THE FAMILY: AT THE HEART OF MANAGING CULTURAL DIVERSITY

Conversations with 35 Ugandan leaders and rural women and men

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Colophon

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The Pluralism Working Paper series

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On behalf of the international Pluralism Programme staff, we thank you for your interest in our working papers.

Caroline Suransky, Hilde van 't Klooster and Ute Seela

Editors of the *Pluralism Working Paper series*

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Editor´s preface

This paper explores the role of the family in nurturing the value of pluralism in Uganda. It presents a new and interesting perspective on pluralism in the knowledge program network. The paper is based on empirical research conducted by Emily Drani, who is the Director of the Cross Cultural Foundation of Uganda (CCFU), and coordinator of the Pluralism Knowledge Program in Uganda, as well as Santa I Kayonga, who is researcher of CCFU. As a civil society based organization, CCFU promotes the recognition of culture as vital for equitable and sustainable development. It carries out studies in this domain which incorporate cultural dimensions and uses its research output to create more awareness among policy makers and practitioners about the role of culture in development.

The authors research the significance of the family as "a space for nurturing the value of pluralism in Uganda". They argue that there may be "good reasons to study the role of the family and the broader community when attempting to understand the meaning and the challenges of pluralism within African contexts, especially since collectivity may play a different role than assumed in the Western world, where many of the pluralism concepts originate". As a point of departure, they refer to the description of pluralism as formulated by the Harvard Program on Pluralism at Harvard University, which is one of the notions of pluralism used in the knowledge program. Central to the Harvard definition is the idea that pluralism requires more than passive tolerance, but instead involves people's active engagement with difference. The authors state that – given Uganda's history of strife – even tolerance should be regarded as an achievement, but that a notion of 'active engagement with difference' potentially introduces new and viable perspectives to manage the complex diversity that exists in the country.

The research focused on two categories of respondents. The first group consisted of Kampala based urban professionals who were selected because of their personal and professional experience in dealing with religion, ethnicity and politics. They were asked to share their personal experiences within their families and their perception of pluralism in the broader society. A second group was identified in the rural districts of Mayuge and Moyo. Mayuge, in Eastern Uganda, was included because its communities have remained ethnically relatively homogenous. In addition, there is a high rate of polygamy which, as the authors suggest, could be an important element to understand managing conflict and diversity at the family level. The Moyo district, on the border with Sudan, experiences high levels of migration and hosts refugees. This situation too challenges families in particular ways to deal with the differences among the communities in the area.

The research addressed the subjective views of the respondents, drawing on their personal perceptions and lived experiences of tolerance and pluralism. Four broad interview topics were identified which revolved around (1) pluralism in respect to the manifestation of and dealing with difference in the family; (2) the inculcation of values within the family; (3) the evolving concept of family; spaces and drivers of pluralism in a family environment and finally (4) the influence of the workplace on promoting pluralism in the family.

The authors notice that the family in Uganda is changing. They state that "circumstances, such as civil strife and displacement, terminal illness (AIDS), education, and religion have resulted in mobility and a shift in roles and power relations, which challenges the traditional family". New emerging types of families go beyond those with parents of similar ethnic, religious, occupational, social background, and include those with "single parents, parents of mixed ethnicity, mixed religions, diverse political affiliation, polygamous families, "modern" urban well-travelled and exposed families, as well as less travelled rural ones". The paper concludes that while the family remains an important point of reference, source of identity and space for nurturing values in Uganda, it is also evolving. New types of families emerge in which "participation, consultation, negotiation, equality and freedoms – principles that foster pluralism", increasingly play a role.

The final part of the paper offers a number of recommendations to civil society organizations which are involved in pluralism and development concerns.

With this paper we hope to encourage a new dialogue on pluralism from a different and fresh angle. We wonder how the ideas on the relationship between family and pluralism as expressed in the paper, compare with those in the other regions in the Knowledge Program network and beyond and certainly welcome your comments and questions in this regard.

Caroline Suransky

Chief editor of the *Pluralism Working Paper series* for the Pluralism Knowledge Program.

The Family:
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1. Introduction

1.1. Pluralism and the family in the African context

Civil society is globally faced with the growth of various forms of intolerance rooted in ethnicity, religion, political affiliation, social class and nationalism, among other expressions of identity. On the African continent, different ethnic groups often attempt to co-exist harmoniously – not always successfully: diversity needs to be managed in a context where different cultures and cultural values dictate how 'the other' is perceived and engaged with. Development actors are however not always well equipped to address this reality which, to varying degrees, interferes with the progress of development initiatives, for example when patronage associated with ethnicity or political affiliation influences communities' access to public resources.

In an effort to address challenges related to diversity and pluralism in the south, an international initiative, the Promoting Pluralism Knowledge Programme (PKP), brings together several organisations in Indonesia, India, the Netherlands and Uganda[1]. The programme reflects a desire by academics and civil society-based actors to generate knowledge and develop new insights into the appeal of fundamentalisms, and to comprehend divergent experiences and views on pluralism. In particular, the PKP aims at generating new knowledge; intensifying linkages between development practitioners and academic researchers; and translating acquired knowledge into strategies for promoting pluralism in practice.

The Programme's appreciation of pluralism is premised on Diana Eck's definition, which highlights four main points. First, pluralism is not diversity alone, but *the energetic engagement with diversity*. Diversity is a given, but pluralism is not; it is an achievement. Pluralism is therefore not just tolerance, but *the active seeking of understanding across lines of difference*. Tolerance is a necessary public virtue, but it does not require one to know anything about one another and does not remove our ignorance of one another, leaving in place stereotypes, half-truths and the fears that underlie old patterns of division and violence. Third, pluralism is not relativism, but *the encounter of commitments*. Pluralism therefore does not require us to leave our identities and our commitments behind. It means holding our deepest differences, not in isolation, but in relationship to one another. Fourth, pluralism is *based on dialogue* and encounter, on give and take, criticism and self-criticism - a process that reveals both common understandings and real differences. In other words, dialogue does not mean everyone at the "table" will agree with one another (Eck, 2006).

The PKP in Uganda chose to use this definition as a point of departure, given its fit with the complexity of the country's diverse ethnic, religious and political composition. Uganda's history of

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[1] In Uganda, the partners are: Uganda Martyrs University, Institute for Peace and Strategic Studies at the University of Gulu, the National NGO Forum, DENIVA, the Gulu NGO Forum, the Mpigi NGO Forum, the Human Rights Network (HURINET), the Human Rights and Peace Centre at Makerere University (HURIPEC) and the Cross-Cultural Foundation of Uganda (CCFU).

strife has shown that, although tolerance itself can be regarded as an achievement, the emphasis on the necessity for engagement across difference introduces a relevant and necessary emphasis on managing this complexity, and takes the discourse on pluralism to a practical and potentially productive level for national co-existence. Uganda's post-colonial history has also shown how diversity, particularly ethnicity and religious diversity, has been used as a tool to manipulate allegiances to meet political ends. This has resulted in the current and common perception that cultural diversity represents exclusion to the detriment of the collective public good (Kayiso, 2009). Furthermore, across the continent, both diversity and the community are considered a 'given', implying inclusiveness within diversity. According to Mbiti, for instance, *"Only in terms of other people does the individual become conscious of his own being, his own duties, his privileges and responsibilities towards himself and towards other people"* (1989: 106). Further, *"African societies still exert a great influence upon individuals and communities, even if they are no longer the only final source of reference and identity. With the undermining of traditional solidarity has come the search for new values, identity and security, which for both the individual and his community, were satisfactorily supplied or assured by the deeply religious background …"* (ibid.:256).

Nkemnkia (1999: 171) elaborates: *"African identity and culture are founded on the intimate and vital unity with the family, the tribe and God. The "I" is not the point of departure, but the "You", the "We", the collectivity of the community and the tribe.[…] The individual cannot organize or fulfil himself outside the community, clan or tribe; he would be like a fish out of its water […] A similar condition favours a communitarian pluralism, which is opposed to individualism, the superiority of the "I" as opposed to the primacy of the "We."*

The family in an African context therefore revolves around the collective: *"In traditional society, the family includes children, parents, grandparents, uncles, aunts, brothers, and sisters who may have their own children, and other immediate relatives. The number of family members may range from ten persons to even a hundred, where several wives belonging to one husband may be involved. It is the practice in some societies to send children to live for some months or years with relatives, and these children are counted as members of the families where they happen to live. The family also includes the departed relatives, […] "the living dead" as well as […] the unborn members who are still in the loins of the living"* (Mbiti, op. cit.:104-5). Shorter (1988: 84) explains: *"the extended family is a group of relatives extended in space and time, and including the deceased as well as the unborn. Usually, members see themselves as belonging exclusively to either the paternal or maternal line. Members cooperate in a family community and accept mutual responsibility across generations…"*

Within this family, the household is the smallest unit, consisting of the children, parents and sometimes the grandparents, what one might call 'the family at night'. If a man has two or more wives, he has as many households, since each wife would usually have her own house erected within the same compound. Shorter (op.cit.:83), complements this definition, stating that *"the family is a minimal effective group of relatives by blood and/or marriage and analogous groups. This means that a family is the smallest group of relatives that can operate effectively by itself in a given society. Analogous groups refer to families in which members are not related by blood or marriage, for example, adopted children, or step children …"*

With internal challenges and external influences, the concept of family and the role of the extended family are evolving. According to Otiso (2006: 97), *"…the role of families and clans in socialisation has largely been taken over by schools where children spend their youth away from both parents and grandparents." […] "The advent of the modern cash economy often forces one parent, especially the father, to spend considerable amounts of time away from the family, thereby further weakening the socialisation process [….] many grandparents are also increasingly disconnected from their grandchildren by language barriers that are engendered by the modern school system. The increased separation of the children from the parents and grandparents is to a large degree responsible for the rapid increase in the number of maladjusted, unproductive, and lawless youth."*

1.2. Studying the family at the heart of cultural pluralism in Uganda

This report is based on research that set out to establish the significance of the family as a space for nurturing the value of pluralism in Uganda. The preceding section suggests that there may be good reasons to study the role of the family and the broader community when attempting to understand the meaning and the challenges of pluralism within African contexts, especially since the collectivity may play a different role than assumed in the Western world (where many of the pluralism concepts originate).

Culture remains an essential point of reference – whether explicit or unspoken - for both urban and rural Ugandan communities. It determines community and individual values, how we see ourselves and others, as well as our worldviews, which in turn inform responses to social, political and economic factors in the environment. In one way or the other, identity is founded on cultural diversity that includes, but is not limited to, ethnicity, religion and gender. Culture however evolves, fuelled by beliefs, expectations and experiences: its custodians (within and outside traditional cultural institutions) are exposed to external influences and worldviews that may challenge their own belief systems and practices, thus creating room for reflection, accommodation of the new, transformation and/or appreciation of diversity.

Further, different African cultures attach diverse social values to relations with 'the other' (often as a result of intermarriage or migration) that may or may not promote pluralism. The African concept of family and community is generally premised on the principle of inclusiveness, on identifying and creating spaces for convergence rather than divergence in individual aspirations and thought. It must however be kept in mind that conforming to the norm, rather than seeking to be recognized as different, is also an important aspect of this collectivity, thus departing from the assumption that collectivity involves unbridled freedom for the realisation and expression of diversity.

This research explores the role of the family in managing cultural diversity. The family is perceived as the space where acculturation begins and where difference in terms of ethnicity, religion and gender, among others, is defined, understood and managed to foster (or not) harmony from the smallest unit of a household to the wider community. Inculcation of values, old and new, often takes place within a family setting where they are translated into the daily lives of children. These values are reflected in the selection of friends, schools attended and interaction with those who are 'different'. Pluralism or the lack of it is then seen as nurtured from the very early stages of individuals' lives and thereafter manifests itself in the way in which they relate to difference in their adulthood, knowingly and unconsciously.

In Uganda, while some research has been conducted on family relations and the upbringing of children in respect to rights, gender roles and responsibilities (Raising Voices, 2005), there has been limited examination of the value of tolerance, attitudes towards this, and even less in respect to pluralism. Little is known therefore about managing diversity within families, its link to the value of equity and how this informs the upbringing of children, and how the shared values of discipline, respect, and tolerance may manifest themselves in pluralism (or the lack of it) within and outside the family setting.

1.3. The research

For purposes of this study, a family refers to immediate relatives (the household living together semi-permanently or permanently) who are directly involved in influencing and determining the values that the family upholds. The extended family is also taken into account as an important social group, which in the local context includes relatives of common ancestry / lineage, with shared goals and values, with long-term commitments to one another, and residing in the same dwelling place.

In Uganda, the family is however changing in ways that affect its members' perceptions and lived reality of diversity. A number of circumstances, such as civil strife and consequent displacement, terminal illness (AIDS), education, and religion have resulted in mobility and a shift in roles and power relations, challenging the traditional family as described by Mbiti (1989) above. The emerging types of families go beyond those with "ordinary" parents (of similar ethnic, religious, occupational, social background) to those with single parents', parents of mixed ethnicity, mixed religions, diverse political affiliation, polygamous families, "modern" urban well-travelled and exposed families, as well as less travelled rural ones. Some families exhibit several of these elements combined, while others

have experiences in more than one country/or location, often as a result of conflict, displacement and trade. This variety of family backgrounds provides information on different worldviews, values, and experiences of transmitting the values of tolerance and intolerance and on the factors that lead to and reinforce such differences. Such changes also result in the disruption of traditional socialisation processes and in exposure to alternative ways of life, making the accommodation of diversity an increasingly relevant concern. This research therefore seeks to explore families' worldviews, their perceptions and lived experiences of tolerance and pluralism

The research focused on subjective views, based on life stories, emphasising the account of individual perceptions and interpretation of events; it also focused on pluralism in relation to ethnicity, religion and politics. Four broad areas were identified and questions developed to explore how difference is managed in the selected families and how values are passed on. Discussions revolved around pluralism in respect to the manifestation of and dealing with difference in the family, the inculcation of values within the family; the evolving concept of family; spaces and drivers of pluralism in a family environment and finally, the influence of workplaces on promoting pluralism in the family[2].

The scope of the first leg of the research was limited to Kampala-based individuals. The sample was small, with 14 key informants (5 women), mostly prominent personalities in their professional fields (in respect to education for adults and youth, health, gender, religion, family affairs and governance). They were drawn from urban or semi-urban backgrounds, educated and exposed Ugandans from various walks of life, institutions and organisations to demonstrate different dimensions of pluralism from a political, ethnic and religious perspective. Because of their professional background, these interviewees are in contact with a wider Ugandan public, in this case women, children, youth, rural community groups, adult learners and religious congregations. They were selected because of their direct experience, personal and professional, in dealing with issues of religion, ethnicity and politics, and asked to share their personal experiences on pluralism (within their families) and their perception of pluralism in society. Two non-Ugandan respondents were included to provide an outsider's perspective on how Ugandans relate to one another.

A subsequent phase of the study was undertaken in two rural settings, in Mayuge and Moyo districts, Mayuge, in eastern Uganda, was identified as a district where rural communities have remained ethnically relatively homogenous, with a high rate of polygamy, an important element to understand managing conflict and diversity at the family level. Moyo district, bordering Sudan, has an experience of movement in and out of the country and hosts refugees. This has exposed local families to diverse groups of people and ways of life and therefore provided them with an opportunity to manage diversity. 23 (11 men, 12 women) individuals were interviewed, reflecting particular types of families with a diverse range of experiences and views, including polygamous families or relationships, mixed/unique ethnic parentage, religious backgrounds, and individuals in families with a high or low educational status. Individuals involved in business or trade, subsistence farming or leadership positions were included.

This report is divided into three main chapters, the first being this introduction to the study. The second describes the findings, with detailed responses in respect to managing difference in the family, transmitting values within the family, the influence of workplaces on promoting pluralism, the evolving concept of family, and spaces and drivers of pluralism in a family setting. Differences in the family are examined according to (i) Ethnic identity (ii) Religious identity (iii) Social status, and (iv) Political affiliation. For each, manifestations of difference and its management are examined. Finally, chapter three focuses on conclusions and some recommendations to civil society organisations involved in addressing issues of pluralism and development concerns in general

The outcomes of this research are meant to inform civil society strategies to address issues of intolerance that manifest themselves in the family in different forms and to identify resourceful spaces to mitigate intolerance. The research may also prove useful to contribute to discussions on supporting the restoration of functional families; on understanding the accepted parameters of tolerance in the local cultural context and on identifying what needs to be done to nurture a responsible, conscientious and tolerant population for a dignified and harmonious society.

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[2] Respondents' names have been masked throughout the text to respect their privacy.

2.   Findings

2.1 Acknowledging difference in upbringing

The research first focused on tolerance as a key dimension of pluralism, and as an initial step towards managing diversity - acknowledging and accepting difference and thereafter engaging with it. The outcomes of mapping studies carried out under the Promoting Pluralism Knowledge programme in Uganda, indicate that religious and ethnic identity as well as social status and political affiliation are key factors of intolerance (Kayiso, 2009, Maraka, 2009). This section therefore examines varying degrees of tolerance and intolerance in relation to ethnicity, religion, nationality and political affiliation.

Religious identity

Religion is a key source of diversity in several families interviewed and the degree of tolerance, especially between Catholics and Protestants, depends on the depth of their religious conviction. The Protestant, Catholic and Baha'i respondents all encompassed a willingness to be inclusive of the other, even when confronted with the reality of a family member's choice to marry a person of a different religious persuasion. Efforts were made to accommodate the other, illustrating that in some instances family loyalty superseded any intolerance inspired by religious persuasion. Although there were instances of co-existence between Muslims and adherents of other religions, intermarriage often required conversion, which conversion was understood by some as a change of ethnic identity.

According to four urban respondents of Catholic and Kiganda[3] background, during their upbringing, discrimination against Protestants was pronounced. In spite of this, their families were however open to friends from different tribes and races, and were not class conscious in their choice of friends, or less privileged relatives. They testified that having parents with the same religious background reinforced common values and principles in their children.

For two urban respondents born of parents of similar ethnic and religious identity, prayer was a strong part of the children's upbringing, with some joining the seminary or becoming priests/pastors. Even where they did not follow this vocation, they testified that this influence shaped their identities. Religion (in this case, Catholicism) was much valued, although a prejudice against Protestantism was also emphasised. Among the rural families, religion was emphasised and expectations of family members with regard to religious observances and loyalties were pronounced. Thus, loyalties and acceptance on the basis of religion blurred the boundaries of other types of differences, for Catholic, Protestant and Muslim families.

Two urban respondents were of Bahá'í faith, which they found appealing because of the openness, freedom of association and inclusiveness the faith promoted. As one respondent recalls, *"My father said, "I will take you to a home where the children do not fear Africans."* Conversion from Christianity to Bahá'í faith did not cause significant tensions or conflicts within the wider family.

Tolerance

In urban families with parents of different religions, a high level of religious tolerance was exhibited. One respondent for instance said, *"My mother was Protestant, my father was Catholic and we (children) were confirmed Catholics, but on Sunday each family member went to worship in a church of their choice, Catholic or Protestant."* According to another respondent from a Catholic headed home, *"there was no pressure for conversion as all the religions were respected and accepted."* In the rural areas, families with different religious backgrounds gave mixed signals in terms of tolerance of different religions. In as far as it meant interacting with people of other religious persuasion on a social basis or even marriage, there was some tolerance between the Christian religions.

An urban Catholic respondent who married into a staunch Anglican family said that his parents were not comfortable with his wife being of a different faith. He however did not demand her to convert although, after a few years in marriage, she chose to convert to Catholicism of her own free will. In Mayuge district, at least three Protestant women had converted on marriage to Catholicism, while at

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[3] From the largest ethnic group in Uganda, the Baganda

least two did not convert but worshipped in the Catholic church. Gentle force was used, trying to convince the women to convert and it was also said by at least 3 of the respondents, both women and men, that it was alright and expected for women to convert to their husband's religion. One of the women who declined to convert also baptised her older children in the Protestant church while her husband was away but now prays in the Catholic church with her younger children who are baptised Catholics, giving a hint of conflict in this situation. In terms of choice of religion, the most accommodating view was linked to change as a result of marriage.

In another urban family, four different religions (Muslim, Protestant, Catholic and Seventh Day) co-existed, and it was only on one occasion that an Islamic marriage required conversion. In general, the choice of religion and decision to convert was by conviction rather than convenience and did not meet resistance. In both Mayuge and Moyo districts, there were instances of Muslim men married to Christian women, who had not insisted on women converting to Islam. Nevertheless, one had 'converted' unofficially while the other continued to worship in her church. One respondent in Mayuge had a daughter-in-law who was the daughter of a Hajji but who had become a Catholic. He viewed this as normal since she was a woman converting to her husband's religion. However, the family adopted practices that would make her comfortable by not eating pork and ensuring all animals were slaughtered by a Muslim. There was at least one family in Mayuge that had 'intergenerational' Catholic and Muslim members, i.e. Muslim grandfather, Catholic father and mother, Muslim son and Catholic sons. The family took this as sign of unity and supported each other in all their activities, be it Islamic or Christian.

One urban Catholic respondent, who is looking after his nephew (born of a Muslim father), chose to expose him to both Catholic and Muslim faiths and to allow him to choose his path. He takes the boy to church, encourages him to join in church-related activities, including leading Catholic prayers at home. His nephew also participates in Islamic teaching sessions organised by Muslim neighbours. Another urban respondent was however of the opinion that what is interpreted as tolerance of the other may actually be reluctance to question, engage in meaningful debates, and challenge the status quo. As a result, there is limited objectivity, and acceptance of things that are "wrong" because they remain unquestioned.

In both Moyo and Mayuge districts, a high level of religious tolerance was also exhibited in terms of social interaction amongst the different religions. All respondents who were in close proximity to Muslims for instance ensured that they did not eat food considered unclean. The Muslims in turn were generally comfortable interacting with Christian in-laws and neighbours.

Polygamy was cited as providing a space for pluralism. As one urban respondent narrated, *"My father was a chief who had several wives, some of whom were Catholics and Protestants, and they all co-existed harmoniously. He visited the different homes without remorse and all his wives were treated equally. Material things and food were divided equally amongst the homes and this was culturally accepted."* The chief in this instance was a staunch and active Christian, but the contradiction between the Christian principles of monogamy and his lived reality as a polygamous man went unquestioned. Polygamy had become a space where differences had to be managed consciously, providing experience of engaging with difference and tension. Tolerance and engagement often had to be nurtured between the women and children and systems for resolving differences identified and accepted. All the respondents from polygamous families highlighted the importance of arbitration and dialogue to resolve differences, as well as the importance of treating wives and children equally. One respondent in Mayuge was quick to observe that polygamy worked better in well-off families that could afford to treat members 'equally'. The tensions brought about by differences in behaviour and in status within the polygamous homes, if not managed adequately, often led to break ups and accusations, including of witchcraft, engendered difficulties in sharing resources and promoted cliques.

In Moyo and Mayuge, examples were given by a woman and a man where 'co-wives' discussed and took a common stand to address their husband's 'misbehaviour'. In these and other kinds of marriages, the extended family is important in fostering conflict resolution. For instance, a woman married to a polygamous man said she valued how her cousins and uncles are available to arbitrate in conflicts between her and her husband.

Intolerance

Within urban families, there were several instances of religious intolerance too. Two Christian respondents recalled that their families were open to friends from all backgrounds, with the exception of traditional believers who were labelled witches and wizards with whom they would not interact, visit or share food. In the rural areas, many of the respondents were reluctant to see their children join or convert to another religion, including respondents who themselves had changed their religions, which tended to occur as a result of marriage (women converted) or, in one case, of school attendance. One respondent mentioned that her children had to have the religion of their father because 'that is how it is meant to be'. In a chance encounter with a Muslim woman married to a Protestant, she explained why she converted to Protestantism: 'the children were getting confused, seeing their mother go to pray on Fridays and their father with them on Sundays'. Her interest was to bring some uniformity to her children's religious experience as they grew up.

Several urban respondents cited tensions between Catholics and Protestants as situations of pronounced religious intolerance. One respondent from a Catholic family shared the sentiments of her family members when her sister chose to marry a Protestant man: "At least she would have married someone from a different race not of different religion!"

In the 1960s and 1970s, Islam was seen as a total way of life and conversions to Islam were likened to even changing one's ethnic identity. According to two urban respondents, a Muslim was not considered a true Muganda[4] or Madi – it was an entirely new identity. One respondent narrated how her Protestant grandfather opposed his son's (her father) conversion to Islam, and changed his will because he could not visualise his heir being a Hajji. As a compromise, he requested him to allow one of his sons to remain non-Muslim so that he could be appointed heir, and he obliged.

To conclude, one can observe that, in some instances, the religious relationship with the other goes beyond simple co-existence, but rarely to the extent of understanding the other's values or belief systems. There are attempts to enhance peaceful and respectful co-existence, but a reluctance to question or challenge the other. Rather, these values and belief systems are taken as a given and actively observed, as an element of interaction and coexistence with the other.

Compared to ethnic and racial intolerance, the 'advantage' of religious intolerance is the room for negotiation, even conversion, while ethnicity and race are not subject to this kind of flexibility and potentially hold a greater threat of deep-seated intolerance. Instances where religious intolerance supersedes ethnic intolerance are highlighted when bridging of deep ethnic and racial divides is preferred to any form of conversion or intimate overtures to the other.

Ethnic identity

Diversity based on ethnic identity manifests itself in the form of language, marriage, social relations and perceptions of the other. Appreciating ethnic diversity requires a degree of assimilation, and unlike conversion from one religion to another, it demands a greater effort to understand and agree with the other, to seek commonalities, to compromise and negotiate for inclusion. Unlike universal religious principles, the diversity of ethnic beliefs and practices are a potential source of difference requiring a greater commitment to be managed. Nevertheless, the 'boundaries' of ethnic identity are made porous by intermarriages and to an extent, prolonged exposure and interaction often lead to assimilation or adoption/adaptation of some practices, creating a closer link with the other. They may also have the opposite effect. For the following generation, while the patrilineal system assures the dominance of the father's ethnicity, allegiance to the mother's widens the circle of acceptance.

"Amongst the Baganda, family identity is very important. The Baganda are often interested in finding out the origin of the other. *"Who are you? How do I relate to you? Are we related? Do we share totems?"* This is to avoid the embarrassment of treating a person inappropriately, a term commonly referred to as *"kufa nsonyi"* ('one would die of shame') if, for instance, s/he did not greet a visitor appropriately, says one respondent. Amongst the Basoga and Madi, the Bagisu, Japadhola, Moru (Sudan) the importance of relations with each other was emphasised in the way children were socialised to interact with and treat people with courtesy and kindness. This applied despite any religious and ethnic differences and was taken as a yardstick of good upbringing of all children across the different ethnicities. Behaviour was one of the most common measures on which decisions regarding the choice of friends were based, surpassing ethnicity and religion in importance in the rural areas of Mayuge and Moyo districts.

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[4] A person from Buganda

Differences within the family evidently manifest themselves in intermarriages between people of different ethnicity. Two urban respondents in such marriages said the advantage of being issued from a mixed family was the opportunity to learn several languages, although it was often the father's language that was spoken in the home. In some instances, the parents did not deliberately choose a single language for communication in the home, and children opted to speak English. This was also attributed to peer pressure and exposure to external influences.

In Moyo, one respondent, a retired policeman and 'Jack of many trades' explained how conflicts were dealt with while he was growing up… by sitting down 'as brethren' and *resolving* issues […] *'women do not sit to resolve issues,* instead each person is told to *'put a finger in the wife's eye'*; meaning, talk to her seriously if she is involved in conflict; thus leaving the individual member to deal with the aspects of the conflict stemming from their home. At times a conflict is wider and requires the 'Vurra' or representatives of the whole clan from the different areas to sit. …. The respondent noted that, these days, girls are also involved in resolving conflicts.

Tolerance

According to an urban respondent, "it did not matter if a woman of another clan or tribe married into the clan. As long as she bore children with a Muganda man she was eligible to become part of the clan. Boys were known to bring in "foreigners" through marriage and in Buganda, family ties with in-laws and relatives were maintained by visiting and exchanging gifts'. In Mayuge, the areas visited had no choice but to interact with each other and took it in their stride as part of their experience. The settlers in the area were conscious of the need to interact and understand each other and took the initiative to do so. Intermarriages were not questioned on ethnic grounds. They were accepted, according to some respondents, without reservation and reinforced by traditional sayings, such as "there is no tribe without good people and there is no privilege of goodness vested in one tribe". There were a number of mixed ethnic marriages, in which - as in Buganda - a woman joined the man's clan. The situation in Moyo was similar in terms of a range of ethnicities. In addition, Moyo residents have for several years interacted with and had migrants from Sudan, to add to migrants from the Ugandan districts of Arua and Yumbe.

One urban respondent explained that having worked in various parts of the country, and being involved in the business of fishing and trade in spare parts, her grandfather was open to people of diverse backgrounds. He had a big home and family, welcomed people to visit and stay overnight. Another respondent recalls his mother allowing workers of diverse ethnic backgrounds to occupy the family house, treating them as members of the family. This, the respondent said, was in line with Kiganda culture, which has open-ended clans. Through an initiation ritual (omukaago) a person from a different clan or ethnicity (in the past this also applied to slaves) could be accepted into the clan. In addition, his family accommodated students (Japadhola and Acholi) who came to study in Kampala but found it difficult to return home for holidays because of long distances and financial constraints.

The influence of education, occupation and exposure was pronounced in both Moyo and Mayuge. One of the respondents, chosen because of his long education experience, could trace the influences of exposure to his grandfather, who went to school and became a 'clerk to the council' and whose home was open to people of all categories. The respondent also learnt other languages to engage with people of different ethnicities and was open to his children's choices in terms of change in religion and marriage across religions and ethnicities. His children are now exposed to a very diverse range of people, including people of different races. In Moyo, education and occupation was also an important factor in linking families and individuals to people of different ethnicities. Just as in Kampala, one of the respondents, a farmer, accommodates the friends of his children and keeps their property during holiday time: 'I now take all people as belonging to one country…people need to sit together to understand each other, otherwise tribal tensions will continue'.

Sometimes socialisation against discriminative behaviour is explicit, as one Muganda respondent recalls being told "our home has no roads going through it", meaning people who visit the home do so intentionally and are not just passing by on their way to some other destination. They should therefore be welcomed and treated with hospitality. The visitors to one of the rural respondents' home are asked to be accommodative and tolerant. Families in Mayuge and Moyo all said they call upon their children not to discriminate against other people, through instruction, discussion and example, as well as story telling by the older generation. In some cases, fear and stereotyping however become part of the message in the process of impressing upon children the need to treat others equally because dire consequences are promised if the counsel of the older generation is not

followed, such as expecting 'Moiba' (said to come from the Sudan to 'eat' or 'carry away' children with bad behaviour), thus instilling fear and prejudice.

Intermarriage between Ugandans and people of other nationalities tended to reduce the degree of intolerance. One Catholic respondent thus recalled her parents overlooking her proposed husband's religion (Protestant) because he was a foreigner (with an entirely different culture). Couples were however warned about cultural differences and challenges, exemplified by experiences where one respondent's uncles (Ugandans) expected to receive a dowry which was not forthcoming; or where a wife of foreign origin could not understand why she was referred to as "our wife" and why her family was expected to accommodate her husband's extended family.

Intolerance

One urban respondent recalled how intolerant her father was towards people from Northern Uganda, speaking openly against them and discouraging his children from associating with theirs, making friends with them or bringing them into his house. This respondent, who insisted on maintaining her friendship with northerner friends, invited them home but had to introduce them to her parents by pseudo names to permit their visits.

Another urban respondent of mixed ethnicity was brought up by her paternal grandparents and recalls how her grandmother frequently begrudged her for being different, blaming all her mistakes on the fact that she was of mixed origin, deprecatingly described as *"omusayi omutabule!"* (with mixed blood). Her grandmother referred to her as being of lesser importance than her relatives of Buganda origin, which resulted in resentment towards her elder. Another respondent explained how her mother, a Lugbara, was blamed for her father's (a Langi) death by his relatives because she originated from West Nile, which her in-laws associated with Idi Amin.

According to one urban Muganda interviewee, if someone in the family behaved inappropriately, s/he would occasionally be said to be behaving 'like a Munyoro'[5]. There were proverbs portraying the Banyoro negatively, as blood enemies. Despite this negative attitude, the Banyoro were recognised in Buganda culture. Of the 12 clans of the bushbuck, a seat was always left empty for the Banyoro because it was believed that rebels from Buganda settled amongst the Banyoro.

A number of stereotypes were found to reinforce prejudices and intolerance. One Mutooro respondent said that although his family was generally inclusive, they tended to exclude the Bakonzo and Bamba as inferior. There were also songs and proverbs that reinforced this prejudice. According to others, the Baganda were stereotyped as dishonest, discriminative and arrogant, while the Rwandese were universally seen as refugees or migrant workers. One respondent said he only realised that some Rwandese did not fall into these categories when he met some at University.

Echoing this report's introduction, some urban respondents asserted that a family is built on commonalities rather than differences. Common principles form the basis upon which they make choices, but if parents are of different ethnic, religious and social backgrounds, they tend to have disagreements about "what is right" and if this is not effectively resolved, the children take advantage of these differences in values and opinions – running from one parent to another for consent, encouraging duplicity. In marriages between people of the same ethnic background, especially where the couple were of the same social class, fewer disagreements were experienced with regard to upbringing, cultural norms, values and principles to inculcate in their children. Families with parents of differing values and social status however struggled to manage these differences.

According to one urban respondent working on issues of violence against children, sexual and other forms of physical abuse are manifestations of intolerance that result in the miscarriage of power over the vulnerable (often children and women). Often, as corroborated by another respondent, relationships of mixed ethnic and religious backgrounds tend to require assimilation. This may however be resisted by the spouse who is labelled an outsider, and thus causes intolerance. Such intolerance can also take the form of 'subversion' as in the case of a rural woman who baptised her children in the absence of her catholic husband: '*I was tired of staying with children who were not baptised and so I had to baptise them'.*

To conclude, hospitality emerged as an important value shared by various ethnic groups. On the one hand, various experiences, proverbs relating to accommodating others, and initiation rituals to accept a "foreigner" into the clan reaffirm the principle and importance of the collective - where a distinction

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[5] From Bunyoro, a neighbouring region to Buganda

is not made of the other but an effort is rather made to include him/her. On the other hand, where inclusion entails a digression from the norm, from commonly held values, for instance in relation to power and social status, a high degree of intolerance, generalisation and stereotyping is demonstrated.

Social / class relations

Discrimination based on social class or status emerged in the experiences of various respondents. On the one hand, the privileged appeared to be tolerant and accommodating of the less privileged, while on the other meting out unequal and undignified treatment to them. In a few instances, discrimination was consciously guarded against through parents' deliberate effort to demonstrate equality in the family.

Two urban respondents born of parents of similar ethnic backgrounds, narrate differences in their parents' values as a source of tension in the home. One recalls disagreements over a contentious grey area regarding alcohol consumption, where one parent was against the habit and the other brewed and consumed alcohol: because there was no cultural or religious (Catholic) guidance on alcohol consumption, it was a regular source of conflict. Another recalls being discriminated against within his uncle's home, *"I was brought up the hard way like my father. My uncle had a huge compound with geese and dogs and I was responsible for them. I worked, unlike his children, alongside the labourers at home and often retired to bed late at night because of the many household chores."* A third urban respondent described her parents' marriage as a near master-servant relationship, which she grew up to resent.

By contrast the family of a non-Ugandan respondent, born of parents of the same racial identity, chose to adopt the local (Ugandan) culture of the extended family, accommodating 8 non-biological dependents from different ethnic backgrounds and co-existing with them harmoniously. The parents do not pretend that these children are the same as their biological offspring, but treat all equally, provide for them and are involved in their lives to varying degrees. The children are also encouraged to maintain relationships with their biological parents, where these are still alive. Within the home, the value of respect of others is emphasized, including respect of the house helper.

Tolerance

Several respondents interviewed in both the urban and rural areas felt that mobility due to occupation or education has enhanced their ability to interact with people of different nationalities. This has exposed them and taught them to deal with prejudices and suspicion. In several cases, religious principles informed their interaction with those who were different.

Intermarriages in the rural areas were also seen by some as a way of *"getting new relatives and developing new relationships",* as a teacher in Moyo emphasised. She observed that her son was married to a Kuku (Sudanese) and could speak Arabic. The family's experience of bringing up children in the Sudan at the time of conflict in Uganda exposed them to differences and gave them a greater understanding of various peoples and cultures.

One non-Ugandan respondent said he felt accepted by ordinary Ugandans and did not experience feelings of exclusion. He attributed this in part to his occupation as well as to adopting forms of communication that illustrated his understanding of the local context. Local people appreciated this.

Intolerance

Two urban respondents recalled attending predominantly Indian schools where Indians were rough and discriminative towards Africans. In one instance, the interviewee learnt to interact with them because her mother had business dealings with Indian women and had Indian friends. Her mother often rebuked her and her siblings for referring to Indians as "*Bayindi.*" The other respondent's father would not tolerate this discrimination, expressed his displeasure to the school administration and asked for redress.

Intolerance as a result of class was not very evident in the rural areas. There were examples given of 'workers' in the home, but these became 'part of the family' and in some cases, were even buried by the family, as in the case of migrant workers. Elements of class discrimination were however felt in the area of education. For example, in polygamous families, the status of education of the wives was considered a factor in conflicts and feelings of superiority or inferiority. Many of the respondents did not stay long in school and felt disadvantaged by this fact. Those who did not go to school at all had

a feeling of loss. Nevertheless there were no examples of direct intolerance towards those who were less educated or uneducated. The respondents who felt deprived by a lack of education said that "*educated people have an easier way of making a living*" and focused on ensuring that their children did not have the same experience.

Overall, social discrimination based on differences in social status and values manifested itself in the relationship between a family and servants, husband and wife, host family members and less privileged extended family. Depending on how these relationships are managed, they resulted in resentment and intolerance but, where a deliberate effort was made to break down these barriers, an appreciation of equality emerged. Social status and values could be enhanced through education (formal and informal) and exposure. With such changeable forms of identity, this type of intolerance may not be long lived or very deeply rooted.

Political affiliation

A number of urban and rural respondents indicated that their families were not actively engaged in politics and that this therefore was not a significant source of tension or intolerance in their homes. A couple of respondents however indicated that while their families were not actively engaged in politics, they were conscious and critical of both national and international news; and considered themselves to be critics of politics rather than politicians.

Some urban respondents' involvement in partisan politics was influenced by religion. For instance, respondents of Bahá'í faith noted that they are not allowed to participate in partisan politics and are advised to take a position of obedience (though possibly critical) to authority. Another urban respondent recalled how his Catholic parents supported the Democratic Party but, with the coming of the National Resistance Movement[6] (NRM), new but mild tensions arose, as the NRM's offer to provide opportunities for women to access resources, political authority and recognition in development appealed to some women. In some cases, political affiliation was determined by personal values and it was often assumed that the family would follow the father's choice, as one respondent asserted: *"my children are likely to share the same political ideology as I do, based on values rather than personality. I always emphasise patriotism rather than divisive politics based on short term achievements."* A woman party member in Mayuge, whose husband is a local NRM party leader, was averse to her children interacting with members of the opposition party FDC and could not fathom maintaining a relationship with her son if he joined the FDC, while a respondent in Moyo, who had changed her religion from Catholicism to 'Mungumema' (a "saved" group), made a cryptic remark, whereby even if her son took up a different political affiliation, *"it is not wanted that NRM should fail"*.

Because of a generally lukewarm attitude towards politics in the homes of many urban and rural respondents, there was limited demonstrated intolerance, although one respondent said her grandfather constantly warned against three things: *"joining partisan politics, becoming a tailor or a carpenter because these were the trades of liars."*

Generally, in all the conversations held, political affiliation did not emerge as a significant course of conflict, only resulting in mild tension. This could be in part attributed to religious principles, family values and the extent to which political affiliation contributes to the survival of the family. Partisan politics having been only recently re-introduced in Uganda, it is possible that its relevance at family level has yet to become apparent, with less energy invested in political differences. Further engagement with politics is often seen as a means to acquire material and other benefits, rather than an accommodation of the rights and aspirations of the people.

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[6] The party currently in government, led since 1986 by President Museveni

2.2. Transmitting values within the family

Respondents indicated that values were inculcated in the family in different ways; these included freedom to discuss differences at home, freedom to associate with the other, orientation by instruction or observation, choice and influence of schools and finally freedom to construct one's identity.

Freedom to discuss difference

All respondents in the urban areas indicated that their children (and to some extent themselves) were free to discuss a wide range of topics, ranging from HIV/AIDS, rape, sex, sexual orientation, justice, rights, national and international politics, among others. This provided spaces to question practices and people that are different from oneself. Three urban respondents however indicated that, during their upbringing, sex was a taboo subject, while for others difference in sexual orientation did not come up because it was a practice that was not visible. In the case of some respondents from Mayuge and Moyo districts, discussion of religious difference was only meant to ensure that there was no digression from the path that the family had chosen. This was the same for Muslims and Catholics. As one respondent put it, her children *"…did not even know that there was a choice"* in terms of changing religious identity.

All the respondents in the urban leg of the research (with the exception of three who were entirely open minded and receptive to their children's aspirations) said their children were free to discuss and choose different lifestyles but within certain parameters, in accordance with their religious values and principles. A clearly negative position was taken on the practice of homosexuality which was perceived as wrong, against religious values, and unnatural - children were generally guided away from this. One respondent narrated how one of the family's dependents, a 6 year old, returned from his first term at a new school with stories of witnessing homosexuality amongst the older boys; he was immediately withdrawn from the school. Other unacceptable forms of exposure were to violence and nudity. The same attitudes were expressed in the rural leg of the research, with similar caveats on matters of choice, depending on the values attached and promoted. An additional area of importance for some of the respondents was the traditional values held by the family, which also had to be taken into consideration.

Freedom of association

Most respondents of different ethnic and religious backgrounds stated that their homes were open to people of all walks of life and children were free to invite friends from different backgrounds, with the exception of one father who distinctly disliked northerners and another who opposed traditional believers. In two instances, urban respondents said they were warned as children against associating with families that were known for sorcery and witchcraft and were discouraged from sharing food or drinks with such people lest they were poisoned. Others still hold prejudices against certain tribes such as the Bakonzo and Bamba for the Batooro. Amongst the respondents in Mayuge and Moyo, who were of Busoga, Teso, Bugisu, Japadhola, Madi and Sudanese origin, restrictions were not present, except in as far as fears for the safety of the children were concerned, including the fear of child sacrifice and therefore the need to protect them from strangers.

Several respondents in both urban and rural areas encouraged their children to make friends prudently – establishing the value of the friendship (e.g. education advancement) and not to discriminate on the basis of identity traits such as ethnicity, religion or social status, but to avoid people who were lazy, dishonest, promoting the politics of hate and abuse, or practicing homosexuality. Rural respondents were particularly opposed to the influences of videos, dancehalls and gangs, which they saw as leading to the adoption of anti-social behaviour, such as smoking marijuana, sniffing glue, and taking up mannerisms seen in films. One of them raised concerns about schools and their negative influence in terms of homosexuality, where *'children are being recruited'*. One urban respondent, a Muganda, said she encourages her children to associate with friends of diverse backgrounds. Her children's best friends are Rwandese and Langi and the children visit and sleep over at each other's homes. As a parent, she would expect her children to tell her if one of their friends was gay and they would discuss this choice and its consequences.

According to one urban respondent, it takes a deliberate effort by parents to understand children's perspectives and eventually benefit from entertaining their independent positions. If in future children however choose to divert from the norm and choose a different religion or identity, this would be stressful, especially after the effort put into socialising them (going to church, holding discussions, purposive exposure, etc.) Nevertheless, all rural interviewees, except 3-4, would not treat their children differently as a

In the rural areas, the trade or business premise and the family home are important spaces where exposure to people of different kinds takes place. Thus exposure to people at the family level is significant. In Mayuge district, the diversity of people in the area has led to acceptance and tolerance, as well as active seeking of interaction … children are taught to tolerate and to be friendly and open and not to discriminate. In Moyo, exposure to people of different origins, tribes, communities and countries and exposure to different religions led to two different responses, a much valued tolerance reinforced through dialogue; and stereotypes about groups of people e.g. Muslims referred to as Lugbara and vice versa.

result of the choices made, although they still maintained that some choices are unacceptable, for instance, a Mugisu man would never allow his son to have a choice on whether or not to get circumcised, because *'it would affect the health of his grandchildren'* - this was a given. He also would never allow his daughter to marry a Mugisu man who is uncircumcised, even though she could marry any other uncircumcised man from any other ethnicity without objection. Some of these choices are therefore premised on beliefs, be it ethnic or religious, and on implications that parents try to protect their children from. They also lead to inflexibility. Thus, two rural Muslim respondents indicated that the Quran does not allow marriage with a non-believer and that children in such a relationship could die, while another mentioned that it was unacceptable for a Muslim to change religion. Such a person could be cursed. Another Muslim respondent, while emphasising that she would never allow her children to convert because they would be ostracised, nevertheless pointed out that the family continued to interact with a member who became a Christian and a pastor, as a result of a healing experience he underwent, following prayers by a Christian group. He continues to observe the Muslim rituals.

Orientation to social behaviour and values

Urban parents of diverse backgrounds opted for various ways to orient their children and expose them to difference. By treating all members of the household equally, one respondent emphasised that there is no great difference between people. She demonstrated and instilled in her children respect for elders and other people's opinion, including the house-help whom she treated as a family member. Observing parents and elders make decisions and respond to problems based on personal values and religious principles was also highlighted by several urban respondents as part of their orientation to accept difference. Reading the Bible and teaching children helped to ingrain Christian values in their lives. One respondent intentionally passed on values of respect and tolerance to his children, encouraging them to be open to people who are different, and not to limit their relationships to people of the same religion or tribe.

Another urban respondent made a deliberate effort to expose her children to her family and her husband's family of different ethnic origin by spending holidays in their respective villages, visiting grandparents and inviting relatives and grandparents to visit their home. One respondent holds discussions with his children on various issues, including justice, ethnocentrism and the distinction between the "-ism" ideology which connotes superiority, while claiming an openness to listen to the other.

Creating spaces to talk regularly to children and tell stories were identified as common means through which parents communicate values. These conversations illustrated the values of responsibility, self control, discipline, self management, hard work, respect, wisdom, decency, honesty, and integrity among others. Other stories were related to the history of the tribe, such as dealing with famine and relationships with other groups. However, in one instance, stories were told that portrayed Arabs as "bad people" because of their involvement in the slave trade – these were often told to deter young children from bad behaviour. These spaces, according to respondents, enabled parents to listen to and understand how their children think and relate to others, and give them guidance on values and principles. In Moyo district, the idea of family meetings or '*paranja*' (a gathering around the veranda in the same way as people used to sit around the fire), is utilised by some of the respondents to guide their children, to provide an opportunity for children and wives to have a voice, avoiding the case of the subsistence farmer who recalled how his mother never had an opportunity to convince her husband that her children needed to go to school.

One urban respondent who was orphaned at an early age said the extended family provided important spaces for learning, although interactions with them were loose. There was no particular person responsible for passing down values or particular cultural information; conversations were often general but allowed the younger generation to learn from the elders. In the experience of another orphan in the rural areas, the extended family

> *Leaving home for whatever reason increases exposure to diversity and living within an extended family system means learning, engaging with and accommodating the culture in the new environment, and whatever differences and distinctions prevail. Wanja soon found this out when she lost her parents. Hailing from a homogenous background, she moved to and was brought up by two different sisters in homes where her guardians were of mixed ethnic and in one case mixed ethnic and mixed religion marriages. She learned to live as part of these two families, exposed to and accepting a Muslim way of life in one sister's home while learning to live with in-laws from two other ethnic groups in both homes. She in turn married someone from a different ethnic group and settled away from her home area.*

provided an avenue to engage with difference because it exposed her to a different kind of life from that of her nuclear family where her parents were of the same ethnic and religious background.

Two urban respondents were very systematic in exposing their children to knowledge and skills to reinforce the foundation of values and principles they upheld. Children were exposed to music, dance and drama classes to enhance their creativity, self-confidence and expression; and to short training in basic technical skills, in reading science related material, physical training and discipline.

Choice and influence of schools

In most cases, the choice of schools for children was informed by academic performance; in cases where the school fell short of expectations, children were withdrawn. Exposed and well travelled respondents tended to appreciate schools that offer a holistic approach to education (academic and extracurricular), a space for children to grow and express themselves, and exposure to multinational and multi-ethnic environments.

Academic performance – Accordingly, urban respondents selected children's schools purposively based on academic performance, serious administration and management, provision of a balanced extra curriculum programme, learner centred teaching, promotion of values of humility and respect for authority and freedom of worship. Such schools were considered harmonisers of society, de-emphasising difference and allowing children to discover commonalities. In both Moyo and Mayuge, the overriding consideration was the standard of the school, followed in equal measure by proximity and cost and, in two cases, by religion.

Prestige – In the 1950s and 1960s, Mengo Secondary School and Kings' College Buddo were prestigious and at the heart of Buganda's education system, so children from prominent families went to these schools. In Mengo Secondary School, the staff were European and students of mixed ethnicity, including non-Baganda, Lubgara, Sudanese, Acholi, Bakiga, West Nilers, and Rwandese. This is where one urban respondent began to form stereotypes: *"the Sudanese were friendly and cool, the West Nilers social, while the Bakiga were difficult and rebellious, often taking the lead in school strikes and fights, and standing out as aggressive and loud."*

Religious background – In some cases, the Christian religion was, without question, the first consideration in determining the choice of school, as this was considered a means to build upon the religious foundation initiated in the home and to reinforce Christian values. In other cases, the quality of the school and its performance was given priority over religion, as one respondent narrates: *"My father, a staunch Catholic, risked being prohibited publicly from some sacraments for taking his children to secular schools but he insisted."* According to one urban respondent and a handful of rural ones, guidance in good conduct and etiquette were also important considerations to inform the choice of schools. One Catholic respondent was of the opinion that exclusive Catholic orientation was not sustainable and sent his children to secular schools although grooming according to Catholic values and principles continued at home. He was of the conviction that managing diversity is a basis for success today - a vital life skill.

Proximity – For some urban respondents, choice was influenced by the proximity of a good quality school to their homes. This often limited their exposure to people with similar ethnic and religious backgrounds. The question of tribe seldom arose and if it did, this was not perceived as a problem. Proximity and cost went hand in hand in the rural areas.

Secular and social status free – two urban respondents chose schools that provided their children with an "ordinary" school experience, void of division according to social status, encouraging them to appreciate others for their personality rather than social or financial status. Another respondent deliberately avoided schools such as Namagunga and Gayaza, perceived as schools to groom girls into the wives of chiefs, and imposing Christianity. Among the rural interviewees, a Muslim woman, interested in the standard of her son's school, allowed his going to a school with a lower standard because it had a place in which the boy could say his prayers, which the other school did not. This was a decision by the child which she respected, after he was challenged by his paternal grandfather to maintain a prayerful life. A teacher who studied and converted from Protestantism in a Catholic school preferred to send her children to just such a school '*because of the good behaviour that is taught to the children'*.

Construction of identity

For several respondents, the choice to construct one's identity is open, but with an expectation that decisions will be made within the framework of the orientation (religious and cultural mentoring and counselling) received from their parents. Most urban respondents said that, if their children diverted from the expected course, they would initially allow space for the phase of growth to pass, or make attempts to influence their choice. If this failed, they would be disappointed but would not disown

> *A female respondent married to a man from a different ethnic group thought her children should be free to choose the ethnic group they identify with, as with other choices, except when it comes to politics. She could not accept her child becoming or getting married to an FDC supporter. She believes that families with mixed political affiliation have no unity. She will not accept her son to stand for a political post as an FDC youth either and, if he insists on doing so, she will not allow him to stay with her. She believes her husband's position will be the same…'The family has benefited a lot from the party and owes it loyalty'.*

them. Few of the rural respondents expected to change their attitudes towards their children on account of their choices, however disappointing these may be.

In general terms, political affiliation does not seem to have much influence on peoples' lives, at least while they are not involved in campaigns and elections. Identities in the rural areas were not tied to politics, although, for a few exceptional cases, this assumes an overriding character. Political affiliation, though not significant from the conversations, nevertheless could be very influential. Some men expected their wives and children to automatically join their parties, while some expressed rigidity towards choice of political affiliation for their children.

One urban respondent narrated encouraging his children to construct their own identity as citizens of the world who identify as human beings first, founded on their religious faith. '*The identity of the soul has no gender and is based on a foundation of the human family'*, he said. He encouraged his children to be patriotic rather than nationalistic, using education to dispel ignorance about the other.

In Buganda, children have a clan identity into which they are systematically oriented. According to one respondent, an annual event is organized every January 1st to pass on information to the youth about their origin, history and important values and practices of their clan. During such events, the youth learn how to relate to death, witness the age-old twin ceremony, clean their ancestors' graves and learn how to relate to others. Strangers (other Ugandans and foreigners) are allowed to witness and participate in these events, which may include initiation into the clan if they so wish.

As mentioned earlier, the only form of identity that most respondents in the urban area (with the exception of three) strongly opposed was homosexuality. A number indicated a reluctance to deal with this, partly because they had no point of reference, and it went against their religious and cultural values. Some indicated that reading about human rights and tolerance have helped them to understand the practices from a rights perspective and feel that homosexuals should not be ostracised as long as they do not infringe on what is considered acceptable to others. Three urban parents were particularly liberal and encouraged their children to be free spirited. The families had diverse friendships including homosexuals and saw no harm in associating with them. They provided mentoring and advisory support to their children, but did not impose their will and aspirations on them. In some cases, this was a form of rejection of the strict boundaries that had been imposed on them as children. In the rural areas, other than one mention of homosexuality as a negative influence that can be picked at school, none of the respondents made reference to it.

Where consistent monitoring and mentoring of adults was absent, individuals tended to construct their own identity, set of values and worldviews. One urban interviewee for instance recalls that his parents were surprised and disappointed at the choices he made in terms of profession and choice of wife, considering the conservative cultural background in which he was born. Another urban respondent deliberately selected a church that promotes spontaneity, self-expression of needs and respect of individual choices, allowing its members to develop their own identity and political affiliation, guided by fundamental principles. Another said that being able to construct his own 'self' made him appreciate the possible existence of diverse identities inspired by different values and experiences and therefore avoid being judgmental of difference.

To conclude, openness to discuss difference indicates a willingness to deal with it within the family. Free association with others reinforces this willingness and enhances children's confidence to engage with others outside the home. Overall, there appeared to be an increasing desire to allow children to make some choices within the home, thus enhancing their sense of self-determination and confidence. This however requires patience and a deliberate effort on the part of parents who may not have had the same opportunities while growing up. In most cases, such a couscous effort to expose children to difference through orientation at home and by their choice of schools was necessary. Academic performance was a key factor in the selection of schools but it was evident that schools that provided support for the child's character development were given high priority by the urban and some of the rural interviewees.

In most families, therefore, significant energy was invested in providing a firm foundation of values and principles for the children, with the anticipation that the children would make the "right" decisions within the framework provided, although room was made for transgression. This may be considered an indication of flexibility within the family, allowing for some individualism within the confines of collective societal expectations.

2.3   Manifestations of tolerance at the workplace

Most of the respondents indicated that exposure to knowledge and people at their places of work contributed to their degree of tolerance in other spheres of life. In some cases, this was explicit through organizational culture, programmes and policies; and in others through implicit rules. Several urban respondents however noted that, up to the 1980s and early 1990s, ethnic identity at the place of work was not an important issue. It only became prominent more recently when identity has become increasingly associated with access to resources and opportunities.

Respondents' organisations host staff of diverse backgrounds and have to deal with issues that require objective engagement with difference at an interpersonal level. The workplace also offered spaces where the ability to manage diversity supported by values of respect, equity and tolerance are encouraged. Exposure to new work related knowledge (e.g. human rights, women and children's rights) and experiences (in practically promoting these rights) influenced perceptions and values of staff who may be influential members of a family and thus in position to translate and promote some of these values in the families.

For many of the rural respondents, the focus was on the values that informed their interaction with people outside the home. These were influences and values learned from their parents (actively inculcated) or in some cases learned in spite of their parents' practices.

Profession – exposure to knowledge and people

Exposure to knowledge on human rights fundamentally influenced a number of urban respondents' outlook on life in respect to interpersonal relationships, rights and equality. It helped them to transcend stereotypes and to enhance tolerance and respect for human beings in their diversity. Occupations that involved travel within and outside the country provided opportunities for some respondents to engage with difference at a professional level, meet new people, and appreciate diverse perspectives and competences to deal with various contemporary challenges. Working abroad on issues related to violence against women exposed one respondent to gender discrimination and intolerance, and inspired her to found a local organisation to champion equal opportunity for women in Uganda.

Three urban respondents, who worked in women-dominated organisations dealing with women-related issues, stated that despite differences in ethnic and religious backgrounds, they work well

together. They disproved the common perception that women cannot easily do so. Differences in religion and ethnicity are discussed openly and they support each other professionally and privately.

In the rural areas, those who manifested and promoted tolerance at the workplace were business people and a boda boda (motor-cycle taxi) rider, whose exposure to a diverse family background had taught him the importance of tolerance. His immediate family had both Muslim and Christian members who had learned to appreciate and support each other, while respecting their differences. He was able to arbitrate in cases where his colleagues fought over passengers and inculcate in them the patience to '*deal with 'difficult passengers'*.'

Organisational culture

The emergence of ethnic associations, such as *Nkoba za Mbogo, Ssebantu* and others at one's University was considered an indication of the growing desire to build solidarity and a sense of belonging among students of particular ethnic backgrounds. A risk was however seen of students becoming ethnocentric – creating rivalry and exclusion, especially amongst the Baganda who tend to assume a position of superiority over smaller ethnic groups. One of the urban respondents said that she encouraged students to look beyond their ethnic identity and to appreciate being Ugandan and global citizens, if they are to relate effectively with others and in turn be appreciated.

Two urban respondents had to work deliberately at breaking the stereotype of a "foreigner boss". They established clear policies on equal treatment of staff and defined organisational operations on a day to day basis to divert the focus from their personal identity and to foster an effective work ethic. Both individuals made an effort to assimilate in their manner of greeting, showing interest in individual personalities, sharing information about themselves openly, highlighting commonalities in cultures and promoting a spirit of fairness and openness.

Organisational programmes and policies

In some instances, development programmes were designed with a diverse local context in mind. Some urban respondents for instance reported the inclusion of diversity in their programme designs in terms of regional representation and sensitivity to diverse languages and targets (people with disability, living with HIV/AIDS, victims of conflict, age, gender, and religious and ethnic backgrounds). In one case, a baseline was used to establish the priority challenges to ensure that the programme design is informed and sensitive to the diverse local context. One respondent thus noted that Muslims are a closed community and therefore, unlike Christians who reach out for help, victims of domestic violence who are Muslim often do not, and therefore require a different approach to enable them access redress.

In some instances, a priority in recruiting staff was given to competence (although affirmative action was offered for certain marginalised categories), followed by considerations of ethnic and religious diversity. In some organisations, the diversity of staff was informed by the need for diverse cultures and languages to meet the needs of clients. In a few cases, ethnic and religious diversity was accidental, as priority was given to competence only. According to a respondent working at a university, policy is very clear in respect to admission on merit, but provision is made for district quotas especially for marginalised districts, although it is silent on ethnic minority groups. Another organisation deliberately recruited foreign (European) volunteers to enhance multiculturalism, to contribute to the professional growth of staff and to enhance tolerance in day to day management. The composition of the Board of Directors was, in some cases, deliberately diverse to bring national and international perceptions and experiences on board. One respondent observed that diversity within an organisation, if well harnessed, provides alternative perspectives on resolving problems.

A clash between individual and organisational values sometimes arose: one respondent narrated how a staff member opposed a programme to support sex workers and sexual minorities, judging them sinners according to her religious beliefs. She resigned from her job because she felt the organisation was promoting evil. After this, tasks were assigned according to the staff's readiness to promote organisational values, publicly and otherwise.

In the rural areas, organisational attributes were of relevance for teachers and some civil servants, such as a policeman, who had worked in various organisations. Most of the respondents related their experience to values they were able to utilise in their professional life or in managing their businesses. The most important attributes for the teachers and other formal workers were hard work, non discrimination, unity and dialogue. One of the head teachers utilised dialogue and meetings as a management tool. The traders and business people valued honesty, friendship and thrift. Some

individuals, such as a boda-boda rider, valued the ability to arbitrate and mentor his colleagues as well as people from the village who support them to undertake a trade of their own. Team work was valued by teachers and a local leader. Other important values learned and utilised included neutrality, particularly in relation to politics, but also other forms of non discrimination, cooperation and mutual support.

The place of work, through its culture and opportunity to acquire knowledge, thus enables employees to enhance their professional and interpersonal competence. Translating this knowledge (often for programmatic objectives) to a family situation however requires a deliberate effort, a willingness and commitment to change. Workplace exposure is often limited to one family member who then has to introduce new values to the family, demanding 'buy-in' from members who may not be similarly convinced. In town, public (professional) and private (family) lives are often divorced and therefore ideas from the work place may not necessarily apply in the home situation which are often dominated by religious and ethnic values. In the rural areas on the other hand, the place of work and the family dwelling place are often combined or in close proximity: 'workplace experiences' then directly influence the family.

2.4   The evolving concept of family

One respondent observed that "Pluralism is based on the principle of individualism, while the African concept of family is premised on the collective, on convergence rather than divergence" While the family is crucial in respect to values, it must, as already noted, be understood within its given context.

The family as a space for nurturing values

A number of respondents confirmed that the family is an important space where values are nurtured and good habits acquired before a child is exposed to other influences. Formal schools, workplaces and informal communities (churches, social functions) also provide spaces for learning and reaffirming values and basic rules or etiquette in respect to relating to others.

One urban respondent thus saw the family is the first of four layers for nurturing and protecting children, followed by the clan, the community and the state. In the ideal Ugandan families, parents have time to interact with their children, the fire place still exists (though not always literally) and the extended family plays a significant role in grooming the youth in respect to traditional values, norms and heritage, fostering a sense of belonging, dignity and respect.

Evolving concept of the family and inclusiveness

We have seen above that the concept of the family is changing for various reasons in Uganda, and these changes affect the transfer of values and the opportunities to be in contact with people and spaces that reinforce these values. Interviews suggest the following:

Identity construction – a breakdown in the systematic grooming and orientation of children, coupled with increased mobility, exposure, and interface with foreign values, is resulting in an independent construction of identity based on choice; on choosing values and the type of family life, rather than what is inherited from tradition. Further, children's rights have often been translated into a "mind your own business" attitude and freedom to do as they wish. While kith and kin remain an important element of the family, individual aspirations are increasingly being negotiated.

Dysfunctional families - According to some urban respondents, there are more dysfunctional families today than in the past. Increasingly, children are growing up without fathers, relationships between parents are influenced by money. With women's empowerment, power dynamics within the home, where not well managed, have led to men's irresponsibility and domestic violence, pushing women into public spaces to fend for their families, leading to deficiencies all round. Another urban respondent said that increased disillusionment in the marriage institution has led to relationships where men and women want children but are not willing to commit to a spouse – the recognition of agency, freedom of choice and availability of one's own resources are informing this stance.

There is also a tendency to prefer smaller families, focusing on the immediate family and current generations. This has meant the loss of guidance and support from the wider family on values, cultures and as a strong means to socialise children. Migration into other communities is another factor of change, in terms of family size, composition and interaction with the extended family.

Another kind of family is also emerging, where grandparents are responsible for the lives of their grandchildren.

Moral degeneration – A growing tendency towards sexual networking was also mentioned, with serial monogamy (women and men who have one partner after another), men with mistresses and informal polygamy. Increased infidelity and alcohol abuse leave children open to mistreatment and exploitation both within and outside the family . Promiscuity and alcoholism have led to growing numbers of neglected children. This in turn has resulted in the emergence of a mass of poorly educated job-seekers with a 'survival for the fittest' attitude, and a desire for quick financial gains at any cost, often referred to as the '*boda boda* culture'. Recent instances of child sacrifice, where children are kidnapped and killed for ritual offerings by witchdoctors promising wealth or other benefits, have also raised concerns amongst parents about the safety of children. Parents then restrict the space provided for their children to interact with communities and their peer.

Unguided children - Children are no longer the collective responsibility of the community. As one respondent in Metu mentioned, the attitude is '*instruct the one you gave birth to*'. This attitude, coupled with the inevitable difficulties of making a living for most people, translates into children left to their own devices even at times when guidance is crucial. Children on their part, seek various forms of support, responding to peer pressure and relying on the media for information and guidance. This is contributing to loose morals in society. Where guidance of children is still available at home, the community or environment in which they live still have much impact.

New World Order – One urban respondent asserted that the family is undergoing a cycle of change (just as religion, nation states and the world do) with the decline of the old and the emergence of a New World Order. It is therefore anticipated that efforts will have to be made to find new ways of doing things. In this process however, some of the original values will remain and the family will continue to be at the centre of this transformation. According to another respondent, it is not possible to solve Africa's problems without tackling problems within the family which is at the centre of leadership, decision making, collective child upbringing (*omwana akuzibwa kyaro*), health and food security. Issues of participation, consultation, negotiation, equality, and freedoms will need more emphasis than in the past.

Profession vs. parenting

Increasingly, parents spend more time on their careers, education and work-related relationships, and are too busy to spend time with their children, often sending them to boarding school at an early age. Parents also tend to pay more attention to their children's academic, material and health needs and less on character development. This then leaves the responsibility of grooming entirely in the hands of teachers, whereas schools often see their role in academic terms only, leaving a vacuum in respect to values and life skills. For the respondents in the villages, parenting challenges also stem from poverty and lack of time to spare. They have to balance their children's schooling and the useful labour the children can provide at home and in the fields. A parent in Moyo tries to accommodate this by ensuring that her child is not involved in such work during weekdays.

The extended family and emerging challenges

The extended family - In the local context, the concept of family includes the nucleus and the extended family. Thus, one urban respondent said he was discouraged as a child from asking questions about relations to avoid creating distance between relatives and possibly discrimination. All relatives were to be treated equally and where preferential treatment was necessary, children were informed. One could therefore have several fathers, *"tata omuto"* each accorded the same respect and with the same fatherly responsibilities.

The extended family provided spaces for sharing, learning, and passing down tradition - hence strengthening social networks, social protection and capital. According to one respondent, the extended family is founded on mutual dependence, where one party provides shelter, food, school fees, clothes, and medical care, and the other provides labour, looks after the home and young children, respects elders, and upholds family values. Another element of the extended family does not necessarily depend on the symbiotic relationship of provider and helper, but rather thrives on ascribed roles to relations, who are responsible for particular social and traditional functions concerning their kin and kith. Hence, when there is a family conflict, a particular set of 'uncles' is responsible to manage and resolve it; when there is a marriage, specific roles and responsibilities are prescribed for individuals on the basis of their relationships. For instance, amongst the Moru, a

respondent noted, *'a woman was assigned her brother-in-law to help her and address her issues, not her husband, although she may consult with the husband'*.

Emerging challenges – Changing values - While a number of respondents inherited their parents' generous disposition towards the extended family and continue to provide support, this was said to become increasingly difficult. Today, the extended family is overstretched by the increasing demands of overwhelming numbers of orphans, the result of HIV/AIDS and poverty. Relationships are no longer as reciprocal, but now rely more on one-way material and financial support. This changes the power dynamics in the extended family where one is no longer looked upon as a daughter/son but as a financial provider or recipient, significantly reducing the social value of these relationships. According to one respondent, the values of generosity and hospitality by the family members receiving support are replaced by jealousy, dishonesty and corruption. An interviewee cited the example of people living abroad who send money for investment to Uganda through their own immediate family members, money which is then 'diverted' to other uses.

Economic costs and benefits - The extended family is also increasingly perceived as expensive, restrictive and often providing limited added value. This might explain the emergence of new networks that are not based on kinship and occupy more space than the extended family, for instance, school associations (old girls / boys), Charity / Rotary clubs, workplace / profession-related associations – where meaningful friendships are established by virtue of spending more time together, thus leading to a re-evaluation of the extended family's importance.

Increasing individualism - According to one respondent, there is also a tendency to imitate western values of individualism. Typically, single-headed households make support to the extended family difficult, as parents struggle alone to support their immediate families. Families then tend to come together only occasionally, for instance for a funeral. The mushrooming children's homes and orphanages are an indication of the breakdown in social protection and networks within the cultural context. Where individuals feel obliged to support the extended family, material and financial support is provided, with very few willing to take on the responsibility of accommodating, grooming and socialising those in need.

Weakening social networks - Today parents are reluctant to allow their children to spend extended periods at their relatives' homes for fear of child abuse, and are also reluctant to receive relatives for fear of the same in their own homes, hence reducing the opportunities for exposure to others.

Generally, therefore, the Ugandan family is transiting from the collective to the nuclear, although both types remain interwoven with relationships with first cousins, nephews and nieces, and restricted to a couple of immediate generations rather than several generations back. The family however still provides an important space for nurturing values and though this has been weakened, it still holds the potential of being the most influential space in the formative years of children, as it is family guidance that will most often determine how individuals will respond to the other spaces they are exposed to.

Nevertheless, with increasing numbers of individuals left to construct their own identity in the absence of a supportive social system as a foundation, there is a likelihood that individual aspirations, lifestyles and worldviews will be so established and guarded, hence the move towards individualism that has so far been attributed to western influence. The relevance of pluralism in such a context will be brought to the fore: a new sense of self within the collective may be developed or the collective may have to redefine its boundaries to accommodate the evolving sense of community.

2.5   Spaces and drivers of pluralism in a family setting

Most respondents said pluralism should be holistically addressed in the family, schools, workplaces, cultural, religious and social spaces.

The (functional) family

All respondents agreed that responsible parents are key drivers in nurturing values in the family, although their roles and the concept of family is evolving and this process needs to be managed with support from various stakeholders. There is a need to review the requirements of good parenting in a modern era, to analyse and strike a balance between profession and parenting, to deliberately recreate spaces (the fireplace) to orient and groom children and avoid "signing in" in children's lives.

Schools (beyond academic performance)

A number of respondents also considered schools as important spaces where children are nurtured, especially schools that place equal emphasis on academic performance and non-academic growth. Youth spend a significant amount of their lives in a school environment and this impacts on their worldviews. Schools were also considered spaces where negative perspectives can be de-constructed, values inculcated, and diversity experienced in real terms. According to one respondent, however, the mainstream education system is programmed to a point that it does not allow creativity and freedom to construct one's identity. Nevertheless, teachers are key actors because, consciously or not, they communicate values that inform how students respond to their environment. Teachers often know the children better than their parents by virtue of the amount of time they spend with them and monitor their behaviour. Unfortunately, many of the teachers in schools today take up the profession as a last resort. Teachers then have a negative influence on children – verbally and physically abusing them, often leaving long lasting psychological scars and laying a foundation for intolerance and stereotyping. This points to the important nurturing role of families to make the most of the opportunities offered by schools, while preparing their children to withstand some of the negative influences that can be expected.

Cultural spaces (positive values and relevance)

Language is an important element through which values are communicated and nurtured. Proverbs, stories of traditional practices and ceremonies are useful tools to enhance the appreciation of identity and difference. Culturally knowledgeable people such as *ssengas* (aunts) and traditional healers can provide conducive spaces for socialisation, to appreciate different cultures and gain self-understanding.

Religious spaces

Religious centres are spaces for influence, as are programmes such as the initiative by the Uganda Joint Christian Council to promote values of child protection and parenting. While some religious centres and leaders have a strong influence on their congregations, their prayers are sometimes aggressive, on the verge of violence and may lead to indoctrination. Religious spaces in the rural areas are an important space for learning values and imparting tolerance. Religious leaders and communities are frequently identified as those who can support and mediate in family conflicts, supplementing the role of the extended family members, which is however still significant the rural communities, particularly during conflicts and ceremonies, as well as at the time of death.

The media

In the past two decades, the media (written word, music, film industry and electronic media) have developed significantly and are playing an important role in influencing perceptions, values and behaviour in Ugandan society. Children are increasingly exposed to this in the absence of attention from parents, placing the media in a good position to meet their social responsibility to project positive societal values that foster tolerance and social transformation. Currently, the mass media is quite money driven, this orientation determining the messages they disseminate and the values they promote.

In the rural areas, few of the respondents appreciated the positive influence of the media. It was recognised as an important socialising avenue, but often demonised as the avenue through which children learned and copied strange behaviours. Nevertheless, a positive aspect was information on

HIV/AIDS to the youth to deter them from making costly mistakes. Cinemas and 'foreign videos' were considered the hallmark of immorality and necessitated care so that children are kept away from them… since it '*corrupts their minds completely and turns them away from school*'.

Political leadership and role models

The fundamental responsibility of enhancing tolerance in society is vested in the State to attend to matters of culture, family values, national history and identity. The key drivers of pluralism in society therefore are leaders (political, technical, social, cultural) who hold influential positions and are able to articulate particular visions and ideologies. Currently, the most prominent role models in Ugandan society are musicians because they are visible and have a strong influence on people's perception of life, especially for the youth. Men and women who are celebrities in Uganda are regarded by many as heroes and heroines, regardless of their conduct.

According to one urban respondent, as the world gets smaller, it hosts citizenship that is not patriotic but rather driven by the power of money. People vote with money and not their conscience. Power lies in the hands of corporate brand values; consumed by self perception and preservation: *"What is trendy? How does the world see me?"*

The workplace

Exposure through sharing knowledge, training and learning events creates spaces for tolerance, challenging perceptions of the self and stereotypes about others. This allows individuals to recognize the ability of others and strive to excel. In the rural as well as urban areas, exposure to difference, to values and skills in managing diversity benefit the workplace, be it a separate space or part of the family space. The workplace is an important space where the skills of pluralism and the management of diversity are put to the test.

Exposure through travelling locally and internationally also fosters learning and enables people to appreciate others, and to become more accommodative of difference. It also increases one's network of friends, and triggers interest in exploring the other, which often influences one's outlook on the world.

External environment

According to one respondent, globalisation is a double edged sword – on the one hand exposing people to diversity, on the other destroying originality and creativity and laying a skewed ground for engagement where communities that are less technologically advanced are overwhelmed and influenced by others.

To sum up, there are various spaces and drivers, old and new, to enhance pluralism in the family environment, but all need to be reviewed in terms of their relevance in the current context. Different spaces provide various levels of exposure and appreciation of pluralism, but they need to be consciously linked to ensure a continuous process of reinforcement of the relevant values and principles. These need to be visible and lived through culture and religion (at home), schools, the workplace, media, as well as the practical examples of decisions and actions taken by role models and opinion leaders. In the local context, this may be difficult; the discussion about what is and what should be ideally therefore returns to the family as a point of reference and assurance. This in turn depends on its ethnic, cultural and religious roots and experiences, to inform how it relates to different and differing stimuli, all vying for attention and allegiance.

3. Conclusions and recommendations

3.1 Principles of pluralism in the family

From the onset, it was noted that a number of respondents, especially the urban-based, debated the concept of pluralism as one of Western persuasion, divorced from an African (or Ugandan) agenda. Pluralism has its roots in Western philosophy and thought, stemming from human identity and doctrine that promotes the individual and autonomous self. This, they noted, is contrary to the African concept of a family that is premised on collective identity. Some respondents were of the opinion that pluralism is a skill that can be learnt while a couple disagreed saying, *"Appreciating the other is a value. It is caught, not taught. It is not a skill that is learnt."*

We suggest here that an appreciation of 'the other' is indeed a value, a conscious choice that requires commitment and resilience in the face of perceived or real differences. Having said this, to promote this value, one needs to gain exposure to difference, be ready to compromise and negotiate and, if necessary establish boundaries, recognise the benefits and challenges presented by a given context. This requires willingness and self-confidence to engage with the other, without the fear of losing one's own cherished identity, which in turn requires a deep appreciation of 'self' in its entirety, delving into and appreciating the origins of one's values and their significance, and viewing them in relation to new knowledge. Such a process of exposure may involve learning new knowledge and skills which leads to the perception that pluralism is learnt.

The outcomes of this research indicate that some of the principles of pluralism as defined by Eck were met to varying degrees. Most families demonstrated tolerance in relation to religion and political affiliation, but there were limitations in respect to "*active seeking of understanding across lines of difference."* Families of mixed ethnicity or religion as well as polygamous families indicated a willingness to accommodate the other as different and a few attempts were made towards an *"energetic engagement with diversity"* witnessed in intermarriage, traditional initiation ritual into clans and learning different languages. With regard to *"the encounter of commitments"* that *"does not require us to leave our identities and our commitments behind",* this could in part be illustrated by that fact that, with the exception of Islam, in the urban areas, there was no indication of coercion to convert to a different religion, to adhere to a political affiliation or to speak a particular language (in respect to intermarriage). In the few instances where a conversion did take place, it was a matter of personal choice. Amongst the rural respondents, the *pressure of social expectation* played a part in leading to conversions amongst Christians, specifically on account of marriage. There were conversions too, between Christians and Muslims, which went both ways and, despite the expectation that conversions would be 'ordained' in favour of Islam, there was no evidence of coercion here, other than the same *pressure of social expectation*, which was not always succumbed to because some (women) were able to retain their religious identities. Nevertheless, part of the drive for religious pluralism is the ethnic construction and perceptions of gender roles and status, that often give a higher premium to the values of the male spouse.

In a country as diverse as Uganda, it may be useful to consider the acceptance and promotion of pluralism as an incremental process with a number of stages. In the local context, families deal with diverse sets of difference in respect to religion, ethnicity, social status and political affiliation. To manage this diversity, families must first acknowledge difference; accept and respect it and thereafter engage with it. The research findings suggest that many families are at the stage of acknowledging and accepting difference, with varying degrees of confidence, and of secure entrenchment in particular identities (religious, ethnic, political) influencing their willingness to participate in "the encounter of commitments" without the fear of being subsumed.

To recapitulate, all respondents identified forms of diversity in relation to ethnicity, religion, political affiliation or social status that impacted on their lives and continues to have impact on the lives of their children.Ethnic and religious identities were found to be the most significant sources of difference. Managing ethnic identity expressed itself through language, cultural practices (polygamy) and social relations. This required a degree of assimilation, an effort to understand and agree with the other, to seek commonalities, compromise and negotiate for inclusion. With regard to religious identity, uniformity was desired, although digression from the norm was tolerated. The findings also show that current family generations, especially in urban areas, with education and other forms of exposure, are more receptive to 'the other' and tolerant of diversity than earlier was the case, when

digression from commonly held values, in relation to power and social status, often resulted in a high degree of intolerance.

Secondly, the workplace offers opportunities for exposure to difference in respect to interpersonal relations, beliefs and ideology based on different ethnicity, religion, political affiliation and social status. In some organisations, practical steps were taken to manage diversity (policies and programmes). Exposure to new knowledge such as human rights (children and women's rights) influenced perceptions and attitudes of parents and family members. Organisational cultures also provided spaces for self expression in a multi-cultural context. In urban areas, it was at times challenging to bridge the distance between this and the home, while the proximity (or confluence) of the home with the workspace in rural areas made this connection easier.

With regard to the evolving notion of the family, a breakdown in traditional social systems was noted, resulting in poorly guided younger generations and dysfunctional families. Weakening social and cultural networks, alongside the emergence of "new families" with different values, perceptions and worldviews are challenging the relevance of the extended family, a main source of cultural orientation and inculcation of values in the recent past. Mbiti (1996) and Shorter (1998) emphasise the importance of the extended family in an ideal traditional setting, but this appears increasingly threatened in Uganda, where the value of extended family, especially amongst urban families, is waning, as is suggested by Otiso (2006). Meanwhile, dysfunctional family settings expose children to diverse upbringing which by default may trigger a desire to be accepted as different and therefore accept others who are different.

If the African definition of the family and identity emphasises collectivity as an important value, this research suggests that there are new emerging centres of collective identity outside the family setting that increasingly influence the self. With growing freedom of choice of association and the challenges faced by families mentioned above, the traditional value of collectivity and the need to conform to the "norm" are challenged, although the family remains an important point of reference in respect to all-important ethnic identity.

The findings thus concur with Mbiti's assertion that African societies are no longer the only source of reference and identity and that the search for new values, identity and security undermine traditional solidarity. Contrary to Nkemnkia (1999), the findings also reveal that while the individual may desire to retain a sense of collectivity, this may not necessarily be around the community or tribe only, but around new, emerging centres of organisation.

3.2   The family as a space for nurturing pluralism

While the family remains an important point of reference, source of identity and space for nurturing values, it is therefore evolving from old to new – where the latter demands participation, consultation, negotiation, equality and freedoms – principles that foster pluralism. The research suggests that this change needs to be efficiently managed to retain the benefits of the collective:

The value of parenthood – the responses obtained indicate that decisions made by parents regarding schooling, as well as freedom of choice and association, significantly impact on the individuals' future decisions in their social and professional lives. The pressures that families in the rural and urban areas have to contend with are similar, though different in intensity and magnitude; and are persistent. With changing circumstances, parents however need to re-evaluate their parenting role in the modern era, strike a compromise between this and their professional aspirations, going beyond being providers of material sustenance, to include providing key points of reference and assurance for their children. If not, they risk losing the valued position accorded to them in the Ugandan traditional context and will have to contend with being professionals and / or financial providers, with limited social relevance to their children.

Emerging spaces for growth – through formal education and occupations, new spaces and actors are filling the vacuum left by the traditional systems. On the one hand, these spaces offer new opportunities to interface with difference and new values are acquired that are attuned to an individual's professional or academic life. On the other hand, these changes increase the social distances within the family, further weakening traditional social networks. The added value of relatives, particularly in urban areas, is questioned, as individuals ascribe to values that may not necessarily be shared by their family. The spaces provided by intermarriages and the forced 'clash of ethnicities' due to migration, political conflict, displacement and mobility as a result of education and

economic progress, all have an impact in the rural areas and continue to nurture heightened interaction across lines of difference and diversity, opening up opportunities for tolerance and acceptance.

Freedom of choice to construct identity – increasingly dysfunctional and asymmetrical families, in towns and to a lesser degree rural areas, also provide opportunities for individuals to construct their own identity. Absentee parents, weak extended families, coupled with uncensored exposure to information and knowledge, on the one hand leave the individual with limited traditional points of reference. On the other hand, the individual has a wide range of values and principles to choose from that are relevant to the prevailing situation, resulting in a sense of self-determination that leads to individualism; individual choices nevertheless continuing to impact on the rest of the family. With more self-determined individuals, the "campaign" for individualism will be strengthened as the appeal for boundary-free identity grows and finds acceptance in the wider global context. The move towards individualism is happening amidst a palpable sense of loss of values that anchored families, but that retains relevance, particularly to rural families.

Having drawn the above conclusions, functional families, the household unit, and to some extent the extended family, probably remain the most suitable spaces for nurturing values, reinforced by cultural reference points. While there are new spaces that appear to be overtaking that afforded by the family, they tend to address goal-specific knowledge, skills and values, hence leaving grey areas and vacuums in terms of social skills, values and knowledge that are not addressed. The family therefore ideally provides basic and holistic principles that guide responses to all elements in an individual's environment. This guidance is often rooted in the tradition or experience of the extended family, with no other agenda than the holistic development of an individual. Thus, a functional family remains the most suitable space to nurture values that may later be reinforced in school or at work and that will provide the basis to deal with other values and experiences. Significant differences in the identity of parents, if well managed, expose children to the first-hand management of diversity, while families with a greater degree of commonality might reinforce commonly-held values of hospitality but would need to desist from reinforcing common prejudices. Significant ethnic differences in the community nurture another level of 'first-hand management' of diversity that reinforce the family's skills and capacities to engage with and manage diversity.

3.3   Recommendations

Revisit the concept of family – with a view of retaining the positive aspects and strengthen social protection and capital, development actors need to re-examine the role and responsibility of adults in grooming children and in providing relevant points of reference from which society can develop a basis for taking decisions.

Enhance knowledge on engaging with difference - formal and informal training and deliberate exposure to difference as well as knowledge and skills to manage difference are imperative. Children spend much time at school, where they have ample opportunity to engage with diversity (age, religion, ethnicity, social background). Educational programmes to inculcate values of appreciating and respecting others can easily be demonstrated and reinforced in the controlled environment of schools, thereby reinforcing the values that are promoted in the family or supporting children to develop values that may not be fostered in dysfunctional families

Enhance institutional competence – teachers first need to appreciate pluralism as a value and then demonstrate this through their relationship with students / pupils. Training in dealing with conflict, reconciliation and negotiation would enable teachers to anticipate challenges that may emerge as a result of difference. It would also equip them to identity ways to integrate activities that promote engagement across differences. Schools (and other development organisations) should be sensitive to diversity within themselves and establish specific policies to enhance intercultural/ religious/ nationality interactions.

Finally, *the use of informal spaces* such as the home, storytelling, family outings, family meetings and a child-friendly environment allows parents to observe their children's behaviour, to discuss and assess topics they find interesting or repugnant and how they relate to others. Religious principles are useful to guide tolerant and respectful engagement with difference. Deliberate exposure to the creative arts, other skills and sports also provides opportunities to compete and interact with a wide range of individuals, based on talent and competence rather than on the basis of one's ethnic or religious background.

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