in the country. This served as preparation for formulating a follow-up NSPPI towards the end of the first NSPPI’s 2005/6 – 2009/10 timeframe. The 2009 analysis focused on determining the scope of the OVC situation and documenting responses to it. The study uncovered some positive developments since the development of the first NSPPI: for instance, 15% of vulnerable children had received medical services from “external support” from “government, NGOs, churches, the United Nations, relatives, schools, commercial businesses like Coca Cola, and rich individuals who sponsor children”, 9.1% of OVC households were trained in modern farming techniques, and 6.9% of OVC received educational support in the form of school fees and scholastic materials (Kalibala and Elson 2009: 2). Nevertheless, it also showed that children’s vulnerability to inadequate access to education, health care, and protection had continued to increase.

Essentially confirming the ineffectiveness of the first NSPPI, this 2009 analysis re-invigorated government concern about the duplication, lack of comprehensiveness, and questionable sustainability of CSO activities attempting to address the OVC situation. Clearly, its efforts (also through the 1989 NGO Statute) to manage and coordinate the NGOs that continued to carry out the bulk of OVC services nationwide had not succeeded. Accordingly, the GOU renewed its efforts to increase NGO accountability, reduce duplication, provide services more equitably throughout the country rather than concentrate on a handful of ‘hot spots’, and apply nationwide standards to support, protect, and care for OVC (MGLSD 2007). In 2010 the GOU synthesized its efforts to strengthen its role in managing, regulating, and coordinating the OVC response through the establishment of the MGLSD’s Management Information and Evaluation System for Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVCMIS) to determine current approaches to and actors.

---

72 This time, the study was conducted with funding from USAID in collaboration with the Population Council, the Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS), and Mathematica Policy Research, and (Kalibala and Elson 2009). The 2009 situation analysis again underscored the importance of building partnerships in addressing the needs of OVC in Uganda, arguing that because of limits to legislative authority, financial resources, staff, and mandate, no single organization or institution could comprehensively meet children’s and families’ needs (Kalibala and Elson 2009). The report restated civil society organizations’ requests for strengthened linkages and networks and reported on promising developments in this regard.

73 The study revealed that up to 96 percent of children in Uganda are vulnerable to some extent; half (51%) of all children in Uganda – roughly eight million children – were considered moderately or critically vulnerable, and an estimated 14 percent of children under the age of 18 were orphaned (Kalibala and Elson 2009).
involved in initiatives to assist OVC. Again, the emphasis remained on analysis and coordination of non-governmental responses to OVC, as opposed to the provision of services directly from the GOU to OVC and their families and communities.

It took roughly ten years after commencing efforts to address the OVC situation in earnest for the GOU to discover (through its 2009 situation analysis) that its prioritization of capacity building of government institutions and staff over the preceding decade had come at the expense of service delivery and tangible improvements for OVC in Uganda (Kalibala and Elson 2009). Rather than investing financial and human resources into providing infrastructural, medical, educational, and nutritional support to OVC (and their families), the GOU had emphasized investment in workshops, trainings, and infrastructural support for staff and institutions in government, who in turn were tasked with coordinating and managing the mostly non-governmental OVC response. The development of a new Strategic Plan in 2011 (NSPPI2) (MGLSD 2011) suggests that the initial goal from the 2004 NSPPI to effectively strengthen OVC interventions through households by 2010 had only partially been met. In part as a reaction to this realization, the MGLSD added the aim of supporting the government in stepping up service delivery (not only capacity building) as well as implementation and enforcement of existing laws and legislations to its 2011-2016 NSPPI. To facilitate these efforts, the MGLSD formed OVC committees at the district and sub-county levels and child protection committees in some north and north-eastern districts and regions (ibid.). The GOU grappled with its efforts to address the needs of OVC by focusing on institutional capacity building and the introduction of broad children’s policies. Meanwhile, civil society initiatives continued to provide much needed services.

4.3.2 Continued reliance on civil society for OVC initiatives

In the late 1990s and early 2000s, the international development sector had undertaken a rhetorical shift towards resurrecting government involvement in development efforts. Despite efforts to ‘bring the state back in’, CSOs continued to be actively involved in development, and often provided a form of legitimacy to government efforts: governments could adhere to stated

74 The Ministry of Gender admits that, despite the “impressive progress” in establishing systems and structures for a national OVC response, “a lot remains to be done to enhance OVC’s access to and utilization of basic services” (MGSDL 2011: iii).
aims of the development sector by capitalizing on the assumption that NGOs represent marginal populations, that their development projects are participatory, and that a wide section of the population ‘owns’ the projects with which they are engaged (Lewis and Okopu-Mensah 2006).

At the same time, the GOU’s efforts to gain more oversight and coordinating control over CSOs provoked tensions between government and civil society. NGOs feared what they perceived as “increasing state heavy-handedness” (Ugandan National NGO Forum 2009: 20), viewing the government’s management and coordination efforts as an impingement on their freedom to determine the nature of their service provision, and arguing that the 2006 amendment to the NGO Registration Act “was a roll-back on constitutional guarantees of autonomy and freedom and represents a threat to [NGOs’] operating space” (ibid.). Although in many of its publications the GOU repeatedly acknowledged civil society’s integral role (see, for instance, MGLSD 2004a; MGLSD 2004b; Wakhweya et al. 2002), NGOs lamented the government’s lack of public recognition of their important function in the country’s initiatives to address the needs of OVC over the preceding two decades (Ugandan National NGO Forum 2009). Working within a climate of increased monitoring and requests for transparency, NGOs found themselves needing to dedicate more time and resources to administrative tasks in order to accord with government standards.

Despite rising tensions and NGO frustration with the government’s growing efforts to coordinate and manage NGO activities in Uganda in the 2000s, civil society continued to provide the majority of services for this population.75 The GOU’s 2009 household survey indicated that NGOs’ most common method of supporting OVC was through providing access to healthcare. This highlights the urgency of basic health needs of many OVC, which is not only a significant social issue but also a major public health concern. Other services often provided included training in farming methods and access to formal education (Kalibala and Elson 2009). Access to education had constituted a central feature of most child-focused civil society efforts since as early as the 1930s. Agricultural and educational training also reflected burgeoning civil society

75 In the early 2000s, funding for social services through civil society actors outstripped that for local governments: NGO contributions (concentrated primarily among a small number of large NGOs) (Barr et al. 2005) combined with private capital flows and other remittances comprised 85 percent of external cash flow coming into Uganda (Cohen et al. 2008).
efforts in the 2000s to incorporate the promotion of child rights, self-sufficiency, women and children, and community-based development into their programming by providing locals with the tools to help themselves and to achieve self-sufficiency. This occurred concurrently with discursive shifts in the development sector moving towards an increased focus on rights and community participation. It also coincided with changing donor demands with which CSOs and local government had to come to terms in order to maintain their central position in the collection of initiatives addressing the needs of OVC in Uganda in the early 2000s. I explore these donor demands and discursive shifts and their influence on changes in development practices in *chapters five and six*.

As a whole, civil society organizations made a notable impact on the child ‘beneficiaries’ they served in the early 2000s, yet their services remained limited geographically, and neglected to cover some sections of society such as street children or children from particularly impoverished households (Kalibala and Elson 2009). The 2009 survey, which included an assessment of organizations providing support for OVC in Uganda, found that NGOs selected children based on their own inclusion criteria rather than a standardized set of criteria common to all organizations involved, which took into account children’s vulnerability (varyingly defined by each organization), as well as the child’s gender, age, and physical condition. Children’s homes continued to house particularly vulnerable children, despite their directors’/managers’ recognition that care within children’s (extended) families or communities is preferable. In total, the survey suggests only 15 percent of all identified OVC received external support in the form of medical aid (care, supplies, medicine) in the twelve months preceding the survey, and even fewer received other forms of support (educational, farming, agricultural) from organizations and agencies (*ibid.*).

### 4.4 Concluding remarks

The postcolonial period in Uganda was a time of authoritarian regimes, widespread violence, and growing numbers of OVC due to civil strife. During this time, Obote and Amin’s governments essentially curtailed the existence of CSOs and drastically weakened the power of voluntary associations. In the face of these challenges, however, local organizations developed activities to tend to the growing number of OVC.
Throughout the late 1980s and 1990s, during Museveni’s early years as President, the GOU depended heavily on civil society to tend to the needs of OVC. As the neoliberal agenda of private market capitalism and concomitant reduced government involvement in public service provision gained momentum and spread internationally, Uganda eagerly and ‘successfully’ (in the eyes of major bilateral institutions such as the World Bank and the IMF) maintained limited involvement in a range of social issues, including OVC. Initially preoccupied with the reconstruction of basic services across the war-torn country upon Museveni’s ascendance to presidency in 1986, the GOU offered little in the way of direct support for OVC or financial support for the organizations working to address their needs.

In the first decade of the 21st century a confluence of factors contributed to an almost sudden flurry of activity in the government’s development of plans, frameworks, and policies to address them. In addition to the government’s ratification of a series of international agreements (such as the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child), its commitment to the MDGs pushed the GOU to address some of its most pressing development issues. During this period, the development of frameworks and plans (such as the NOP) necessitated the establishment of policies to formalize the guidelines for initiatives to address the country’s OVC situation. The GOU’s growing unease with the increasing prominence of NGOs in determining the nature and scope of OVC initiatives nationwide also encouraged its development of regulations pertaining to the licensing and activities of NGOs.

This evolution of initiatives to address the situation of OVC in Uganda since independence, and more specifically in the past quarter century, illustrates a series of challenges and obstacles facing the development of a strong civil society sector in Uganda’s early years as a politically independent state. These challenges were later reversed, as the state increasingly came to depend on CSOs to tend to a series of social issues, including OVC. The reliance on non-governmental initiatives to address the needs of OVC in the 1980s and throughout the 1990s only relented somewhat in the early 2000s, when the GOU began in earnest to step up its role in addressing their needs. Nevertheless, the GOU’s initiatives have taken place primarily at the level of coordinating and monitoring the still undeniably strong civil society sector, which provides the bulk of services to OVC. This dynamic has had significant implications for the nature of OVC.
initiatives in Uganda, which remain deeply and heavily influenced by the rules and regulations of foreign donors, that provide the majority of the funding for these initiatives.

As I discuss in the next two chapters (*chapters five and six* focusing on discursive practices), international and bilateral agency (e.g., UNICEF, USAID etc.) and other foreign donor financial and technical support of both governmental and non-governmental initiatives factored prominently into adherence not only to international commitments, but to a range of conditions that contributed to the development of the character of OVC initiatives in Uganda since the mid-1980s. In the next chapter (*chapter five*), I build on this historical background by exploring the character of GOU and NGO initiatives in relation to OVC within the context of donor requirements and competing donor demands.
Chapter 5
Perpetuating and Resisting the Asymmetrical Characteristics of Donor-Recipient Relations: Technologies of Power and Domination in OVC initiatives in Uganda

5 Introduction

In this chapter and the next, I draw on the experiences of representatives of a variety of child-focused NGOs and key informants from government agencies and non-governmental advocacy networks, all of whom are involved in some aspect of the provision of services, policy development and implementation, and/or child protection in relation to OVC in Uganda. This helps me answer the research questions guiding this study, which asked about the evolution of OVC initiatives in Uganda between 1986 and 2011, and also the international influences that contributed to the character of these initiatives. Informed by the Foucaultian lens outlined in chapter two, the methods of analysis outlined in chapter three, and the historical framing from chapter four, I examine the power dynamics operating (at times overtly, at times insidiously) in the ‘community’ of actors (governmental, non-governmental, local, international) engaging in such initiatives. This involves employing critical discourse analysis to elucidate the power dynamics embedded within the texts I analyze (Kincheloe and McLaren 2007). In this chapter, I focus on donor agency agendas shaping initiatives focused on OVC through the rules and regulations governing their operations. I consider the external pressures and influences that contributed to the shape of NGO and GOU OVC-related initiatives.

I argue that the nature of donor relations with funding recipients affect the character of OVC initiatives by structuring the ways and spaces within which local NGOs, Ugandan chapters of INGOs, and the GOU can operate. I find that these relations influence OVC initiatives primarily in ways that perpetuate rather than confront inequities in power. Through this argument, I extend Foucault’s concern regarding the conditions of possibility that have allowed individuals to become particular kinds of subjects and use this to consider how international donor agencies and high-income country governments engaging in development efforts have used NGOs and low- and middle-income country governments strategically to serve their own interests. I contend that these donors reflect and transmit such interests to NGOs through both explicit declarations of what is required of them through, as Stirrat and Henkel (1997: 77) write, “calculated systems
of exchange and negotiation” (i.e., technologies of power and domination), and through micro-level relations (i.e., technologies of the self).

Following Foucault’s progression over the course of his scholarly work from grappling first with the technologies of power and domination and subsequently with the technologies of the self, I first consider (in this chapter) donor interactions and relations with implementing NGOs, which I see as illustrative of technologies of power and domination. In chapter six, I consider the processes through which NGOs participate in perpetuating mainstream development discourse through technologies of the self. I explain how, together, these practices illustrate expressions of power through techniques of cooperation and inclusion rather than force or overt domination (Abrahamsen 2003).

This chapter consists of three main parts. The first describes the context within which the study is set, beginning with a brief refresher (building on chapter two) of the Foucaultian concept of technologies of power and domination. I follow this with a cursory overview of Uganda’s position in the context of global development policies. I proceed with a discussion of key elements of a donor-driven development system as it plays out in Uganda. The second section describes interviewee experiences and ideas as implementers of OVC services in Uganda that speak to the donor-driven development agenda. This involves both respondents’ acceptance and perpetuation of inequitable power relations between donors and recipients, as well as their resistance of the power practices that create and systematize the donor-driven agenda. Specifically, in this chapter I identify respondents’ outright acts of defiance against the inequitable power dynamics characterizing the mainstream development agenda. I also examine the way that these manifest in the initiatives related to OVC in Uganda, through NGO activities and through GOU initiatives. I present respondents’ comments as evidence for the analytical interpretation that follows. In the third section, I analyze and discuss how the experiences expressed in this study empirically illustrate how technologies of power and domination play out in OVC initiatives in Uganda. In the conclusion, I comment on the implications of these findings.
5.1 Applying Foucault’s technologies of power and domination

Technologies of power and domination are influential in shaping the character of OVC initiatives in Uganda. These technologies (or ‘techniques’ or ‘practices’, as used interchangeably by Foucaultian scholars)\(^76\) are a regulated and systematized mode of power, conceptualized within Foucault’s concept of governmentality and consisting of asymmetrical relationships that are “both stable and hierarchical, fixed and difficult to reverse” (Lemke 2000: 5). In these relationships, subordinated individuals and collectives experience a very limited “margin of liberty” (Foucault 1988b: 12), which leaves them with little room for maneuvering (Lemke 2000). In other words, technologies of power and domination represent “what we ordinarily call power” (Foucault 1988b: 19).

Importantly, Foucault did not localize power in one single institution. He saw power as a process of governing conduct, involving state and non-state institutions and agencies – in addition to “discourses, norms, and identities… self-regulation, techniques for the disciplining and care of the self” (Ferguson and Gupta 2002: 989).\(^77\)

Power presupposes individuals’ capacity as agents, as it can function only through their freedom to act in one or another way (Gordon 1991). For Foucault, who was not concerned simply about individuals but rather individuals in their relations to others, other people, and other things (Foucault 1991), “to govern individuals is to get them to act and to align their particular wills with ends imposed on them through constraining and facilitating models of possible actions” (Burchell 1991: 119). The descriptive overview of interviewee experiences in section 5.3 illustrates this process in relation to local NGOs, Ugandan chapters of INGOs, and government agencies involved with OVC initiatives in Uganda. In order to contextualize these results, it is useful to begin with a review of donor-driven development policies over the past quarter century.

---

\(^{76}\) Sometimes technologies refer to more general collections of localized and specific techniques.

\(^{77}\) I explore technologies of the self in *chapter six*. 
5.2  Context: Uganda and the donor-driven development agenda

5.2.1  The global development context

From 1987 onward, Uganda had become a primary host of neoliberal structural adjustment programmes. The government implemented “an ambitious and successful program of macroeconomic adjustment and structural reform” (primarily involving substantially liberalizing the economy, reducing tariffs, lifting three of four import bans, and privatizing the Uganda Commercial Bank) which the GOU implemented through “fiscal and monetary policies” and “substantial economic liberalization” (International Monetary Fund [IMF] n.d.). According to the IMF, this enabled the country to achieve status as “the first country to reach its completion point under the Initiative for Heavily Indebted Poor Countries” in April 1998 (ibid.).

Like many other low- and middle-income countries, Uganda served as a transitional setting for the new NGO funding patterns that emerged during their “explosive growth” (Reiman 2006: 46) in the 1980s and 1990s. In the 1990s, the government undertook to organize policies and programmes to address the HIV and AIDS pandemic in all respects (from prevention to treatment). Two decades later, international loans and research funding continue to constitute the largest source of funding for domestic NGOs in Uganda (Fafchamps and Owens 2009), while funds from private domestic sources (through member fees, essentially user fees paid by ‘beneficiaries’) constitute only a miniscule proportion of NGO operating funds (Barr et al. 2005). The majority of NGOs in Uganda depend heavily (and in most cases exclusively) on foreign sources of funding (Thue et al. 2002; Fafchamps and Owens 2009), to the extent that “grants from international NGOs and donors are the life and blood of Ugandan NGOs” (Barr et al. 2005: 671).

As a major recipient of donor funding, the GOU quickly acceded to the reality of the need to “negotiate with external actors such as NGOs and donors in virtually all aspects of service provision” (Parkhurst 2001: 74). In a 2001 report examining the politics of Uganda’s AIDS response, civil servants commented on the GOU’s intentional openness to and support of non-governmental initiatives, which civil servants described as creating a uniquely ‘friendly’ political environment compared with other low- and middle-income countries and particularly those of other African nations. They felt that this facilitated NGO operations within the country.
With such an ‘open’ approach, foreign-funded organizations and projects became dependent on and subject to funder rules and regulations.

In the 1990s Uganda’s financial reliance on foreign donor agencies brought to a head “inherent clashes between the desire to serve local needs and the need to appease foreign donors” (Parkhurst 2001: 81). This relationship continued to plague donor-recipient relations in Uganda throughout the early 2000s (Rauh 2010). A 1996 study (Cannon 1996) found that NGOs operating in Uganda displayed extreme reticence to reveal any details about their financing to anyone other than their donors, despite demonstrating interest in networking with one another and coordinating their activities. Although in 2006 the GOU implemented regulations requiring all NGOs operating in Uganda to divulge funding sources and amounts to district officials and to submit financial reports (audited accounts) alongside renewal request (see chapter four), these efforts have not yet sufficiently altered the dynamics that encourage NGO loyalty to donors above all else.

For external observers, the process of international agency (i.e., the IMF and the World Bank) imposition of both broad and detailed policies on African states through structural adjustment loans necessitating recipient governments to “‘adjust’ their economic (‘structural’) policies” in order to qualify for and maintain loans (Easterly 2008: 75) is a process ‘recolonization’ (Saul 1993). They argue that this is facilitated by a combination of African states’ reputed “general fiscal weakness” (Ferguson and Gupta 2002: 991) and an acute debt crisis. Yet such assertiveness among donor agencies in relation to civil society organizations, observers consider simply business as usual.

### 5.2.2 Donors monitoring and governing the NGO ‘partnership’ rules

In the early 2000s, the GOU increasingly sought to monitor and coordinate NGOs, arguably to minimize duplication of services, streamline service provision, and identify areas requiring more attention (see chapter four). Uganda’s National NGO Board (within the Ministry of Internal Affairs) initially undertook to supply NGOs with one-year registration certificates; organizations can renew this certificate every three years if they meet renewal requirements, including the provision of reports and accounts of their activities (Barr et al. 2005). According to these regulations, the Board can technically deny certificate renewal to NGOs failing to demonstrate sufficient activity. In practice, local authorities take on the bulk of government monitoring of
NGOs in Uganda through sporadic visits from local government representatives requesting to see annual reports and accounts (ibid.). Despite these government efforts, donors continue to be the primary monitors of NGO activities by engaging in “extensive screening and evaluation” (Barr et al. 2005: 676), with the government playing only a minor role. Specifically with regard to OVC, the GOU has developed a series of policies and frameworks to guide non-governmental initiatives (see chapter four), although it lags far behind donors in monitoring their work.

Collectively, virtually all “northern agencies unilaterally set the rules that govern the [NGO and government] partnerships [between donors from high-income countries and recipients in low-and middle-income countries], based on their own norms, values and beliefs” (Elbers and Schulpen 2013: 48). Beginning in the early 1990s, development increasingly became a process of standardizing “planning, reporting and accountability practices” (Rauh 2010: 29). A donor-driven development agenda (that is, donor command of priority setting and funding regulations) creates a confined conceptual and practical space within which NGOs, like governments, must operate. Indeed, during this period the lopsided power relationships characteristic of donor-government relations became increasingly transposed onto donor-NGO relations, whereby NGOs became subject to a similar set of rules, regulations, and accountability requirements as foreign-funded government agencies.

Heavily reliant on external funding sources, locally- and foreign-founded NGOs increasingly moved away from their experimental approaches that aimed in some way to challenge the status quo, to become more conservative ‘on the ground’ by limiting themselves to readily achievable goals for which they can transparently demonstrate success. This led to reluctance to engage in truly participatory, ‘bottom-up’ initiatives (Mohan 2002). ‘Successful’ NGOs in such a system are measured in terms of funding acquisition and international recognition and can better follow the “legitimating symbolic requirements” (Rauh 2010: 36) of the donors (such as formalizing and professionalizing procedures etc), rather than those truly effecting change ‘on the ground’ (Bornstein 2003).

Financial control gives donors considerable leverage to determine NGO objectives and activities according to donor interests (Thue et al. 2002). This funding dynamic is at the root of a troubling truth about the nature of civil society efforts to address social needs: donors “constitute the single most important factor that influences the character and role of NGOs in Uganda” (ibid.: 30).
NGO dependence on donor objectives is so extensive that the activities of Uganda’s civil society sector “largely reflect the agenda and concerns” (Barr et al. 2005: 675) of international donor agencies and governments. As I describe next, this occurs throughout the processes of establishing donor-recipient relations, through governance and implementation, renewal processes, and beyond.

5.2.3 Donor conditions: influences on programme development

Reflecting IMF and World Bank relations with recipient governments, prior to establishing a funding relationship between donor and NGO, donors influence NGO programme development through prescriptions regarding the nature of the programmes they are willing to fund. A 2005 study by British and Ugandan scholars, funded by the World Bank and government of Japan, showed that responding to calls for funding proposals is the primary means for NGOs to access financial resources in Uganda, as is common worldwide (Barr et al. 2005). This suggests that the donor plans and expectations precede the grant application; that is, donor requirements influence the character of NGOs’ proposed programmes from the very conception of programming ideas.

For most donors, grant eligibility requires potential recipients to maintain formalized management operations (Elbers and Schulpen 2013). To be considered for contracts in a competitive environment, locally-founded NGOs and local chapters of INGOs must operate essentially as private companies, assuming operational approaches and organizational cultures resembling those of “the commercial market-oriented world” (Stirrat and Henkel 1997: 70) where concern for financial stability trumps any claims to “occupy the moral and ethical high ground” (ibid.). Donor requirements for formalized administrative procedures for procuring and managing funding translate into high implementation and management costs for NGOs.

Donors typically select organizations whose objectives reflect their own (Stirrat and Henkel 1997). Large international donors often choose to support programmes based on the extent to which doing so further increases their own visibility. However, NGO efforts to formalize their administrative processes are in vain if the NGO is not on the donor’s radar. The importance of NGO visibility for funding success thus often excludes small, grassroots organizations – that may be doing remarkable work with OVC – from opportunities to acquire grants that would otherwise enable them to continue and possibly scale-up their programmes. Small, new, or “unproven” NGOs (Barr et al. 2005: 661) face particular challenges ‘being seen’ and therefore
invest in enhancing their visibility in the hopes of encouraging donors (including the GOU) to trust and support them. This pattern further obligates them to focus on administrative tasks in lieu of programming activities (Rauh 2010).

Donors prefer (and tend) to fund NGOs focusing on service delivery and boasting a proven record of transparency, rather than a new NGO (Barr et al. 2005). They thereby directly influence OVC initiatives through their denial or withdrawing of funding based on an organization’s previous or current accountability record.

5.2.4 Donor conditions: influences on programme implementation

The global health legacy developed a century earlier chiefly by the Rockefeller Foundation emphasized principles of agenda setting from above and delimited time frames for government funding (Birn 2006). Following this legacy, contemporary donors typically determine the location and nature of activities through designated funds for which their financial support must be used. In the current period, strict guidelines outlining the required or anticipated expenditure of funds within an extremely short timeframe (three to five years is common) accompany donor funds. Within these timeframes, it is often difficult to achieve goals, and NGOs are required to pursue further funding when projects end (Hatton and Schroeder 2007). Upon granting funding to an NGO, donors solidify their command of the development agenda through stringent conditions accompanying funding protocols (Bornstein 2003). Particularly the requirements for NGO accountability and transparency are crucial to donor conditions.

Accountability and transparency became key donor priorities in the early 2000s as a result of a number of developments: the size of grants to NGOs grew considerably (these have decreased again since 2008) (Global Humanitarian Assistance 2013), the MDGs provided a standardized monitoring and accountability framework for assessing countries’ progressions towards the goals, and locally- and foreign-founded NGOs were unable to clearly demonstrate attainment of objectives (Gibelman and Gelman 2001; Johansson et al. 2010). According to the World Bank, accountability “exists when there is a relationship where an individual or body, and the performance of tasks or functions by that individual or body, are subject to another’s oversight, direction or request that they provide information or justification for their actions” (World Bank n.d.). Within the structure of development aid, accountability to donors trumps that to ‘beneficiaries’ or local constituents (Stirrat and Henkel 1997; Thue et al. 2002). Expressed in
terms of the direction of aid, NGOs are ‘upwardly’ accountable to their donors, more so than they are ‘downwardly’ accountable to their ‘beneficiaries’ (Rauh 2010). Moreover, NGO accountability to donors supersedes their obligations to report to their own governments, or that of the donors to be accountable to and transparent to the NGOs they fund. Donors justify their demands for NGO transparency with claims that they lack familiarity with local circumstances, costs, and cultures and are thus limited in their capacity to accurately assess the efficacy, performance, or misuse of funds (Burger and Owens 2010). This admission of inadequate contextual knowledge ends here, however, and less often transposes to reflection about donors’ self-ascribed ‘expertise’ in developing programming ideas.

One method used by donors in an attempt to maximize accountability and transparency involves providing “staff attachments” (James 1994: 26) to manage the financial contributions in implementing countries. In the mid-1990s, almost half of northern NGOs engaged in this practice and in 66% of those cases expatriates were involved (Mukasa 1999). Even in cases where expatriate staffing was not a condition of funding, funders often demanded to be actively involved in hiring local staff (ibid.). The flood of expatriate personnel in development NGOs often drains qualified staff from the public sector, exacerbating inequality and enacting power relationships in ways that deeply affect programme policy and development (Pfeiffer 2003). Local staff often resent expatriate employment in local offices, as expatriates are paid up to eight times more than local staff and receive a range of extra benefits including housing, private school fees for children, household staff, and transportation all free of charge or heavily subsidized and often untaxed (Zarembka 2008; Campbell et al. 2012). Additionally, local professionals working for foreign NGOs are paid significantly more than public sector employees, constituting another dimension of inequality in development initiatives (Pfeiffer 2003).

In the rare instances where hiring foreign staff is not necessarily a funding condition, foreign donors influence local operations through long-distance monitoring and regular visits. A 2005 study in Uganda noted that almost four out of every five NGOs receive an average of five monitoring visits annually, which is “a fairly high level of monitoring by granting bodies”, and some much more frequently (Barr et al. 2005: 671). As has been reported elsewhere (see Hatton and Schroeder 2007), many donors have unique accounting requirements and regularly visit local NGOs and local chapters of INGOs while others also require visits from local NGO representatives to the funding donor.
This contributes to the typically unfocused and disjointed shape of OVC initiatives in Uganda. NGO attempts to appease various donor requests also involve considerable effort towards accountability rather than project implementation. The cost of hiring expatriates to oversee financial management or sending Ugandan staff to the United States or Europe to ‘defend’ their decisions is often considerable in relation to many NGO funding budgets. Such donor requirements thereby impact both the quantity and quality of services provided to OVC, as they divert resources away from direct service delivery to administrative tasks.

Donor command of the development agenda also often pushes NGOs to source funding from a variety of donors, engaging multiple donors in a single programming mission to compensate for the restrictive nature of a single donor’s funding, to provide the breadth of services they desire. In Uganda, a 2005 study of NGO financing showed that NGOs attracting sufficient resources to finance their programmes are often funded by multiple (roughly three to five) donors (Barr and Fafchamps 2006). Accountability to a single donor is already sufficiently challenging for NGOs, and most are funded through multiple sources: As such, acquiring funding from multiple donors constitutes a considerable logistical hurdle and time expenditure for NGOs.

In the remainder of this chapter, I explore the implications of this donor-driven development agenda through the context of OVC initiatives in Uganda. This involves drawing on a description of NGO representatives’ experiences conforming to and working with donor conditions, and the ways in which these influence their programme development and service delivery. I then consider the GOU’s similar experiences through funding agency restrictions with regard to its policy frameworks.

5.3 Descriptive results: NGOs working through bureaucratic hurdles

“People change depending on what the donors want.”
(Representative of a non-governmental advocacy network)

I present this section in an order consistent with the methodological steps I took in organizing and interpreting the interview data from this study (Attride-Stirling’s six-step analytic tool) (see section 3.3). I begin with a description of NGO representatives’ experiences working with donor conditions and regulations, reflecting the thematic networks that resulted from coding respondents’ descriptions and arranging them into themes (steps 1 through 5). The subsections
herein reflect specifically the codes and themes I developed during this process that speak to the influence of donor rules and regulations on local implementation of NGO initiatives. I present them in the order of the first three of the five ‘global networks’ I developed. These are: a) NGO representatives’ experiences and appraisals of OVC initiatives in Uganda; b) the role of the GOU in responding to the needs of OVC; and c) foreign influences shaping the overall character of OVC initiatives in the country. (I take up the remaining two ‘global networks’ pertaining to discursive framings and resistance in chapter six.) These sections (5.3.1 through 5.3.8) consist of descriptive results, absent of analytical interpretation based on the theoretical framing of this study. In section 5.4 I draw on the Foucaultian theoretical framework I outlined in chapter two to critically interpret these thematic networks (consistent with step 6).

5.3.1 “Dancing to the tune of the donor’: NGO acquiescence to donor conditions

The majority of interviewees in this study described the donor-driven development agenda as a context wherein donors command priority setting and funding regulations. This, they explained, influences NGO programme development and administrative operations. Seven (of 23) interviewees representing both locally- and foreign-founded organizations (and a range of very small and modestly funded local NGOs to large INGOs, mostly founded within the last two decades) specifically noted first searching for funding opportunities rather than establishing an organization or programme and subsequently searching for financial support and designing their organization/programme in accordance with donor objectives. As one representative of a small locally-founded NGO reported,

If you go on the net you put in, like in Google, “NGOs funding orphan programmes in Uganda”, you might get them, and you click on one and you know what they are funding. So, you design … You design your organization [accordingly].

Recalling his observations and experiences from almost a decade working with NGOs in a networking capacity, one representative of a non-governmental advocacy network explained that responding to calls for proposals in this manner “influences the service delivery” as donors

78 Additional NGOs might be using a similar approach, but did not explicitly make a point of mentioning this in the interviews.
preclude or encourage particular programme activities which are often at odds with the intentions of local NGOs or local chapters of INGOs. This system, he suggested,

... influences the service delivery, because then the agenda has already been set. The agenda has already been set by the donor. Because you are telling me you want this and this to be done. You want this and this to be done... So we write the proposal according to how you want it, not how I want to do the intervention. Because I want that money. It comes with maybe a little salary for me, and things like that. Hmm? So, I think ... the donors also sometimes prescribe what should be done.

Interviewees experienced the donor-recipient relationship in terms of pressure to conform to donor requirements and as an impingement on their freedom to operate according to their own agendas. In a spin on the old axiom, ‘he who pays the piper calls the tune’ or – as others have adapted – “he who pays the piper not only calls the tune but attempts to make sure that it is performed” (Stirrat and Henkel 1997: 75-76), a diverse range of study interviewees (one from a small locally-founded NGO, one from a medium-sized foreign-founded INGO, one representative of a government agency, and one representative of a non-governmental advocacy network) metaphorically described (in their own words, unprompted) the character of donor-recipient relations as ‘dancing to someone else’s tune’; that is, dancing to the tune of the donors that fund their activities and programming. This, they explained, begins as early as the development of a programming idea or the establishment of a new NGO, as this representative quote from a small locally-founded NGO employee indicated:

Most organizations are now designing programmes bas[ed] on what available donors are [funding at any given time]. So that’s why you find at times, we are dancing to the tune of the donor. Because you knew what was their focus, and then you apply to them.

(Representative of a small locally-founded NGO)

An individual with over a decade of experience at a medium-sized foreign-founded NGO echoed this observation:

Before we apply for this funding, we will have consented to promoting the ideas of the donor ... Yeah, because the donor is actually putting it to us, “These are the guidelines under which you’ll operate if you receive funding from us. Now, if ... you want to apply
for money, make sure you work within those guides”… So, from the start, we must come to terms with what’s in the basket of what the donor is providing, and how does the donor want us to move around with it. (Representative of a medium-sized foreign-founded INGO)

Success in securing funding often depends on donor awareness of an NGO’s reputation. In essence, aspiring NGOs must ‘be seen’. Interviewees identified the notion of ‘being seen’ – that is, having visibility as a respected and ‘active’ organization – as a prerequisite to successfully sourcing funding and being included in networks and other associations: “Everybody wants to be seen doing something” (Representative of a large foreign-founded INGO); “Each organization is trying to make themselves be known more” (Representative of a small locally-founded NGO).

5.3.2 Contrasting priorities: donor versus NGO aspirations

At early stages of establishing a funding relationship between donor and NGO, donor rules and regulations structure the shape of the NGO’s initiatives, in this case determining the nature of an NGO’s proposed approach. In my research, donor agenda-setting bore out in their provision of designated funding. Consequently, NGOs expressed a frequent mismatch between their philosophical priorities and that of donor agencies.

Five NGO interviewees (three of them representing small locally-founded NGOs, one representing an NGO founded locally by foreigners and managed primarily from abroad, and a fifth interviewee representing a large foreign-founded INGO) and three key informants from governmental and non-governmental agencies concurred that NGOs at times find themselves implementing projects incongruent with their own priorities and beliefs. They viewed this as an outcome of the funding dynamic that facilitates donor influence on their programme development.

So there are also other donors who may force you to do something, which possibly you may not have wanted to do, but because you need the money to support the people… you dance to their tune! (Representative of a small locally-founded NGO)
Half the interviewees, representing a mix of locally- and foreign-founded small and large organizations, made particular mention of donors’ inflexibility and suggested that donors rather than local needs that determine what is funded. One representative of a medium-sized NGO founded locally by foreigners elucidated,

There [are] designated funds that are sent in to bring money, to give money for [a] certain something. Someone will donate money and say, “This is towards a medical this. This is towards a school. This is to build a lab”. So those are designated funds. (Representative of a medium-sized foreigner-founded local NGO)

Indeed, control of funding at headquarters can restrict the use of funds according to funder requirements, as this representative of a large foreign-founded NGO explained:

It has been structured in a way that, if you’re in Uganda … you’re going to get one consolidated fund… Already, our guidelines are very strong. When we are making the budget, it’s coded… We do our plans, and they go through an approval process until the top … just to ensure that everybody’s in line with what the organization looks like. (Representative of a large foreign-founded INGO)

The targeted nature of donor funds thus indicates that local NGOs and local chapters of INGOs must use the funds in a manner pleasing to the donor, regardless of their own ideas or aspirations. Ultimately, as extensions of donor agencies, local initiatives are required to reflect the priorities and objectives of their benefactors (Barr et al. 2003).

For this reason, study interviewees – particularly those involved in advocacy – said they were strongly disinclined to accept funding from the GOU (relative to any other donors), feeling that doing so would be particularly constraining because of what they perceived as the GOU’s conservative and ill-informed approach to OVC (which interviewees judged as less problematic among foreign donors). Two representatives of NGO networks explained:

79 Additional NGO representatives insinuated similar perspectives but made no explicit mention of this in the interviews, and hence are not included in this proportion.
If we got funding from [the] government [of Uganda], that’s what it is. You must dance to the tunes of government. (Representative of a non-governmental advocacy network)

Of course the dilemma is getting money from [the] government [of Uganda] and then keep on criticizing them, which they don’t want! [Laughs] … So, they give you money, they want you to do what? To be talking nicely, but that cannot be all the time… constructive criticism is good. (Representative of a non-governmental advocacy network)

Indeed, these representatives of non-governmental advocacy networks felt that their freedom to challenge government in any significant way had been increasingly truncated since the GOU began sincere efforts to monitor and coordinate NGO initiatives in the country in the early 2000s.

Surprisingly, despite hesitating to accept funding from their own government, half the NGO representatives in this study (representing a blend of small, medium, and large organizations, both locally- and foreign-founded) reported willingly accepting funding from foreign governments (e.g., governments of Germany, United Kingdom, United States of America, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Australia, Korea). Interviewees’ strong disinclination to apply for or accept GOU funding – based primarily on fears of ensuing limits to their freedom of speech and their concomitant presumed inability to work independently of the state – was not reflected in their stance towards foreign-government funding. Although they openly critiqued the need to ‘dance to the tune’ of the GOU and of private donors, no NGO representative demonstrated evidence of extending this critique to government agencies of other countries such as USAID or the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) or to multilateral agencies such as UNAIDS.

Notwithstanding their greater willingness to work with large and consistent funding sources such as foreign governments (as opposed to the GOU) all interviewees in this study recognized and expressed concern about the conditionality of donor funding which is part and parcel of OVC initiatives in Uganda. A common refrain in this study was some variant of: “people bring money, but it’s conditional. There are conditions attached to it” (Representative of a large foreign-founded INGO).
5.3.3 NGOs incorporating conditional and bureaucratic measures

A measure towards adhering to donor demands that often emerges prior to establishing a funding relationship involves adapting NGO administrative procedures to accord with donor requirements, which vary according to which GOU ministry, foreign government agency, or private organization provides the funding. In this study, interviewees reported changing administrative practices to accord with donor requirements for particular grants: “We put what we were doing into formal ways” (Representative of a small locally-founded NGO). For example,

USAID came in… First of all, … we had to have a full proposal and come up with a big budget. We had to incorporate a lot of things. We had to get a team which was organized. Because, before, I was working with [this European man] alone. We had to get a staff at the time, because this was money coming from the government. We had to have an accountant. We had to have official audits. We could no longer carry money in the bag and so on. (Representative of a small locally-founded NGO)

Beyond the regulations shaping NGO funding proposals or programmatic ideas, interviewees expressed concern about onerous donor requirements for detailed accountability regarding the funding acquired. Given the limited administrative capacity of many NGOs, donor reporting requirements are often quite arduous for implementing organizations (Barr et al. 2005):

So it’s difficult. Sometimes it’s a nightmare… Somebody has to spend here the whole night, trying to put boxes [of receipts etc.] together… But with the rules and regulations, you learn to live with them. The most important thing is to understand them, and know that this is what is required, and if there is anything that you don’t understand, then we usually seek clarification to ensure that we, you know, we abide with the rules and regulations. (Representative of a large foreign-founded INGO)

Indeed, NGOs invest considerable resources to attend to stringent donor accountability requirements and prove their adherence to donor conditions. Donors reward organizations producing quality documents and do not take notice of (or show little respect to) NGOs lacking such organizational skills yet effecting positive changes (Rauh 2010). However, given the vagaries of securing donor funding, and the often limited scope of what NGOs can undertake
within restrictive donor funding protocols, NGOs must often engage a number of donors in order to meet their programmatic needs. One representative of a small locally-founded NGO referred to sourcing funding from multiple donors as a “disturbing” challenge. Another representative of a large foreign-founded INGO was more sanguine:

When you are working with multiple [donors], their rules and regulations are very different and you have to get yourself to learn to deal with rules and regulations from five agencies. Ha! Which sometimes is difficult. But also, in terms of … communication, it’s overwhelming, because you have these multiple donors, and you’re receiving communication from each one of them every day, and you have to respond. And, logistically, it’s difficult. But we learn to manage it because I think that’s the way to go.

Another element of conditionality often involved in determining NGO procedures involves NGO staffing. This particular element of donor command of the development agenda – especially if this requirement occurs in the form of donor provision of staff attachments for their funding projects, or their prescriptions regarding NGO staffing with local employees – engendered tensions between local and foreign staff. As one representative of a large foreign-founded NGO put it “the Americans want to be involved in the hiring of staff”. This observation was echoed throughout the interviews. For example:

You find conditions of certain things that you must do, for you to qualify for their resources. Once you qualify for their resources, then you start hiring some expatriates who take 30% [of the resources] back to the US. (Representative of a large foreign-founded INGO)

In combination with tight donor monitoring standards and frequent evaluations, interviewees felt that this condition reflected donor efforts to maximize funding control, and their mistrust towards local staff:
[The donors] want their own people to manage their own money… It’s probably they don’t trust [local] people with the money… To them, they have to come and monitor and see what we’re doing. (Representative of a medium-sized locally-founded NGO)

---

**Openness to discussing NGO funding**

NGO representatives’ discussions of the element of managing various donors’ concurrent conditionalities varied by NGO size. In this study, five of the seven smaller locally-founded organizations exhibited considerably more openness about financing and other details of their organizations in comparison to foreign-founded organizations. In response to broad questions about financing of NGOs in Uganda, several representatives of small NGOs offered specific and thorough examples from their own organizations. One NGO representative even offered detailed information about his NGO’s financing coordination, which aims to strategically maximize government support where available and minimize local suspicion about the NGO’s assets.

By contrast, all representatives of the foreign-founded medium-sized and larger organizations actively avoided discussion of finances, giving broad answers, using hypothetical numbers, and responding defensively, at times outright refusing to discuss financial matters despite the open and unspecific nature of the questions. Most often, these interviewees evaded such discussion by claiming ignorance or lack of insight into a field of organizational operation for which they were not responsible, as this characteristic quote from a representative of an NGO founded locally by foreigners illustrates:

> As far as funding is concerned, I’m not the right person to give [information], because I’m not an authority in that area… We have an accounts department that … deals with that, that has systems in place on how to account to, report to different people, and they’re really doing it really well. It’s just that I’m not informed enough to be able to give the information. (Representative of a medium-sized foreigner-founded local NGO)

Interviewees making such statements suggested that NGO staff who are not directly involved in the accounts department are unable to identify the primary sources of NGO funding. However, the obviousness of these sources and the interviewees’ breadth of knowledge about their NGOs suggest such assertions are likely misleading, and probably reflect interviewees’ concerns about divulging finance-related information to a foreigner and relative stranger, of whose motives they are uncertain.

---

In light of this recognition of the apparent inevitability of requiring foreign funding to ensure organizational survival, five of the seven locally-founded NGOs were proactive. Typically, they
addressed the perceived lack of trust by strategically involving a foreigner in their administration in the hopes of inspiring more confidence in donors and soliciting more funding.

I would really say that, if you have a European on the programme, it’s easy for him to raise money. People would trust him. (Representative of a small locally-founded NGO)

For this NGO representative, maximizing the appearance of transparency in NGO operations by involving a foreigner was a way to maximize donor trust. Indeed, this process of involving foreigners has become so entrenched in development efforts that NGOs felt it necessary to include foreigners in programmatic and operational decisions even when this is not prescribed by the donor.

In cases where the donor did not or no longer require(d) staff attachments, monitoring through site visits were common.

[The British woman] was our social worker [alongside myself, tending to children’s needs] here for a long time … And I only came in shortly after she went back to [the] UK. But… she continued monitoring. And she continued visiting. (Representative of a small locally-founded NGO)

Alternatively, donors required local NGO staff to visit headquarters as an element of monitoring. For instance, one NGO representative described defending her decisions to the American Board that oversees her work:

[Any changes] have to be approved… in Washington… At times, I send things and they’re like, “No, it’s not supposed to be like this or like that”. But, anyhow, I usually go there twice a year… for board meetings. I attend the board meetings. So that is really, really helpful. I’m always there to sort of defend what I’ve… sent to them… what I do. Because usually you have the [predetermined] agenda of the board meeting. So I go with all my paperwork or, you know, everything. [With] my justification. (Representative of a small NGO founded locally by foreigners)

In sum, autonomy to work according to one’s own ideas and aspirations was not part of the vocabulary of NGO representatives, who instead gave countless examples of the donor conditions to which they must adhere in order to secure or ensure continued funding.
5.3.4 Donors defining NGO success

Primary among donor conditions is their requirements for measurable outcomes within pre-determined (and often short) timeframes. Indeed, in this study, interviewees expressed anxiety over the potential cessation or denial of (future) funding should they be unable to heed these donor requirements.

Sometimes there is a lot of pressure [from donors] [hesitant laugh]. Recently, we got some money to do a project and we were given a timeline on which to report on it. So, by the time of reporting, the project was not yet complete. But the donors were expecting a report… Many NGOs are faced with that challenge. The donor expects results within a given time, and you have to prepare something, or else they may not be funding … the following year. And, and of course if you don’t present the report, then it appears like you’re not working. (Representative of a large foreign-founded INGO)

One medium-sized foreign-founded NGO preemptively addressed this requirement for rapid results within short periods of time by designing its entire mode of operation around three-year programming, after which time the NGO withdraws from the project and moves to a different community. In this way, the NGO is able to demonstrate quick results to its donors.

For many NGOs, donor emphasis on measurable results within specified timeframes revealed a lack of patience to work on lasting changes and avoidance of the roots of issues, as this observation from representatives of a foreign-founded NGO indicates:

Participant 1: Who has the patience to wait for 10, 15, 20 years? … People expect instant results, immediate solutions, which may not help you in the long run… So, some of the responses really are not towards building the capacity of the individual. It’s more [like] relief [work].
Participant 2: They address the symptom. (Representative of a large foreign-founded INGO)

One representative of an NGO that provides both residential care and assistance for children living with families noted donor preference to fund programme elements with the most (measurable) impact.
[The donors] would like to hear numbers… They are supporting only the community bit of [our work] because, again, that’s where they see we are [serving] more children ...

Yeah, they would never do anything for the children’s village [which houses few children]. (Representative of a large foreign-founded INGO)

Two NGO representatives (one from a foreign-founded, the other from a locally-founded and largely foreign-funded organization) explained how donor obstinacy on project parameters limited their freedom to adapt to changing circumstances, such as a location change necessitated by shifting needs.

If we have written a project for village ‘X’, it is very hard to say, “We no longer want to intervene in village ‘X’, we want now to go to village ‘Y’”. (Representative of a large foreign-founded INGO)

The founders, development partners, at times they come, they dictate where you should go and work… It poses a challenge. And what you should go and do. So, because we may be in need of going to another area, but they say, “For us we are giving you seeds, we give you this, take it to this place”. (Representative of a medium-sized locally founded NGO)

In a similar vein, interviewees reported experiencing another component of donor requirements for ‘measurable’ outcomes: the number of ‘beneficiaries’ impacted by their services. According to interviewees, donors partly measure impact through the number of ‘beneficiaries’ because they “are touched by the big numbers” (Representative of a small locally-founded NGO). For them, donor desire to serve large numbers of beneficiaries reflected donor emphasis on quantity over quality.

It’s the element of cost now. Because the donors are saying, “If we give $10,000 … how many [children] are you reaching [with this money]?” Let the donors go beyond impact [in terms of numbers] and look for results! (Representative of a medium-sized foreign-founded INGO)

NGO representatives’ definitions of success thus contrast with corresponding donor definitions, including requirements for large numbers of beneficiaries. This mismatch in NGO and donor
conceptualizations of desired outcomes is symptomatic of a broader concern regarding the cultural inappropriateness of many donor requirements and programmatic conditions.

5.3.5 Cultural imperialism: imposing donor views on local initiatives

NGO representatives’ primary apprehension regarding donor command of the development agenda concerned the cultural insensitivity donors portray through their conditions. Indeed, some donors demonstrate an appalling lack of adaptability to local conditions and circumstances. Regardless of specifics regarding the timeframe, activities, location, or the number of beneficiaries donors require from the implementing NGOs, the discord between donor requirements and the plans of locally-founded NGOs and local chapters of INGOs is emblematic of a system that is typically not adaptable to different contexts and can be inappropriate if the context is changed.

Donors frequently require NGOs to engage in outdated or contextually inappropriate initiatives. Almost half of the NGO representatives in this study (from both locally- and foreign-founded organizations) reported continuously endeavoring to develop new approaches to OVC care in response to an ever-changing donor scene. Some models of OVC care developed in Europe and North America more than half a century ago continue to be implemented without much change to suit the context of present day Uganda. Two NGOs have made changes over time by adapting to changing conditions internationally but not across space. Such organizations implement essentially identical programmes worldwide without thoroughly considering or adjusting for differences across and within regions.

One representative of a large foreign-founded INGO reported the NGO’s headquarters requiring implementation of essentially the same “universal” model of care worldwide, despite acknowledging differences in culture and customs across communities and nations. Another representative of a large foreign-founded INGO noted, “[Our NGO] first tried [this approach] in a few countries. It works well. And [now] it’s a common feature everywhere”.

The basic principles of one NGO’s approach have remained the same within Africa since its foundation in 1946, even though it modified the model it uses to provide housing for children in Europe (where it originated) to account for the changing demographics of children requiring assistance (i.e. by only temporarily housing children of drug addicted or divorced parents until
their households become stable). The individual representing this large foreign-founded INGO explained,

Of course [the model] can never be perfect. I mean, the family is… headed by a mother. So, the father figure is not a very outstanding thing in this model. Because of the belief that the [NGO] founder had that the majority of the families at that time were being taken care of by women. Because the men had gone out to war, and the women really managed the situation. So, he thought, “Oh, yeah, they can manage”. Even in Africa, you find that… the fathers could be [physically] there, but they kind of aren’t [available]. Hands folded, just bossing around. While the mothers are more in touch [with the children]. So, that was the whole thinking [during the organization’s founding]. But, realistically, you need both. We do manage to get results, but there are situations where you feel that, “Oh, we do miss this in our model”.

The desire of local NGO staff to adapt their NGO model to a more ‘modern’ conceptualization of family – which values the involvement of fathers within (not exclusively outside) the home – has thus far fallen on deaf ears as foreign board members insist on maintaining the original model as it has been for decades. This also ignores in large part the long-standing cultural practice of caring for orphaned children within the extended family.

Within the asymmetrical power relationship between donors and funding recipients, donor cultural insensitivity and failure to fully appreciate the intricacies of the local context is particularly problematic. To illustrate such insensitivity, one NGO representative recalled donors asking his NGO to provide piglets as gifts to Muslim families. Given the prohibition of pork consumption in Islamic law, he noted wryly that “it was a problem” (Representative of a medium-sized locally founded NGO). Donor desire to contribute materially can also be tricky for the recipient NGO, according to a Ugandan representative of an NGO founded locally by a European and two Ugandans:

There is another organization, another company in Germany… They donated us shoes. But if you look at the amount of tax we paid [to the Ugandan government in order to bring those shoes into the country] … The government [of Uganda] should have felt embarrassed and say, “No, we cannot charge you this money”. But we paid almost three million [Ugandan shillings] or three and a half [million]. Which is enough money to run
the organization for a month to buy food for the kids, for example. So, those are some of the things that really press us. Where you have many people who would like to donate things from outside of Uganda. (Representative of a small NGO founded locally in collaboration with a foreigner)

While in this instance it was the German company demonstrating insensitivity towards the local context and adamancy to provide a gift of questionable suitability, this respondent shifted the blame on the GOU for failing to recognize the absurdity of charging such heavy tax on this gift. This reflects a widespread critical stance among local NGOs and local chapters of INGOs in relation to the GOU and its dealings with civil society, which I take up in the analysis.

Donor refusal to adapt their requirements to local circumstances was disconcerting for interviewees. One interviewee representing a non-governmental advocacy network spoke at length about international donors’ inadequate understanding of local situations and insufficient consultation with locals prior to project implementation, explaining:

Many donors don’t know… what direction to take most times. And, certain times, they decide on a direction without a due process of appreciating and consulting… That is why sometimes the money is available, but it is not translating into impact or any changes. So, I think the donors also have a role to play [in understanding] the dynamics here. Sort of the small things… It’s not that, “Oh, there are 800,000 orphans in Uganda. We have to allocate 20 million dollars to this programme”. No, there are dynamics in there, that they need to really sit with the NGOs, with government, and understand that … maybe we should sit and talk… The donors [laughs], the donors should stop being small Gods… They should not direct… I should not respond to your call proposal that the proposal should be like this… No! Let me tell you what I want to do … then you give me the money. (Representative of a non-governmental advocacy network)

For this interviewee, donor command of the programming agenda is also reflected in donors’ reluctance to make an effort to learn or inform themselves about pertinent local circumstances. This example portrays a profound desire to determine the direction of locally-implemented work, instead of being confined by donor ideas and regulations. It also reflects a broader concern about donor imposition of their perceptions of beneficiaries’ needs, which is often incommensurate with what NGO representatives perceive to be beneficiaries’ felt needs. NGO representatives’
perceptions certainly also represent a filtered version of these needs. Yet perspectives of local NGO representatives (or long-term foreign residents of Uganda) are arguably at least marginally more legitimate than foreign-based donors’ perceptions, given local representatives’ proximity to and more similar social and cultural contexts to beneficiaries’ situation. One NGO representative argued,

To a large extent, far too much of Western aid efforts [are] focused on what the giver perceives that [the beneficiaries] would want … Without really truly thinking through what will happen in 20 years’ time … I know for some of the [children’s] homes, the children stand absolutely no chance … They will be poorer when they grow up. They will have had aspirations developed with no chance of them being met. And I think that’s both cruel and irresponsible … Far too many of, let’s call them the Western agencies, come in and … the children … suddenly get moved to what would be the equivalent of upper middle class Ugandan standards. Looked after while they’re children. And then how on earth do they cope when they’re adults? They don’t know how to live in the country. Haven’t got a clue how they will cope. And they will go from being well looked after with everything done for them and support networks to, “Well, you’ve grown up now. Bye bye”. Where they would be far better if the organizations looked after them to a much lower level, a level which reflected Uganda better, and looked after twice as many.

(Representative of a small NGO founded locally in collaboration with a foreigner)

This NGO representative expressed a similar sentiment as above: donors impose their own requirements and beliefs on NGOs. In the case referred to in the quote above, the NGO representative suggested that donors attempt to raise the living standards of OVC far beyond the local norm, with the end results of raising children who lack the life skills to succeed in their environment. In this regard, donor bias (based on experience and knowledge in high-income countries) regarding an acceptable (or desirable) standard of living conflicts with local understandings of the needs of OVC, and according to respondents has undesirable outcomes for beneficiaries.

In sum, donor cultural insensitivity spawned wide frustrations which, as we shall see in chapter seven, was channeled into limited yet significant advocacy and resistance of the mainstream development paradigm.
5.3.6 Donor conditions: influencing GOU frameworks and policy development

The government of Uganda plays a minor role in financing NGO activities in Uganda, functioning primarily as a conduit for foreign funds to local NGOs and local chapters of INGOs. Only under comparatively uncommon circumstances, the GOU plays the role of donor, with all its accompanying implications. In its position as a recipient of foreign aid, however, the GOU is itself not immune to the donor influence as described above in relation to NGOs. The GOU is heavily financed through foreign governments and agencies (ranking 34th in 2011 in recipients of official humanitarian assistance and receiving 9.9% of its gross national income as official development assistance in 2011) (Global Humanitarian Assistance 2013), although in 2012 the European Union, the United Kingdom, the World Bank, Austria and other countries suspended up to US$300 million in budget support to Uganda until 2015 due to “massive public corruptions” (Jeanne and Njoroge 2012).

The GOU has its own experiences operating within a donor-driven development environment. Paralleling NGO experiences with donors, one government agency employee with many years of experience in various positions within government noted,

So what I actually know is, there’s a lot of tailoring of issues to fit in the priorities… of the donors. You know, as far as the economy is like this, I swear, in as far as you are relying on funding, external funding, you have a large, huge amount of ideas that you have to put into your plan from elsewhere… The end result for you is if you are able to reach the child, the better. But you’ll have to dance to somebody’s tune to some extent, in order to be able to reach the child.

Resembling NGO experiences, the mismatch between government agency and donor priorities often commences prior to confirming a funding relationship. Particularly for government initiatives, the nature of the funding dynamics is such that donor buy-in is required from the outset. One government agency employee, perhaps illustrative of more extensive experience (in

---

80 National and local government revenues for NGOs in Uganda represented only 0.6% and 5.2% of the aggregate share of revenues in 2001, the main revenue sources coming from INGOs (43.1%) and bilateral donors (28.3%) (Barr et al. 2005).
contrast to NGO representatives) with the vagaries of donor funding and the need to concede to donor requirements in order to maximize her own funding opportunities, revealed the influence of her own agenda in requisitions for government funding:

One of the main agendas for getting the donors involved is actually to get their commitment to the issues. I think that is, at the back of the mind, that is first and foremost... Getting their involvement to be able to appreciate the main issues and buy-in and fund in the long run... Because if they don’t understand the issues, if it’s not in line with their priorities... Then you have challenges later.

A 20-year veteran employee of a government agency explained,

I might be able to write a requisition and say, “I want to handle street children in this quarter”. I say, “I want to handle street children, also do a consultative meeting for maybe missing and abandoned children.” The finance people will decide which one to fund. I will strongly think the one for street children is a priority. They will not fund that. They will fund something else. So I end up also mismatching in my priorities.

In contrast to NGO representatives (who expressed concern about accepting funding from the GOU, but readily accepted funding from foreign governments), two GOU representatives involved in OVC policy and programme development expressed unease about accepting funds from foreign governments. This reticence reflected their understanding that accepting funding from other governments requires adherence to their standards and accountability structures. One of these interviewees expressed a keen awareness that other governments also “come with set policies” to which they must conform. Commenting that both NGOs and government “dance to the tune of the donor” to some extent, one government agency employee explained,

NGOs that are operating, they also [like we do in government] kind of operate in specific areas that are of interest to the donor. Otherwise they won’t be able to mobilize the money. So, there is that donor-driven way of doing things.

For the GOU, evidence of this “donor-driven way of doing things”, as a representative of a government agency described it, extended beyond the conditionality of foreign government
agency funding to multi-lateral agencies and international treaties that support the government’s OVC initiatives.

5.3.7 What about government coordination?

Donor command of the development agenda also raises questions about the responsibility of the GOU to coordinate and monitor NGO initiatives, and to set policies and standards in relation to OVC, which still requires considerable improvement. Most interviewees agreed that GOU involvement with NGO initiatives was negligible, particularly throughout the earlier surge in OVC initiatives in the 1980s and 1990s, as this archetypal quote from a representative of a large foreign-founded INGO indicates:

> Before 2004, I think what was happening in Uganda was implementation of programmes, interventions for orphans and other vulnerable children were being carried out in a very uncoordinated way, and it left vulnerable children just receiving the smallest bit [of assistance]… Until when the Minister of Gender, with support from … USAID [and the] Core Initiative, came up with guidelines [put] first of all the Strategic Plan [for OVC] in place. So that people, NGOs implementing interventions, are guided.

Indeed, half the interviewees representing a mix of locally- and foreign-founded organizations as well as government and non-government advocacy network representatives conceded that the GOU has made efforts in the early 2000s to increase its capacity to monitor and guide NGO services in relation to OVC in the country. However, respondents reported that these efforts have been insufficient, due to lack of GOU oversight and coordination of program implementation. In regard to GOU involvement with OVC initiatives, one representative of a small NGO founded locally by a foreigner claimed, “In most cases these things are theoretical, not practical”. Indeed, NGO representatives repeatedly echoed this sentiment:

> Policies and implementation... That’s where the gap is. Wonderful policies and programmes, but the gap of implementation still remains. (Representative of a medium-sized foreign-founded NGO)

One experienced government agency representative openly admitted to the GOU’s shortcomings in this regard:
Uganda has developed a lot of policies, legislation, guidelines, frameworks, that – once properly implemented – … the situation of children in the country should be able to improve. The key question we are facing is lack of implementation. Lack of proper implementation… When it comes to implementation, we’re not enforcing the legislation that should protect children. (Representative of a government agency)

Seven interviewees representing small and large locally- and foreign-founded organizations as well as four (of five) government agency and non-governmental advocacy networks attributed the minor role of the GOU (compared with donors) in monitoring NGOs to the government’s lack of prioritization of OVC. One government agency employee stated, “At the central government level, priority is being given to other areas, and not this sector that handles OVC”. A similar range of interviewees commented that the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (which officially holds the responsibility for coordinating OVC-related initiatives in Uganda) is “the least funded [ministry]; it is actually marginalized” (Representative of a large foreign-founded INGO) (a claim also made six years earlier by Bantebya-Kyomuhendo 2005). According to this NGO representative, other ministries are well funded, suggesting that the GOU has the funds required to coordinate the OVC response, but “it’s not the priority”. Another NGO representative from a large foreign-founded INGO concurred:

[In] the Ministry of Gender... There [are] limited efforts towards coordinating the response for OVC. There were efforts, many efforts, for helping on coordinating the HIV response. And you find that there is strong coordination for care and treatment agencies. There is a way they get to speak together. There is a way they get to know what the other is doing. But when it comes to agencies focusing on OVC, there isn’t that strong coordination… The Ministry of Gender tries, but it’s weak. It’s weak in terms of bringing us together, and being able to share what we’ve been able to do in a concrete way. They call quarterly meetings, bi-annual meetings that people just go present what they’re doing, without even providing evidence for what they’re claiming to be doing for children. So, the coordination efforts for organizations focusing on children, particularly orphans and vulnerable children, are weak... The Ministry of Gender is generally weak… Everybody’s in their own world. Even when you are implementing in the same district.
Although another representative of a medium-sized NGO founded locally by foreigners similarly contended that the introduction of the OVC Technical Advisor in 2003 had ameliorated the situation by coordinating what she referred to as the “OVC response”, she observed that most NGOs continued to do “their own thing”.

In Uganda, it’s external people that come and see the problem, come and see the issues. But the [Ugandan] government has not risen to … the occasion of these children. They … have not come up to see the real issues of the children… There is no priority given to orphans and other vulnerable children. Somehow we think that they’ll be absorbed into families… There are systems and structures in place in communities to take care of these children. And traditionally, not just in Uganda, that is what is expected. But we need to get to a point where we recognize that the systems have failed. The families have failed… I don’t know if it’s an issue of funding, but it’s just an issue of prioritization. I think if we put our heads, if we put our minds to it, and we saw it as a need, if the government saw it as a need, they would do something about it.

Without detailed knowledge of NGO activities and budgets, the capacity of the GOU to monitor and coordinate them is limited. Indeed, interviewees in this study reported a strong disinclination to share detailed funding matters with the GOU. One government employee lamented this dynamic:

We don’t know, if I have to say accurately how much money has gone into OVC response, I don’t know. There is so much money that is coming and we don’t know about it. They don’t report to you, they don’t report; they report to the donor. (Representative of a government agency)

Government inability to actively take charge of NGO-led OVC initiatives enables great donor command of NGOs.

NGO representatives’ unease about the dependency that characterizes the nature of their relationships with foreign donors was also apparent in discussions regarding the GOU, which is itself deeply engaged in donor-recipient relationships.
5.3.7.1 Influences from UNICEF/UNCRC and USAID

Six interviewees representing mostly foreign-founded organizations, a representative of a government agency, and a representative of a non-governmental advocacy network emphatically and frequently mentioned the influence of the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) on GOU policies, frameworks, and programmatic activities.

As discussed in chapter four, UNICEF has played a central role in OVC affairs in Uganda since the 1980s. Interviewees from both government councils and NGOs recognized the Fund’s prominence, particularly in government initiatives for OVC, highlighting its injection of “a lot of money in OVC” (Representative of a government agency), and its encouragement of the Ministry of Gender – as signatory of the UNCRC – to follow up on its agreements through policy. They suggested that the government developed OVC policies in order to accord with UNICEF requirements; that is, as a result of ratifying UNICEF’s guiding document, the UNCRC. “Organizations like UNICEF, I think, they have pushed the government to really put these [OVC] policies in place” (Representative of a large foreign-founded INGO). A representative of a locally-founded NGO and a government council employee hinted at the paternalism inherent in UNICEF involvement in Uganda’s OVC affairs.

UNICEF is a big funder [of the Ministry of Gender]… And it has got a lot of impact in the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development. When they’re making policies, UNICEF comes in to address some of these issues. Since we are signatories to some of the international bodies, so UNICEF comes in to impress on them that, “Since you’re a signatory to this, you need to follow it up strictly when you are framing up your policies”. So thereby, there is somebody there, monitoring. (Representative of a small locally-founded NGO)

It was an international requirement … for us to now consider orphans and other vulnerable children within our mandate. And we had to do it… For instance, the UNCRC… Because we ratified the Convention and we were required to investigate it. (Representative of a government agency)
Respondents spoke of UNICEF and the UNCRC almost interchangeably, emphasizing the government’s UNCRC ratification as central to ensuing OVC policies and frameworks. One representative of a large foreign-founded INGO explained that GOU ratification of international commitments translated into a concrete imperative to create institutions and frameworks that transform international commitments into action:

We have international instruments that put government in a situation of, “You have to replicate the Convention on the Rights of the Child in your country. You have to come up with policies that domesticate this policy, this instrument”. So once, you come and then they form the Children’s Act, you put that in the Constitution. Come up with policies to address some of the social, socioeconomic needs … in the [UN]CRC and in all those instruments… You really cannot do away with that. And once you create this at national level, then you must create a budget for these policies. You must create institutions that are going to ensure that the Children’s Act is enforced. You must come up with clear institutions that are in place. The institutional framework has to be very clear. So, the need is in two way, that there is a problem, indeed, but there is also this international commitment at the national level.

The problems of OVC in this sense are constructed not only through observable, measurable conditions, but also through the naming of such issues by foreign agencies. Echoing this observation regarding the centrality of the UNCRC in encouraging government policies related to OVC, another NGO representative with almost a decade of experience working for this large foreign-founded NGO argued that the GOU only took serious notice of OVC issues upon ratifying the UNCRC, and that it only abides by its stipulations to the extent necessary to appease UN demands. As he said,

[The government] respond[s] only to a level where they can get away with it! [Laughs]
Where they can get away with it. (Representative of a large foreign-founded INGO)

For this interviewee, it is primarily the act of international monitoring that encourages the government to take initiative with regard to OVC issues.

Another notable impact of the UNCRC comes through the Convention’s four pillars of child rights (survival, protection, development, and participation), which formed the foundation of the
National Council for Children mandate (see chapter four). According to several interviewees, the establishment of the NCC was partially an outcome of international comparison: considering what other countries, particularly in Africa, were doing. In other words, it involved “a head of state borrowing a leaf from the neighbouring country”, as a representative of a government agency said. This emerged as a key development following GOU ratification of the UNCRC. Two government agency employees explained,

Participant 2: We want to be aligned, exactly, with international standards.
Participant 1: Because, remember, we go by the UNCRC.
Participant 2: Exactly.
Participant 1: That is our bible, so to say.

A close second to UNICEF and the UNCRC, interviewees noted the tremendous influence of USAID on OVC initiatives in Uganda. Through government channels (implemented both by governmental and non-governmental actors), USAID constitutes a significant funding source specifically for OVC initiatives. In 2007, USAID funded (through the State Department) Uganda’s National Quality Standards for the Protection, Care and Support of Orphans and other Vulnerable Children in Uganda (see chapter one). In 2010, the agency granted US$20 million to “build capacity of district local governments and civil society organizations to lead, plan, manage and implement a decentralized, quality and comprehensive OVC response in Uganda” (USAID 2010). Throughout, USAID has been a key ‘partner’ of GOU efforts to ramp up its involvement in OVC initiatives. According to a representative of a large foreign-founded INGO,

USAID has a strong influence on what happens in this country when it comes to the OVC response. In terms of what should be in the policy, we have an OVC policy that was hugely influenced by USAID because they were the main supporters. Then we have a new national strategic plan of implementation… So there’s a lot of influence from USAID and UNICEF because they’re the major technical support to the Ministry [of Gender] … for the development of the new [Strategic] Plan.

Despite four NGO representatives’ unprompted recognition of USAID’s influence on government policies through direct policy development funding, three of them (representatives of two small locally-founded NGOs and one large foreign-founded INGO) believed USAID influence was limited to its partners:
USAID [influences what happens “on the ground”] because of a lot of money that it has. What I’ve seen is that USAID has mainly focused on its partners that are implementing PEPFAR grants… It calls for coordination meeting for only those partners. So you find that its influence is limited to its partners. But, anybody else that does not benefit from American money, they are not influenced at all. (Representative of a large foreign-founded INGO)

These NGO representatives suggested that USAID influence extends only so far as its direct funding reaches. This is a large underestimation of the agency’s true influence on GOU policies frameworks, and legal requirements.

Another interviewee also reflected this uncritical stance towards the influence of foreign government funding despite sentiments to the contrary regarding the GOU’s role or the government stance towards OVC and NGOs. He expressed reluctance to accept GOU funding out of fear that doing so would compromise his organization’s freedom of speech, yet simultaneously reported accepting grants from USAID.

That would also compromise our work if we are going to get funding from [the Ugandan] government… [Our organization] is free from the state influence. We do our work independently, we get our support [primarily from USAID]. (Representative of a non-governmental advocacy network)

UNICEF and USAID reputations for improving the conditions of OVC in Uganda are so pervasive that even those who have not seen any direct benefits from them are convinced that these agencies are assisting Ugandan efforts towards OVC. One representative with seven years experience directing a locally-founded NGO (and many more years working in public health in Uganda) commented,

All the support that we have got in Uganda about the children with those organizations and elsewhere, I think the international bodies have done very great work. UNICEF, USAID, they have done great work. Although, we have not benefited with USAID and UNICEF, but we believe that we shall. (Representative of a small locally-founded NGO)
The experiences described above illustrate what Foucault termed technologies of power and domination, as I show in the final section below. I consider the particularities of OVC initiatives in Uganda in relation to the contextual factors outlined in the first section of this chapter, by analyzing these relations as technologies of power and domination. Reflecting the chronological sequencing of donor-recipient partnership establishment as outlined in the preceding two sections, I demonstrate how NGOs become donor subjects and carrying out strategic donor objectives through submission to their requirements. I follow this with a discussion of the implications of the changing nature of government involvement in OVC issues in Uganda.

5.3.8 Between a rock and a hard place: NGO dependence on donors

Despite the dissonance between donor requirements and NGO priorities, NGO representatives by and large expressed an inability to turn down funding opportunities and endeavored to adhere to donor priorities. One representative of a large foreign-founded INGO said that the reliance on foreign funds “is something that we live with and we are not complaining”.

Although interviewees resented the asymmetry inherent in this donor-driven system and envisioned a more democratic relationship whereby donors provide funding for locally-designed programmes, they resigned themselves to the existing dynamic. The practice of NGOs reporting to their donors rather than prioritizing accountability to their beneficiaries or feeling accountable to the GOU is problematic. It is an issue not only for the reasons of cultural imperialism and its attendant concerns such as donor-determined programmes being unsuitable for local contexts and donor priorities fluctuate in accordance with global development priorities (Rauh 2010), but also because it minimizes government oversight and capacity to coordinate efforts to reduce duplication and ensure quality services (Hatton and Schroeder 2007), despite GOU efforts to oversee NGOs through licensing requirements. Respondents’ reluctance to share detailed funding accounts with the GOU (see section 5.2) is consistent with findings from a 1996 study that indicated Ugandan NGOs are willing to divulge accounting information only to their funders, not to government (Cannon 1996). This observation raises the critical issue of dependency, which is a central problematic component of the donor-recipient relationship. One NGO representative from a small NGO founded locally by foreigners proclaimed, “It’s horrible being so dependent… for a problem that is in your country”. In practical terms, direct foreign management of funds at a local level solidifies such dependency, as Ugandan staff are denied the
opportunity to acquire (or prove their capacity) to run the programme upon the expatriate’s departure.

While we’re dependent on these donors, they bring the money and they don’t want us to manage those projects. So when they go, we don’t know what to do with those projects, and everything dies… This technical assistant does everything himself, and he does not build capacity. When he goes, everything collapses. (Representative of a small NGO founded locally by foreigners)

Indeed, for the most part respondents (from NGOs, a government agency, and non-governmental advocacy networks) felt that their organizations had “not [yet] reached a level of saying [to donors], ‘No, I will not take this money’” (Representative of a non-governmental advocacy network). Instead, they explained that, “because we are on the receiving end [of the funding], we can’t change that much” (Representative of a government agency). With the exception of two NGOs (one large foreign-founded INGO and one small NGO founded locally by foreigners) who related experiences of refusing donor funding because of conflicting principles, most interviewees reported that their NGOs were not in a position to refuse donor funding. They reported feeling caught in a situation of obligatory concession to donor agendas in order to receive programming funding, as this representative of a non-governmental advocacy network illustrated:

I think we still have a long way [to go]. We have not reached [a point of refusing funding]. There are just a few organizations, just a handful that have reached that level of telling the donor off: “You know, that money will not help us. If you are not giving us the money [in] this line, we cannot use it”. There are just very few.

Although the focus on NGOs’ and the GOU’s acquiescence to donor rules and regulations thus far in this chapter is representative of the dominant tone of my discussions with interviewees, respondents also portrayed a notable degree of resistance to the mainstream development apparatus, which I explore next.

5.3.9 NGOs resisting the mainstream development apparatus

Despite acquiescing to donor requirements in many respects (as I have shown in the preceding section), some NGO representatives also demonstrated creative and strategic responses and
efforts to alter the nature of their relationships with donors. Although most NGOs obliged with donor requirements when met with donor adamancy about the precise use of funding, at times NGOs engaged in minor acts of resistance by endeavoring to convince donors of what they considered to be the most appropriate use of funding (for instance, using finances to “top up” the salaries of existing school staff rather than using the funds to pay a single principal, as suggested by the donor).

Others attempted to circumvent or change the characteristically inequitable nature of the funding dynamics by requesting funding for a very specific component of a larger project (for instance, a particular medical centre), rather than general programme funding, the allocation of which is determined by donors. Three representatives of medium and large foreign-founded INGOs spoke of trying deliberately to avoid the existing inequitable character of donor-recipient relationships and hence negate the need to abide by stringent donor conditions. They described efforts which local organizations have been making from the start, such as to decrease dependence on donors through income-generating projects, supporting families to become self-sufficient, and making efforts to source increasing amounts of funding from within Uganda. Together, these illustrate NGO aspirations for a more locally-driven approach to donor-recipient relations, an overall rejection of externally-formulated solutions which a representative of a non-governmental advocacy network described thus:

I want … a donor to come here, and I explain what I want to do, what would be the outcomes, what would be the indicators, what would be the plan… If you buy into that, then you give me the money. (Representative of a non-governmental advocacy network)

A representative of a foreign-founded INGO reported making ongoing attempts to adapt her NGO’s long-standing model of family care for OVC, which she (and her Ugandan colleagues) felt failed to incorporate ‘modern’ understandings of family dynamics and the importance of fathers in a family setting. She described their efforts to effect change in this regard:

Well, we’ve had debates and debates [with international headquarters]. It’s something that’s [being discussed] in the organization, so we do hope that, in the future probably it will be better… It’s something we are talking about. (Representative of a large foreign-founded INGO)
These examples of NGO efforts to engage creatively with the donor-recipient relationship that confronts them offer evidence of mild NGO resistance to the typical mainstream process (involving external command of local programming) and efforts to alter donor-recipient dynamics.

5.3.9.1 NGOs’ upward influence: acts of defiance

In more potent iterations of these acts of resistance, NGOs showed how the donor-recipient relationship can work in more than one direction, not only through downward influence from donors to NGOs, but through upward influence from NGOs to donors. Indeed, respondents also demonstrated more vigorous modes of engagement with donors, namely defiance, “an active form of resistance, which includes the dismissing, challenging, or attacking of institutional rules and values” (Rauh 2010: 39).

One representative of a medium-sized foreign-founded INGO suggested it is “big institutions like … Plan [and] World Vision … [which] draw money [from] and influence [donors]”. While likely accurate, this observation does not constitute a form of resistance in the way I have interpreted it here, given that these organizations most effectively and consistently promote donor agendas, both discursive (see chapter six) and regulatory. While these large foreign-founded INGOs (“the huge aid organizations” which boast large financial resources) may be able to “influence the tide of [development] because they have the resources” (ibid.), their influence has been primarily in accordance with donor agendas, promoting rather than critiquing donors’ strategic operations worldwide, much less openly questioning mainstream development as a whole.

Indeed, with few exceptions (notably a large foreign-founded INGO), it was primarily a handful of small locally-founded NGOs and government agencies that demonstrated resistance to the mainstream development paradigm, illustrating the earlier (interviewee) comment that “very few” organizations speak back to donors (Representative of a non-governmental advocacy network). This indicates reluctance among NGOs to accept donor funding that is accompanied by conditions NGOs deem inappropriate. For instance, a representative of a small NGO founded locally by foreigners reported her refusal to accept funding from an overly stringent donor:
There’s one American organization. They wanted to come and also help us, and they wanted to bring in their own manager. So I refused. I said, “You know, we’ll not have many managers for one organization”.

Despite the donor’s insistence, she refused to succumb to the donor request to command management decisions as well. She explained,

The other condition was that we are given the money, and it comes with a volunteer, a person who will manage the project. I said, “No, give me the money, get that person to come, so that he builds capacity, and then the Ugandan takes over”. That one was a bit difficult. Ok, no, we have to manage [our organization], we have to manage [it]. I understand where they’re coming from. [Concerns regarding] accountability and what have you. But, no, if you’re giving me the money, give me the benefit of doubt. So, it was quite tough, and I told them, “Uhm-uhm [No]. Give me the money. Bring this volunteer or who[m]ever you’re bringing to manage for six months, while building capacity. I’ll bring in a Ugandan and this [foreign volunteer] guy goes back”. It was a push and pull, push and pull. But then they understood finally.

This NGO representative offered another example of resistance by refusing to accord with a donor suggestion to plant lettuce for children in Uganda, as she felt this was culturally inappropriate, and the children (who she noted have likely never seen lettuce before) would certainly refuse to eat it: “I said, ‘No. This is agriculture. [In] Uganda, we are used to all these [agricultural methods]’”.

Other examples of such resistance include a representative of a non-governmental advocacy network who reported that his own network refused funding from the United Nations Development Programme over a two-year period, in an effort to maintain its right to voice opinions freely. He commented that the UNDP employed a very calculated and selective approach with regard to associating its name and/or logo with other organizations who may publish “certain analytical information and statements” that could raise uncomfortable macro-economic issues. Similarly, a representative of a large foreign-founded INGO reported efforts of resistance:
There are conditions that come with the money, and sometimes different ideas. But we also don’t take everything, every grant that comes. If it is really not within our approach, then we may not be able to take the money, much as we need it … So we also look at our values as an organization, what do we stand for, and what is our approach, before we take on a grant.

This assortment of varying degrees of NGO resistance to the mainstream development agenda in a larger context of widespread acquiescence donors’ agendas has a number of analytical implications. In chapter seven, I consider these implications together with the observations of discursive acts of resistance mentioned in chapter six.

5.4 Interpretation: bureaucracy as a technology of domination

In this section I extend Foucault’s concern with the governance of individuals to the relations of local NGOs, local chapters of INGOs, and the government of Uganda (as funding recipients) with donor agencies and (I)NGO headquarters (as funders). To do this, I consider how the relationship between funding recipients and funders parallels that between individuals and those governing them. I focus on the specifics of the donor-recipient relationship as presented in the context of OVC initiatives in Uganda (above). I use four analytic sections to reflect the themes I have presented. The first analytic section (5.4.1) draws on the themes of dancing to the donor’s tune and contrasting NGO and donor priorities; the second section (5.4.2) considers the examples of NGOs’ incorporation of conditional and bureaucratic measures, and the definitions of NGO success; the third section (5.4.3) attends to comments about cultural imperialism and foreign influences on GOU policy; and the fourth section (5.4.4) works through the ideas presented about withering GOU coordination and NGO dependence on donors. The analysis draws out the intricacies of the donor-recipient relationship in order to demonstrate how the kinds of power relations with which Foucault was concerned are played out in this context.

In particular, I note how the bureaucratic structure of the donor-recipient relationship subjectivizes funding recipients through a set of rules and regulations, which require not a submission to an overt power, but rather participation in structures that appear to be purely technical and bureaucratic. This reveals the context of OVC initiatives in a way that exposes the complexities of the power dynamics embedded in donor-recipient relations, which go beyond a straightforward ‘power over’ situation to one wherein which the ‘subject’ (in this instance, the
funding recipient) is deeply imbricated in the relations of power. The current section marks the beginnings of a commentary on NGO complicity in perpetuating the asymmetry that defines their relations with donors, which I extend in chapter six.

Individual participation in self-governance is a central and indeed necessary component of being governed. Similarly, in order to engage in a process of governance, donors necessitate recipient NGO action; that is, they require NGOs to align their programming with donor objectives. Accordingly, the nature of the power dynamics characterizing donor-recipient relationships is facilitated by NGOs’ active engagement with donor regulations and also comes to necessitate it. With this in mind, I show how NGO acquiescence to a variety of rules of engagement consolidates the asymmetry of the donor-recipient relationship, and the implications of these dynamics for OVC initiatives in Uganda.

5.4.1 Donors and NGOs consolidating the asymmetry of donor-recipient ‘partnerships’

Interviewees in this study were no strangers to the position taken by critics that donors “hold the purse strings” and are “powerful driver[s] of inequality in terms of priorities addressed and how decisions are made and managed within partnerships” (Hatton and Schroeder 2007: 159). As I demonstrated in the preceding account of interviewees’ experiences with funders, the simple fact that the funding comes from foreign donors perpetuates these inherent inequities in (and reflects the asymmetry of) the donor-recipient relationship. This prevents local NGOs and local chapters of INGOs from engaging with their donors as equals out of fear of losing or being denied funding based on disagreements about programming emphases and methods (Bornstein 2003).

The asymmetry of donor-recipient ‘partnerships’ reflects a funding context that forces such relations into existence (often as a condition of funding) rather than allowing for the emergence of an organic development of genuine partnerships (Hatton and Schroeder 2007). This is emblematic of north-south, ‘developed’-‘developing’ country ‘partnerships’, which are inherently inequitable, despite rhetoric purporting a progressive adoption of mutually respectful and beneficial relations suggested by the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the Accra Agenda for Action (Elbers and Schulpen 2013). Northern agencies largely determine the ‘partnership’ agenda (Hatton and Schroeder 2007). Critics have labeled such asymmetrical
‘partnerships’ a Trojan Horse because of the way it disguises the reality of relationships characterized by power imbalances (Fowler 2000).

Indeed, despite funding recipients’ ongoing attempts to reconceptualize NGO financing so as to neutralize or deny the asymmetrical nature of giver-receiver or donor-NGO relations, NGO financial dependence on donor agencies implies an ongoing “indissolubly asymmetrical relationship” between ‘partners’ (Stirrat and Henkel 1997: 75; Elbers and Schulpen 2013). This asymmetry fosters dependency, which “denies reciprocity” by making the implementing NGO dependent, “a recipient of charity” (Stirrat and Henkel 1997: 75).

The local NGO involvement with multiple donors cements the asymmetry of these partnerships. As interviewees confirmed, this reduces the resources and time available to tend to any one donor-recipient relationship. The logistical burden and investment of time this complex system requires forces NGOs to limit their genuine involvement with any particular partnership. This situation further contributes to diminishing efforts towards an equitable relationship between donor and recipient (Hatton and Schroeder 2007). My findings confirm that, even when ‘partners’ actively aim for equality through particular processes and mechanisms, the logistical demands of attending to numerous donors conspire against such efforts. Instead, juggling multiple funding sources that rarely work seamlessly together requires local NGOs to become adept at “changing the sets to match the partner in town” (ibid.: 159), demonstrating to each donor their adherence to (and impact of) the funding provided. Through rules and regulations, this asymmetrical nature of donor-recipient becomes deeply entrenched in the rules that govern the aid regime (Elbers and Schulpen 2013) as well as efforts to assist OVC in Uganda as was reflected in the descriptions above.

Despite the incongruence between donor and NGO priorities, local NGOs and local chapters of INGOs actively aim to attend to donor priorities. Interviewees reported submissively acquiescing to donors’ explicit declarations of conditions, as failure to do so would result in denial or cessation of funding on which they rely for their organizational survival and often by extension their individual personal/familial and financial survival (Burger and Owens 2010). Indeed,

---

81 For instance, recipients who radically reinterpret the nature of the funding as compensation for past exploitation or pragmatically view funding as payment for contract work.
NGOs invest considerable effort to obtain donor funding upon which they rely. For many, identifying funding sources is often “a primary activity in and of itself” (Hatton and Schroeder 2007: 159). The “survival instinct” of NGOs (Cannon 1996: 263) in the process of soliciting sufficient funds to remain viable reflects the reality that “some NGOs cannot afford the luxury of angst over whether they are compromising their integrity by following the agendas of donors or government” (ibid.). As NGO staff are (naturally) concerned about supporting their families, it is not surprising that they would appease donor funding criteria in order to facilitate NGO survival regardless of the original aims of their organization.

The asymmetrical donor-recipient relationships are so firmly established (Lemke 2000) that NGOs perceive little choice but to concede to these dynamics. Through donors’ explicit declarations of rules and conditions for NGOs, donors prescribe a very limited space for NGOs to operate freely according to their own volition (Lemke 2000). Their relations with NGOs become systematized and regulated, facilitating technologies of power and domination that secure the asymmetrical nature of their relationships.

5.4.2 The mechanisms of maintaining asymmetrical relationships: domination through rules of engagement

Donor funding grants are not “pure, or free, gift[s] of the disinterested, anonymous donor” but rather “an interested, accountable, and non-free transaction” (Stirrat and Henkel 1997: 76). Indeed, the character of the offer changes upon reaching the NGO, as “it becomes entrapped in a system of rules and regulations that are antithetical to the spirit of the free gift” (ibid.), reflecting not only charity laws but also NGO organizational constraints. Donor influence on NGO mandates, practices, and activities proceeds through guidelines and restrictions that are ubiquitous in the concrete requirements around proposal preparation, programme development, operations, accountability procedures, and dissolution.

Interviewees repeatedly described needing to ‘dance to the tune’ (as a metaphor for the rules of engagement) of the donor that represents the source of their financial survival. Their involvement with donors illustrates how the structure of the aid regime reflects “the power of the purse …given that ‘he who has the gold makes the rule’” (Williams 1998). By subjecting NGO recipients to conditions determining the intended (indeed required) application of that funding, donors realize their influence on the development agenda. In the case of NGO and government
initiatives to assist OVC in Uganda, donor domination involves a set of rules relating to a series of processes, beginning prior to the establishment of a funding relationship, throughout programming, and beyond.\textsuperscript{82} The systematic nature of donor conditions – expressed through a series of rules of engagement – is at the heart of the power dynamics between donor and recipient.

Donors practice power through regulation, conferring a set of rules upon all partners. Interviewees demonstrated how donors establish a stable hierarchy between themselves and funding recipients through a process of systematizing and regulating a mode of power that is difficult to escape. Seen through the lens of governmentality, the asymmetries between donor and recipient are outcomes not of any abstract power (of the aid regime) ‘over’ funding recipients, but of the ways in which it is manifested and reproduced. In other words, through the technologies of power and domination which lead to “the systematization, stabilization and regulation of power relationships” (Lemke 2000: 6). I argue that the structure of the aid regime – through its asymmetrical relationships and systematization of donor interests with regard to NGO and beneficiary needs – reflects a form of governmentality, specifically technologies of power and domination (Williams 1998).

In this regard, donor command of directing, guiding, and shaping the conduct of NGOs and government agencies reflects technologies of power and domination wherein donors coordinate, manage, and heavily influence the work and function of NGOs. Donor regulation of NGO activities, programme development, and/or formation illustrates an expression of power through regulatory processes, whereby donors use NGOs to serve donor strategic interests. Donors use techniques of systematizing and regulating NGO activities through concrete requirements in such a way that the latter carry out the former’s strategic interests and highlights the “political techniques for integrating concrete aspects of [individuals’] lives and activities into the pursuit of the state’s objectives” (Burchell 1991: 122-3).

\textsuperscript{82} This includes requirements to formalize NGO administrative procedures, adhere to donor-determined staffing conditions, and structure programme proposals in particular ways; to determine the location, timeframe, number of beneficiaries, and activities; and to emphasizing accountability and transparency.
Thus, through the inherent asymmetries in the donor-recipient relationship – which, as I have argued, appear as a set of rules of conduct rather than overt expressions of force or power – donors practice power through technologies of power and domination by systematically enforcing their interests. Indeed, donor enactment of sets of rules functions as a process of power that donors and recipients view primarily as administrative procedures rather than the expression of force by the donor ‘over’ recipients. This regulates, for instance, the process of decision-making and allocation of funding. The case of OVC initiatives in Uganda thus exemplifies technologies of power and domination reflected in the systematization of donor interests and rules of conduct.

5.4.3 Cultural imperialism through standardized approaches

In part, donor prescriptions regarding the use of funding represent an attempt to standardize their image and accountability through the programmes they support. That is, they endeavor to present uniformity in their operations across the world in order to preserve their recognizability as consistent, effective, and reliable agencies/organizations. Such prescriptions also serve a bureaucratic function for the donor, who is also able to standardize its accomplishments in this way (Birn 2006). In the case of large NGOs working through country offices, strong central control at donor headquarters (most often in Europe or North America) or at regional (and in rare cases, country) headquarters often facilitates this standardization effort (Edwards 1999). Any decisions about adapting approaches to accord with local contexts and viability are vetted and confirmed by the funder, who then categorizes consolidated funds according to intended use.

In this study, interviewees reported that donor quest for uniformity in operations and standardized approaches at times results in implementing a standardized approach across time and space, with inadequate consideration of local conditions or context. This is reminiscent of endeavors among multi- and bi-lateral development agencies (such as the United Nations Development Programme, the World Bank, the International Fund for Agricultural Development, and others) to develop a ‘recipe approach’ to development, including a list of ‘ingredients’ that can be administered across different regions (Bellù 2011).

A ‘one size fits all’ approach enables donors to maintain order and regulate activities at the periphery through routinization and systematization at the expense of awareness and sensitivity towards local conditions, thereby ensuring their productivity. In the case of Uganda, Western
views on OVC initiatives become further systematized into “Ugandan” initiatives through the management and business models of international instruments and agencies who work through a quantifiable and efficient model akin to that used by the corporate sector (Birn and Fee 2013; Rauh 2010). This gives the perception that the ideas are ‘locally grown’ because the GOU logo is stamped on all resulting documents, while in reality they are deeply influenced by external forces.

In my research, representatives of large (I)NGOs were vague, used hypothetical examples, and expressed reluctance to discuss financial matters. This is suggestive of stage management, which involves an effort to maintain a particular image in accordance with the donor or international/regional headquarters. Smaller locally-founded NGOs’ transparency regarding funding dynamics (as we observed earlier) may in part reflect a knowledge of funding details to which only accountants in large NGOs are privy. Indeed, NGO representatives’ evasion of discussions about financial matters enabled them to portray a pre-established image of their organizations without revealing funding details that might portray them in an unfavorable light.

As others have argued, for donors, “what really matters is optics and image boost” (Kapoor 2013: 24), regardless of the sometimes dismal outcomes of their development efforts. Indeed, “failure may in fact be fine, as long as the philanthropic effort comes off looking good” (ibid.: 23).

Indeed, donor need for uniformity, systematization, and regulation often takes priority over the local relevance of OVC initiatives, the adaptability of OVC models, and the felt needs of target groups. This raises important concerns about the nature of OVC initiatives in Uganda, which by their very structure are primarily geared towards meeting donors’ measurable outcomes. Through rules and regulations, donors influence the nature of OVC initiatives that have very little freedom to manoeuvre and must concede to donor requirements in order to ensure financial survival. When donor perspectives are culturally ill-aligned, this can be particularly detrimental. Indeed, most NGO representatives felt their donors or Western-based boards lack sufficient understanding of local circumstances, which impinges on their capacity to advise appropriately.

### 5.4.4 Implications of a donor-driven development agenda

Donors regulate recipient programming and activities by requiring adherence to a variety of conditions and directly supervising decisions initiated ‘on the ground’. Recipients routinize their
acquiescence to donor requirements by abiding by the multiple conditions attendant to donor funding. Donor systematization of rules and conditions holds implications for the nature of OVC initiatives in Uganda and structures “the possible field of action” (Foucault 1982a: 221) of NGOs.

The subordination of local communities to the imperatives of international ‘experts’ and funders in promoting “global” power, knowledge and interests” (Campbell et al. 2012: 448) has been well established in the literature, particularly around the issue of HIV and AIDS. In the NGO world, acquiescence of this nature, according to organizational management scholars, is one of NGOs’ most frequently employed forms of engagement with donors, alongside other strategies of “compromise, avoidance, defiance, and manipulation” (Rauh 2010: 37). Accordingly, this approach contributes to organizations’ likelihood of acquiring or maintaining financial support and results from organizations believing “that conforming will improve their prospects for economic gain or social legitimacy” (ibid.).

The relations between donors and recipients represent the inequity of donor-recipient relations that “constantly engender states of power, [wherein] the latter are always local and unstable” (Foucault 1978: 93). Indeed, Foucault took as given such “nonegalitarian and mobile relations” (ibid.) consisting of multiple points of power which taken together result in dominations. Foucault identified these as “the hegemonic effects of that are sustained by all these confrontations” (ibid.: 94). Regardless of outcomes, NGO acquiescence to donor rules and regulations represents one of NGOs’ several avenues of participation in their own donor-led governance. As I describe in chapter seven, their participation in self-governance holds potentially liberating implications.

A central concern for interviewees which they felt had negative repercussions in their OVC initiatives related to the stringent donor conditions requiring rapid, measurable results as a component of their accountability to donors. This component of donor conditions encourages NGOs to carry out “showcase projects” (Pfeiffer et al. 2008: 2135) such as the one identified earlier. These are vertical programmes with quick-fix technical solutions of questionable sustainability in confined geographical areas, serving only a limited population. The tendency towards short-term initiatives occurs despite the logical and established observation pointing to the benefits of long timeframes. The need for NGOs to make a positive impression on donors
also influences service provision as NGOs become involved in particular geographical areas with the primary purpose of attracting donor attention. The need to ‘be seen’ by donors contributes to geographical clustering of service provision, as ‘hot spots’ attract international donors and high-profile INGOs, to the neglect of other ‘needy’ areas.

Perhaps more saliently, however, this need to ‘be seen’ also pushes NGOs and government agencies to focus time, energy, and resources on projecting the appearance of being ‘active’, while quality service delivery becomes a secondary concern. The impact of this donor-driven development agenda on beneficiaries is apparent in donor influence on NGO programme development. NGOs focus less on enabling ‘beneficiaries’ to determine and implement their own solutions with financial and technical support and instead “think in terms of how they need to position themselves to receive external aid” (Foster 2002: 1909).

Indeed, as I demonstrated above, donors achieve their status as key determinants of the nature of NGOs primarily through their position as funders of NGOs and the attendant need for accountability which they prioritize over accountability to domestic constituents or ‘beneficiaries’ (Thue et al. 2002; Mitchell 2007). While GOU policies and frameworks require NGOs to divulge their finances and activities to government, NGOs feel accountable to their donors, whose actions (whether commencing, continuing, or ceasing funding) much more forcefully affect the survival of the NGOs. As NGOs distance themselves from their initial objectives of directly addressing beneficiaries’ needs to focus on donor demands, their vulnerability to the shifting priorities of donors compromises both organizational autonomy and service quality (Elbers and Schulpen 2013; Thue et al. 2002). Changes in donor interests, geographic focus, and priorities threatens programme sustainability, leading to the dissolution of projects before the institutions, mechanisms, and relationships required to protect the sustainability of project outcomes are clearly established, even in instances where funding may be ensured for an extended time period (Hatton and Schroeder 2007).

Donor accountability requirements often conflict with the needs of NGO target group(s) and juggling donor requirements with NGO commitments, the needs of the target group(s), and the concerns of the community is challenging (Burger and Owens 2010; Johansson et al. 2010). This

83 Specifically, for instance, the 2006 NGO Registration Amendment Act.
requisite visibility encourages NGOs to be more concerned with attending to donor requirements than prioritizing the needs of the ‘beneficiaries’ with whom they are working, already at the initial and definitive stage of programme development. It suggests that donor conditions reach beyond their requirements for accountability and transparency, to infiltrate NGO activities throughout all stages of programme development.

5.5 Concluding remarks

In my research, interviewees’ descriptions of their relations with donors – in particular, their accounts of acceding (despite their reservations) to donor rules and regulations – suggest that genuinely equitable and mutually beneficial partnerships are less common than international and Western development agencies’ rhetoric suggests. In an endless search for new labels for donor-recipient relations and amidst greater involvement of private enterprise, donors have increasingly emphasized the value of ‘partnerships’ across sectors in their engagement with grass-roots organizations (Lewis and Okopu-Mensah 2006), an emphasis which gained prominence in the 1990s and influenced the nature of NGOs implementing OVC services in Uganda as NGOs increasingly ‘partnered’ with northern agencies and depended on them for financial survival. However, the foregoing description of interviewee experiences as funding recipients for OVC-related initiatives in Uganda has demonstrated how in order to achieve its desired outcomes, a donor-driven development agenda relies on a coordinated effort among ‘partnerships’ between donor agencies and implementing NGOs. In the absence of recipients’ concession to donor requirements, however, these ‘partnerships’ fall apart and fail to serve their function.

In this chapter, I have shown how the inherently asymmetrical character of donor-recipient relations influences the nature of OVC initiatives in Uganda. I have argued that donors make recipients into subjects that serve their own strategic interests through a process of regulating and systematizing the structure of their aid, expressing what Foucault termed technologies of power and domination that are accepted by the recipients, rather than overt expressions of donor power over recipients. In addition to the impact of such a system on programme sustainability, cultural appropriateness, geographical clustering, and focus on donor requirements at the expense of beneficiary needs, the required acquiescence of NGOs to donor wishes also threatens key characteristics of their advocacy role in grassroots development, namely flexibility, creativity, and innovation (Cannon 1996). Indeed, these relations between donors and recipients threaten
the very function of NGOs as they initially came into existence (although their distance from this ideal continues to grow) as a non-governmental alternative and source of support for social service provision and perspectives of civil society free of government influence. To contrast with the evidence of NGO acquiescence to these power dynamics, I also provided multiple examples of respondents’ resistance to the donor-driven development agenda through tweaking, minimally resisting, and outright defying donor commands.

The desire for freedom from their own government control has permeated deep into the minds of interviewees due to the implications of engaging with the GOU in programme development and service provision, that seem obvious to them. For example, they view GOU funding as limiting their freedom of speech and requiring them to conform to the GOU’s preferred mode of service delivery require. In place of government, mostly foreign donors regulate Uganda’s development agenda in such a way that NGOs concede to their conditions and promote donor priorities above all else. All the while, these NGOs fail to fully appreciate the parallels and arguably more concerning implications of allowing themselves to be influenced by another country’s government and/or the agencies those foreigners produce and host.

It is notable that interviewees did not express recognition or concern about the influence of other governments on NGOs or the impact that USAID influence has on government policies. For interviewees, bilateral and multilateral agencies appear to be less personality-driven or subject to the whims of a particular director than private donors who do not represent nations or transnational organizations. USAID regulation of GOU affairs has become so entrenched that NGO representatives rarely question or scrutinize it. Part of the success of USAID in being involved in developing policies and programmes affecting OVC initiatives in Uganda thus perhaps stems from locals’ acceptance of USAID as neither GOU nor ‘private’ donor imposition. Perceiving foreign donor systems as less constraining than their own government, interviewees’ perception of donor assertiveness as simply ‘the way things are’ bestows considerable leeway on donors to continue to transpose their needs and desires on implementing organizations.

Indeed, in locating much of their critique in the realm of GOU-NGO relations, and to a smaller extent private donors, NGOs absolve major bilateral agencies of an objectionable role. Representatives of NGOs of all types (but in particular smaller and modestly-funded organizations lacking the clout of large INGOs the GOU recognizes and actively incorporates
into policy development and planning) find GOU rules and regulations to be too imposing while most often also unaccompanied by financial support. In contrast, major bilateral agencies come with big budgets, and NGO representatives see evidence of their presumed positive influence in developments, buildings, and posters throughout the country. They also trust, for the most part, that these large agencies have the best interests of the people they intend to serve at heart; a level of trust NGO representatives do not extend to their own government which they describe as corrupt and ineffective. This double-standard suggests that the functioning and efficacy of technologies of power and domination are profound. NGOs acceptance of the rules and regulations espoused by bilateral donors as simply bureaucratic and necessary facilitates domination through seemingly purely technical regulations.

The hints of the role of NGOs in furthering the inequitable donor-recipient relations at the core of this chapter form the foundation of the next chapter where I examine the forms of power that function even more insidiously through donor agency discursive practices, which implementing NGOs integrate in various ways into their modes of operating in order to maximize financial survival. I argue that these represent what Foucault termed technologies of the self.
Chapter 6
Technologies of the Self: Integrating Mainstream Development Discourse

6 Introduction

This chapter explores the second research question of this study which asks: How have the regulatory and discursive practices of foreign and international donor agencies and donor nations contributed to shaping the character of locally- and foreign-founded NGOs and government sectors involved in OVC services between 1986 to 2011? I contextualize the discourse that has shaped OVC initiatives in Uganda over the past quarter century, with a view to understanding the participation of NGOs in perpetuating the relations of power that facilitate their enactment of donor requirements through the very discursive practices that subjectify them. I trace the emergence and consolidation of human rights, child rights, and community participation as three concepts representative of mainstream development discourse throughout the period following World War II through the present, using these concepts to illustrate the ways in which mainstream development discourse plays out in the field of OVC initiatives in Uganda. My findings suggest that NGOs have integrated mainstream development discourse into their discursive practices to a considerable extent, as revealed in the ways they present themselves through marketing and communication with outsiders such as myself.

In this chapter I demonstrate that mainstream development discourse has become so pervasive that it is rendered almost meaningless. When leading development agencies co-opt this discourse and make it ubiquitous, the social and political history and purpose of the key concepts that initially represented relatively daring ideas that challenged the status quo are often lost or, at a minimum, compromised. One of my key findings in this chapter is that, in order to operate in a competitive donor market, NGO representatives must employ watered-down applications of development concepts.

My analysis shows that in the case of OVC initiatives in Uganda, there are considerable gaps and differences between the origins and core tenets of development concepts and local-level NGO representatives undertaking to apply these concepts in practice. As international agencies co-opt and attempt to mainstream development concepts, NGOs engage in rhetoric that is misaligned
with the original definition of the concepts. Key tenets of the concepts in their original intention become part of NGO initiatives primarily at a discursive and rhetorical level, which demonstrates a change in terminology rather than a marked change in programming practice, as organizations interpret the principles of these concepts in ways that they can operationalize in practice.

This chapter focuses on exploring NGOs’ interpretations and applications of mainstream development discourse and considering how these processes of integration and adaptation illustrate technologies of the self. In the first section I begin with a brief review of technologies of the self in relation to this study’s focus on governmental and non-governmental initiatives targeting OVC in Uganda. I proceed with three main sections paralleling those in the previous chapter: context, descriptive results, and interpretation. I review the factors that have contributed to the (re)emergence and popularity of key terms in the discursive field of the development enterprise during the past quarter century. In the second section, I demonstrate NGOs’ adoption of mainstream development discourse through illustrations from respondents’ descriptions of their work with OVC. I also reflect on the implications of these findings for avenues of resistance by interrogating the dialectic of NGOs’ acquiescence to and resistance against the development apparatus. Building on chapter five, in this chapter I conceptualize acts of resistance as illustrated through refusals to engage with donor discourse, which I suggest demonstrates the liberatory implications of NGOs’ required participation in their self-governance in order for donor-recipient relations to function as they do. In the third and final section, I interpret my findings through a Foucaultian lens and consider the implications for understanding the power dynamics cursing through development efforts.

6.1 Considering mainstream development discourse through Foucault’s technologies of the self

Interested as Foucault was in technologies of power and domination (which I explored in chapter five), over time he developed an interest in what he termed the technologies of the self, which have been defined as “the ways in which individuals constitute themselves through practices of freedom” (Allen 2011: 43). I use this concept to focus on how individuals (or in this case, NGOs as collectives of individuals) work on and represent themselves in relation to others in terms of NGO integration and adaptation of mainstream development discourse within a donor-driven development agenda. I use this perspective to unearth the discursive practices that influence
initiatives related to OVC in Uganda to varying degrees at an international level. I contemplate the rise and consolidation of these elements of development discourse against the backdrop of the historical conditions that made their emergence possible, and consider mechanisms of “the professionalization of development knowledge and the institutionalization of development practices” (Escobar 1995: 17) through which NGOs have deployed these discourses. I reflect on discursive influences on NGO production of knowledge and ideas, which form the bases of their programming (Bebbington 2005).

This infiltration of donor discourse in NGO rhetoric is a function of the diffuse nature of power, which functions primarily through discourse. Indeed, “professional vocabularies” (in this case, mainstream development discourse) are among the governmental technologies that “denote a complex of practical mechanisms, procedures, instruments, and calculations through which authorities seek to guide and shape the conduct and decisions of others in order to achieve specific objectives” (Lemke 2007: 9). This centrality of discourse in facilitating the technologies of the self warrants a brief expansion of the concept of discourse, as already outlined in chapter two.

6.1.1 Discourse according to Foucault

In Foucaultian terms, discourse “is a way of thinking and speaking about some aspect of social life” (Palmer 2003). It is at once a language and a practice, which “brings into existence an object of knowledge” (ibid.). Discourse is “the accepted frame of thought and reference around a concept” which consists of layers and oppositions, “but also an exclusive hierarchy of relevance based on political expediency, path dependence and the status quo” (Harlow et al. 2013: 271). This practice is made possible through real, material, institutional conditions, and in turn has material effects. In this dissertation, I argue that ideas about how to address the needs of OVC are “powerfully shaped by the world of acceptable statements and utterances within which they live” (Ferguson 1990: 18). In this chapter I demonstrate how discourses are constantly in flux, emerging, disappearing, or persisting for long periods of time (ibid.).

Foucault was not particularly interested in the intended meanings of discourses, as for him this was much less important than the conditions that made it possible to even speak in certain terms (Foucault 1978). Rather, he was concerned with the effects of particular discursive practices, “the transformations which they have effected” (ibid.: 60); that is, the tangible ‘outcomes’ of
speaking (or abstaining from speaking) in one way or another. I therefore suggest that NGO interpretations of key development terms in themselves have important effects.

In the poststructuralist tradition, the concern with discourse analysis is not to focus on individual words or even categories of words, but rather to examine “whole language pieces or patterns” (Palmer 2003: np). Nevertheless, examples that are representative of these patterns can be employed to illustrate them. I investigate three concepts interviewees in this study used most frequently and emphatically to describe key elements of their organization’s programming model: human rights, child rights, and community participation. Based on their recurring and emphatic mention by respondents, I selected these as representative of the mainstream discourse shaping the development agenda since the 1980s. Prior to outlining the historical emergence of these key concepts I set the stage through a description of development discourse more generally, drawing primarily on a postcolonial perspective that is more explicitly concerned with the idea of ‘development’ than Foucault was.

6.1.1.1 Development discourse from a postcolonial perspective

Literary theorist and cultural critic Edward Said employed Foucault’s work to formulate the idea that, “what is thought, said, or even done … follows (perhaps occurs within) certain distinct and intellectually knowable lines” (Said 1978: 13). Mainstream development discourse often emphasizes the ‘negatives’ of the circumstances of the so-called ‘Third World’ (low- and middle-income countries), which face common ‘problems’ that ‘experts’ and development actors from high-income countries decontextualize, dehistoricize, delink from their causes, consolidate through images, and identify as (for instance) “overpopulation, the permanent threat of famine, poverty, illiteracy, and the like” (Escobar 1995: 12). These concepts are mostly arbitrary, culturally and historically specific, and dangerous in low- and middle-income country contexts because of their reliance on one system of knowledge, “namely, the modern Western one” (ibid.: 13) which has marginalized and disqualified non-Western systems of knowledge.

Indeed, the emergence of development discourse in the post-WWII period identified the ‘Third World’ as riddled with poverty and other undesirable characteristics. Escobar (1995: 24) described this definition as “an organizing concept and the object of a new problematization” which gave rise to a series of measures offering means of averting or resolving these conditions. Alongside the development discourse that highlights the purported ineptitude and backwardness
of ‘developing’ nations, another field of development discourse (see description in chapter one) has emerged, whereby ‘experts’ seek to address the problems they identify through a series of interventions they define.

Although the context within which development work has been applied has changed since its first rise to dominance following the 1945-1955 period, “the architecture of the discursive formation laid down” (Escobar 1995: 42) during that period has not faltered, and new and emerging strategies for development continue to work “within the confines of the same discursive space” (ibid.). Indeed, there is little to suggest that development cooperation has undergone dramatic changes since that time (Schuurman 2009). Multi- and bilateral donor issues of primary concern within the development agenda, notably “economic growth, poverty reduction, the reform of trade regimes, the reduction of international debt, decentralization, democratization, social development and environmental issues” (Kothari and Minogue 2002: 2) have continued to prevail since the 1970s. Their more recent prioritization of “good governance, privatization and economic transition” as well as human rights, child rights, and community participation, has been less an outcome of theoretical debate than a response to the fall of socialism (ibid.).

The emergence of mainstream development discourse as a companion to the post-World War II problematization of poverty was “not a natural process of knowledge that gradually uncovered problems and dealt with them” (Escobar 1995: 44). Additionally, the emergence of the discursive field of mainstream development interventions such as solutions to development issues was not an inevitable progression based on scientific evidence. Rather, this discursive field is “a historical construct that provides a space in which poor countries are known, specified, and intervened upon” (ibid.: 45). Indeed, it seems that the objectives of mainstream development discourse are to employ terms that are accepted and promulgated for their promises of development, while rendering them technical for strategic attainment of their own interests and agendas.

For Foucault (1978: 100), there was not “a world of discourse divided between accepted discourse and excluded discourse, or between the dominant discourse and the dominated one”, but rather “a multiplicity of discursive elements that can come into play”. Indeed, while mainstream development discourse certainly dominates the development agenda, it contains a
number of alternative discourses that challenge or simply disengage with the mainstream agenda which can generate a form of resistance, a central topic I cover later in this chapter. I focus on the concepts of rights and community participation, which interviewees repeatedly emphasized as constituting a central role in the formulation and operationalization of their programmatic models. I begin with a historical overview of the emergence and consolidation of the language of human rights and child rights, and then outline the concept of community participation in parallel fashion.

6.2  Context: human rights, child rights, and community participation discourses

Human rights, child rights, and community participation are representative of the nature of the mainstream development discursive field that was founded on the basic notion that ‘developing’ countries are (or should) work towards ‘progressing’ to the model of ‘developed’ countries, and abundantly spews terms and phrases implying progress. In this chapter I demonstrate that these terms that are inherently suggestive of collective action for structural change have become “practical and technical, concerned with project dictates of efficiency” (Cleaver 2001: 37). Leading development agencies coopt these terms, individualizing and depoliticizing their very essence by using these development buzzwords to eschew the radical and transformational change these concepts fundamentally require (ibid.). I suggest that this has implications for the integration of these terms in initiatives to address OVC. In the following section, I trace the emergence of these terms and illustrate their adoption in OVC initiatives in Uganda.

6.2.1  The emergence of rights discourses

6.2.1.1  Human rights discourse

Human rights discourse has many lineages, beginning with the “struggles for emancipation from slavery, feudalism, and workplace exploitation [which] date back thousands of years” (Birn 2008: 33). In the 18th century, human rights discourse was primarily philosophical, with early
declarations seeking primarily to inspire protective legislation at a national level. In this conceptualization, full respect for all basic human rights was a precondition for achieving a socially just society. In more recent history, in the aftermath of World War II and motivated by wartime suffering and genocide as well as the demand for worker rights in the context of the industrial revolution and welfare state building, the current system of human rights emerged as we recognize it today. Human rights in this postwar iteration was linked with other idealized notions of justice, peace, and development. This idealism underpinned the founding of the United Nations (UN) in 1946 and inspired a series of treaties focused on human rights protections (Save the Children 2005), most notably the UN’s 1948 adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) (Redfield and Bornstein 2009). At the time of its drafting in 1948, the UDHR “had virtually no impact on world politics” (Moyn 2012: online).

Over the subsequent decades, rights discourse was bifurcated: into one tendency promulgated particularly by the U.S.-led Western bloc emphasizing “civil and political rights”; and the other Eastern bloc approach advocating for “enforceable economic, social, and cultural rights, including the rights to food, shelter, and freedom from discrimination in health services” (Birn 2008: 35). It was not until after the end of the Cold War that the notion of human rights gained primacy on the international development agenda, garnering a position as a key component of development (Bradshaw 2006). Initially, the concept of human rights was distinct from development, based on its focus on social justice and power and the dignity and agency of individuals as opposed to poverty reduction (Cornwall and Nyamu-Musembi 2004). Human rights are “extensive and inviolable even when they are recognized through violations” (Redfield

---

84 This included Voltaire’s (François-Marie Arouet) suggestion that the primary duty of governments was the recognition and securing of people’s rights and Jean-Jacques Rousseau’s argument for the freedom of all human beings to participate equally with all others in political politics, which provides a basis for the creation of a nation state. Rousseau’s ideas contributed to the concept of human rights in its modern guise, which extends back to 18th-century European liberal political theory, when France’s 1789 Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen became a foundational human rights document. In 1848, building on the political movements that preceded them, “uprisings against class-based, imperialist, racial, gender, and other forms of oppression articulated the profound connections between social justice and public health” (ibid.).

85 This Cold War tension was particularly evidenced by issuance of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, both in 1966. In the late 1970s, thirty years after its creation, the UDHR emerged more forcefully when “Soviet dissidents and refugees from Latin American dictatorships catapulted human rights to visibility” (Moyn 2012: online).
and Bornstein 2009: 22). As opposed to needs, rights cannot be ‘given’ or ‘provided’, but can be advocated for.

In the 1990s, following the end of the Cold War, the concept of human rights emerged even more forcefully in international relations, consolidated through the UN embracing “human rights as a basis for global governance” (Meier and Onzivu 2014: 182). In 1997, then UN Secretary General Kofi Annan focused global attention to rights-based approaches (RBAs) to development and health by calling for the integration of human rights into all UN operations. This operationalization of human rights into RBAs moved rights discourse into a new realm, away from the philosophical and political nature of its early iterations, towards technical and increasingly depoliticized applications of the term in development efforts.  

Today, human rights discourse emphasizes political liberties as well as economic and social affairs as it becomes increasingly coopted and made technical by organizations and institutions endeavoring to integrate it into their programming. Justice and its counterpart, injustice (operationalized in terms of specific violations), are at the heart of human rights discourse. This focuses not on justice at a societal level, but rather at that of the individual. Indeed, human rights are framed within a Western notion of individualism rather than collectivities. Consistent with the neoliberal dogma of liberalism and individualism, rights are “granted to sovereign individuals rather than communities” (Cheney 2012: 95). Individuals should become ‘empowered’ through RBAs, ultimately leading to societal transformation (ibid.). For development efforts, this suggests that NGOs’ primary motive with regard to ‘achieving’ the rights of their beneficiaries should be on advocating for protection of their rights at a national level, rather than trying to ‘provide’ those rights through financial or other material support. This distinction is central to contextualizing the findings in section 6.4.

6.2.1.2 Child rights discourse

The related notion of children’s rights follows a historical trajectory interconnected with human rights. Initially, the concept of children’s rights emerged as a response to the industrial

---

86 In 2003 the UN established a unified definition of RBAs in the Common Understanding on a Human Rights-Based Approach to Development Cooperation (United Nations 2014), which provided a “lowest common denominator approach, privileging consensus over specificity” (Gruskin et al. 2010: 134).
revolution, when efforts began to remove children from factories. In 1919, in the wake of World War I, British social reformer Eglantyne Jebb founded Save the Children Fund (SCF) in Great Britain to provide relief for children in Austria and Germany (Marshall 1999). A year later, fundraising success inspired Jebb to found the International Save the Children Union in Geneva, employing businesslike fundraising techniques such as purchasing full-page advertising space in national newspapers. A series of political developments in the years that followed (including a refugee crisis in and around Greece, famine in Soviet Russia) led to renewed successful fundraising efforts for Save the Children.

As the Russian relief effort was coming to a close and the Fund’s revenues diminished, Jebb began to focus on children’s rights. In 1923, she led the drafting of a Children’s Charter to present at a meeting of the International Union in Geneva (Save the Children 2014). The Charter outlined a set of children’s rights and asserted the international community’s duty to prioritize these rights in all planning activities. The following year, on 26 November 1924, the League of Nations adopted the Declaration of the Rights of the Child (as the World Child Welfare Charter), and SCF made promoting the Declaration its main priority. Britain’s dominant role at the League of Nations agencies facilitated the Charter’s rapid and widespread endorsement (Marshall 1999), including at the first International Child Welfare congress held in Geneva in 1925. To be sure, these proclamations were merely guidelines that found wide international resonance, yet were not enforceable by international law.

Simultaneously in Latin America, efforts to influence legislation to improve women’s and child health were propelled forward by the Pan American Child Congresses launched in Buenos Aires in 1916, and the associated American International Institute for the Protection of Childhood established in Montevideo, which promulgated a series of national and Pan American Codes of Children’s Rights in the 1930s and 1940s (Birn 2012).

Meanwhile, in 1931, the Save the Children International Union organized a four-day conference on ‘The African Child’, representing the Union’s “first major shift away from European

---

87 In 1874, to protect infants and maternity, France passed the Roussel Law, which inscribed infants’ right to breastmilk by making a national responsibility the supervision of wet nurses (van der Klein et al. 2012). In the 20th century, Western developmental psychology influenced the protectionist conceptualization of children’s rights, based on the perception of children as “incompetent and vulnerable by nature” (Cheney 2012: 94),
children” (Marshall 2004: 273) in an effort to translate their Declaration of the Rights of the Child into the African context. This paved the way for the Union to establish itself as “one of the very first humanitarian institutions in Africa” (ibid.). This movement for rights of the African child was interrupted in the late 1930s, when SCF redirected its humanitarian efforts to refugee children from the Spanish Civil War and the ensuing world conflict.

It was not until the early 1950s that SCF returned to its activities in Africa, at that point working alongside other large agencies including UNICEF and the Oxford Committee for Famine Relief (OXFAM) (Marshall 2004). In 1959, all 78 member states of the United Nations General Assembly unanimously adopted a significantly expanded version of the League of Nations’ Declaration of the Rights of the Child (replacing the initial five principles with ten principles). This later became an inspiration for the 1989 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

In sum, it was in the 20th century that many European societies (and, in turn, governments) began to view children as “innocent and precious” (Cheney 2012: 94), and simultaneously naturally vulnerable and incompetent in a legal sense. Inspired by Western developmental psychology understandings of childhood and informed by declines in infant mortality and the transition from feudal agrarianism and industrial capitalism, it was the duty of adults to protect children through, for instance, removal from factories, but also hyper-surveillance and separation from adults in scholastic institutions.

The conceptualization of OVC as inherently vulnerable (indicated in the acronym itself) and in need of protection is directly at odds with the emphasis on ‘empowerment’ contained within human rights discourse. Operationalizing children’s rights as consisting of the protection of vulnerable children “is incommensurate with thinking of children as rights bearers because it strips them of their capacity to make claims on their rights” (Cheney 2012: 94). Nevertheless, through the mid and late 20th century, virtually all countries adopted protective legislation. By the time of the declaration of the UNCRC in 1989, which Uganda signed and ratified in 1990 (see chapter four), African countries embraced child rights as they came to realize the scope of the OVC ‘crisis’ and sought ways to address the structural causes underlying the crisis in a way that needs-based approaches hitherto had not (Cheney 2012).
6.2.1.3 Interpreting and operationalizing rights: conceptualizing and applying rights-based approaches

Applying a human rights approach to work with children in accordance with the main tenets of advocating for the dignity and protection of individuals requires extensive policy and advocacy work (Woll 2001) “to bring about changes in national and subnational policies” (UNICEF 1998: 27). In their Western individualistic conceptualization, RBAs reframe the relationship between the individual and the state “as one of empowered consumers demanding from the state the rights that it no longer, by and large, has the capacity to provide” (Cornwall 2006: 78). In relation to OVC, the contemporary individualistic conceptualization of rights functions to infantilize children and guardians “as people in need of supervision” (Cheney 2012: 95), removing OVC from their extended family systems and community support, and further depoliticizing the causes of the circumstances that contribute to their vulnerability.

International agencies and institutions promulgating RBAs in recent decades have done so from varying understandings and interpretations of human rights. The UNDP, for instance, argues that development can only be achieved through respecting human rights, and that normatively speaking rights do not represent a reward of development but are rather a precursor to it (Manzo 2003). The World Bank (1998) has shifted from insisting that the realization of human rights is an objective of development (something to be achieved through the process of development) to arguing that its work naturally “contributes to the realization of social and economic rights” (ibid.: 1426) because of its focus on reducing poverty.88

The main axis of differentiation in interpretations of human rights lies in their use of RBAs in legalistic terms (using rights as a standard against which to assess development interventions), versus those applying the term more broadly as a foundation for the entire project of development, requiring development goals to be redefined (Cornwall and Nyamu-Musembi 2004). Those applying RBAs in legalistic terms plan their programming without explicitly paying attention to rights. Rights only factor into their initiatives at the point of evaluating their efforts, at which point they measure their initiatives by the extent to which they respected or

88 Until the 50th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) in 1998, the World Bank avoided engagement with the language of human rights. According to some scholars, this was because of the concept’s overtly political implications (Cornwall and Nyamu-Musembi 2004).
achieved human rights for targeted peoples and populations. By contrast, for those such as the UNDP seeing rights as foundational to the development enterprise, “rights appear to offer, more than anything else, a way of framing an approach to poverty reduction (ibid.: 1431). These agencies broadly interpret human rights as a necessary component of development and base the entire premise of their programming on the concept of human rights, ensuring its infusion into all aspects of their development approach.

Signifying a discursive shift over the past two decades upon realizing the scope of the OVC ‘crisis’ and spurred by the UNCRC, child-focused NGOs and governments across Africa began to eagerly incorporate the concepts of rights and RBAs into their OVC programming and marketing strategies (Cheney 2012; Kendall 2008).

In Uganda, leading international child-focused NGOs have paved the way for incorporating rights discourse into their programming since the late 1990s. Most prominently, SCF re-doubled its rights-focused efforts (part of its mandate since its inception), and began working on a Child Rights Programming approach. In 1999, the organization developed an explicitly rights-based approach to its programming “build[ing] on … ‘good [development] practice’ [concerned with such issues as: sustainability, power, participation, multi-sectoral approaches, and non-discrimination], incorporating it into a single framework based on human rights principles and standards” (Save the Children 2005: 11).

In time, other prominent OVC organizations followed SCF’s lead in introducing rights-based approaches in their programming. After half a decade of operations, World Vision endorsed the UNCRC “as an appropriate set of standards for the protection of children” (World Vision 1999: 3) and began (in the 1990s) to focus its attention on training for child rights while encouraging governments to enact policies to protect children’s rights through fighting poverty and injustice (World Vision 2013). In 2009, Plan declared its mission to promote children’s rights and

---

89 For instance, since 1989, UNICEF premises its organizing framework on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women. At least rhetorically, SCF has since 1989 employed the UNCRC in its policies and programming, while drawing on “the wider context of the international human rights and humanitarian law framework” (Save the Children 2005: 14). Yet the organization’s rhetoric reflects the World Bank’s view that the fulfillment of human rights is “the end goal of development” (ibid.: 14), and represents an approach to development that validated the role of the poor as actors in their own development, and as rights bearers whose rights can be supported and realized with the assistance of government and NGO involvement.
interests (Plan 2013). Simultaneously, SOS Children’s Villages International (2013) employed the principles outlined in the UNCRC as a basis for its programming. Smaller NGOs informally and to a much lesser extent began to incorporate the language of rights into their discourse.

The GOU is no exception to this enthusiastic uptake of RBAs. For example, in March 1993 the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs worked together with UNICEF, SCF and the African Network for the Prevention and Protection of Children Against Abuse and Neglect (ANPPCAN) to host a one-day meeting of over 100 NGOs and government departments concerned with child welfare programmes in Uganda. At the meeting (entitled Children’s Rights: The Way Forward), participants resolved to “continue with publicity and programmes on the rights of the child”, and “specifically urged Government to implement the rights-led proposals of the [Child Law Review Committee] CLRC” (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights 1996).

In 2009, the GOU began to incorporate the concept of human rights into its rhetoric in earnest, including in its 2010-2014 Country Programme (UNICEF 2011). Similarly, its 2011/12-2015/16 National Strategic Programme Plan of Interventions for OVC (NSPPI) adopted the principle of Human Rights-Based Approach to Programming as its foundation, in lieu of a needs-based approach (needs in this case as expressed by the “beneficiaries” themselves). The intention was to design programmes “to realize the enjoyment of rights by OVC, placing emphasis on the rights to survival and development” (MGLSD 2011: 22), and providing a blueprint for the realization of children’s rights. According to this commitment, agencies and organizations working with and for children were to “give due considerations to the best interest of the child” in all child-related decisions, and the GOU’s role was to “identify the most vulnerable children and take affirmative action to ensure that the rights of these children are realized and protected” (ibid.).

6.2.2 The emergence of community participation discourse in the development sector

Just as understanding the origins and applications of human rights is key to understanding its integration in Uganda, so too does the related concept of community participation need to be

90 Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development since the 1995 Constitution.
examined in its complexity. Participation is central to the realization of RBAs to development. Although the rhetoric and integration of participation into development policy and programming predates the widespread contemporary incarnation of RBAs, the push for RBAs since the 1990s has reinvigorated participation discourse. Today, development actors view participation as a central and necessary ingredient in development. Deeply tied to and often inseparable from the presumed advantages of participation is the idea of ‘community’ or ‘community-based’ development (Stiefel and Wolfe 1994). The desire for community participation stems from the assumptions that communities are better informed than international technocrats about their own needs, and that “local communities [can] draw on local social capital, so that the NGO can harness the ‘generalized reciprocity’ of village life” to provide care for populations such as OVC, “the ill and dying”, or services to youth groups (Swidler and Watkins 2009: 1184).

The concept of community participation is described in the literature both implicitly and explicitly as an intervention for improving people’s lives (Rifkin 2001) and focuses on listening to communities, respecting their views, and involving them in decisions that affect their lives. Since the 1990s, this concept has been embedded in mainstream development agencies and has achieved an unparalleled popularity among development agencies, rivaling other concepts such as empowerment, capacity building, and sustainability. Arguably, community participation “has gained the status of development orthodoxy” (Cornwall 2006: 62).

The recent resurgence of participation rhetoric in mainstream development discourse (in the 1990s) belies its older roots. In the 1950s, the idea of community participation’s role in development began to take shape worldwide. Initially, development actors used the term community participation synonymously with community development, although the relationship between these two according to the 1950s meanings is now unclear (Mathbor 2008). In the late 1960s, social worker turned physical educator Sherry Arnstein (1969) developed the now classic eight-rung ‘ladder of community participation’ to show that participation is not an all-or-nothing concept. Arnstein’s ladder, developed as a critique of urban renewal programmes in the United

---

91 In 1963 the United Nations created the Research Institute on Social Development (UNRISD) with a focus on organizing heretofore overlooked disadvantaged groups and emphasizing “people power” (ibid.: 12). Significant in the UNRISD approach was its quest “to ensure that social equity, inclusion and justice are central to development thinking, policy and practice” (UNRISD n.d.).
States, demonstrates the “significant gradations of citizen participation” (1969: 2). Arnstein broadly categorized these rungs beginning from the bottom as: non-participation (therapy, manipulation), tokenism (placation, consultation, informing), and realizing bone fide citizen power (citizen control, delegated power, partnership). Each of these rungs “correspond[s] to the extent of citizens’ power in determining the end product” (ibid.). The bottom rung involved “power-holders ‘educat[ing]’ or ‘cur[ing]’ the participants” (Arnstein 1969: 2), progressing to “allow[ing] the have-nots to hear and to have a voice” (ibid.) while lacking the power to insure the power-holders will heed this voice and the status quo will be challenged, and reaching the top rungs where citizens are increasingly genuinely involved in decision-making through partnership (rung #6), delegated power (rung #7), or ultimately citizen control (rung #8). In the highest rung, “have-not citizens obtain the majority of decision-making seats, or full managerial power” (ibid.). Arnstein justified her admittedly simplified homogenization of diverse groups as ‘power-holders’ and ‘have-nots’ by suggesting that “in most cases the have-nots really do perceive the powerful as a monolithic ‘system’, and power-holders actually do view the have-nots as a sea of ‘those people’” (ibid.). For Arnstein, citizen participation was “the means by which [the have-nots could] induce significant social reform which enable[d] them to share in the benefits of the affluent society” (ibid.).

The popularity of participation in mainstream development discourse increased in the 1970s, particularly in reference to “participation in the social arena, in the ‘community’, or in development projects” (Gaventa and Valderrama 1999: 1). At the time, participation remained “at the margins of development practice” (Molyneux 2007: 10) and was primarily concerned with organizing efforts to increase communities’ and other hitherto excluded groups’ access to resources (Stiefel and Wolfe 1994), taking the form of self-help groups or social movements (Gaventa and Valderrama 1999). Throughout the 1970s, the UN “heralded participation’s possibilities and redefined its parameters” (Cornwall 2006: 70) through a series of studies and reports. During this decade, organizations and government agencies began to adopt the engagement of communities in development as a central strategy in earnest, including in the

92 This was done most prominently the 1969 Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) resolution (LVIII), which required participation to be based on democratic and voluntary inclusion in development efforts and equitable sharing of its benefits, as well as in decision-making regarding goal setting, policy formulation, and economic and social development programme planning and implementation (ECOSOC 2013).
health sector.\textsuperscript{93} By the early 1980s, the reified principle of community participation had become an item on development agencies’ checklists, reflecting more high-income countries’ programmatic imperatives than the realities of those they intended to serve (McGee 2001).

Over time, macroeconomic policy frameworks of governments as well as organizations in the international health arena such as WHO, UNICEF, and in the early 1980s the World Bank, adopted the rhetoric of community participation (O’Manique 2004; Hong 2004). However, instead of employing the community approach initially promulgated, which involved communities controlling key aspects of their development, UNICEF and the World Bank undermined the concept (Hong 2004) by adopting the language of community engagement (emphasizing people’s ‘empowerment’ and ‘participation’) (Kothari 2001) while maintaining decision-making control over the projects, programmes, and policies they promoted (Werner et al. 1997).

The watering down of community participation occurred contemporaneously with neoliberalism’s rise to prominence in the 1980s during the political regimes of Margaret Thatcher (United Kingdom) and Ronald Reagan (United States of America).\textsuperscript{94} These conservative governments undermined the principles of states as partners to development by advocating a drastic downsizing of government services through structural adjustment policies that crushed public welfare provisions in developing countries (Hong 2004).\textsuperscript{95} These

\textsuperscript{93} In 1978, World Health Organization (WHO) member nations formally endorsed the importance of community engagement in health and development at the Alma Ata International Conference on Primary Health Care (Werner et al. 1997) and henceforth participation became a central component of achieving Health for All by the year 2000 (Zakus and Lysak 1998). At the time, this radical movement to counter institutional ‘top-down’ approaches (Banerji 1984) was intended to involve communities in decision-making, planning, implementation, and control of health and development projects (Werner et al. 1997); that is, to maximize their participation in all aspects of development. The desirability of community participation – premised on the understanding that involvement of local populations was necessary to provide basic health needs in ‘developing’ countries (Zakus and Lysak 1998) – contributed to its hearty endorsement at Alma Ata and its rapid integration into development discourse (Morgan 2001). This has also facilitated its long-lasting appeal among international donors and NGOs (ibid.).

\textsuperscript{94} Thatcher, for example, pushed an individualistic blame-the-victim philosophy, declaring that “democracy is people taking care of themselves” (Navarro 1984: 113), not the state taking care of people.

\textsuperscript{95} The absence of an agreed-upon definition of community participation in the 1980s reflected the discordance of varying participatory pathways pursued in the 1970s and the contested influence of neoliberalism (Cornwall 2006). The ever-growing influence of neoliberalism in mainstream development re-shaped participation, articulating participation as ‘self-reliance’ and requiring communities to be active participants “in meeting the costs of development” (ibid.: 71). This fit neatly into the structural adjustment approaches of the time, which emphasized individual responsibility and privatization. Through the Bamako Initiative, the World Bank co-opted participation as
interventions, purportedly “engaged” communities through user fees for healthcare services and urging communities to take responsibility for their own development. In reality, they demonstrated practices that are antithetical to the approach promulgated by the development sector, using community participation rhetoric primarily for its strategic appeal and failing to make the necessary power shift required according to its founding principles (Banerji 2002; Hong 2004).

A strong feminist critique of participation emerging at this time in development (particularly with regard to women’s participation) cautioned development programmers about the fine line “between participation and exploitation” (Molyneux 2007: 40) inherent in antipoverty programmes. It also alerted development actors to the possibility of damaging effects of such participation that may prevent or restrict the freedom of women to occupy paid positions (ibid.) and cause their status and productivity to decline (Boserup 1970). This critique questioned the extent to which new welfare programmes based on women’s participation serve to deepen existing gender divisions “through explicitly female targeted programmes” (ibid.:19) and view women’s contribution to development in instrumental terms, “whether in the form of voluntary labour, social capital or returns to lenders in microcredit schemes” (ibid.). In order to be successful, participation of this nature almost necessarily involved unpaid labour on behalf of

a tool for promoting cost-sharing and responsibility for producing services (Paul 1987), avoiding the elements of capacity building, shared decision making, and empowerment otherwise central to participatory approaches. Indeed, participation fit beautifully into the ideology of individualism underlying the neoliberal agenda since the 1980s. As international agencies morphed ‘participation’ into ‘self-reliance’, encouraging individuals to contribute (in cash or kind) to their own care (instead of challenging the centres of power and control), they neutralized “popular resistance to liberalizing reforms” (Cornwall 2006: 72) and afforded international agencies the opportunity to counter grassroots reforms.

In the health sector, only upon African health ministers’ adoption of the Bamako Initiative at a regional WHO meeting in Bamako, Mali, in 1987 did primary health care develop increasingly into the community development movement initially imagined at Ata Alma. UNICEF branched out to include other ministries, partners, and local people in its community development initiatives. However, the emphasis on the devolution of health system responsibilities through user fees and community financing was reflective of Arnstein’s category of ‘nonparticipation’ in the sense that “their real objective is not to enable people to participate in planning or conducting programmes, but to enable powerholders to ‘educate’ or ‘cure’ the participants” (1969: 2). The Bamako Initiative defined community participation beyond simply including community health workers. Although enthusiasm among governments, UN agencies and NGOs “waxe[d] and wane[d]” (Rifkin 2001: 42) through the 1980s and 1990s and “participation efforts … often bypassed national and district levels of health planning and policymaking” (Morgan 2001: 224), towards the end of the 1990s these agencies by and large agreed that community participation needed to be a central component of poverty alleviation and programme planning efforts (ibid.).
women, thereby adding yet another burden: a third shift – that of participation as part of a community – to women’s double shift of domestic and paid labour. Finally, feminists questioned, the efficacy of women’s participation in development “in addressing the causes of women’s poverty” (ibid.: 20).

Despite these reservations and criticisms about the concept of participation, community participation began to enter discussions about democratic governance and citizenship rights in the 1990s. Varying conceptualizations of community participation in development in part facilitated its inconsistent application in these sectors (Kidman et al. 2007; Labonte 1997; Thurman et al. 2008). Initiatives endeavoring to maximize community ‘ownership’ and management of services, and development agencies’ valorization of local knowledge during this period were extraordinarily similar to earlier iterations of participation discourse, suggesting that “the blueprint approach to development was far from dead” (Cornwall 2006: 75). By the 1990s, efforts that had begun in the 1980s to reconceptualize participation to fit into the ideology of neoliberalism through measurable interventions evaluated according to a criterion of cost-effectiveness were firmly established in mainstream development, in World Bank and IMF papers (Molyneux 2007).

The idea of community participation gained such momentum in the 1990s that many intergovernmental (e.g. UN) and bilateral aid agencies adopted participatory development as a formal policy alongside conflict resolution and governance (Reiman 2006). By the mid-1990s the mainstream community participation orthodoxy was marked by a rhetorical “stress on

---

97 In 1990, the World Bank launched a Bank-wide Learning Group on Participatory Development with the aim of “examining the issues of participation and identifying ways to step up efforts to support participation in its operations” (World Bank 2013c). This led the World Bank to develop its Participation and Civic Engagement (PCE) group in the early 1990s that “focuses on promoting participation and civic engagement in Bank supported operations” (ibid.). In 1994, the World Bank’s Board of Executive Directors officially endorsed “The World Bank and Participation” report produced by the PCE group, which defined participatory development as “a process through which stakeholders influence and share control over development initiatives, and the decisions and resources which affect them” (World Bank 1994: 7) and developed an action plan to facilitate and support Bank-wide participation (Aycrigg 1998). This report openly identified the advantages of community participation – that is, involving those whom World Bank projects intend to help – as making the Bank’s projects “more efficient and sustainable” (World Bank 1994: 3). In this report, the Bank resolved to “broaden its business practices to encourage the participation of a much wider range of stakeholders, in order to improve and sustain its development efforts” (ibid.: 7). Once again, however, this reflected a growing concern among critics that “the very nature of the choices available to local people was so circumscribed by the processes used to determine avenues for action, that it was barely possible to imagine, let alone articulate, alternatives” (Cornwall 2006: 75).
participation, on empowerment, on bottom-up as opposed to top-down approaches to development, a stress on process rather than blueprint projects, on indigenous rather than on expert knowledge” (Stirrat and Henkel 1997: 67). Some international agencies promulgated participation in seemingly new ways, in an effort to extend it in scope and intensity. Again, these efforts were uncannily similar to the earlier international agency commitments to participation such as the 1966 and 1973 US Foreign Assistance Act amendments, the 1976 World Employment Conference, a 1978 International Labour Organization strategy paper, and a 1975 Economic and Social Council statement. This development reiterated the same benefits of participation as had been articulated in the preceding three decades (Cornwall 2006). Indeed, each document or proclamation promoting participation included little or no mention of its precedents, nor to previous participation policies, instead restating anew the same arguments for participation, “at times in a language that resonates with contemporary euphemism or rhetoric, yet in terms that are essentially interchangeable” (ibid.: 64). This constant reinvention of the term suggests something undeniably positive about this enduring concept of community participation in development, yet its promulgation as a new and progressive idea speaks to the development sector’s continuing efforts to offer new solutions to societal problems.

All of these developments in community participation discourse set the global context within which the concept was taken up in initiatives in Uganda. Abetted by pressure from donors, in Uganda endorsements of participation as a means of promoting good governance coincided with Museveni’s rise to power (in 1986) and his concomitant efforts to democratize the politics of the country through a process of decentralization (see chapter four) (Golooba-Mutebi 2004). Establishing a participatory local administrative system that enabled ordinary citizens and communities to participate in public matters and influence government functioning (which local councils would facilitate) was “a major plank in [Uganda’s] democratization agenda” in the late 1980s and into the 1990s (ibid.: 289).

---

98 Development donors viewed good governance as central to efforts in improving human welfare in areas where policies had hitherto disproportionately benefited local elites.
6.3 Results: integrating mainstream development discourse

My findings suggest that mainstream development discourse has made considerable inroads into the discursive practices of NGOs targeting OVC in Uganda. In this section I show how NGO representatives exhibited a considerable level of integration and digestion of mainstream development discourse, yet did so in ways that remain mainly rhetorical (as we saw earlier with large organizations and institutions in international health, such as WHO, UNICEF, and the World Bank). In the uncommon instances when NGOs integrated this discourse in ways that noticeably changed programmatic practices to accord with discursive shifts, this was largely incongruent with the advocacy-focused tenet of the terms as initially conceptualized.

I begin by outlining respondents’ use of the concepts of human rights, child rights, and community participation in their descriptions of their NGOs’ programming approaches. I also provide evidence of their resistance to a donor-driven agenda through discursive practices.

6.3.1 Integrating the concepts of human rights and child rights

Although it is not binding, the UN’s position on rights-based programming has tangibly infiltrated NGOs. Beyond the policy prescriptions requiring government acquiescence to signed and ratified treaties (see chapter five), the pervasiveness of the concept of rights (generally) contributes to organizations’ adoption of such terminology. Respondents in my research repeatedly and unprompted identified rights as a major plank in their programming agendas. Reflecting their use of child rights synonymously with human rights, I consider them together in this description, although for the sake of clarity in interpretation I separate them in the analysis that follows.

One NGO representative who referred to RBAs as a “hot item”, relayed the origins of her foreign-founded INGOs’ focus on rights:

I think it was a global move. It was a global move. Not only [our NGO] was now thinking about rights-based programming, but so many organizations… It was a wave throughout organizations, but some organizations of course took time to implement the rights-based programming. (Representative of a large foreign-founded INGO)
Three NGO representatives stand out as being particularly appreciative of and reflexive on the core tenet of rights, which involves advocacy for the dignity of the individual rather than the provision of goods. For example, one representative of a large foreign-founded INGO noted the link between advocacy and human rights:

We want to move into advocacy ... As an organization, [we want] to see that the rights bearers receive rights. And demand for their rights. And the rights-holders take responsibility for the other party to enjoy their rights.

Another respondent representing a large foreign-founded INGO portrayed a firm grasp of the process of incorporating RBAs into NGO programming according to this advocacy-focused intention. Specifically, this interviewee spoke of informing ‘rights bearers’ (in this case OVC) of their rights and responsibilities.

[We] train [the children] on their rights, and also inform them about their responsibilities. As children and as human beings... And they become like actors in their own protection. Yeah, because nobody should keep on protecting you when you are not protecting yourself. And you can’t protect yourself when you are not yet aware that you’re supposed to protect yourself. So we try to bring in that aspect of empowering the children ... to contribute to their own protection. (Representative of a large foreign-founded INGO)

This emphasis on the child’s (self-) protection illustrates the rhetoric of child rights according to its original conception and as it is promulgated by international agencies and institutions. In section 6.4.1.1 I consider how this is incommensurate with truly realizing their rights.

A representative of a third large foreign-funded INGO expressed similar inclinations towards rights-related advocacy work:

We want to come out of the community when they’re able to demand [for their rights], they know the service providers, they know their rights. So there has been a whole shift [to this kind of advocacy work].

The representatives of these three large foreign-founded INGOs certainly demonstrated a grasp of the roots and defining characteristics of rights discourse, to which advocacy is central.
Other representatives’ interpretation of rights is at odds with this core tenet. In addition to the three NGOs noted above, ten respondents (representatives of seven large foreign-funded INGOs, two government agency employees, and one member of a non-governmental advocacy network) employed variations of this concept mostly understanding and operationalizing rights as the provision of goods (as opposed to advocacy). These interviewees portrayed interpretations and application of human rights and RBAs profoundly distinct from their original conception. Importantly, they did so while perceiving and claiming that they address rights in accordance with the way they are promulgated by international agencies.

In contrast to the three NGOs highlighted above, these respondents expressed a lack of clarity about both human and child rights, what they are and how they can be ensured. One representative of a large foreign-founded INGO surmised that NGO hesitation to incorporate RBAs reflected confusion about the implications for programming operations. Most often, she suggested that NGOs interpreted child rights specifically as having the right to be sponsored and receive material gifts. My research confirmed this supposition. Accordingly, she surmised, NGOs felt confused about how to put these rights into practice. She further revealed her literal translation of these approaches, despite having earlier mentioned the centrality of advocacy in RBAs.

It is really very, very challenging to do rights-based programming, because if you think all children have rights, then it’s confusing. You’re enrolling one child, you’re saying all children have rights. Then, when a sponsored child [receives] a gift, [the sponsor] will send [it] to only one child. So, what happens to the rights of the other children? What happens to the component of … non-discrimination as a right? … We are saying, “We want to go to community gifts” [a gift the child can use with all the children within the area] … Being a rights-based [organization], it means all children have rights, not only the sponsored child. (Representative of a large foreign-founded INGO)

This NGO’s solution to the rights conundrum was to remove gifts from the sponsorship model altogether. In essence, this NGO representative argued that a child sponsorship model inherently contradicts RBAs. According to her, an NGO’s inability to sponsor every child in a family amounts to discrimination against the unassisted child(ren) and results in failure to realize (her interpretation of) those child(ren)’s rights. She interpreted literally the employment of RBAs, and
further suggested that children registered with her NGO have a ‘right’ to refuse engagement with (what she nevertheless describes as ‘mandatory’) written communication with their sponsors:

Some mandatory communications [such as annual letters the children are required to write to their sponsors] have been removed. They don’t have to write the mandatory communication. Because … again, it abuses their right. [What if they] don’t want to write [the letter]? (Representative of a large foreign-founded INGO)

Another representative of a medium-sized foreign-founded INGO echoed this conflation of child rights with the ‘right’ to receive gifts. He added that “having the right to access your potentials goes with the right to be supported and to receive care and services”.

Across the board, the ten other NGO representatives in this study who spoke of rights reflected such literal interpretations of rights and RBAs. These respondents conflated children’s economic, social, and cultural rights (which are enshrined in the UNDHR and the covenants mentioned earlier) with what NGO representatives perceived to be the ‘right’ of children to acquire financial and social assistance from NGOs. These supports are certainly not universal human rights, as much as they could arguably help people access them. This illustrates the gap in understandings between those promulgating the integration of human rights into development programming (who emphasize the protection of human rights through attention to characteristics such as “universality and inalienability, indivisibility, interdependence and interrelatedness, equality and non-discrimination, participation and inclusion, and accountability and rule of law”) (UNFPA 2010: 107) and NGO applications of RBAs as the ‘right’ to sponsorship, gifts, and other such material forms of assistance.

The lack of congruence with the central meaning of ‘rights’ as respecting and protecting people’s right to dignity and equality before the law, regardless of nationality, gender, age, ethnicity etc. with how it is used in practice may be explained in part through its foreignness in the setting I describe. One representative of a foreign-founded INGO pointed out that ‘child rights’ in particular is a term that is foreign to Ugandans: “In the African context, child rights, I mean, it’s not a very big thing to be talked about”. The discrepancy with which many NGO representatives reported applying the term to their programming efforts may be partially attributable to the incompatibility of this Western individualistic term with the local context, which has for centuries been much more community/collectivity oriented. Yet regardless of the origins of these
mainstream development discourse concepts, interviewees eagerly (and unprompted) incorporated them into their rhetoric about their NGOs’ work. This similarly occurred with the concept of community participation, as I show next.

6.3.2 Integrating the concept of community participation

“For us, ‘community’ here means ‘rural’.” (Representative of a large foreign-founded INGO)

In this study, a range of NGO representatives mentioned community participation as a central component of their work with OVC in Uganda, and did so emphatically and repeatedly. One representative of a medium-sized foreign-founded INGO described his organization thus:

We work as a community-based organization, and our services are managed on a participatory strategy. The communities that we serve are part of the participants of this strategy to reach out to children who are in need, the vulnerable children.

The early mention of community participation was pervasive in interviews with NGO representatives. Almost without exception, within the first moments of describing their organization all NGO representatives in my study mentioned the importance of community and/or community participation in defining their NGOs and the work they do. For instance, when asked to describe her NGO, one representative of a large foreign-founded INGO straightaway stated, “[Our NGO] is a child-centred community development organization”.

Indeed, early on in the interview process, and unprompted, 14 of the 18 NGOs identified community participation as a central principle of their work. Among them, however, only one representative of a large foreign-founded INGO exhibited an understanding of community participation (which he termed ‘engagement’) commensurate with its original conception, as he described an example of his organization’s work:

The children are key actors in the interventions. Like, in the Western region [of Uganda] … we have a programme … where governments had failed completely to construct schools in the mountainous areas… But we had an engagement with children, we had an engagement with parents, and they said, “No, for us, we can even do the work”. So, through that kind of engagement the communities became involved in the construction of the schools, and … mountains have schools now, and it has worked. Because the children
were involved, the parents were involved, the local leaders were involved.

(Representative of a large foreign-founded INGO)

This represents an interpretation of community participation more or less consistent with the way development agencies initially propagated it: listening to and involving communities in the process of their own development. Another representative of a large foreign-founded INGO who claimed his NGO had shifted over the years from employing the model of providing handouts to a participatory model described how communities and children participate in their own development.

One of the areas we have ventured into... we have also involved children. And in some cases the children will tell you what [the problem] is... And when we are doing assessment and evaluations, and even implementation of the programme, we want the communities to take the central, the centre part of it... So they sit down and say, “This is what we see from our community”. Then [our NGO] comes along and says, “So what is your dream for your community in the next five years, in the next ten years?” So, the envisioning is done together with the communities. They paint the picture of where they want to go. So, then we ask them, “So how do you go there?” Then they say, “Ok, [the NGO] is here”. We say, “If [the NGO] is not here, how do you go there?” So they begin. So, once we have done a proposal, we ask the community, “Whose proposal is it? Is it a [NGO’s name] proposal, or is it your proposal?” And, indeed, it is their proposal.

(Representative of a large foreign-founded INGO)

This statement also represents an understanding of participation more or less commensurate with core tenets of the term as initially conceptualized and officially promoted by large international development agencies.

Most other NGO representatives that used the concept of community participation did so vaguely and loosely, without clearly explicating their interpretation of the term. One representative of a large foreign-funded INGO referred to his organization’s inclusion of local government representatives and his own staff as ‘participatory’:
The selection [of beneficiaries] is also participatory. [Our NGO] staff, the local leadership, participate and say, “In the households here, which households do we register children from?” Then we agree on this together.

A representative of a medium-sized foreign-founded INGO that prides itself on its “quite unique” participatory approach, when pressed, related that communities’ participation comes in the form of monetary contributions:

Participation comes in, because during the provision of services in the first year, [our NGO] provides the services with the family not contributing any monetary contribution. There is no monetary contribution… But, during the second year, we withdraw our contribution to 75% … Meaning, the project we give in the first year to generate income will have helped these people to save some money. And … they get business training skills, and they save [money]. So we encourage them to inject in some 25% [during the second year]. It may not be cash, but a contribution that at least they feel they are contributing. Then, during the third year, we reduce, we reduce our contribution [to] 50%, because this project will have also [grown]. In essence, it’s to prepare them for their self sustenance after the three years [at which point we remove all financial support].

(Representative of a medium-sized foreign-founded INGO)

This respondent’s interpretation of participation as the financial or in-kind contributions of communities to the programme illustrates a profound departure from the central tenet of community participation, which involves communities’ thorough involvement in planning, operationalizing/implementing, and evaluating their own process of development. Conceptualizing community participation as cash or in-kind contributions, although consistent with the Bamako Initiative which advocated for financial contributions from communities to drug supplies, in direct contradiction of this tenet of the concept and renders its promulgation almost meaningless in this context. This is particularly noteworthy given this NGO’s pride in employing what it identifies as a profoundly participatory approach.

Further illustrating this departure from the core tenet of community participation as involving ‘participants’ in all stages of their development process, one representative of a large foreign-founded INGO boasted of the ‘community-based’ element of his NGO’s work, describing it thus:
Community-based: [Our NGO] exists for children. And these children live within the communities.

Attempting to more clearly describe this NGO’s interpretation of the concept of ‘community-based’ upon my request, he expanded:

Our focus is on children’s health, hmm? Now, the children that are more vulnerable are actually the ones who are zero to 24 months [old]. That’s a very critical age. Neonatal [and postneonatal – going to 1 year] deaths are very common around this age. And the children we offer sponsorship are beyond this age. But we’re focusing on those ones who are not registered for sponsorship. That’s why we say [our NGO] is “child-focused” and “community-based”, because these children live in the community. What are the services that are required in this community for the children to be well?

His colleague elaborated,

That is the other strength, that we’re child-focused, we’re based in that community because that’s where the problem is. We’re just community-based to stay in that community because that’s where the problem is… There are [our NGO] staff in the communities. They stay in that community. They work within the community. The project is within the community.

This interpretation of community-based development accords with a distinction noting the difference between a community-based model of intervention and a community-based programming design:

The way we work is [a] community-based mode of intervention. We are not community-based in the design… but the strategy we are using is community-based approach... Because… we go lower [to] the community, and we provide the intervention. Some organizations are using community-based groups to do the interventions... They facilitate them. For us, we are the implementers. Our staff are down there. That’s the mechanism. (Representative of a medium-sized foreign-founded NGO)

In essence, this suggests that using a community-based model means providing services and working in communities. This is a profoundly superficial interpretation of the concept which is
much more complex than simply working at the level “down there” in the community. Nowhere did the above NGO representative make any mention of community involvement in programme development, as his use of the terms ‘provid[ing]’ and ‘implement[ing]’ interventions to describe his organization’s approach substantiates.

Another representative of a large foreign-founded INGO, although seemingly conversant with some of the key elements of community participation in OVC initiatives, spoke convincingly of his NGO’s interpretation of this response in accordance with its original conception up until the moment of describing the involvement of children as part of the community.

For us, our interventions are more or less community-based. When we want, we engage with the communities. We go to the community. And we dialogue on the issues in the community. Then we make, like, community action plan. How do we address this? And who will do what? So if it is a problem in the community as has been ranked as the highest is lack of infrastructure, education is very low, children are dropping out of school. And they say, “What is the real cause? What is the problem?” What is the problem analysis? Now they tell us, “If we construct a school here, all these other problems will be solved”. Then we say, “How? This place is not accessible. How do we construct a school?” Then they give their ideas. Then who will do what? The communities take what they can do, and then they say, “I think [your NGO] can take [responsibility for] the rest”. Yeah. So, you find that, at community level, there are a number of areas where children can get involved in, like maybe, they can carry one brick from the kiln to the site. (Representative of a large foreign-founded INGO)

The suggestion that children’s involvement comes in the form of carrying a brick to the construction site for their school is another demonstration of how NGO representatives superficially interpret community participation in development and reflects an infantilizing conceptualization of children as unable to contribute meaningfully to development efforts that affect them. This type of interpretation of community participation in OVC initiatives was representative of all but the three interviewees mentioned at the beginning of this section.
6.3.3 Perpetuating mainstream development discourse?

In chapter five I described how some NGOs had intentionally involved foreigners in their management operations in order to gain or solidify (potential) donors’ trust in their organizations. I noted how some interviewees seemed to be aware of the centrality of discursive practices to funding acquisition. For them, this translated into actively involving Western foreigners in management and marketing components, primarily as a measure towards ensuring that the NGO was incorporating a language and portraying an image commensurate with donor needs.

Three respondents representing locally-founded NGOs viewed their involvement of foreigners as an aid to fundraising efforts and ‘translating’ local conditions into terms understandable by potential sponsors in developed countries.

Our target is that we make sure that … we get foundations that are able to support [our NGO] directly through western world countries… We now found that we can benefit [from British] volunteers who would be able to help us in marketing and also fundraising… Volunteers who have worked with us … are influential ... to explain [abroad] more about what’s on the ground in [our NGO]. (Representative of a small locally-founded NGO)

NGO representatives reported engaging volunteers, supporters, and other overseas contacts in designing, managing, and funding their websites in order to frame the organization’s work in a way that increases its fundability and appeal to Western donors. One interviewee in particular (representing a government agency) explicitly revealed an awareness of the centrality of discursive practices in establishing or maintaining relationships with donors. This individual commented on the implications of discursive restraints in her work. She noted the challenges of striking a balance between using what she referred to as ‘tone’ and ‘wording’ (in other words, engaging in a discourse) that will please the donor and increase the chances of securing funding and pleasing her superiors, thereby keeping her position in government, and proposing her own ideas about attending to the needs of children, in her own words and tone. Commenting on the necessity of preemptively shaping her proposals in accordance with donor agendas, she explained:
I think the situation is like more or less uniform, and I don’t think internally people are like happy with danc[ing] to the tune of somebody. But somehow, that is how the system now works… For example, if I don’t tailor my plan… So if the plan, in its tone and wordings and so on does not attract donor funding, I will disappoint the Ministry. Because, I mean, I … hear people. You understand. I don’t want them to say, “You have failed us, you have failed the government”. It will be looked in that way. Because that is the way to mobilize resource … And then, at the end of the day, if I failed to generate a plan that will attract resources. So I have no choice. (Representative of a government agency)

While on the surface this appears to be a survival strategy among government agencies and NGOs in a competitive donor market, viewed through a Foucaultian lens this exemplifies a form of active participation in perpetuating the power dynamics that characterize the donor-driven development and, in turn, influence the provision of services to OVC. I will return to this idea in the analytical interpretation in section 6.4.

Thus far I have demonstrated how most interviewees reported conceding to donor conditions (chapter five) and heeding their discursive example (this chapter). In chapter five I also gave examples of respondents’ resistance to the mainstream development apparatus through tweaking, reworking, and/or actively avoiding integration of a number of donor requirements. In addition to these acts of resistance demonstrating NGOs’ agency in relation to inequitable power relations with donors, resistance was also apparent in some of the respondents’ discursive practices through which they demonstrated non-conformance with mainstream development discourse.

6.3.3.1 NGOs’ discursive acts of non-conformance

Representatives of small locally-founded NGOs revealed a marked absence of mainstream development discourse in their descriptions of their NGO programming approaches. All the interviewees representing small, locally-founded NGOs used clear and descriptive language to depict their programming activities in ways that reflect the daily realities of their work with OVC. This was in stark contrast to the mainstream development rhetoric characterizing the discursive practices of representatives of large foreign-founded INGOs mentioned above. In this sense, the handful of small locally-founded NGO representatives demonstrated resistance to the mainstream development apparatus by refusing or simply avoiding engagement with the
discursive practices that it promotes. Although these omissions may simply indicate respondents’ limited exposure to and engagement with broader OVC and development networks as opposed to intentional discursive practices to avoid certain rhetoric, they nevertheless illustrate a non-engagement with an otherwise all-pervasive mainstream development discourse, and thus offer an alternative to it.

As I demonstrate in the interpretation in section 6.4.2, the adoption, adaptation, and often watered-down integration of mainstream development discourse exemplified by representatives primarily of large foreign-founded INGOs also represents a form of resistance, as they make into their own the concepts that foreign agencies and donors are attempting to impose on them.

6.4 Interpretation: heeding the development line by dancing to the tune of the donor through discursive practices

I begin this analysis with the premise that “thinking is as ‘real’ an activity as any other” (Ferguson 1990: xv). I am not concerned with uncovering the ‘truth’ of the discourses I examine, insofar as this dissertation is not an evaluation of the extent to which the organizations ultimately carry out their programmes directly according to the descriptions provided in their marketing materials or interviews with foreigners. Rather, my interest lies in interviewees’ discursive practices primarily as a measure towards pleasing (potential) donors as well as pleasing me as the researcher, as opposed to applying these concepts accurately to advocate for the radical goals they initially represented. As Ferguson (1990: xv) explains, “the question is not ‘how closely do these ideas approximate the truth,’ but ‘what effects do these ideas (which may or may not happen to be true) bring about?’ I am concerned with mainstream development discourse as a device or mechanism with a function, a discourse “that does something” (ibid.).

Governance occurs not through force or domination, but through “the management of freedom” (Abrahamsen 2004: 1460), such that “to govern is to presuppose the freedom of the governed” (Rose 1999: 4) and to use the knowledge of that freedom for one’s own objectives. Indeed, power is not opposed to but rather exercised through freedom (Foucault 1982a). In this sense, through their own freedom, NGOs allow themselves to be governed through discursive practices.

99 As I discussed in chapter three, respondents often perceive foreigners as a possible conduit for funding.
by donor agencies and governments that exercise techniques which enable NGOs to align themselves with donor aspirations (ibid.). NGOs organize interventions around the basis of a structure of knowledge that is in some sense artificially constructed through discourse (Ferguson 1990).

6.4.1 The power of discourse

“The power of speech is the power to name and define things.” (Slim 2002: 3)

In the previous sections, I illustrated the integration of mainstream development discourse in NGO discursive practices through the lens of key concepts in this discourse: human rights, child rights, and community participation. These examples have shown integrations of mainstream development discourse in ways that are often misaligned with – and at times outright contradictory to – the concepts’ core tenets (as described earlier) and the way they are promoted by large development agencies that espouse their benefits to development efforts. In the following interpretation, I discuss how watered-down applications of the concepts of rights threaten the quality of OVC interventions. I then consider how the idea of community participation as conceptualized by interviewees is premised on false juxtapositions regarding what constitutes community participation, which not only fails to garner the reputed benefits of community participation but may in fact also have destructive effects on OVC initiatives.

Donor agencies would like the public to believe that success in obtaining donor funding depends in large part on the confluence of the viability, anticipated efficacy, and cost-effectiveness of proposed interventions or programmes of activities with donor mandates, budget, and past experiences with the funding recipient. In order to successfully obtain funding, NGOs must convince donors of their qualities in this regard. A primary means of convincing donors of their aptitude to carry out programmes in accordance with donor mandates is through communicating ideas using a discourse appealing to and in accordance with that of the donor.

The terms used by interviewees to describe their NGO programming in the preceding section provide evidence of the infiltration of mainstream development discourses at the local/national NGO level. These, in turn, support the relations of power outlined in chapter five (Foucault 1978). Yet dissimilar interpretations of mainstream development discourse may impact the ‘beneficiaries’ the interventions are intended to assist, as programmes are built on tenuous
understandings of the core concepts they are intending to promote. Of note in the foregoing description of interviewees’ uses and interpretations of particularly jargon-laden development terms is that they stem from representatives of large foreign-founded INGOs. Indeed, this highlights a discernible difference between foreign-founded NGOs and indigenous NGOs (recall from chapter five the greater transparency and openness regarding financing exhibited by smaller NGOs as compared to their larger counterparts). In this study, large foreign-founded INGOs frequently employed standardized ‘bite-size’ catch phrases replete with key terms in mainstream development discourse functioning as advertisements for their NGOs. These NGOs incorporated “fashionable ‘buzzwords’ often associated with influential international organizations” (Mintzberg and Srinivas 2009: 49). In contrast to these jargonized descriptions of NGO work, small locally-founded NGOs instead employed more descriptive and explanatory terminology of day-to-day operations. When asked to describe their organizational practices, these NGO representatives provided lengthy in-depth explanations of their quotidian activities, often complementing these descriptions with detailed examples of the experiences and situations of individuals targeted by their services.

This implies that the degree to which technologies of the self are at work among NGOs developing initiatives to attend to the needs of OVC in Uganda is in part a reflection of the size of the NGO as well as the origins and location of its directors. My findings suggest that the presumed stability (in terms of funding, track record etc.) of larger, well-established INGOs effectively limits their ability to maneuver around the pressures of the mainstream development apparatus in contrast to their small locally-founded counterparts that have absorbed and integrated mainstream development regulations and discourses to a much lesser extent. In this sense, large INGOs with worldwide recognition are ironically more subject to technologies of the self, not in spite of but because of their firm position in the development apparatus.

Indeed, those NGO representatives frequently and emphatically employing mainstream development discourse were those who work for organizations founded in high-income countries. These are practiced in heeding a particular rhetorical line that has shown to be appealing to donors. The ways in which NGO representatives integrated and re-presented this discourse suggests that the concepts they routinely employ are less their own ideas and visions about the whys and hows of development, than they are the ideas of development agencies and
donors shaping the development landscape. The earlier mention that child rights is not a term originating within Africa substantiates this observation.

There also appears to be a discernible gap between foreign-founded INGOs’ official adoption of mainstream development discourse (as illustrated in their marketing materials and discussions with foreigners such as myself) and Ugandan staff members’ interpretations and application of these terms. Local interpretations of mainstream development discourse seem not to accurately or consistently reflect organizations’ official adoptions of development enterprise terms.

Although the concepts of human rights, child rights, and community participation gained their consolidation and popularity not only individually but rather as “the result of the establishment of a set of relations among these elements, institutions, and practices and of the systematization of these relations to form a whole” (Escobar 1995: 40), in the next section I consider them sequentially, in the order I presented the concepts in the previous sections.

6.4.1.1 NGOs adapting donors’ human rights rhetoric: practicing technologies of the self to please the donor

Despite much earlier iterations, human rights discourse has only reemerged as a central feature of the development agenda since the 1990s and continues to gain credence among NGOs and government agencies today. The resonance of RBAs in a multiplicity of situations globally has facilitated this widespread adoption of rights discourse. The concept’s ubiquity in the development sector is a negative characteristic as much as it is a positive one. By assuming “that we and others know what a rights-based approach looks like, since we ‘know’ what rights look like” (Bradshaw 2006: 1334), we become lax in determining a precise and standardized meaning and application. Indeed, although mainstreaming rights is advantageous in bringing the need to factor rights into development efforts to global attention, it threatens to systematize diluted and ineffective conceptualizations of rights as development actors promote the application of concepts with which they are not intimately familiar. Although accurate applications of this concept’s call for advocacy are welcome as a way of raising consciousness, “particularly when incompletely incorporated, [human rights and RBAs] may be a double-edged sword, akin to … other ideas interpreted and applied in distinct or contradistinctive manners to their original conception” (Birn 2008: 38). Interpreting rights and RBAs in ways dissimilar to their intended meaning can hold implications for those they seek to assist (Gruskin et al. 2010).
In the previous section, I showed how NGO representatives (particularly those from large foreign-founded INGOs) have interpreted and operationalized RBAs in ways incongruent with the original conception of human and child rights, which is an observation others have substantiated (Gruskin et al. 2010). NGOs in this study employed a range of interpretations regarding rights and RBAs in development of their OVC initiatives, resulting in varying modes of implementation.

According to its original intention, rights discourse must bear the possibility of positively transforming the relations of power between development actors (Cornwall and Nyamu-Musembi 2004). Yet the disparity between the once radical conceptions of RBAs and their watered-down application by NGOs in this study suggests that this key tenet of RBAs has been lost as NGOs try to operationalize a concept in ways that can be applied and measured (recall the importance of this from chapter five) to show the results of their interventions. Because of this discord between the concept’s radical potential and NGOs’ ability to incorporate it into their programming practices in an efficient and quantifiable way, their transition to incorporating RBAs has remained primarily at a rhetorical level. According to the descriptions of programming provided by study interviewees, NGOs have portrayed a change in terminology more so than a discernible change in programming. They have incorporated rights rhetoric into their practices in order to mold themselves in a way that is appealing to (potential) donors. Their eager adoption of this discourse – that is, their manipulation of their own discursive practices in order to appeal to (potential) donor agencies – reflects active participation in technologies of the self.

Although at its worst rights discourse is simply another attempt by development agencies to co-opt an originally revolutionary concept couched in ‘bottom-up’ terms, for all its shortcomings this concept and the hopes it transmits are “as good as it gets” (Cornwall and Nyamu-Musembi 2004: 1433) in the current development apparatus. While skepticism is warranted about the transformational potential of changes in intentions in “an industry as full of paradoxes and dissonance as that of development” (ibid.), more than any other in mainstream development discourse, this concept inspires talk about politics, power, and social justice. Rights discourse “animates and mobilizes, … and restores to people a sense of their agency and their rightful claim to dignity and voice” (ibid.) in a way that comparatively empty terms such as community participation simply cannot, as I show next.
6.4.1.2 Community participation: false juxtapositions and damaging effects of discursive practices

From a Foucaultian perspective, the concept of community participation itself is particularly problematic as it relies on juxtapositions and the creation of binaries which are simply not real in the world. For example, development actors incessantly evoke the concepts of “North” versus “South” or “professional knowledge” versus “local knowledge” (Kothari 2001: 140) to demonstrate their inclusion of the latter two of each of these binaries, respectively. Similarly, the idea of community in development can only come about and be justified as being more humanitarian than institutional responses through the creation of a dichotomy between the state/elites/foreign actors and the community (Bullock 1990). These prevailing conceptualizations of participation and community require the imposition of a contrast between “the micro [and] the macro, the margins against the centre, the local against the elite, and the powerless against the powerful” (ibid.), with the goal of reversing the inequities these binaries present.

This, in turn, relies on a conceptualization of power held within particular sites, which can be transferred from one site (the currently dominating) to another (the subjugated). Foucault vehemently rejected such dichotomous ways of thinking pervasive in much political theorizing, and argued instead that binaries do not exist as ‘real’ in the world (Kothari 2001). To suggest that one’s organization incorporates community participation therefore relies on a false dichotomization of community in opposition to what is outside of or not part of the community, as well as the implication that there is power to be held, and this power should be transferred from development agencies to target groups or participating communities. This dichotomization is in direct conflict with Foucault’s supposition that power is never localized or maintained within some sort of body (be it political or corporeal), but rather functions through processes of and circulates through a chain-like link between people or organizations (Foucault 1980b). This suggests that, apart from conceptualizing and implementing community participation in more accurate ways, these concepts (individually as well as combined) require reconsideration as they are based on assumptions about the nature of power that themselves do not reflect the true nature of the world.

More important than these false juxtapositions are the potentially damaging effects on OVC and their families and communities due to NGOs’ superficial interpretation of community
participation rhetoric and related operationalization in ways that exploit rather than ‘empower’ or include them in a truly participatory way. Interviewees’ application of the concept of community participation to refer to a range of roles performed by various actors and stakeholders illustrates it as “an infinitely malleable term [which] can be used to evoke and to signify almost anything that involves people” (Cornwall 2006: 63). This implies that those applying the concept can frame community participation “to meet almost any demand made of it” (ibid.). The concept of community participation is also a prime example illustrating Foucault’s analytical stance towards the subtlety of the function of power. Participation manifests and rearticulates forms of historically constructed dominance and control through “ostensibly humane and freely adopted social practices” (Kothari 2001: 143), while endeavoring to reveal knowledges and voices that have been subjugated and “disqualified as insufficient or insignificant” (ibid.).

I showed earlier how NGO representatives employed grossly watered-down interpretations of community participation in their descriptions of NGO programming. At times, they conceived of community participation as the cash or in-kind contributions of communities towards a project conceived and implemented by NGO staff. The interpretation of one representative from a large foreign-founded INGO of community participation as the involvement of NGO staff in the community entirely misses the key element of the concept, which involves engaging communities throughout the entire process of programming, from conception through implementation and evaluation. If ‘fulfilled’, community participation would involve “participatory project identification and design; inputs by local beneficiaries into project implementation or decisions over the distribution of financial benefits, if generated; and, lastly, extensive participation throughout project cycle management” (Bornstein 2003: 399).

Instead, as we saw earlier with regards to the concept of rights, the once radical concept that calls for a problematizing and critical engagement with social issues has transformed “into a managerial exercise based on ‘toolboxes’ of procedures and techniques [working on] problem-solving through participation” (Cleaver 2001: 53). In its contemporary interpretation and application, efficiency trumps true empowerment and decision-makers focus on highly visible institutions at the expense of community-level activities (ibid.).

Development agencies enact participatory approaches in ways that strategically enhance their efficiency and effectiveness, and promote lofty goals of empowering and democratizing
populations. For all its widespread application, there is a shocking lack of evidence substantiating the claims that community participation can in fact achieve such goals, to be effective over the long term, and to improve the material conditions of societies’ most vulnerable populations (Cleaver 2001). Despite this, and in the face of incisive critiques of participation as an approach to development, development agencies continue to believe in the concept’s value, and to co-opt a term initially imbued with strong potential to contribute towards social justice. As my analysis shows, the pressure to incorporate community participation into development programming pushes NGOs to make considerable efforts to shape themselves in a way that pleases the donor, even if this means adapting community participation in ways not intended by the donors. Recall the feminist critique mentioned earlier, which warned that in reality ‘participation’ can often mean ‘exploitation’ as (particularly female) community members are burdened with additional tasks under the guise of ‘participating’ in community development (Molyneux 2007).

6.4.2 Resistance as an expression of power, agency, and technologies of the self

At the crux of NGO incorporation of mainstream development discourse is the necessity of such adoption for (continued) funding success. Revisiting the discussion on RBAs at the beginning of this chapter and considering what has materialized in the interim, it becomes increasingly apparent that naming activities in accordance with donor discourse is critically important “at least in terms of ensuring finance” (Bradshaw 2006: 1335). This is the case regardless of the precise nature of NGO activities and programming and the extent to which these truly build on and embody the terms employed (Bornstein 2003). This observation about the importance of integrating and publicly using donor discourse echoes a 2003 study in South Africa which showed how local NGOs and local chapters of INGOs package their projects in particular ways to match donor priorities, “chang[ing] the language and repackag[ing] programme elements to ‘create a fit’” with donor objectives (ibid.: 398). Indeed, “there is money available for projects focused on rights, participation, on citizenship, the elements that make up a rights-based approach” (Bradshaw 2006: 1335-6). Incorporating a discourse acceptable to donors through repackaging of existing activities thus enables organizations to ‘sell’ their projects to donors. This further demonstrates the efforts on behalf of local NGOs and local chapters of INGOs to modify themselves in order to accord with donor commands in discursive ways. My findings
confirm that organizations “use the language of rights-based approach to development largely to invoke the discursive power of the concept of rights, without intending to bear the weight of the entirety of consequences that flow from it” (ibid.: 1433).

Yet despite evidence showing widespread NGO acquiescence to donor rules and regulations (in chapter five) and integration of mainstream development discourse (in this chapter), my findings confirm the observation that local NGOs and local chapters of INGOs “are not necessarily powerless in their relations with funders” (Elbers and Schulpen 2013: 51), and regularly demonstrate numerous acts of resistance and upward influence.

Interpreting these findings through a Foucaultian lens challenges common criticisms of his seemingly paralyzing notion of power, which many observers have suggested leaves little space for resistance or change. Critics’ accusations that Foucault promoted hopelessness and pessimism and presented power as “something so ubiquitous and overwhelming that all resistance becomes pointless” (Pickett 1996: 461) is in fact incommensurate with his own interpretation of power. Foucault’s stance was quite the opposite: he contended that if everything is dangerous, everything has the possibility of resistance (Foucault 1983). Indeed, from this perspective NGOs’ resistance could be anticipated.

Given that at the time of Foucault’s conceptualization of ‘contestation’ or ‘transgression’ he had not yet fully developed his ideas on power, I employ his latter conceptualization of resistance as diffuse yet localized. This coincides temporally with the other Foucaultian concepts I employ in this dissertation including governmentality, technologies of power and domination, and technologies of the self. In his later work, Foucault argued that “where there is power, there is resistance” (Foucault 1978: 95), noting that power could not be conceptualized without resistance. More accurately, “since power is spread throughout society and not localized in any particular place, the struggle against power must also be diffuse” (Pickett 1996: 458). Indeed,

---

100 Foucault’s views on resistance evolved over the course of his intellectual work, in the 1960s initially conceptualized as ‘contestation’ or ‘transgression’ (Foucault 1961), in the early 1970s focusing on “revolutionary agitation” (Picket 1996: 445; Foucault 1986) of what he then referred to as ‘struggle’ or ‘resistance’, and finally – beginning in the mid- to late-1970s – conceptualizing resistance as “a broader notion of diffuse, localized resistance to power” (Picket 1996), all encapsulated within the terms ‘agonism’ and ‘resistance’ over the course of his theorizing on this concept (Foucault 1982b).
resistance is central to relations of power, which cannot exist but for “a multiplicity of points of resistance” within it (ibid.). Instead of a central point of refusal, “there is a plurality of resistances … [and] by definition, they can only exist in the strategic field of power relations. (Foucault 1978: 96)

Because resistance inherently lacks hierarchy, it is thus a ‘counter-power’ (Pickett 1996) but, like power, it is not simply a negative force, but also something that can be “productive, affirmative, and even use the techniques of power” (ibid.: 460). In this sense, this form of resistance reshapes the power relations between donors and funding recipients as the latter take an active part in governing themselves, lessening the extent to which donors dominate this governance. Foucault illustrated this in his own work. He used precisely the formal discourse techniques “such as arguments, footnotes, and historical data” (ibid.) he was endeavoring to undermine. In this study, respondents exemplified this element of resistance in part by refusing to incorporate mainstream development concepts in their discursive or programmatic practices, and others through integrating it in ways incommensurate with the original conception. The diversity of their incorporation (and lack thereof) of this discourse itself reflects a form of resistance.

Indeed, respondents’ application of rights and community participation (as opposed to developing a new discourse of their own) in my study is perhaps surprisingly consistent with Foucault’s conceptualization of resistance. While on the one hand he suggested that using rights discourse to rebel against disciplinary power “is counterproductive because the discourse of rights is itself an integral part of disciplinary power” (Pickett 1996: 460), he nevertheless conceded that critiquing power through other principles “would merely be the creation of a new totalizing theory” (ibid.) and would therefore be equally invalid. This suggests that respondents’ movement within development enterprise discourse, whereby they integrate key concepts from this discourse albeit in uniquely and varyingly interpreted ways, falls within this conceptualization of resistance.

The reconceptualizations and reinterpretations of mainstream development discourse portrayed by NGOs are also consistent with the postcolonial perspective I briefly outlined in chapter two. Postcolonial analyses endeavor to reveal the heterogeneity of discourses as a measure of “undermin[ing] and transform[ing] the dominance of eurocentrist colonial discourses” (Goss 1996: 242). My effort to draw attention to the persistence of mainstream development discourse
within and among organizations and agencies seeking to address the needs of OVC in Uganda also reflects a postcolonial theoretical intent to uncover the discursive practices through which power continues to shape representations and understandings of non-Western worlds (Echtner and Prasad 2003).

6.5 Concluding remarks

This chapter has reviewed the evolution of various elements of mainstream development discourse and offered illustrations of this discourse in practice in the context of OVC initiatives in Uganda. I have interpreted the evidence of Ugandan NGO representatives’ integration and varying interpretation of three key concepts within the development discourse promulgated by major development institutions and donors. I argued that the dominance of mainstream development discourse in NGO initiatives to assist OVC in Uganda has remained primarily discursive rather than programmatic (as evidenced by interviewees’ descriptions of their programming in relation to these concepts). I also suggested that neither of the discursive elements I outlined, despite efforts to prove the contrary, have effectively addressed the underlying issues of inequitable power relations. I have proposed that perhaps more dangerously, this lends support to the literature suggesting that these efforts have contributed to the exploitation of the children, families, and communities they set out to assist (see, for instance, Veale et al. 2001, Kothari 2001), which I speculate may also be the case in Uganda.

While the failure to truly challenge power inequities through the integration of human and child rights or community participation according to their original conception may be lamentable, seen another way it may be a saving grace, as the concepts themselves are incommensurate with what they truly aim to achieve, even if integrated or applied in direct accordance with their key tenets. As Cheney (2012) has argued, conceptualizing children through a protectionist lens that suggests children are vulnerable (as the term ‘OVC’ actively perpetuates) is directly at odds with respecting children as rights bearers that have the capacity to fight for their own rights. Similarly, the concept of community participation, again even in application of its most basic tenets, relies on a much disputed and contestable conceptualization of ‘community’, on which researchers and development practitioners have yet to agree. This suggests that a reconsideration of the very concepts the mainstream development apparatus is bent on promoting may be necessary.
This chapter has also illustrated how donor dependence on NGOs to incorporate the ideas they promote suggests that NGOs can use the technologies of the self for their own purposes, in part by resisting donors’ subjectification. Organizations can engage with power relations for their own ends and determine (at least in part) the extent to which they incorporate such discourses and propose alternative discourses, although always functioning within larger culturally and socially defined contexts and discourses (Lupton 1995). The political nature of knowledge and discourse thus holds potentially emancipatory implications, as “people on the ground can twist and bend the constraints imposed upon them” (O’Manique 2004: 44-5). In the concluding chapter that follows, I consider the implications of this form of resistance in light of evidence from the analysis in earlier chapters and argue that it is precisely this characteristic of power relations that offers avenues for resistance.
Chapter 7
Conclusion: Imagining Alternatives to the Mainstream Development Apparatus

7 Brief summary of the thesis and introduction to chapter seven

This dissertation has demonstrated the tremendous influence of donors’ regulatory and discursive practices on initiatives to address the situation of OVC in Uganda during the period 1986 to 2011. I have argued that initiatives to attend to the physical, social, and emotional needs of OVC (through the provision of food, education, health care, housing, and social support) illustrate the impact of donor-recipient relations of power and mainstream development discourse in shaping governmental and non-governmental initiatives. I examined the diffuse nature of power characterizing the relationships between donors and funding recipients.

In this concluding chapter, I revisit the historical overview from chapter four and the analyses from chapters five and six with the aim of using the preceding analyses to imagine alternatives to the context of OVC initiatives in Uganda which is heavily influenced by the mainstream development apparatus. I synthesize and collectively examine the findings of the preceding chapters, and consider the implications of the mechanisms locally- and foreign-founded NGOs and government agencies have used to resist or demonstrate alternatives to the donor-recipient funding dynamics that influence the character of OVC initiatives in Uganda. In considering the analytical implications of these interactions, I offer suggestions for rearticulating donor-recipient relationships in OVC care in Uganda in ways that meet the needs of (and as expressed by) OVC organizations and government agencies.

Based on my analysis of the foregoing evidence from my study, I argue that concerted individual efforts at the NGO level and collective efforts on behalf of NGOs through non-governmental advocacy networks can augment the series of partly intentional, and partly happenstance small daily acts of resistance of the donor-driven agenda. My analysis acknowledges the enormous potential for repetitive ‘small’ acts in multiple iterations and over sustained periods of time at the NGO level to also effect change for the benefit of the local implementation of foreign-designed programming, even in the absence of collective organization. Combined, channeling NGO
representatives’ growing awareness of and discontent with the regulatory and discursive restrictions involved in their engagement with donors (not only with the GOU) can facilitate an active and authentic reconceptualization of the donor-driven development agenda that characterizes this domain, a shift that is ultimately the aim of this work.

The preceding three chapters have constituted the bulk of the response to the two research questions interrogating the evolution of OVC initiatives in Uganda over the period 1986 to 2011, and the roles of international agencies and donors in shaping these initiatives. Drawing from the analyses of the previous chapters, I argue that instead of endeavoring to develop grand alternatives to the mainstream development apparatus, local NGOs, local chapters of INGOs, and government agencies can build on their existing acts of resistance through micro-level, day-to-day interactions with beneficiaries, programme staff, and donors. This may offer some small validation for the hope and motivation felt among those endeavoring to resist the feeling of being trapped in an inequitable development enterprise that prioritizes donor needs above all else. As my analysis of donor-recipient relations through the concept of technologies of the self has shown (in chapter six), the fluid and dynamic nature of power necessitates NGO participation in constructing and maintaining a development agenda that is driven by donors. This implies that these organizations and the individuals which they employ are not passive recipients or subjects of an all-powerful development enterprise whose ‘game’ they are required to play in order to survive or succeed. Instead, these organizations constitute part of a process through their everyday practices and interactions that can reimagine and rearticulate donor-recipient dynamics.

I conclude this dissertation by outlining suggestions for future research and offering some closing remarks.

7.1 OVC initiatives in Uganda, 1986 – 2011: insights from this study

The developments in OVC initiatives in Uganda between 1986 and 2011 are symptomatic of larger shifts in the international development agenda during this period. Below, I consider the regulatory and discursive practices I outlined in chapters five and six in the context of the historical developments I outlined in chapter four.
7.1.1 Efforts to identify and address the needs of OVC: foreign involvement by design

In the late 1980s and into the early 1990s, large international child-focused organizations such as Save the Children (SCF) were integral to identifying the magnitude of OVC in Uganda. These organizations highlighted the need for and were deeply involved in the initial official enumeration of OVC and descriptions of their circumstances. For instance, SCF became a central promoter of developing a national plan of response to the situation of OVC in Uganda, which included locally- and foreign-founded NGOs, Ugandan institutions, and foreign donors. In this sense, foreign agencies and institutions were incorporated into initiatives to tend to OVC in the country by design. As I showed in chapters five and six, the centrality of foreign influence in planning and implementing an overall OVC response holds considerable implications for the nature of OVC initiatives in Uganda, as the foreign agencies implicated in this response subject local constituents to a series of rules and regulations that govern it.

The GOU’s establishment of the National Council for Children (NCC) in 1996, established first and foremost as a body to coordinate child-focused efforts within the country, further facilitated a donor-recipient dynamic that (again by design) gave donors considerable leverage to determine the nature of OVC initiative in Uganda as NGOs of all kinds provided services under their purveyance. Indeed, in the ‘NGO decade’ of the late 1980s/early 1990s, the design of the OVC response in Uganda facilitated strong donor influence by limiting the role of government and maximizing non-governmental involvement in the issue.

The NRM-led government of Uganda, on the contrary, was very slow to respond to the OVC situation as it prioritized other national concerns upon seizing power in 1986 and facing the massive task of reconstructing a war-torn and ethnically divided country. In particular, the GOU focused at this time on health sector reforms, which established and consolidated non-governmental and private organizations as key providers of service delivery. The GOU dealings with the country’s OVC situation reflected these principles as evidenced through the government’s focus on continuing to rely on families, communities, and community-based organizations to provide OVC care, while primarily becoming involved in providing technical guidance to organizations and limited healthcare services to children. This gave foreign donors and organizations considerable leverage to determine the nature of OVC initiatives. With few local financial resources or GOU support, local NGOs and local chapters of INGOs depended...
heavily on these foreign inputs and thus, by necessity, actively conceded to the ideas and conditions accompanying their funding in order to stay afloat.

### 7.1.2 The drive for human rights, child rights, and community participation in development

The emergence and consolidation of women’s organizations in Uganda during the late 1980s coincided with a growing focus on human rights internationally. The growing popularity of rights discourse in international policies and frameworks was in part exemplified through the GOU’s signing and ratifying of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) in 1990 and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC) in 1994. Alongside the worldwide movement towards female visibility in politics (also evident in Uganda) and a growing focus on women’s health (particularly with regard to childbearing, maternal mortality and morbidity, and safe motherhood initiatives) was increased interest particularly in women’s and children’s rights. As the plight of children became more visible in Uganda (in part as child soldiers emerged from the bush and growing numbers of AIDS orphans resulted from a then-unrelenting epidemic), efforts increasingly focused on securing child welfare.

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, the influx of civil society organizations in the country and the growing global economic crisis coincided with a strategic worldwide move towards sustainability in development. Sustainability’s close conceptual connection to community participation gained credence during this time. Development agencies and INGOs increasingly heeded the call to incorporate communities into their development efforts and focused on engaging communities in their own development. This was in large part a measure towards maximizing the sustainability of their initiatives. In Uganda, World Vision drilled community wells and SCF developed the ‘U5’ (under five) initiative to expand their focus to include child survival for children in the first five years of life.

During this decade, INGOs’ move to at least rhetorically engage communities in OVC initiatives also reflected discursive changes in the mainstream development agenda. Indeed, INGOs’ shift away from exclusive focus on residential care and/or the child sponsorship model to include supporting children in their families and communities through ‘community-based’ projects that also required the ‘participation’ of communities lends evidence to the concept’s growing popularity during this time.
This shift also illustrates INGOs’ uneasy efforts to strike a delicate balance: on one hand, organizations endeavored to outwardly demonstrate their recognition of the serious and considerable drawbacks of child sponsorship and residential care for OVC and foreign donors’ increasing support for community efforts by heavily promoting the concept of community participation in their communication and marketing materials. On the other hand, these INGOs continue(d) to rely heavily on residential and child sponsorship models of OVC care in practice. In this sense, employing the discourse of community participation allowed INGOs and donors to gloss over the realities of their programming, a disconnected practice which leading child aid organizations and charities continue to employ to the present day. Prominent Ugandan organizations’ (such as UWESO’s) shift from providing relief services to OVC to focusing on development programmes emphasizing sustainability, secondary education, self-reliance (through income-generating activities), partnerships with communities, other organizations, agencies, and governments illustrated the growing worldwide move to engage communities in development efforts as part of an effort to ensure sustainability.

Occurring simultaneously with this development in Uganda was the worldwide growth in the number and size of NGOs. Child-focused NGOs extended their reach particularly into Africa, where the social consequences of civil unrest and the AIDS pandemic were increasingly recognized. In practice, this meant adding a growing list of ‘partner’ countries and establishing country offices in a number of low- and middle-income countries, including Uganda to their roster. This had significant implications for the nature of OVC initiatives in Uganda, as donor agencies and INGO headquarters developed a series of rules and regulations to maintain unity across their worldwide initiatives and ensure transparent and accountable use of their funds. At the same time, local chapters of INGOs relied heavily on expatriate staffing to facilitate and ensure compliance with donor or headquarter rules and regulations.

The discursive shifts towards rights and community participation in development of the late 1980s and 1990s carried through into the early 2000s. In Uganda, foreign-founded NGOs in particular increasingly incorporated the promotion of child rights, self-sufficiency, women and children, and community-based development into their programming by endeavoring to provide locals with the tools to help themselves and to achieve self-sufficiency. The mainstream development discourse (discussed throughout chapter six) reflects this shift in the development sector and changing donor demands with which organizations and local government had to come
to terms in order to maintain their central position in the collection of initiatives addressing the needs of OVC in Uganda.

In May 2004, the Ugandan Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (MGLSD) establishment of the National Orphans and Vulnerable Children Policy (NOP) firmly consolidated the mainstream development discourse in policy, as exemplified through the promotion of the concepts of rights and community participation. In section 4.3.1 I argued that this policy focused on incorporating a rights-based approach to development, making the family and community the first line of response to OVC, facilitating community participation and strengthening community initiatives, and ensuring participation of vulnerable children in families in initiatives that concern them (MGLSD 2004).

The GOU also adapted international rights frameworks (i.e., The United Nations Conventions on the Rights of the Child; the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child; the UN General Assembly Special Session on HIV and AIDS; the United Nations Millennium Declaration; and the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability) into domestic policies by transforming the rhetoric of the National Policy and Strategic Programme Plan of Interventions for Orphans (NSPPI) into policies geared towards children (see section 4.3.1). These developments confirmed the confluence of discursive practices and policy development both internationally and within Uganda.

7.2 NGO engagement with donor agencies: examining the influence of donors’ regulatory and discursive practices

The involvement of foreign-founded (I)NGOs in addressing the needs of OVC in Uganda is based on the premise that such organizations have something to offer that cannot be attained through exclusively locally sourced initiatives. Indeed, foreign donors, governments, and foreign-founded NGOs have styled themselves as ‘experts’ with resources to attend to the needs of OVC in order to justify their prioritization of particular kinds of initiatives (as also seen in the field of HIV and AIDS, for instance; see Campbell et al. 2012). These initiatives are often at odds with the customs and ideas of those being assisted and can thus undermine the success of programming in such areas (ibid.).
Foreign donor and foreign-founded NGO efforts to assist OVC in Uganda seem in large part to have ignored a growing body of research demonstrating that supporting existing local initiatives to assist OVC is almost always more effective than imposing external solutions (Foster 2002; Skovdal and Campbell 2010). Although the challenges facing ‘traditional’ coping mechanisms which centred on familial or community-based care in relation to the needs of OVC have been well documented (e.g., Foster 2000), a number of scholars in the field remain optimistic that local efforts, if adequately supported, can continue to provide the bulk of the support necessary (Skovdal and Campbell 2010; Drew et al. 1998; Nyamukapa and Gregson 2005). In Uganda, most foreign-founded and foreign-funded NGOs have consumed the overwhelming majority of resources and attention donors allocate towards OVC initiatives. This likely undermines the efforts of local communities to address their health and social needs (Skovdal and Campbell 2012).

The negative implications of this scenario are intensified by the overriding acquiescence of locally-founded NGOs and local chapters of INGOs to the needs of mainly foreign donors at the expense of acknowledging, respecting, and building on the strengths of local efforts. As I have demonstrated in this dissertation, these NGOs by and large accede to donor pressure to follow often rigid rules and regulations regarding their initiatives related to OVC in Uganda (section 5.3.1). They also integrate mainstream development discourse (section 6.3) into their own discursive – and, to a lesser extent, programmatic – practices (albeit often at odds with donor as well as multi- and bilateral agency conceptualizations of key concepts within this discourse). Despite local NGOs’ reservations about the threat of such foreign influence on the viability of local efforts (which cannot compete on an even playing field for the resources available to address the OVC issue), the systematic application of external solutions to local problems continues unabated, as ‘recipient’ countries and organizations are mostly not in a position to say “no” to such influence and instead acquiesce to their requirements.

7.2.1 Potentially liberating implications of (the necessity of) participation in governance

My findings regarding NGO engagement with donor regulatory and discursive practices suggest an overwhelming tendency among NGOs to acquiesce to donor requirements. In chapter five, I highlighted the active participation of NGOs in perpetuating relations of power that prioritize donors over funding recipients by outlining the bureaucratic nature of donor-recipient
relationships which functions to subjectivize funding recipients through a set of seemingly technical and bureaucratic rules and regulations into actors that carry out donor strategic interests.

I continued and expanded on this thread in chapter six, where I explored NGOs’ active participation in promoting such power relations through their discursive practices, which reflect and confirm donor agendas. In that chapter, I suggested that particularly foreign-founded INGOs appeared to place enormous value on engaging with mainstream development discourse (regardless of the depth of their familiarity with the key historically situated social and political tenets of these concepts) primarily as a means of gaining or maintaining visibility and respect within a competitive donor market. Whether or not this is intentional, I argued that the application of watered-down development concepts may have disadvantageous implications for the quality of OVC initiatives in Uganda. However, these acts—which, indeed, are active undertakings on the part of NGOs—demonstrate a key characteristic of Foucault’s conceptualization of governance: in order to function, governance necessarily requires the participation of those being governed.

As I demonstrated in both chapters five and six, one key component of governmentality is the required cooperation and action of those being governed. In this case, this is arguably a central and decisive factor in donor-recipient relations. Indeed, the requirement of NGOs to engage with donor rules, regulations, and discourses in order to facilitate donor governance of them is central to opening opportunities for them to challenge, subvert, re-orient, and re-imagine the power dynamics defining the nature of contemporary OVC initiatives in Uganda. Put simply, because donors depend on the participation of NGOs in co-constituting the nature of the development apparatus, NGOs are in a position of altering the power dynamics that constitute it.

7.3 Implications

My identification of NGOs’ tangible reworkings of donor funding and conspicuous silences (in terms of mainstream development discourse) as evidence of resisting the development apparatus illustrates the “kind of Sisyphean optimism” (Gordon 1991: 48) characteristic of Foucault’s later work. In one respect, Foucault suggested that in order to govern—in this sense, in order for donors to regulate NGO programming activities—a mode of governing necessitates “a certain notion of its rationality, which may in turn need, in order to be operable, to be credible to the
governed as well as the governing” (ibid.). In another sense, it represents the contingency of current ideas and modes of operating, and their modifiability. Combined, these relations – indeed, the “conduct of conduct” (ibid.) – show how “the relation between government and the governed passes, to a perhaps ever-increasing extent, through the manner in which governed individuals are willing to exist as subjects” (ibid.).

This also points to a response to a common question among critics of Foucault’s concept of governmentality who question the absence of agency and critique the anonymity and facelessness of the forces working upon others they perceive as implicit in his work. As Ferguson (2009) has indicated, the assumption that Foucault neglected or belittled agency is misaligned. Discourse is a practice which by definition involves doing something, performing an action. Ferguson (2009) explains, “understood in that way, it’s not a question of some anonymous discourse sort of making things happen, it is a question of one set of practices, let’s say the practices of thinking through things, which is articulated with another set of practices, let’s say being a development worker”. As such, the practices of local NGOs and local chapters of INGOs engaging with donor regulations and discursive practices, whether in accordance with their expected activities or not, constitutes “doing something in the world” (ibid.) and is thus an example of their agency.

It is in the absence of a central locus of resistance wherein lies its strength. Resistances are “inscribed in [power] as an irreducible opposite” (Foucault 1978: 96), and as such are not simply passive reactions to a dominating force. These resistances,

… are distributed in irregular fashion: the points, knots, or focuses of resistance are spread over time and space at varying densities, at times mobilizing groups or individuals in a definitive way, inflaming certain points of the body, certain moments in life, certain types of behaviour. (Foucault 1978: 96)

In other words, in order to shift the dynamics plaguing NGOs implementing OVC programming in Uganda, no great revolution is necessary. Certainly “great radical ruptures” (Foucault 1978: 96) may occasionally occur, yet these are not necessary to shift the current dynamics. Foucault (1978: 95-6) explains,
More often one is dealing with mobile and transitory points of resistance, producing cleavages in a society that shift about, fracturing unities and effecting regroupings, furrowing across individuals themselves, cutting them up and remolding them, marking off irreducible regions in them, in their bodies and minds. Just as the network of power relations ends by forming a dense web that passes through apparatuses and institutions, without being exactly localized in them, so too the swarm of points of resistance traverses social stratifications and individual unities. And it is doubtless the strategic codification of these points of resistance that makes a revolution possible, somewhat similar to the way in which the state relies on the institutional integration of power relationships.

In this sense, the work of non-governmental advocacy networks – in ‘strategically codifying’ various points of resistance by uniting diverse organizations under a common goal, and by providing a collective platform for the promotion of these efforts – is already setting the foundations for such a shift in power dynamics. For Foucault, it was through coherence among less noticeable local struggles (rather than a Marxist class-based revolution) that dominating relations and structures of power could be upended (Pickett 1996). Indeed, power’s strategic nature could offer the necessary coherence required for such struggles. “The lack of a description of a new order should not, therefore, be taken as a lack of hope for change, including total revolution” (ibid.: 463). This pattern, I suggest, has a series of implications for NGOs’ future work with OVC in Uganda.

7.3.1 Implications for the field

Critics of the international development apparatus including most notably Escobar (1995) and Ferguson (1990) have identified social movements as holding the potential to provide an alternative to the technical nature of the solutions bilateral agencies and NGOs promote through their depoliticization of poverty and other social issues, and at the same time working to challenge inequities that are inherent in the current system of development (Campbell et al. 2010). The perspective taken in this dissertation provides a slightly different approach to the “implicit dualism between all-powerful international development agencies and the powerless” (ibid.: 448) implied in conceptualizations of unidirectional flows of influence, suggesting instead that those being subjectified by ‘powerful’ others “may subvert international donor agendas and appropriate resources in ways that are … reflective of their own needs and interests” (ibid.).
This suggests a more nuanced conceptualization of the power dynamics between donors and funding recipients, which recognizes the possibility for resistance within every expression or ‘practice’ of power. Drawing inspiration from Campbell and colleagues (2012), I have tried to indicate how the acknowledgement of power inequities and donor regulation of NGOs can in fact co-exist conceptually alongside funding recipients’ acts of resistance of such dynamics. In order for these subversions to take hold, however, social movements of this nature must promote “receptive social environments” (Campbell et al. 2010: 969) that can “hear and support the[se] voices” (ibid.). To do so effectively, such efforts must promote critical thinking that heightens awareness of the societal inequalities (as opposed to individual traits) influencing their conditions, with actionable strategies. This does not require broad-scale collective action across and between nations, but can also take place on a smaller scale in local contexts.

In the context of OVC initiatives in Uganda, the implications of my study findings are:

1. Mainstream development discourse is largely ineffective and can even be harmful in the way it is commonly applied by NGOs. As NGOs increasingly integrate and work to formulate their programming activities in accordance with this discourse, the implications of employing key concepts from mainstream development discourse need to be better recognized. Development practitioners and international agencies promoting the application of mainstream development discourse must reconsider the main tenets of the concepts they are promoting, and NGOs of all shapes and sizes can work to resist incorporation of this discourse into their practices, particularly if they are doing this primarily to please donors, and/or incorporating it in rhetoric only.

2. The current character of OVC initiatives in Uganda is historically situated; that is, the inequitable power relations characterizing donor-recipient dynamics and hence current efforts to address OVC are a product of their historical as well as political, social, and economic development over time. I have shown in this study how local NGOs and local chapters of INGOs have historically contributed to the perpetuation of a donor-driven development agenda through their own quotidian acts and discursive practices. However, their involvement in engaging in these technologies of the self whereby they continuously endeavor to improve themselves in accordance with the donors’ needs also suggests that local NGOs and local chapters of INGOs can influence this trajectory by formulating
OVCI initiatives in Uganda in the way they envision. They can do this through selective engagement with and resistance to the influences of a donor-driven development agenda. For their part, donor agencies must respect the needs expressed by local NGOs and local chapters of INGOs at not only a rhetorical level but in daily practice. They should also heed the research repeatedly showing that on the whole locally developed initiatives more effectively address the needs as they are experienced by ‘beneficiaries’. This involves cultivating considerable flexibility with regard to adapting to locals’ understandings and perceptions of needs.

3. Local NGOs and local chapters of INGOs have the capacity to resist the mainstream development apparatus they feel is pushing them to provide OVC services in ways emphasizing accountability and transparency as well as promoting mainstream development concepts such as human rights, child rights, and community participation. By capitalizing on and maximizing their central role in co-producing the relations of power that create this donor-driven development agenda and participating in networks that provide a platform for advocacy, they can reorient the nature of these power dynamics.

7.3.2 Potential areas for further research

This dissertation offers a critical inquiry into the factors shaping OVC initiatives in Uganda in the period 1986 to 2011 as a means of exemplifying the strength of mainstream development (through regulatory and discursive practices) in affecting the character of these initiatives, as well as the acts of resistance working against it. In examining this particular case, I have left unanswered a series of salient questions.

The first involves a set of concerns regarding:

1. The role of (mostly foreign-managed, and almost exclusively foreign-funded) NGOs in addressing the needs of OVC in the first place.

2. Impact or effectiveness; that is, the extent to which NGO representatives’ commentaries on their programming is truly enacted ‘in the field’ (how much of their discourse is actually translated into and implemented in practice).
3. Possible measures to minimize the often negative impacts of foreign-driven development efforts on local communities.

Indeed, my focus in this dissertation primarily on the discursive practices of NGO representatives within Uganda took as a given the involvement of foreign-managed initiatives in local OVC issues. Further studies critical of NGOs’ role in development could examine whether and/or to what extent NGOs have a role in addressing the needs of OVC in the first place. The absence of a comparative analysis of NGOs’ discursive practices in relation to actual practices ‘in the field’ also suggests there is much yet to be done in determining the extent to which foreign influences indeed filter down to practices in the delivery of services or care for OVC. Finally, further research building on Dahl’s (2009) ethnographic work examining the negative impacts of foreign-developed OVC initiatives (no matter how ‘culturally sensitive’ they deem themselves to be) would be helpful for clarifying precisely what it is that causes these negative implications, and how they can be averted.

Secondly, continuation of this research could focus exclusively on the marketing strategies employed by mostly INGOs but increasingly also local NGOs to solicit funding, which points to a larger issue around NGOs’ use of children as tools. In this study, I focused only on the element of ‘marketing’ apparent in NGO representatives’ discussions with a foreigner, and did not explicitly interrogate their marketing strategies through media such as the internet and sponsorship campaigns. Yet given the pervasiveness of online marketing in not only INGOs’ but increasingly more local NGOs’ fundraising efforts and the tremendous influence of marketing styles on Westerners’ perceptions of the problems and possible solutions to OVC issues in low- and middle-income countries, further examinations exclusively of NGOs’ marketing campaigns could shed light on the commercialization of NGOs and their growing tendency to model themselves as businesses aiming to maximize financial success. Many INGOs focused on OVC have taken on the stylistic approach of marketing for material objects, wherein selecting a child to sponsor is almost as straightforward as ordering a book online: sponsors-to-be can select a child’s gender, age (at times by date of birth), geographical location, and other such factors that ‘suit’ the sponsor’s liking. This effort to put a human face (that is, of individual children identified by name, age, location etc.) on what for many is often an overwhelming scenario against which they feel helpless, has instead been a dehumanizing development that portrays children in such situations as objects whose conditions can be simply and efficiently ameliorated
through a financial contribution. This has tremendous potential to further entrench the very perceptions of and practices towards the vulnerable ‘other’ child that NGOs should be working against.

Finally, there is need for the continuation of the discussion on the merits, drawbacks, and complex factors constituting a still-popular model of OVC programming, namely the child sponsorship model which arose numerous times during this study but was too large in scope to fit neatly into the presentation of this broader project. As I outlined in section 4.2.4, the child sponsorship model has had a (relatively) long history and maintained a central position in efforts to assist OVC in Uganda (as well as worldwide), despite evidence of the inappropriateness and possibly destructive implications of such an approach. It is my hope that future work will build on the important work of Erica Bornstein (2001a and 2001b) to contribute to a critical dialogue about the role of this form of assistance in efforts to assist OVC. This has repeatedly been shown to have considerable detrimental implications for the targeted OVC (as well as their communities), yet continues unabated in various guises, showing little signs of being genuinely reconceptualized. Because of its continued use and perseverance in the face of a growing body of research demonstrating its ill effects, it is necessary to examine and present this issue in such a way that those continuing to employ or promote this model genuinely reconsider its use and help restructure the global discourse around OVC and how best to address their needs.

7.4 Concluding remarks

“Maybe the target nowadays is not to discover what we are, but to refuse what we are”

(Foucault 1982: 785)

This study has considered initiatives focused on OVC in Uganda as illustrative of a development enterprise that facilitates donor strategic action through NGOs and local governments. It is a call of attention to the systemically inequitable nature of donor practices, both regulatory (through rules and regulations) and discursive in relation to those implementing these initiatives. It is in the interest of highlighting one small yet salient element of the damaging characteristics of the mainstream development that I write this dissertation. Often, the contextual factors and unintended consequences of the relations constituting this enterprise go unnoticed or ignored.
In *chapter four*, I historicized Uganda’s government and civil society activities related to OVC over the periods 1986 to 2000 and 2001 to 2011, suggesting that global political factors shaped these periods, which represented distinct phases in Uganda’s overall OVC response and consisted of almost exclusive civil society initiatives in the first period and the emergence of growing GOU engagement with OVC affairs in the early 2000s.

In *chapter five*, I suggested that donors influence the nature of OVC initiatives in Uganda strategically through funding conditions and requirements which insidiously produce inequitable power relations under the guise of bureaucratic and possibly even necessary rules and regulations. I conceptualized the process of making funding recipients into subjects that serve donor interests as reflective of technologies of power and domination, which are accepted and partially co-produced by the recipients. I also noted elements of resistance in NGOs’ engagement with donors.

I observed that considerable differences exist between small locally-founded NGOs and local chapters of large INGOs in the extent to which they integrate, accept, and resist the mainstream development agenda. In particular, my research suggests that the bureaucratizing of NGOs perhaps ironically makes them more subject to Foucaultian technologies of the self, as the larger and more established INGOs feel more pressure to style themselves in accordance with mainstream development practices and discourse, to an extent far beyond their small local NGO counterparts, which take little notice of or largely ignore (at least the discursive) impositions.

In *chapter six*, I illustrated the pervasive mainstream development discourse through the case studies of human rights, child rights, and community participation as key terms that demonstrate its nature. These concepts illustrate the incredible power of language to insidiously contribute to the shape of the development agenda through discursive practices. Despite arguably sound intentions in framing the situation of OVC as a matter of rights, this conceptualization has effectively promoted children’s victimhood, as efforts focus on “ameliorating … their vulnerability” (Cheney 2012: 96), which at times has the unintended effect of deepening that vulnerability as OVC, their guardians, and/or extended family further attempt to demonstrate their vulnerability in order to gain entitlement to NGO or government assistance. This requires not only discursive but also policy-level changes. I also noted the potentially destructive effects
of misinterpreting the core tenets of community participation, which can exploit rather than ‘empower’ the ‘beneficiaries’ with which NGOs work.

In both chapters five and six, I outlined alternatives to this system, through the numerous modes of NGO demonstrations of resistance to the development enterprise. These have occurred primarily through micro practices, that is, through the quotidian interactions between donors and funding recipients. Although not revolutionary in the sense of concerted action against a powerful other, these practices nevertheless represent important acts of resistance and inklings of a possible alternative to the mainstream development apparatus dominating contemporary efforts to assist OVC in Uganda. Resistance in this way functions to counter the status quo and acts, little by little, as a prelude to revolutionary action.

Indeed, through infinitesimal behaviours of this nature, examples from this study indicate that local representatives of NGOs are beginning to alter the character of heavily donor-influenced OVC initiatives in Uganda through resisting, tweaking, and interpreting to accommodate their own needs the rules, regulations, and discourses endeavoring to shape their practices. While they may focus on the submissive elements of their dance “to the tune of the donor” (see chapter five), my research indicates that their dance is more complex than simply following the donors’ lead or following the steps requested by the donors. Indeed, in light of the remarks outlined in this and the previous two chapters, continued engagement in acts of resistance on the part of funding recipients may transform this dance from one of following the donors’ lead, to the dance of the tango, which requires both partners to move together, at times in tandem, at times in opposition to one another, in order for it to be a dance at all.

In relation to GOU initiatives and policies, on the other hand, NGOs have begun to combine these series of isolated acts of resistance into communal, organized, and concerted efforts to affect change, providing examples of strengthening their voice as a collective. While I argue that such concerted acts of resistance are not absolutely necessary to re-imagine and redefine donor-recipient relations in ways that more equitably meet the needs of the latter, research in social psychology has shown that networks and collaborative platforms of this nature can boost the micro practices of everyday engagements with donors and target groups to affect change in mainstream development towards more equitable and culturally appropriate OVC initiatives (Campbell et al. 2010).
Indeed, infinite acts of reinterpretation, altered integration, resistance, and defiance of the donor-driven development apparatus and mainstream development discourse, alongside growing and strengthened networks among small and large NGOs, can reimagine and reshape the donor-driven development agenda that characterizes this domain of OVC initiatives in Uganda and beyond.
References


216


Oleke, Christopher, Astrid Blystad, and Bjørn Rekdal Rekdal. 2005. “‘When the obvious brother is not there’: Political and cultural contexts of the orphan challenge in northern Uganda.” Social Science and Medicine 61:2628-38.


Appendices

Appendix 1: A typology of non-governmental organizations

Scholars have developed a variety of NGO typologies categorizing organizations along a number of dimensions. These include distinguishing NGOs based on:

1. The intended beneficiaries (self or others) of the NGO’s work;

2. The NGO’s primary activity (service – sometimes referred to as “operational” – or advocacy) (Duke University Libraries 2013; Yaziji and Doh 2009); or

3. The people by whom the NGO is run (i.e. “local insiders” or “cosmopolitan outsiders”) (Mintzberg and Srinivas 2009: 40).

Mintzberg and Srinivas’ typology differentiates between, on the one hand, grassroots initiatives, grassroots co-operatives and co-operative federations working “from the inside up”, and on the other hand, development support initiatives, development support organizations, and development support alliances working “from the outside in” (2009: 49). This distinction attempts to draw attention to indigenous organizations’ purported tendency to be more focused on “narrow agendas” and the tendency for exogenous NGOs to be “detached from operating activities and specific communities” and thus to be “drawn up and away to the generic, the ‘global’, as well as specific donor interests” (ibid.).

The government of Uganda (GOU) takes a more simplistic approach, conventionally distinguishing NGOs based on the location where the organization was initially founded, resulting in a straightforward typology of national NGOs (originating/formed in Uganda, usually by Ugandan nationals) and international NGOs (INGOs), introduced to Uganda by individuals or agencies external to the country. Both INGOs and NGOs – according to this GOU definition – may (and predominantly do) receive funding from outside of Uganda.

I propose to blend the GOU’s and Mintzberg and Srinivas’ (2009) typology in a hybrid typology. In addition to considering each NGO’s roots (exogenous to Uganda or local), I want to capture the sources of influence in each NGO’s decision-making processes, in the form of financial support and key decision-making roles. The following table shows these dimensions as applied
to participating NGOs and key informants’ places of work. Throughout this dissertation, I identify participating NGOs based on their founding location, as this at times distinguishes NGOs from one another in important ways.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NGO #</th>
<th>Founded</th>
<th>Primary funding source(s)</th>
<th>Board of Directors / Key decision-makers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Local, by foreigner + Ugandan</td>
<td>Foreign</td>
<td>Foreign + Local Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Local</td>
<td>Foreign</td>
<td>Foreign + Local Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Local</td>
<td>Foreign + Local IGPs</td>
<td>Volunteers (Foreign) + Local Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Foreign</td>
<td>Foreign</td>
<td>Foreign + Local Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Foreign</td>
<td>Foreign</td>
<td>Foreign + Local Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Foreign</td>
<td>Foreign</td>
<td>Foreign + Local Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Local</td>
<td>Foreign</td>
<td>Local Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Foreign</td>
<td>Foreign</td>
<td>Foreign + Local Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Foreign</td>
<td>Foreign</td>
<td>Foreign</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Foreign</td>
<td>Foreign</td>
<td>Foreign + Local Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Foreign</td>
<td>Foreign</td>
<td>Foreign + Local Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Local</td>
<td>Foreign + Local IGPs</td>
<td>Foreign</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Local, by foreigner</td>
<td>Foreign</td>
<td>Foreign + Local Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Local</td>
<td>Foreign + Local IGPs</td>
<td>Local Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Local, by foreigner</td>
<td>Foreign</td>
<td>Foreign Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Local, by foreigner</td>
<td>Foreign</td>
<td>Foreign Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Local</td>
<td>Foreign</td>
<td>Foreign + Local Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Foreign</td>
<td>Foreign</td>
<td>Foreign + Local Director</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Appendix 2: Interviewee and NGO descriptors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NGO Type</th>
<th>Organization type</th>
<th>Position(s) in NGO</th>
<th>Position in NGO since(^{101})</th>
<th>Services offered/provided</th>
<th>Target district(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>National NGO</td>
<td>Director</td>
<td>1992</td>
<td>Health Programmes, Support to OVC, Training, Vocational training, Guidance, Counseling, Sponsorship</td>
<td>Wakiso</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Christian NGO</td>
<td>Founder and director</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>Spiritual, Education, Economic and Practical skills development, Social-Physical aspects and HIV/AIDS</td>
<td>Kampala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>National NGO</td>
<td>Founder and director</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Health Programmes, Training, Vocational training</td>
<td>Soroti, Kampala, Gulu, Adjumani</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>International NGO</td>
<td>Programme Coordinator</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>Development, emergency relief, disaster mitigation programmes focusing on children</td>
<td>30 districts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>International NGO</td>
<td>(a) Associate Director, Children in Ministry; (b) Child Rights Manager(^{102}); (c) Child Protection Manager</td>
<td>Information not available</td>
<td>Health Programmes, Support to OVC, Advocacy, Awareness, Legal Protection, Sponsorship</td>
<td>23 districts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>National NGO</td>
<td>Programme</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>Training, Vocational</td>
<td>35 districts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{101}\) Current as of February 2011.

\(^{102}\) Noted as “Advocacy Officer Child Rights” on Linkedin.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Country/Role/Title</th>
<th>From Year</th>
<th>To Year</th>
<th>Position/Activities</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>International NGO Director</td>
<td>1996</td>
<td></td>
<td>Child sponsorship</td>
<td>Wakiso</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>International NGO HRC/Deputy National Director</td>
<td>2008</td>
<td>(plus five years with same NGO)</td>
<td>Support to OVC, Sponsorship, Health Programmes</td>
<td>Gulu,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Wakiso</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>International NGO Sponsorship Support Manager</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>(plus 7 years with same NGO)</td>
<td>Social Support, Training, Vocational training</td>
<td>Tororo,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Nakaseke,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Luwero,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Kamuli,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Kaliro,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Butaleja</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>International NGO (a) Senior Health Specialist; (b) N/A</td>
<td>(a) 2004;</td>
<td>(b) Informatio n not available</td>
<td>Sponsorship, Support to OVC, Health Programmes</td>
<td>23 districts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>National NGO Program Director (like Country Director)</td>
<td>2008</td>
<td></td>
<td>Care for AIDS orphans and other OVC</td>
<td>Rakai,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mukono</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>National NGO (a) Chairman; (b) Country Director</td>
<td>(a) 2005;</td>
<td>(b) 2010 (General administrator since 2005)</td>
<td>Health Programmes, Training, Vocational training, Sponsorship</td>
<td>Wakiso</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>National NGO Social Welfare Officer</td>
<td>1989</td>
<td></td>
<td>Child care and protection; advocacy and lobbying; education; psychological support; arranging adoption and foster care; tracing relatives for family resettlement etc.</td>
<td>Mpigi,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Kampala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>National NGO (a) Director; (b) Social Worker</td>
<td>(a) 2008;</td>
<td>(b) 2005</td>
<td>Support to OVC, Sponsorship</td>
<td>Wakiso</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>National NGO Social Worker</td>
<td>2007</td>
<td></td>
<td>Residential care</td>
<td>Gulu,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Kampala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>National NGO Acting</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td></td>
<td>Sponsorship, Guidance,</td>
<td>Luwero,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KI</td>
<td>Agency type</td>
<td>Position(s) in agency</td>
<td>Position since</td>
<td>Primary function of agency</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>--------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Government – council</td>
<td>(a) Acting Secretary General; (b) Programme Officer</td>
<td>(a) Two months prior to interview; (b) 2008</td>
<td>Coordinate, monitor, and evaluate policies and programmes re child survival, protection, development and participation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Government – secretariat within ministry</td>
<td>OVC Technical Advisor</td>
<td>2008</td>
<td>National policy development re OVC</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Non-governmental agency</td>
<td>Programme Coordinator – Membership and Constituency Services</td>
<td>2003</td>
<td>Platform / advocacy for NGOs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Non-governmental agency</td>
<td>(a) Programme Assistant; (b) Programme Officer – Networking</td>
<td>(a) 2008; (b) 2010</td>
<td>Advocacy for child rights</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

103 Current as of February 2011.
Appendix 3: Information letters for interviewees

Uganda’s response to orphans and other vulnerable children: A critical analysis

Date:

My name is Franziska Satzinger and I am a PhD student at the University of Toronto, in Canada, under the supervision of Dr. Anne-Emanuelle Birn. I’m working in collaboration with the Makerere University School of Public Health, under the supervision of Dr. Joseph Konde-Lule.

I’m carrying out a study to examine the ways in which orphaned children’s needs (in terms of housing, education, nutrition, health, guidance etc.) are being addressed by government and non-governmental organizations in Uganda. I’m talking to a number of organizations and individuals involved in orphan-related issues in Kampala, Kabarole, and Mukono Districts.

Participation

I understand that you are doing work in this area, and I’d like to talk with you about this work. I’m interested in finding out about your approach and the way you feel the situation of orphaned children is best addressed in this setting. The information you provide may help us to better understand the response to orphaned children in Uganda.

You are invited to join this project as a participant. I am very interested in your perspectives on this issue of orphaned children in Uganda. You are under no obligation to participate in this study. Your position in this organization does not mean that you must participate in this study. Also, regardless of who referred me to you as a potential participant, you are under no obligation to participate in the study.

There is no compensation for your participation in this study. I am very appreciative of your time and input. Please be assured that there are no right or wrong answers to anything I ask you. We can have our discussion at your place of work or any other place that is suitable to you.
Anonymity and confidentiality

I am gathering comments from a number of different sources (international and national NGOs, key stakeholders actively involved in the response to orphans in Uganda, district-level NGO coordinators, and formerly NGO-supported adult orphans) to better understand the response to orphans’ situation in Uganda. You are free to express your views openly.

Anything you tell me today will be kept anonymous. This means that nobody will be able to link what you say back to you or the organization you work for. Your name and the name of your organization will not be disclosed.

All of your answers will also be treated as confidential. This means that I will not share your personal information with anyone, to the full extent allowed by the law. When this project is finished, I will be writing some reports. I will not use your real name or your organization’s real name in these reports.

Risks of participation

You may feel that you are disclosing information by identifying particular individuals or organizations, and you may fear that this may jeopardize your continued employment with this organization. Rest assured that any information you provide about the organization for which you work will be kept strictly confidential, and will not be shared with any other members of staff from this organization, nor with any donor agencies or beneficiaries etc. Your names, the names of your employer(s) and/or organization, or any other information that could identify you or the organization you work for, will not be revealed in any publications or reports that ensue from this study.

Recording

I would like to take some notes and record the interview as I don’t want to miss anything you tell me. Please let me know if you will allow me to record our conversation. Your name and the name of your organization will not be recorded on the audiotape. No one outside the research team will have access to the audiotape, which will be erased once the information is transcribed. If you decide after our interview that you would like me to erase the recording, I will do so.
**Freedom to withdraw**

You don’t have to answer any question that you don’t want to answer. You can also stop the interview at any time. If you decide after some time that you want to withdraw from the study, I will not include any specific information you already told me in any write-ups about the study.

Our discussion today should take approximately one hour. If we are carrying out the interview in a place other than your work or home, I will reimburse you for the cost of public transportation to and from the site of our interview.

**Questions or concerns**

If you have any questions about the study, we can discuss them today, and/or you can call me at 0787562792 or email me at f.satzinger@utoronto.ca.

If you have further questions, you can contact Dr. Joseph Konde-Lule (my host supervisor at Makerere University) at jkonde@musph.ac.ug or 0772418451, or Dr. Anne-Emanuelle Birn (my thesis supervisor at the University of Toronto) at ae.birn@utoronto.ca or +1.416.946.5792. If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact Prof. Wabwire Mangen, the Chairman of the Institutional Review Board at Makerere University School of Public Health at 0772732206, 0414532206/7, or at fwabwire@musph.ac.ug.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Franziska Satzinger
Appendix 4: Consent form for interviewees

Uganda’s response to orphans and other vulnerable children: A critical analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Part 1: Researcher Information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Name of principal investigator: Franziska Satzinger  
Affiliation: University of Toronto  
Contact information: 0787562792; f.satzinger@utoronto.ca |
| Name of co-investigator/host supervisor: Dr. Joseph Konde-Lule  
Affiliation: Makerere University School of Public Health  
Contact information: 0772418451; jkonde@musph.ac.ug |
| Name of co-investigator/supervisor: Dr. Anne-Emanuelle Birn  
Affiliation: University of Toronto  
Contact information: +1 416 978 5792; ae.birn@utoronto.ca |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Part 2: Consent of Participant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do you understand that you have been asked to be in a research study?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you read and received a copy of the attached information sheet?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you understand the benefits and risks involved in taking part in this research study?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you had an opportunity to ask questions and discuss the study?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you understand that you are free to refuse to participate or withdraw from the study at any time? You do not have to give a reason.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has the issue of confidentiality been explained to you? Do you understand who will have access to the information you provide?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you understand how any internal documents or emails you have shared with the researcher may be used in the research process?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you agree to allow the researcher to contact you again, should follow-up be required?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Part 3: Signatures

This study was explained to me by Franziska Satzinger on (date): ____________________
I agree to take part in this study.

Signature of Research Participant: ____________________________________________

Printed Name: _____________________________________________________________
Appendix 5: Interview guide for NGO representatives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NGO Directors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Position:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notes on setting:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

During our last visit, you told me about [NGO]. Today I’d like to talk to you a bit more about [NGO’s] work and hear your thoughts on some issues related to OVC care in Uganda.

1. Please briefly review the type of support or services [NGO] provides. (Target group/age? Location/communities served?)
   - How does a child/family come to be supported by [NGO]?
   - What is the professional background/training of the staff?

2. With regard to providing support and services to orphaned children (and their families/communities), what are the primary objectives of this organization?

3. How would you describe the values/principles on which this organization is founded?
   - What are the reasons for choosing/identifying these values on which to base the organization’s work?

4. How would you describe [NGO’s] ‘model’/approach to the needs of OVC?
   - What was the motivation behind choosing this model?
   - Who was the process involved in developing it?
   - What kinds of factors were considered when designing this model?
   - What examples has [NGO] looked at for input/ideas in developing this approach?
   - In developing your organization’s model of service provision, how would you describe the influences of various people/institutions involved?
   - (How) has this approach changed over time? Why?

5. What do you think is particularly good about [NGO’s] approach?
   - Please talk about some of the successes you’ve encountered in using this approach.
   - What are some of the shortcomings or challenges of this particular approach?

6. As an organization, what would you like to be able to do (e.g., what services would you like to be able to provide, and how would you like to be able to provide them), if financial and other constraints were not an issue?
   - Please comment on any constraints (not only financial) on your capacity as an organization to respond to the orphan situation in Uganda.

7. I understand that the primary funding source for [NGO] comes from [funding source].
   - Please talk about your experiences working with [source].
   - What is that like on a day-to-day basis (logistically)?
   - Please tell me how this relationship – wherein you report to [source] – influences your work in Uganda.

8. Overall, how would you assess the funding and attention directed towards OVC internationally (e.g., by large umbrella organizations/institutions)?
In/sufficient? Misguided? Too much?
• WHY?
• What is neglected? Why?
• What or whom would you describe as major actors involved in or shaping the way in which organizations respond to the orphan situation in Uganda?
• What do you think motivates these actors to be a part of the orphan response in Uganda?

9. Is [NGO] a member of any NGO forum or network (e.g., UCRNN, Uganda National NGO Forum)?
• Why/why not?
• Please tell me about any formal or informal relations you have with government authorities.

10. Please tell me what you know about the Ugandan government’s increasing involvement with regard to the circumstances of orphans over the last ten years or so.

11. What is your assessment of this increased government interest (if applicable)?
• How would you assess
  (a) the Ugandan government’s,
  (b) large umbrella organizations’ attention to orphan issues, when compared to other social issues in Uganda, such as disabled people, HIV/AIDS, malaria, TB?
• WHY?
• What changes in this attention have you observed over time?
• (If applicable) Why do you think government is becoming increasingly involved in efforts to assist OVC?

12. Please comment on any changes in NGOs’ (yours and others’) work that you have observed since the government began to increase its role in coordinating and managing Uganda’s OVC response (ca. 2000). (E.g., NGO reporting requirements?)

Thank you! Questions / comments / concerns.

Next steps.
Appendix 6: Interview guide for key informants from government agencies and non-governmental advocacy networks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key informants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name: Council/secretariat/network:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Position: Position since:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date: Location:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time: Gender:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notes on setting:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional notes:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Last time we spoke, you told me a little bit about your role as a council/secretariat/network in relation to NGOs and their work with orphans and other vulnerable children in Uganda. Today, I’d like to talk a little bit more about that.

1. Please briefly review the history of [council/secretariat/network].
   a. When was the ministry/forum/agency first formed?
   b. Why was it formed?
   c. Who/what was involved in forming it?
   d. What is the main source of funding for the council/secretariat/network?
   e. What is the primary role of your council/secretariat/network in relation to NGOs and OVC care in Uganda?
   f. How has your role as a ministry/network changed over the preceding 5/10/20 years?

2. How would you describe the current situation of OVC in Uganda?
   • Growing numbers? Numbers reducing?
   • Situation getting better? Getting worse?

3. Please describe your observations of the overall response (government, NGO, and community) to the orphan situation you describe?
   • What changes have you seen in this overall response since the late 1980s?
   • What do you think has been responsible for these changes?

4. What can you tell me about any changes in foreign involvement in the orphan response over the previous 20 years? (More or less attention/financing? Changing nature of attention/financing etc.?)
   a. Why do you think these changes have come about?
   b. What do you consider to be the responsibility of foreign organizations and/or donors in addressing the needs of orphans in Uganda?
   c. …of the Ugandan government in this regard?
   d. … of NGOs?

5. In your opinion, is there a solution to – or a ‘right’ way to address – the circumstances of orphans in Uganda?
   • If so, what does that look like?
   • (Why) is that (not) happening?

6. It seems that, since roughly 2000, the Ugandan government is taking an increased interest in being part of the response to orphans’ needs in Uganda.
   • What can you tell me, specifically, about what the Ugandan government has been doing to ramp up its involvement in OVC care in the country?
   • (From your perspective), what has been the primary motivation behind this?
     • What factors have been considered / what was involved in identifying these
particular areas of work/intervention? (E.g., how did this come about?)
i. What do you know about how this is being funded (e.g., project-based, or base funding within the government)?
ii. Who/what is shaping/determining the approach government is using?
iii. To what extent is government looking to NGOs’ experiences for input or ideas about how best to respond to the orphan situation in Uganda?
iv. What impacts/effects have you seen of the government’s increasing role in working to manage and coordinate the NGO response in Uganda?
v. To what extent are the policies and frameworks developed at the government level influencing or having an effect on the way in which NGOs respond to the OVC situation in Uganda?
vi. I understand that government has been encouraging NGOs not to keep orphans in homes because it psychologically affects the children.
vii. When did that “policy” come about? Why?
viii. What led to those recommendations/restrictions?
ix. How are they enforced? What are the exceptions etc.?

7. How well do you think NGOs have been responding to orphans’ needs in Uganda? What impacts (negative and positive) have you seen of their involvement?
   a. Please describe any differences you see in how foreign or local organizations respond to orphans’ needs in Uganda.
   b. The issue of ‘briefcase’ NGOs (which exist in name only) seems to be of concern in Uganda. What can you tell me about that?

8. How have NGOs responded to increased government involvement with orphans (which has historically been left to the non-government sector)?
   a. Please describe your observations about the (changing) relationships between government and NGOs with regard to orphan care in Uganda.
   I understand that few NGOs are following the reporting requirements set out by government.
   • Can you tell me more about that? Why do you think only few NGOs are reporting regularly to government?

9. There has been a lot of talk recently about the value in engaging NGOs in a range of social issues, including that of orphans. For instance, the World Bank and other international institutions seem to be eager for NGOs to continue or increase their work in orphan care.
   a. What do you make of this “push” for NGOs’ involvement?
   b. Where (e.g. from whom) do you think this “push” comes from?
   c. What do you think is the motivation/interest behind encouraging NGOs’ involvement?
   d. How do you think this emphasis on NGOs affects the work of governments within countries like Uganda?

10. How do you think NGOs are responding to this changing funding dynamic, whereby large foreign organizations and institutions determine funding areas for which NGOs apply?

Thank you! Questions / comments / concerns.
Next steps.
Appendix 7: Coding framework

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Codes</th>
<th>Basic Themes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Rights”</td>
<td>• Human rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• “Not an ‘African’ term”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• NGOs advocate for children’s rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Interpretations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Pressure to include “rights” in OVC programming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Participation”</td>
<td>• As a main pillar/value of NGOs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Principle of UNCRC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• National Council for Children pillar #3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Interpretations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Rhetoric</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• “Ensures sustainability”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Community”</td>
<td>• Community “involvement”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Community “ownership”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• NGO presence in community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Rhetoric</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Interpretations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Dancing to someone else’s tune”</td>
<td>• Responding to calls / designing fundable plans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Need for quick, measurable results; large numbers of beneficiaries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Limits “freedom of speech”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Shifting donor priorities = difficult to remain funded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Big orgs = big $ = big influence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Donors “buying services”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Drawbacks of donor-driven system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donor conditions</td>
<td>• Funding tied to conditions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Staffing conditions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Lack of flexibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Government subject to donor conditions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Targeted activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Problems with donor conditions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dependency</td>
<td>• Causes of “dependency syndrome”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• As a problem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Efforts to decrease</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural insensitivity</td>
<td>• Blind/unhelpful “help”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Ignorance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Results in above-average living standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Being seen to be doing something”</td>
<td>• International pressure to ‘be seen’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Challenge for small organizations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Codes</td>
<td>Basic Themes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fund(raise)ing</td>
<td>• Reporting to multiple donors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Funds through headquarters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Core funding (UGD gov.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Shift from service delivery to advocacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• International fundraising efforts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Local fundraising efforts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• (Lack of) openness (towards me) re financing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Transparency paramount</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Trust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Funding system inconsistent with NGO systems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Through marketing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Models of OVC care</td>
<td>• Values and underlying assumptions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Elevator pitch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Based on coined, vague language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Adaptability of model</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government role</td>
<td>• Monitor NGOs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Government reliance on NGOs for service delivery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Government does not prioritize children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Institutionalizing children = “last resort”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementation</td>
<td>• Government policies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Gap b/w policies and implementation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• How to address lack of implementation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Optimism re implementation / “good effort”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International instruments</td>
<td>• World Bank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and agencies</td>
<td>• EU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• UNICEF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• PEPFAR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• USAID</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• UNCRC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Networking</td>
<td>• NGO Forum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• UCRNN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Public Private Partnerships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Foreigners assist with fundraising etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• With government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Lack of networking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Benefits (or lack thereof) of networking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Codes</td>
<td>Basic Themes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resistance</td>
<td>• Refusing grants (rare)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Not “dancing to someone’s tune” –</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>resisting donor conditions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Appendix 8: Organizing themes and networks (global themes)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organizing themes</th>
<th>Networks (Global themes)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• “Dancing to someone else’s tune” / engaging with donors’ conditions</td>
<td>(1) Experiences and appraisals of OVC initiatives in Uganda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Accessing and using donor funds</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Providing services for OVC</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Values and assumptions influencing NGO models</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Models of OVC care</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Changes in service provision (over time, space)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1) Experiences and appraisals of OVC initiatives in Uganda</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Government services / efforts re OVC</td>
<td>(2) Ugandan government role and initiatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Government monitoring role</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Government’s policy implementation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Critiques of government involvement</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Foreign financing of Uganda’s OVC initiatives</td>
<td>(3) Foreign influences on OVC initiatives in Uganda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• International influences</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Influential international instruments and agencies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Donor and NGO discursive practices</td>
<td>(4) Discursive framings of OVC initiatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Definitions and interpretations of mainstream development discourse</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Resisting inequitable power dynamics</td>
<td>(5) Resisting the development enterprise; optimism re the way forward</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Influencing government policies through civil society action</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 9: Ethics approval letters

PROTOCOL REFERENCE # 25816

December 17, 2010

Dr. Anne-Emanuelle Birn
Dalla Lana School of Public Health
University of Toronto
480 University Avenue
Toronto ON M5G 1V2

Ms. Franziska Satzinger
Dalla Lana School of Public Health
University of Toronto
480 University Avenue
Toronto ON M5G 1V2

Dear Dr. Birn and Ms. Satzinger:

Re: Your research protocol entitled, “Uganda’s response to orphans and other vulnerable children: A critical analysis”

ETHICS APPROVAL

Original Approval Date: December 17, 2010
Expiry Date: December 16, 2011
Continuing Review Level: 1

We are writing to advise you that the Health Sciences Research Ethics Board has granted approval to the above-named research study, for a period of one year. Ongoing projects must be renewed prior to the expiry date.

All your most recently submitted documents have been approved for use in this study.

Any changes to the approved protocol or consent materials must be reviewed and approved through the amendment process prior to its implementation. Any adverse or unanticipated events should be reported to the Office of Research Ethics as soon as possible.

Please ensure that you submit an Annual Renewal Form or a Study Completion Report 15 to 30 days prior to the expiry date of your study. Note that annual renewals for studies cannot be accepted more than 30 days prior to the date of expiry, as per federal and international policies.

If your research has funding attached, please contact the relevant Research Funding Officer in Research Services to ensure that your funds are released.

Best wishes for the successful completion of your project.

Yours sincerely,

Daniel Gyewu
Research Ethics Board Manager- Health Sciences

OFFICE OF RESEARCH ETHICS
McMurrich Building, 12 Queen’s Park Crescent West, 2nd Floor, Toronto, ON M5S 1S8 Canada
Tel: +1 416 946-3273 • Fax: +1 416 946-5763 • ethicsreview@utoronto.ca • http://www.research.utoronto.ca/for-researchers-administrators/ethics/
20 December 2010

The Executive Secretary
Uganda National Council of Science and Technology

Dear Sir,

**Re: Uganda’s response to orphans and other vulnerable children: A critical analysis**

The above proposal by Franziska Satzinger was reviewed during the 81st Higher Degrees, Research and Ethics Committee meeting held on 14th December 2010.

The committee recommended some comments and suggestions which have been incorporated to our satisfaction. I therefore wish to recommend the proposal to you for further approval.

I'm attaching the revised proposal, the minutes of the 81st Higher Degrees, Research and Ethics Committee meeting.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Dr. John Ssempebwa

*Vice Chairman, Higher Degrees, Research and Ethics Committee*

Cc: Franziska Satzinger
Ms. Franziska Miriam Satzinger
Makerere University School of Public Health
P.O Box 7072
Kampala

Dear Ms. Satzinger,

RE: RESEARCH PROJECT, “UGANDA’S RESPONSE TO ORPHANS AND OTHER VULNERABLE CHILDREN: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS”

This is to inform you that the Uganda National Council for Science and Technology (UNCST) approved the above research proposal on January 06, 2011. The approval will expire on January 06, 2012. It is necessary to continue with the research beyond the expiry date, a request for continuation should be made in writing to the Executive Secretary, UNCST.

Any problems of a serious nature related to the execution of your research project should be brought to the attention of the UNCST, and any changes to the research protocol should not be implemented without UNCST’s approval except when necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to research participant(s).

This letter also serves as proof of UNCST approval and as a reminder for you to submit to UNC timely progress reports and a final report on completion of the research project.

Yours sincerely,

Winfred Badanga
for: Executive Secretary

UGANDA NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

LOCATION/CORRESPONDENCE

Plot 6 Kimera Road, Ntinda
P. O. Box 6884
KAMPALA, UGANDA

COMMUNICATION

TEL: (256) 414 705590
FAX: (256) 414-234579
EMAIL: info@uncst.go.ug
WEBSITE: http://www.uncst.go.ug
March 18, 2011

The Resident District Commissioner, Kampala District
The Resident District Commissioner, Kabarole District
The Resident District Commissioner, Mukono District

This is to introduce to you Ms. Satzinger Franziska Miriam a Researcher who will be carrying out a research entitled “Uganda’s response to orphans and other vulnerable children – A critical analysis” for a period of 01 (one) year in your district.

She has undergone the necessary clearance to carry out the said project.

Please render her the necessary assistance.

By copy of this letter Ms. Satzinger Franziska Miriam is requested to report to the Resident District Commissioners of the above districts before proceeding with the Research.

Alenga Rose
FOR: SECRETARY, OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

Copy to: Ms. Satzinger Franziska Miriam
## Appendix 10: Timeline of key developments in Uganda, 1986 – 2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event / development</th>
<th>Significance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td>• Yoweri Museveni assumes Presidency of Uganda</td>
<td>• Museveni’s NRM enthusiastically enforces structural adjustment policies; Ugandans further impoverished</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Women’s rights organizations engage in public lobbying</td>
<td>• Women’s movement gains momentum in Uganda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• GOU appoints nine women ministers</td>
<td>• Newspapers begin to report (often exaggeratedly) on magnitude of orphan numbers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• First Lady Janet Museveni lends support to orphan-focused UWESO organization</td>
<td>• UNICEF recommends institutional and non-institutional responses to OVC situation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• UNICEF conducts comparative analysis of children’s circumstances in war-torn Luwero vs. a non-war district</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td>• Brundtland Report popularizes ‘sustainability’ in development</td>
<td>• Sustainability becomes a cornerstone of USAID, World Bank, OECD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Late 1980s / early 1990s</td>
<td>• Global economic crisis</td>
<td>• Uganda becomes a “honey pot” for donors addressing AIDS epidemic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Burgeoning civil society sector in Uganda</td>
<td>• Critics begin to question prominence of NGOs in development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Two marketing strategies gain popularity: (1) Involvement of public figures and celebrities in awareness raising and fundraising efforts; (2) child sponsorship model</td>
<td>• Western countries continue to support establishment of residential facilities for OVC despite largely abandoning this practice at home, ignoring GOU recommendations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Leading child-focused charity organizations shift focus to OVC</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989</td>
<td>• World Bank commissions a mission to Kampala to identify disadvantaged groups as a result of IMF policies</td>
<td>• Analysts identify orphans as most vulnerable and request proposal submissions from NGOs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• World Vision drills community wells as an illustration of its focus on ‘community’ development</td>
<td>• Intention of minimizing duplication in NGO efforts, ensuring quality services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• GOU introduces NGO Statute</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Events</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 1990 | • Uganda signs and ratifies UNCRC  
      • Save the Children Fund and Uganda’s Ministry of Relief and Social Rehabilitation support research to enumerate number of orphaned children; shows growth in numbers with orphans constituting 12-17% of all under-18s in Uganda  
      • Approximately 3,000 child soldiers (many of them orphans) come out of bushes into urban areas  
      • GOU demonstrates commitment towards child rights through supporting research to enumerate OVC magnitude and signing and ratifying UNCRC  
      • Public awareness of magnitude of orphanhood in Uganda grows domestically and internationally  
      • Women’s organizations shift focus to include OVC |
| 1992 | • GOU establishes Uganda National Program of Action for Children (UNPAC)  
      • Includes provisions for establishment of Secretariat focused on OVC |
| 1994 | • Uganda ratifies African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC)  
      • According to ACRWC proponents, this Charter more suitably incorporates African context (than does UNCRC) |
| 1995 | • Uganda Constitution integrates sections requiring special protections for OVC under the law, provides legal framework to ensure protection of children’s rights  
      • Legislation in the decade following did not provide special protections to OVC |
| 1996 | • GOU establishes National Council for Children (NCC)  
      • NCC mandated to coordinate, monitor, and evaluate child-related programming in Uganda |
| 1997 | • NCC promulgates the Children Act  
      • GOU introduces Universal Primary Education (UPE)  
      • Children Act reforms and consolidates child-related laws in Uganda, incorporating the standards of the 1994 ACRWC and 1990 UNCRC  
      • Uganda becomes one of the first countries in Africa to harmonize a child-related law with international standards  
      • UPE intended to tackle widespread poverty and child vulnerability |
| Late 1990s / early 2000s | • GOU increasingly shifts towards resurrecting its involvement in development efforts  
      • Continued heavy reliance on civil society to provide bulk of services to OVC in Uganda |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event 1</th>
<th>Event 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>GOU establishes OVC Secretariat in Department of Children Services</td>
<td>Responsible for co-ordinating Uganda’s national initiatives related to OVC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>GOU amends 1989 NGO Registration Act, requiring NGOs operating in Uganda to secure a valid and time-sensitive operating permit, and include a dissolution clause</td>
<td>Civil society criticizes amendment for further impinging on their freedom to determine nature of their service provision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>GOU conducts situation analysis revealing that prioritizing building the capacity of staff to do their jobs effectively (through a series of workshops and trainings) has directed resources to government staff development rather than providing services aimed at tangible improvements for OVC</td>
<td>Encourages Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (MGLSD) to include provisions for supporting scaled-up service delivery in its 2011-2016 National Strategic Program Plan of Interventions for OVC (NSPPI2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>GOU establishes Management Information and Evaluation System for Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVCMIS) at MGLSD</td>
<td>GOU synthesizes efforts in strengthening management and coordination role of OVC initiatives by systematizing a system of record-keeping and evaluation of all OVC efforts in Uganda</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>