'You are all my people'

Building disabled community in Uganda's

microentrepreneur economy

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For Patricia Katete

Declaration

This dissertation is the result of my own work and includes nothing which is the outcome of work done in collaboration except as declared in the Preface and specified in the text.

It is not substantially the same as any work that has already been submitted before for any degree or other qualification except as declared in the preface and specified in the text.

It does not exceed the prescribed word limit for the Archaeology and Anthropology Degree Committee.

Abstract – 'You are all my people': building disabled community in Uganda's microentrepreneur economy

Julia Keri Modern

In 1995 Uganda adopted a new Constitution mandating parliament and local councils to include disabled members, elected by registered disabled people in each community. Consequently, Uganda has an unusually institutionalised disability movement, with over 45,000 disabled councillors and, theoretically, disabled people's organisations in every village. The political position of 'disabled person' is closely tied to Uganda's governing party, the NRM, as a structural client, encouraging a form of 'quiet politics' aimed at fostering relationships to bring about future opportunities rather than approaching government or NGOs as citizens demanding rights. This thesis uses an ethnographic study (based on eighteen months of fieldwork) of a disabled women's organisation called DWG to investigate the effects in disabled people's lives. With a focus on the social determinants of obligation, it expands critically on anthropological literature treating dependence as a mode of political action.

DWG is based in a peri-urban market in Bunyoro, where the core members run small retail businesses. Members receive grants from government and NGO small business programmes, which form the overwhelming majority of support available to disabled people in Uganda. Through analysing the distribution of one grant, I detail the disciplinary effects produced: the programmes establish an idealised model of newly empowered (post-1995) disabled people as independent and self-sufficient. This advantages an elite group who present the desired financial behaviour, including some members of DWG. Disabled people who do not fit the behavioural expectations (particularly people living with mental health problems or intellectual disability) do not benefit.

However, DWG's operations are not fully determined by powerful infrastructure or actors. While entitlement to business funding is judged on economic performance, obligations accruing to relationships within the group are based on long-term togetherness, especially co-residence, giving the group a gendered historico-spatial specificity. Chapters 4-6 look at elements of DWG sociality that exceed the model of self-sufficient businesspeople. Even the

most financially successful members rely on long-term relationships providing care and (for deaf members) communication assistance based on linguistic community, repurposing disability movement-derived resources to foster them. In this space, obligations turn on what I call 'claims in relationship,' a concept that blends theoretical work on dependence, clientelism, and obligation.

My interlocutors use two diverging discourses. One, characterised by the word 'obulema' [disability] is closely associated with legal structures; its usage is largely restricted to the political disability community. The other, using the term 'abaceke' [weak people], is more widely used, forming part of a moral system of provisioning in which people who live together accrue mutual obligations in misfortune. In chapters 6 and 7 I look at the differential distribution of these discourses. The second can be more inclusive, allowing partial identification with those excluded from mainstream disability sociality (especially 'mad' people). However, because it relies on non-systematic personal connection, this group's challenges are not thereby fed into the infrastructure or funded activities of the disability movement. Chapter 7 looks at problematic interactions between the discourses, which impact on the most excluded during land disputes, in the context of industrial sugar farming.

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements

List of acronyms

CA   Constituent Assembly

CBO   Community-based Organisation

CDO   Community Development Officer

DAW   Deaf Awareness Week

DPO   Disabled People's Organisation

DWG   Disabled Women's Group (pseudonym)

IDPD   International Day of Persons with Disabilities

LC   Local Council

NEF   North European Foundation (pseudonym)

NRM   National Resistance Movement

NUDIPU   National Union of Disabled Persons of Uganda

PWDs   People With Disabilities

RUDDIPU   Rubuga District Disabled People's Union (pseudonym)

UNAD   Uganda National Association of the Deaf

USDC   Uganda Society for Disabled Children

UgSL   Ugandan Sign Language

UWEP   Uganda Women Entrepreneurship Programme

YLP   Youth Livelihood Programme

List of figures

List of key people

Core members of DWG

Alinaitwe   Chairperson of DWG. A wheelchair user, she lived in the 'railway cottages' collective with Jovia, Lidia, and Safia.

Esther   Secretary of DWG. A wheelchair user and elected Female Councillor for Disabled People at the LC4 (Municipal) level, she worked closely with her male counterpart Mugisa. She was assisted at home and in the market by her nieces Precious and Betty, and her sister Birungi.

Safia   Treasurer of DWG. A wheelchair user, she lived in the 'railway cottages' collective with Alinaitwe, Jovia, and Lidia. She was also the Chairperson of the community savings group *Tukolengane*.

Lidia   'Mobiliser' for DWG. Lidia was deaf and bilingual in UgSL and Runyoro. She lived in the 'railway cottages' collective with Alinaitwe, Jovia, and Safia. She was assisted in the market by Khadija and Basemera. She was also the Chairperson of Rubuga's Deaf Association and Secretary of the community savings group *Tukolengane*.

Alice   Core member of DWG. A wheelchair user, Alice formerly worked in the market as junior partner to Esther. She later set up her own business on a nearby side-street. She was assisted in her home and shop by her daughter Gift and nephew Byaruhanga.

Jovia   Founding member of DWG. A wheelchair user, she lived in the 'railway cottages' collective with Alinaitwe, Lidia, and Safia. Two of her children were sponsored by a small British NGO.

Khadija   A young deaf woman, who was a monolingual UgSL-user, Khadija was a more recent member of DWG. Because she worked in the market as a junior partner on Lidia's stall, she was nevertheless considered part of the core group. She was also a leader in Rubuga's Deaf Association.

Peripheral members of DWG

Akugiziibwe	A founder member of DWG, Akugiziibwe was no longer closely involved. She lived in a village outside Kicweka with her parents and two children, including her father Muhumuza. Akugiziibwe was described as a 'slow learner' and experienced periodic mental distress, as well as living with partial paralysis of one side of her body.
Alinda	Alinda was formally a member of DWG but was not closely involved with them and complained they had 'dropped' her. She was deaf, but did not know UgSL, and walked with crutches after an amputation. She lived in Kicweka, and her rent and children's school fees were paid by the same small British NGO that sponsored Jovia's children.
Harriet	Harriet joined DWG before they received funding from NEF. She walked with a stick due to impairment of one of her legs. She had a sub-prime stall in the Friday clothes market and also repaired clothes from her home. She was partially estranged from DWG due to a dispute over the NEF funding.

Other disabled people

Audrey	A visually-impaired woman who lived in a village near Rubuga. A land case was brought against her by her neighbours, and she was supported in the hearing by Mugisa, as a Councillor for Disabled People.
Atugonza	Atugonza lived in a village outside Kicweka and worked in Kicweka market doing odd jobs. He lived with untreated epilepsy, which had affected his intellectual capacity, and was often described as 'mad.'
Basemera	A young deaf woman, Basemera was learning UgSL. She worked as an assistant to Lidia on her market stall.

Mugisa	Elected Male Councillor for Disabled People at LC4 (Municipal) level, Mugisa worked closely with Esther. He also represented Audrey in her land case and mediated between Atugonza and his family.
Muhumuza	Akugiziibwe's father. He considered himself disabled after a bicycle accident permanently damaged his leg.
Nabila	A former member of DWG, Nabila walked with difficulty using a stick after surviving childhood polio. She had fallen out with DWG members and avoided places where they congregated, but still considered herself a disabled advocate.
Namutebi	A young deaf man, Namutebi was a monolingual UgSL-user and Lidia's rival for leadership of Rubuga's Deaf Association.

Civil servants and NGO staff

Baganyire ('the CDO')	The LC4 (Municipal) level Community Development Officer, Baganyire was committed to helping disabled people and worked closely with councillors Esther and Mugisa. He administered the Special Grant and UWEP at Municipal level.
Solomon	Solomon was the Ugandan manager of the small British NGO that sponsored Jovia's and Alinda's children.

Neighbours and friends of DWG members

Mama Karolin	A young woman, Mama Karolin was a tailor who worked at the stall next to Safia's in Kicweka market. She was a close friend of Safia and acted as a minor officer of the community savings group *Tukolengane*. She sometimes interpreted for deaf stallholders, using improvised gestures.
Felicite	Felicite worked from the stall next to Alice's shop, on a side road near Kicweka market. She lived in the same village as Atugonza, who called her 'sister' because of their friendship.

Introduction

At the heart of this thesis are seven women: Esther, Alinaitwe, Safia, Lidia, Jovia, Alice, and Khadija. These women make up the core membership of a disabled women's organisation called DWG, located in Kicweka market on the edge of Rubuga town in Bunyoro, western Uganda.[1] The women run small retail businesses in the market, and four members (Alinaitwe, Safia, Lidia, and Jovia) live in rented rooms directly alongside. The others rent nearby. The women belong to two 'impairment groups': Esther, Alinaitwe, Safia, Jovia, and Alice all use wheelchairs, while Lidia and Khadija are deaf.[2] All seven know some Ugandan Sign Language (UgSL); the two deaf members and three hearing members communicate fluently using it. This thesis considers how the women form a 'community' of disabled people, by which I mean a meaningful social grouping involving processes of identification and solidarity, and how the grouping interacts with other features of the market and town's social world. I open with an incident from market life illustrating disabled people's presence in the space.

One afternoon, I arrived in the market to find an atmosphere different to the torpor usual at that time of day. Safia, who is Treasurer of DWG and trades in basic groceries, was at her stall but without her goods displayed. She explained she had been forced to pack them away by officials who were collecting market dues. Safia did not have the 7,000 shillings' monthly payment (around £1.50), so they had tried to seize her goods, only agreeing not to when she started packing away. They instructed her not to trade until she paid the arrears, then moved on to another stall.

Half an hour later, a swell of noise erupted from the far end of the market. People near us hurried to see what was happening, including two young deaf women from Lidia's nearby stall, who ran past together, laughing. Safia, who uses a wheelchair, was seated on the raised table from which she sells her goods and had no quick way to join the rush. The noise

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[1] DWG, all personal names, and most place names are pseudonyms.

[2] In Euro-American scholarship, it is common to refer to 'Deaf people' using a capital 'D' to recognise them as a cultural and linguistic group. I do not adopt this convention because deaf identities are defined differently in Uganda, see chapter 5. (See also Friedner 2015: 12; Green 2015: 70.)

built and Safia began beating on a jerrican, providing a dramatic rhythm beneath the shouted alarm calls. Stallholders and customers shouted news to those who had stayed behind to guard the goods, and we heard there was a fight. As further news filtered through, particularly when the deaf women returned and explained in UgSL, we learned the officials had seized tools from Moses, a disabled cobbler, because he had not paid. He had attacked the security guard with his fists in response and narrowly escaped arrest.

As workers returned to their businesses after the commotion, small knots of people gathered around several stalls. The biggest was at Safia's, where the chairperson of DWG, Alinaitwe, loudly criticised the officials, pointing out that without his tools Moses had no chance of paying the tax. Esther, the group's secretary, agreed, although she kept her voice quiet, speaking just to me. Anger had been building for months about additional fees perceived as arbitrary, and over the next weeks the stallholders negotiated with management. Esther and Alinaitwe were prominent in this process, though taking very different roles. Alinaitwe drove conversations with neighbours within the market to ensure DWG members' interests were considered. Esther acted as an advocate for Moses toward the council, helping him retrieve his tools in her role as Councillor for Disabled People. This was despite his case being technically outside her jurisdiction;[3] and Moses, a man, not being a member of DWG. When I asked why she helped she said simply 'I am a leader.'

Uganda has an unusually elaborate and institutionalised 'disability rights movement,' which was substantially boosted by the National Resistance Movement (NRM) regime after President Museveni took power in 1986. NRM-sponsored legislation mandates reserved places for disabled parliamentarians and local councillors, who represent and are elected by local branches of the National Union of Disabled People of Uganda (NUDIPU) (Ahikire 2007: 52–3). When the Local Governments Act was implemented in 1998, 46,218 disabled people suddenly became councillors (Lwanga-Ntale 2003: 19); the number is far higher today. Most 1998 councillors had no prior experience of government or Disabled People's Organisations (DPOs) and no knowledge of NUDIPU, which was formerly a small urban organisation

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[3] The market is managed by the Division (LC3) council, while Esther was a councillor at Municipal (LC4) level. See Figure 1.

(Ndeezi 2004: 28). Most were consequently unclear what their role was (Lwanga-Ntale 2003: 14).

Despite widespread praise for the innovative system, evaluations have found limited practical benefits, which are concentrated among disabled people who were already better off (Aniyamuzaala 2012: 282; Barriga & Kwon 2010: 12; Busuulwa & Baguwemu 2009: 2–4; Kett & Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social development 2020: 117–118; Nalule 2012: 51; Omona et al. 2016). Beneficiaries are disproportionately male and urban, living with minor impairments, and high levels of education (Jezari 2012: 65; Lwanga-Ntale 2003: 14–5; Whyte & Muyinda 2007: 304–7; Yeo 2001: 25).

Existing accounts of the Ugandan disability movement focus mostly on governmental structures. Events in the market after Moses' tools were confiscated give a different sense of 'disabled community.' Formal representation is present and important, with Esther's crucial role in rescuing Moses' livelihood, but it is only one aspect of a more substantive sociality involving informal connections based on friendship, familiarity, and the linguistic community of UgSL-users (Owens & Torrance 2016: 32 also emphasize the role of 'informal institutions'). In the decades of NRM rule, DPOs have proliferated, both within the NUDIPU system[4] and outside it. Many disabled people (particularly in urban areas) are members of multiple DPOs. This has generated a complex social terrain containing rivalries and animosity as well as camaraderie and support.

There are strong affective ties between the core members of DWG, which are occasionally spoken about in kinship terms. However, several times during my fieldwork core members denied they were friends and instead emphasised the instrumental nature of their association. These moments arose when divisions within the 'disabled community' surfaced, for example while discussing disputes over external funding, or when Lidia claimed hearing members conceal opportunities from deaf members. Such moments brought into focus how political the 'community' was.

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[4] NUDIPU branches proliferated because of a dramatic increase in administrative districts (see Nakayi 2018: 5; Green 2010; Oloka-Onyango 2007: 6; Muriaas & Wang 2012: 327).

This thesis argues that 'disabled people' are summoned up as a particular kind of political subject in Uganda because of their association with the NRM. This subject position has a profound effect on their political and economic options, and on the features of the 'disabled community,' including who is excluded from it. I investigate the reasons for different groups' diverging levels of engagement with the community, in relation to the conceptual and practical infrastructure of disability institutions. I find that interventions to support disabled people create marginalisation of those who do not meet associated economic and behavioural standards, sometimes despite also living and working in the market area. Many of DWG's peripheral members[5] were thus affected. More absolute exclusion existed for people termed 'mad' or 'slow,'[6] who were not considered potential group members, despite Ugandan legislation setting out an expansive definition of disability that includes them.

Structural positioning did not, however, determine DWG members' political actions; rather, they are 'incorporated in multiple social, political and religious ways while finding positions to speak from via [their] disability' (Krause 2018: 289). DWG members drew on repertoires of connection and obligation based on neighbourhood, which mobilised the spatial and historical specificity of the group and could link some excluded disabled people temporarily with formal infrastructures. I investigate the grounds for effective 'working together' by disabled people in the market, tracing it to the deep social history developed through co-residence, a feature of the 'disability movement' that is overlooked in existing literature and institutional engagements with it.

Defining disability

At once analytical tool and ethnographic object, disability features multiply in this thesis. My analytical basis is that disability is a phenomenon of disadvantage emerging from the social and interactive constitution of body-mind configurations marked as 'deviating' from norms. This resembles the 'social model' of disability, which became dominant in disabled people's activism in the UK by the 1970s (Tremain 2005: 17), and distinguishes between 'impairment' and 'disability', with the former considered a condition of the body-mind, the latter

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[5] The full membership was around 20 people.

[6] These concepts are discussed in chapter 6.

produced by the interaction of that body-mind with the social and physical environment (Barnes 1997: 8; Hasler 1993: 281–2).[7]

However, critics of the 'social model' argue that in its instantiations (particularly in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), which heavily influenced Ugandan legislation) the separation between a 'natural,' inevitable phenomenon of impairment (which does not produce suffering) and a social and environmental phenomenon of disability (which does) strips impairment of social content (Meekosha & Soldatic 2011: 1392; Szántó 2019: 117–8; Tremain 2002: 33–4). This denies the social production of impairment in body-minds made amenable for debilitation through war, colonisation, or industrial production (Meekosha 2011: 674; Meekosha & Soldatic 2011: 1391–1392; Puar 2017). The strict dualism between impairment and disability also obscures bodily-mental aspects of suffering in disabled people's experience (for example pain, see Crow 1996; Shakespeare & Watson 2001: 12).

I therefore use the social model's basic insight, that people are 'disabled' through social mechanisms, not by the constitution of their body-minds alone, without rigorously distinguishing impairment and disability. The minimal content of my analytical definition is deliberate: disability is a historically situated subject position that has not existed in all times and places. If and how the term 'disability' becomes socially consequential and whether 'disabled people' form a meaningful collective are historical questions. In the Disability Studies tradition, the historical emergence of categorisation as 'disabled' is located in institutions such as 'asylums, income support programs, quality of life assessments, worker's compensation benefits…' in Euro-American settings (Tremain 2005, 5). Using Foucault's biopower, key works trace the development of statistical norms against which disabled people are judged 'defective' (Baynton 2008; see also McRuer 2006). The history of disability in Uganda includes the coercive importation of European ideas during the colonial period and is discussed fully below.

While the 'social model' is presented in universalistic terms, it developed in a specific setting, 1960s and 70s UK, in which its goals – 'independent living, productive work and

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[7] The 'social model' was developed in opposition to the 'medical model', which considered disability a 'problem' located in an individual's body (Shakespeare & Watson 2001: 11).

control over one's own life – did not constitute a rupture from mainstream values' (Szántó 2019: 210). Tsing argues that 'activism moves in "charismatic packages," allegorical modules that speak to the possibilities of making a cause heard' (Tsing 2005: 227). One such 'package' in Uganda is the association of disability organising with 'independent living,' which appears frequently in DPO materials (for example, Ajangi n.d.; National Union of Disabled Persons of Uganda (NUDIPU) 2014: 13–14, 18). However, the desirability of 'independent living' is often controversial outside Euro-America (Shuttleworth & Kasnitz 2006: 10–11; Staples & Mehrotra 2016: 41; Vatuk 1990: 68). Elite disability activists speak of 'independent living', but in Uganda most people 'rightly understand themselves to be living in a web of dependencies, and…strive to manage and foster the nurturing side of these dependencies' (Livingston 2005: 10).

'Disability' is a reductive term, grouping together experiences that are not always obviously similar through their relationship to standardised forms of work and productivity (via 'incapacity' for those standardised forms) (see Friedner & Weingarten 2019: 486). As a result, there are tensions within the category, which may be particularly prominent in Uganda where industrial work has never been the norm. Some tensions are explored in depth in this thesis, including those relating to impairment group, gender, and class. Because needs entailed by different impairments vary, the interests of sub-groups within the movement can conflict. I therefore look at the 'category work' of the general term disability (Friedner et al. 2018: 3) and the conflicts and disadvantages it creates, especially for deaf (chapter 5) and 'mad' (chapter 6) people.

The flagship Ugandan law on disability is the Persons with Disabilities Act 2019, which replaced an earlier 2006 version. While the legislative environment is commonly considered to adhere to the 'social model' (Millward et al. 2005: 166; Owens & Torrance 2016: 25), the Act is a hybrid, drawing on both social and medical models. It has a 'social model'-influenced overall definition[8] welded to a list of qualifying 'categories of disabilities'[9] (Kett & Ministry of

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[8] '"disability" means a substantial functional limitation of a person's daily life activities caused by physical, mental or sensory impairment and environment barriers, resulting in limited participation in society on equal basis with others' (see *The Persons with Disabilities Act* 2019 Par I, 1.1).

[9] The list includes examples of physical, sensory, and psychosocial conditions (see *The Persons with Disabilities Act* 2019, Schedule 3).

Gender, Labour and Social development 2020: 10; see also Busuulwa 2015: 17). In the next section, I trace the conceptual development of 'disability' in Uganda, locating the present hybrid concept in a differentiated field of actors and a history of multiple moments of (sometimes coerced) contact and borrowing.

Before moving on, I want to note that 'disability' is not the only way my interlocutors conceptualised the situations of people living with marked forms of body-mind difference. In chapters 6 and 7, I discuss an alternative nexus exemplified by the Runyoro terms 'omuceke' [weak person] and 'ebizibu' [problems]. In this discourse, obligations are entailed to 'weak' neighbours and family members. Assessing whether someone is an *omuceke* or has *ebizibu* is based on multiple factors including body-mind debility or difference, poverty, and isolation. Not every disabled person is *omuceke*: even if someone experiences bodily weakness or disability-related oppression, if they are well-connected and prosperous, they have 'amaani' [strength]. In other words, a person is assessed based on a contextualised view of their (potentially changeable) circumstances.

This recalls Whyte's description of the treatment of 'misfortune' in eastern Uganda, where the qualities of relationships are central to healing practices: 'Affliction is not seen as an individual matter' (Whyte 1997: 3, 60). A relational view of the person is central, producing *obligations in relationship*, attached to particular people, in stark contrast to the universalistic justice and rights-based approach of Ugandan and international legislation, NGOs, and many disability activists (see Gyekye 1997: 70; but also Onazi 2019: 130 on the potential compatibility of these approaches). This thesis considers the interplay of radically different idioms of obligation and rights, looking at why disabled people employ certain discourses in particular situations, the kinds of relationship produced, and the consequences for the actors.

Disability history in Uganda

People living with situations that could now be categorised 'disability,' including a blind king and a princess who could not walk, appear in early records of Ugandan oral tradition (Kagwa 1971: 22; Roscoe 2011: 218). However, there is no suggestion that people living with these different configurations of body-mind were considered to share a status. Such a grouping emerged after contact with Europeans. One of the first issues Apolo Kaggwa, Regent of

Buganda, raised during negotiations over the Buganda Agreement of 1900 (which formalised British rule) was exempting those who were old, sick, or living with 'physical deformity' from providing labour to the colonial government. In 1904, one chief exempted 3000 people on these grounds and was required to bring them to Kampala 'to prove their disability' (Hanson 2003: 182–3).

This development is suggestive of the welfare regimes developed to manage incapacity during the industrial revolution in Britain (Blackie & Turner 2018; Gleeson 1999). However, while Hanson uses the term 'disability' to describe the exemptions, Kaggwa and his sub-chiefs did not (Hanson's source is printed in Low 1971: 60). The negotiations suggest incapacity for work was a political priority, but Uganda never had a large industrial workforce so industrially produced impairment did not appear at a large scale. The exemptions were part of chiefs' generalised need to 'offer protection in order to retain followers' (Hanson 2003: 182). The coherence of those who were old, sick, or living with 'physical deformity' was an artefact of a particular demand, not a stable category.

'Disability' appears in correspondence by European doctors at Mengo Hospital by the 1930s (Stones 1939: 3). However, the colonial medical system did not treat 'disabled people' as a group. Most medical provision grew piecemeal, with early colonial priorities focused on venereal disease due to British stereotypes about the 'immorality' of Ugandans (Doyle 2006a: 151; Mulumba 2005: 122). Leprosy was also a concern (Vongsathorn 2012: 544); a 1933 memorandum notes its economic importance as a threat to exports and taxes (Broadbent & Downes-Shaw 1933). But 'disability' remained a British concept at this point, which could be applied to the situations of Ugandan people but did not refer to a socially significant group, even within government policy and welfare institutions.

Former MP for disabled women Safia Nalule dates the origin of the 'disability movement' in Uganda to 1952, 'when the Executive Director of the Royal Commonwealth Society for the Blind visited.' This visit led the colonial Legislative Assembly to establish the Uganda Foundation for the Blind (UFB) in 1954, and the first school for people with visual impairment in 1956 (Nalule 2012: 3). In 1959, the Buganda government donated land to the UFB to build a livelihoods training centre in Kireka, Kampala, and in 1963 (after independence), 'people with disabilities,' including deaf people and 'the physically

handicapped,' began to be trained there (Nalule 2012: 3). Under the first regime of President Milton Obote (1966-1971), disabled people were sometimes taken to rehabilitation centres unwillingly; Obote also created a campaign against polio, commenting 'let the state provide services for the disabled people' (Nalule 2012: 23).

Until the 1970s, all disability-related institutions were run by non-disabled people (Nalule 2012: vii). Organizations *of* disabled people run *by* disabled people appeared in the 1970s, echoing developments elsewhere, including the UK (Finkelstein 2001: 4; The British Council of Organisations of Disabled People (BCODP) 1997: 9). The Uganda National Association of the Blind (UNAB) was formed in 1970, and the Uganda National Association of the Deaf (UNAD) in 1973. Ambitions for a cross-disability organisation of disabled people first emerged around 1976 (Ndeezi 2004: 10). At the same time, multiple programmes on disability were being established around the country; records from Bunyoro first mention disability in 1974 (Ngabirano et al. 2015: 100).

The proposed cross-disability organisation, the National Union of Disabled People of Uganda (NUDIPU) was finally established in 1987 following the end of the 'Bush War' when Obote's second regime was overthrown and Museveni's NRM took control. During a meeting at the Kireka centre, 60 disabled people elected an interim committee for NUDIPU; the seventeen founding organisations included UNAB and UNAD as well as cross-disability organisations focusing on livelihoods (Nalule 2012: 5; Ndeezi 2004: 10–11). The UK-based NGO Oxfam funded a meeting in Mbarara in 1987, at which the first official board was elected. The meeting was opened by a government representative from Museveni's Ministry of Local Government (Ndeezi 2004: 12).

The founding of NUDIPU is remembered as transformative by 'disability movement' leaders (see Ndeezi 2004: 10; Nalule 2012: 6). Nalule argues it was possible because of the 'favorable political climate' for 'minorities' introduced by Museveni's NRM (Nalule 2012: 4). The NRM's political reforms started during the war, with the abolition of local chiefly authority and its replacement with democratic 'resistance councils' (RCs) involving every adult living in the designated area (Mamdani 1996: 201, 209). Higher councils were run by nine-person executives, with two places reserved for women and youth (Mamdani 1996: 209).

Although there is little information about the causes of the consolidation of women's political role (in the absence of strong gender policy and against entrenched male domination), the NRA leadership was 'bathed in global ideological influences' (Mamdani 1996: 207) and wanted to present itself to 'the international community' as 'committed to democracy' (Tamale 2018: 17). Disabled people were not paid particular attention by NRM structures prior to the 1987 founding of NUDIPU. However, the NRM had signalled change from former political structures, oriented toward 'the politics of inclusion and the language of representation' (Ahikire 2017: 195).

In 1986, the new government started reviewing the Constitution. The process was long, expensive, and skewed towards the interests of the NRM; nevertheless Tripp notes astounding popular engagement, especially from women (Oloka-Onyango 1995: 162; Tripp 2010: 162–3). The Constituent Assembly (CA), established in 1993, had the final say on drafting (Oloka-Onyango 1995: 168; Tripp 2010: 165), and NUDIPU successfully lobbied to represent disabled people (Nalule 2012: 4). Among the 286 members of the CA, 214 were directly elected in Uganda's districts and 74 were 'specially selected' to represent 'a cross-section of dominant political forces in Uganda' (Odoki 2001: 277). These included ten presidential appointees, ten representatives of the army (NRA), representatives of trade unions and the major political parties, youth and women's councils, and one NUDIPU representative (Tripp 2010: 165).

The inclusion of NUDIPU demonstrates the NRM's willingness to sponsor disabled people's infrastructure; however, with a single representative, disabled people could have been insignificant. Instead, the CA is remembered as a triumph, leading to recognition in the constitution, including provisions against discrimination and for affirmative action, and a clause committing the state to develop a sign language. (Ndeezi 2004: 23). Disabled people would also join the groups with special representation in parliament.

Feminist analysts of the CA have raised similar questions of how apparently progressive outcomes for women were achieved from relatively small representation. Tamale and Ahikire suggest women were able to create effective collaborations with others due to new infrastructure, including a Women's Caucus with support from foreign donors (Ahikire 2007: 80–85; Tamale 2018: 116–7). The historiography of the disability movement remembers the

CA similarly: NUDIPU's success is attributed to collaboration with women, because they 'are traditionally to be blamed for giving birth to children with disabilities' (Katsui 2020; Millward et al. 2005: 161).

Tamale argues the term 'Women's Caucus' is a 'misnomer' as it actually consists of 'the alliance of marginalized groups,' including disabled people, youth, and trade union representatives (Tamale 2018: 153). However, army representatives were also included in the Caucus (at least during the CA) (Muriaas & Wang 2012: 322). This points toward a different interpretation. Tripp claims the CA representatives of 'special interest groups' were 'institutionally beholden to the NRM for their positions' (Tripp 2010: 165; see also Oloka-Onyango 1995: 168). The members of the caucus are in similar positions because their constituencies were either almost entirely created *as political groups* (disabled people) or substantially boosted (women, youth, NRA) by the 1995 Constitution, and they remain marked by that political moment and its close association with the NRM.

This can be problematic, as Ahikire shows in her account of the response to a legal ruling opening the way for abolition of the special representatives: 'Social media platforms were awash with celebrations, for instance, referring to the affected MPs as a mere "vote bank" for the ruling party' (Ahikire 2017: 194). Katsui reports a disability activist telling her "The end of the NRM...can be the end of...NUDIPU" (Katsui 2020). Ahikire considers women, youth and disabled people to be a sub-group within the 'special interest groups', defined differently to army and worker representatives, as 'subjects for empowerment, training and special projects' (Ahikire 2017: 205, 214). Government provision for these groups shares distinctive characteristics, discussed in the next section.

Disability infrastructure at the sub-national level

Unlike other 'reserved places' systems, disability infrastructure in Uganda penetrates into local government (Virendrakumar et al. 2018: 526), which is where DWG members interacted most frequently with it. The most important structures for them were councillors for Disabled People and civil servants, especially in the Community Development Offices.[10]

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[10] The Council for Disability also has local government branches. My disabled interlocutors did not consider them a place to seek redress, despite the remit to 'inquire into any matter that violates the rights' of disabled

Local government in Uganda has five hierarchically organised levels. The names vary slightly depending on the status of the area (rural or urban, and, within urban, depending on size and status). In Rubuga the levels were (smallest to largest): Village (LC1), Ward or Parish (LC2), Division (LC3), Municipal (LC4), and District (LC5), see figure 1. Each level has either an elected chairperson and appointed advisory committee (LC1 and LC2) or a fully elected council making formal policy (LC3 to LC5). The three higher levels also have paid administrative staff.
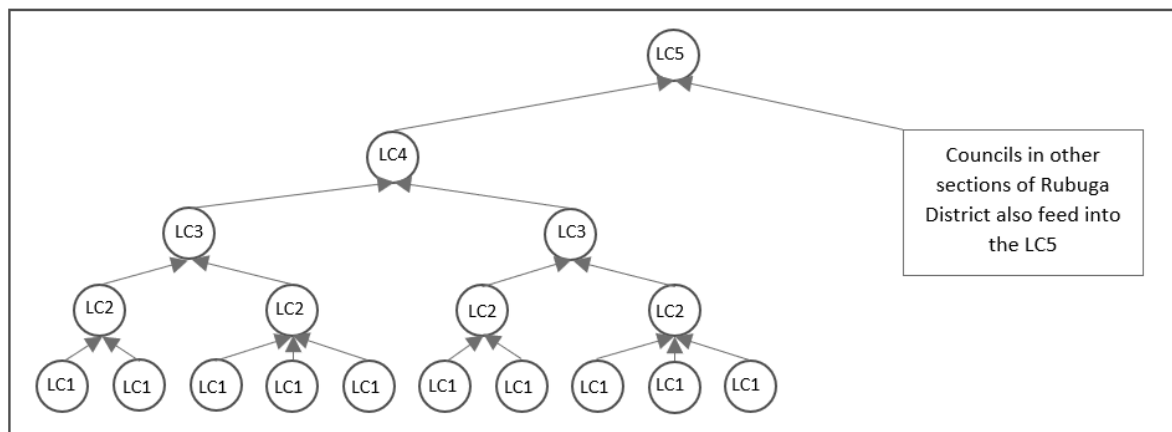
FIGURE 1: SCHEMATIC REPRESENTATION OF LOCAL COUNCIL TIERS IN RUBUGA. 'LC1' = VILLAGE COUNCILS. 'LC2' = WARD/PARISH COUNCILS. 'LC3' = DIVISION COUNCILS. 'LC4' = MUNICIPAL COUNCILS. 'LC5' = THE DISTRICT COUNCIL.

The Local Governments Act of 1997 stipulates each council from LC3 to LC5 include two representatives of disabled people, one of whom must be female. In Rubuga, these councillors were well-known, acting as sources of advice and advocacy for their constituents, particularly at LC4 and LC5 (see chapters 6 and 7); DWG's Secretary, Esther, was a councillor at LC4.[11] Lower-level councils do not have elected representatives, but co-opt the chairperson of the relevant level's NUDIPU section as 'Secretary for Persons with

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people (*National Council for Disability Act,* 2003, see part IV), possibly because they included non-disabled people, who sometimes made discriminatory comments during meetings. Consequently, it does not feature in this thesis.

[11] LC3 (Division) and LC5 (District) are structurally more important than other levels (Ahikire 2007: 51). In many places, particularly in rural areas, the others barely function (Jones 2009). Rubuga has municipal status at LC4. It received additional funding and staff to this level, which consequently was unusually active.

Disabilities Affairs' (see Local Governments Act, subsection 47(2)(j)). In practice these lower-level representatives were insignificant, particularly at LC2.

Civil servants responsible for social programmes were hugely significant for DWG members. At LC3-LC5, each area had a 'Community Development Officer' (CDO), a position originating in the colonial government apparatus (Snyder 2017: 247–8; Kark 2008) that had been adapted to the post-1995 system. The CDO was responsible for administering programmes targeting 'vulnerable' groups and advocating for them within government services. In practice, this meant those groups with 'special representation' on councils: women, youth, disabled people, and older people (a recent addition).

Relationships between CDOs and their 'target groups' vary. In Rubuga, disabled people had a strong partnership with the CDO at the LC4 (Municipal) level, who had started his career as a Rehabilitation Officer, responsible for assessing disabled people for assistive devices. This CDO, Baganyire, was well-known for his commitment to disabled people and sometimes criticised by other groups in the 'vulnerable' category for his focus on them. Baganyire worked closely with the municipal (LC4) councillors for disabled people and encouraged their strategy of working with other 'special representatives' (especially for women and older people) to push for increased budget allocations. Other levels within the hierarchy were not as engaged with disabled people; LC5 and LC3 councillors both described difficulties getting their civil servants to prioritise them.

Due to Baganyire's personal commitment to disabled people, the Municipal became a hub of strategizing for disability in Rubuga. However, the CDO's activities remained marginal within local government work. The Directorate of Gender and Community Services is consistently the 'least resourced' (Ahikire 2007: 75), and in 2006-7 the Community Services Directorate of the District Council in Rubuga had the highest percentage of unfilled positions (Galiwango 2008: 192–3): community services were a low priority. Even budgeted money may not be released (Ahikire 2007: 75), a problem exacerbated during my fieldwork by a new financial system which brought disbursement approval back within the Ministry of Finance, causing serious delays and uncertainty in payment that halted CDO services entirely for a while (the policy was justified as preventing corruption, but see Mamdani

1996: 214–6; Oloka-Onyango 2007: 35, on (re)centralisation as characteristic of later periods of Museveni's government).

Practical assistance for disabled people was limited to two things at Municipal level: attendance at national celebrations for International Day of Persons with Disabilities, held in a different district every year; and the 'Special Grant', which provided groups of disabled people small grants for individual small businesses; in 2016-17 a total of 8 million shillings [approximately £1525] was divided between four groups. The Special Grant was also offered at District level, where 20.6 million shillings [just under £4000] was allocated; this was 1700 shillings [33p] per capita for the approximately 12,000 disabled people in the district. Disabled councillors claimed if they requested additional funding they were told 'your budget is already there,' a problem also cited in previous research (Lwanga-Ntale 2003: 14).

The CDO's day-to-day work consisted almost entirely of administering a portfolio of special projects. This included the Youth Livelihood Programme (YLP), Uganda Women Entrepreneurship Programme (UWEP), and the 'Special Grant' for disabled people. Each is conceptualised as a one-off injection of capital to set up or expand an individual small business. For women and youth the programmes offer loans; only the provision for disabled people is a grant, a legacy of its 2010 introduction in a political settlement between the Ministry of Finance and MPs representing disabled people (Nalule 2012: 43–4). To qualify, applicants must form a Community Based Organisation (CBO) and register it with the council to which they plan to apply; Baganyire described this as becoming 'known' to the government.

Special Grant payments were small, usually around 200,000 UGX (£40).[12] Therefore, although the programme was conceived as a one-off intervention providing the basis for ongoing prosperity through self-employment, the capital it delivered was insufficient. Some members of DWG historically received the Special Grant multiple times as members of different groups, enabling their business to survive by gradually 'eating the capital' (see chapters 1 and 2) until the next grant. The result was striking duplication of CBOs, with most members of DWG belonging to several. Proliferating structures involved disabled women in

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[12] UWEP loans were bigger, around 550,000 UGX.

overlapping time-consuming bureaucratic activities, creating 'a burden of participation' that Ahikire believes 'diverts energies from meaningful associational life and political engagement' (Ahikire 2017: 206).

While money is technically allocated to the group, a small business must be specified for each member, with associated cost allocations. The paradoxical individualisation this effects was exemplified in 2018. Civil servants were directed to reach new recipients, so the Special Grant Committee removed individuals from applications if they had previously received the grant in another group. The supporters of one application objected that the committee had removed the only members experienced in bureaucratic processes and thereby left the group 'leaderless.'

The nature of grouping is central to this issue. Government and NGO structures conceptualise groups as agglomerations of individuals associating voluntarily on a model of equal exchange; therefore, the group is no more than its individual members and removing one would not change its character. Institutions employing this model target 'responsible well-being' (Chambers 1997): as one NGO staff member told me, they fund individual businesses because 'it is your idea, what matters…it is that thing that you think you are going to do that is going to change, to add value to your life.' These words echo what Bornstein describes as 'the Protestant discourse of individualism that speaks to a God-given potential for change,' supporting the noted tendency for 'development' interventions to foster individualism (Bornstein 2005: 119, 167).

Grouping in DPOs I investigated varied. Many did resemble opportunistic agglomerations of socially distant individuals. DWG did not: it was based on historically deep relationships between disabled women living and working together. In chapters 1, 2, and 3 I investigate the effect of the 'individualised' model of allocations[13] on DWG's internal dynamics, connecting the design of interventions to the production of exclusion. In chapters 4 to 6, I examine aspects of DWG sociality that exceeded the model of an agglomeration of individuals, drawing on other traditions to provide care, language assistance, and economic connection, based on neighbourhood.

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[13] This model was used by all major funders of DPOs during my fieldwork.

The interface with 'development'

While the representational architecture for disabled people and the DPO system underwriting it are specific to Uganda, forming CSOs to access resources is common across Africa since colonial times. It is contemporarily encouraged by overseas funders and often used by aid recipients to 'signal' alignment with modernist 'development' values, sometimes in the absence of actual material gains through the group (Von Bulow 1995: 6; Crewe & Harrison 1998: 170; Piot 2010: 145–6; Burke 1996: 58–9).

Formulating anti-poverty interventions as small grants or loans for businesses also draws on the concept of 'microfinance,' under which loans given to poor people for 'entrepreneurship' are expected to impact poverty levels. (Microfinance is a varied field, but this 'poverty-fighting' approach is usually credited to Muhammad Yunus and his Grameen Bank (Bateman & Chang 2012: 12).) The efficacy of the approach is now in doubt, but enthusiasm among policy-makers and advocates in the 1990s-2000s made it 'the most popular fad of the international development industry,' leading to rapidly increasing provision (Ghosh 2013: 1203; Duvendack & Maclean 2015: 203). Disability infrastructure in Uganda is marked by its historical origin, with the representational system established in 1995 and the 'special grant' introduced in 2010.[14]

Lazar argues participation in microfinance groups in Bolivia changed members' ways of associating: new members were initially assessed on social ties (whether they were 'known'), but over time the leaders began to judge applications on individual business plans and repayment potential (Lazar 2004: 307). The CDO's activities had the same sequential disciplinary form, conceptualised as changing the behaviour of the targeted vulnerable groups from an 'inactive' dependent state to 'active' independence. I draw on the 'temporal turn' in anthropology (Bear 2016: 488) to understand similarities between the two strands

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[14] Microfinance has been replaced as the leading development 'fad' by conditional cash transfers (Ghosh 2013: 1203). However, in Uganda, cash transfers are insignificant and the only scheme including disability among its eligibility criteria has been discontinued (Hickey & Bukenya 2016: 21; Livingstone 2018: 21; Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development 2015: 3).

of this strategy – establishing CSOs and funding entrepreneurship – which share an important conceptual feature: temporal orientation toward a (changed) future.

Although practices labelled 'development' vary and have changed over their history, this orientation is characteristic: 'Development cannot delink itself from the words with which it was formed – growth, evolution, maturation…The word always implies a favourable change, a step from the simple to the complex, from the inferior to the superior, from worse to better' (Esteva, quoted in Ziai 2015: 64; see also Crewe & Axelby 2013: 4–5). The CDO's language was similar. He spoke of the need to 'take a step' after training rather than 'just sit doing nothing' and to 'keep a group moving forward.' Only one directionality was acceptable: toward an improved future. When contingency arose – as people got sick, relationships broke down, and businesses failed – this movement 'backwards' caused conceptual and ethical problems (Whyte 2020 also notes disjunction between 'development project time' and 'life-time'; see Ginsburg & Rapp 2020: S12).

However, development temporalities do not always foster progressive concepts of time. Consternation about the unreliability of progress was also present in Rubuga, linked, as Piot argues, to the 'temporality of the NGO,' under which projects providing support come and go unpredictably, shifting under desires to be 'in time' to achieve international agreements (Piot 2010: 164; see also Igoe & Kelsall 2005: 2; Davidov & Nelson 2016: 5–6). This effect was compounded by the 'projectisation' of the Community Development Office, which made relationships with government also short-term and non-renewable.[15] Temporal orientations were differentially distributed among my interlocutors, depending on complex positionalities.

Piot relates the sense of 'crisis' he describes in Togo to the collapse of the linear developmental time fostered during Eyadéma's dictatorship (Piot 2010: 163–4). By contrast, the Ugandan state narrates Museveni's rise as a triumph ending decades of 'chaos' from civil war and spurring economic growth (Fisher 2014: 324; Reuss & Titeca 2017: 2350). This narrative was widely accepted, at least in southern areas less affected by continuing

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[15] Baganyire's commitment to disabled people made the municipal level a partial exception. However, he remained constrained by the projects he administered: the only ongoing support he could give was mentorship; funding was always one-off.

depredations from security forces, through the 1990s (Rubongoya 2007: 59), as the NRM introduced policies based on 'a Marxist version of linear modernization theory' (Karlström 2004: 606).

In Rubuga, a historically NRM-supporting area, it remains common, although challenges are increasing (especially among youth). The narrative of restoration supports a 'developmental' temporality much more easily than does 'crisis' (see Jean Comaroff & Comaroff 2001: 4–9; Guyer 2007: 409–10; Mbembe & Roitman 1995: 328), despite faltering economic growth and failure to improve living conditions. The developmental narrative can still conjure ambitious futures: I was told if I came back in a few years I would find Rubuga a 'city' with every street paved, because of the development coming from oil (see Hickey & Izama 2017: 171; Vokes 2012: 313 on 'inflated' expectations of resource distribution from Ugandan oil). As Ferguson argues, 'The loss of credulity toward narratives of social and economic development has occurred not universally, but in specific ways and in specific *places*' (Ferguson 2006: 182–3). I would add *for specific people*.

Among disabled people, using Museveni's rise to power as a historical anchor point is particularly common because of the close association between disability and the NRM regime. During interviews, most DWG members narrated their personal history using a temporal schema involving change caused by Museveni; a typical comment was 'Museveni saved us. Before the NRM we were abandoned in the villages.' (This schema is shared with central disability institutions, see Nalule 2012: 23.) Disabled people, especially politicians, were less likely than others to revise this assessment, even during the profound political disturbances related to the constitutional revision and *Togikwatako* movement in 2017-18.[16]

But the adoption of this dominant developmental time-map (Bear 2014: 15–17, 2016: 489–90) was uneven. In chapters 1, 2, and 3, I investigate its interaction with the *techne* of time in the market, identifying the ethical orientations produced and noting differences by generation, impairment type, and business success. The leadership of DWG, under constraint from funders' developmental time, judge members' ethical behaviour through their adherence to a future-oriented disciplinary time-map referred to as being 'active.'

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[16] 'Togikwatako,' a Luganda phrase translating 'Don't touch it [the Constitution],' was an opposition slogan that spread popularly around the country. (See Kiwuwa 2019: 23.)

Nevertheless, DWG itself has a different temporality. 'Project time' enables DWG's existence but disrupts the relationships central to its long-term functionality, which operate according to Whyte's 'life-time' rather than in rhythm with development apparatus. In chapters 4 to 6 I consider these longer-term relationships.

Disabled subjectivity and the question of dependence

Despite close ties between Ugandan disability institutions and international disability rights campaigns associated with 'North Atlantic institutional forms' (Trouillot 2003: 26), disabled people in Rubuga did not usually confront the state as citizens demanding rights. Rather, they were constructed, and constructed themselves, as 'Museveni's children.' Disabled people, along with other 'special interest groups,' are 'subjects for empowerment, training and special projects by government and CSOs' (Ahikire 2017: 205), tied to seemingly contradictory identifications as entrepreneur and client. As such, to claim to be a 'disabled person', or especially a 'disabled politician,' is to enter a nexus affecting subjectivity.

Ahikire argues the 'dominant posture' of women toward the regime is 'grateful sycophancy,' with 'the effect of emptying the women's movement of its agency' (Ahikire 2017: 197–8). Disabled politicians, however, considered their position one from which effective (although constrained) claims could be made, if they operated with skill. They did not wholly accept assertions that disabled people needed to move from dependent to independent positions. My theoretical approach must therefore account for political action within dependent positions, without seeing them as non-agentive. I seek to recognise elements of this political subjectivity experienced positively alongside those that felt negative, such as difficulty reconciling a sense of obligation with distaste for certain NRM policies. I therefore bring a burgeoning literature on 'claim-making' to bear on disabled people's situation, to understand how obligations and persons were constituted alongside each other.

Feminist and disability studies question the view that being dependent is inherently negative, noting the importance of interdependence to the human capacity to act (Kittay 1999: 58; Gibson et al. 2012: 1895). This is particularly clear in majority-world contexts, where 'independence' is not always crucial to adult status (Livingston 2005: 10; Vatuk 1990: 85) and concepts of agency frequently emphasise co-production (for example, LiPuma 1998:

58; Whyte 1998).[17] Interdependence is also relevant in societies that strongly emphasise autonomy, where alternative conceptualisations co-exist, pointing to elisions in the dominant view (Fine & Glendinning 2005: 605–607; Gibson et al. 2012: 1895; Kafer 2013: 83; Shakespeare 2000: 63–4).

However, feminist and disability-centred reconceptualisations of dependence do not generally focus on political action, instead considering social and physical dependence in care relationships. Theories of political action within disability-based campaigning remain focused on the rights-based individualised citizen (Das & Addlakha 2001: 511; Meyers 2019: 166),[18] even though the conceptual exclusion of domestic and kinship relations from the public domain is itself political (Okin 2013: 280–1). By contrast, in African studies, Ferguson attempts to 'de-pathologise' dependency in the politico-economic sphere (Ferguson 2013, 2015). Using historical analysis of the nineteenth century Ngoni state, he argues 'society was founded not on relations of exchange between liberal, transacting individuals, but on relations of dependence and respect among relational persons.' Claiming dependence on another was a 'mode of action' constituting freedom that 'came not from independence, but from a plurality of opportunities for dependence' (Ferguson 2013: 226).

While Ferguson starts from political analysis, his present-day examples are primarily analysed economically, and briefly. Ferguson ignores the political constitution of patterns of employment, treating the development of 'surplus populations' as a given (Nilsen 2021: 10–11; Rossi 2016: 575). Challenging the 'negative social connotation' of dependency is important, but replacing it with positive valuation is no better: dependencies are 'neither inherently negative or positive but becomings that we all move in and out of' (Gibson et al. 2012: 1894, 1897).

Ferguson is aware of this, acknowledging the 'dangers of patronage-based state forms' (Ferguson 2013: 238) and examining 'chauvinistic versions of distributive politics' in his 2015 book. As he writes, 'the task is not to eliminate dependence but to construct desirable forms of it. We still don't know what those are.' (Ferguson 2015: 60, 163) However,

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[17] Asad traces the 'sovereign, self-owning agent' of human rights discourses to changes in 'conceptual grammar' in the history of Western European states (Asad 2003: 25, 135).

[18] In the academic sphere this may be changing (see Meyers 2020; Szántó 2019).

rehabilitating dependence through 'mini-sketches' of situations gives no indication of differences between relationships and 'fails to explain the many circumstances in which dependence is in fact rejected by real-life individuals who are in a position to do so' (Rossi 2016: 577–578; see also Bolt 2013, 2016 on dependence and violence). Dependence must be reintegrated within a wider literature on claim-making, restoring connections with older work on political patronage, seen as a 'living *moral idiom*' with person-making effects (Piliavsky 2014: 4; Auyero 2001; see also Shore 2016, who argues re-integrating patronage brings in class and gender effects). This allows me to understand both the lived experience of dependence and its effects on aggregate.

Ferguson pays no attention to forms of hierarchy, consequently implying 'Africans are different, that they somehow 'like' distribution and dependence', which is particularly problematic in contexts of historical slavery (Rossi, 2016, p. 575). Bunyoro, where my study is located, resembles Ferguson's description of the Ngoni state. Segmentary lineage-based 'clans' were said to be conceptually the basis of Bunyoro society, either actually existing or having existed in the remote past (Beattie 1964: 28; Uzoigwe 1972: 428; see also Karugire 1971: 79 on Nkore). The earliest ethnographers argued Bunyoro was based on conquest and aristocratic distinction, with an autocratic kingship above a hierarchy of chiefs and a 'serf' class who were nevertheless free to choose who they served (Roscoe 1923: 8–9).

However, as Beattie and Uzoigwe recognise, the situation has always been more complex,[19] as it is in contemporary South Africa (Dawson & Fouksman 2020). Willis claims 'The English term clan…covertly imposes an externally defined idea of hierarchy and order onto the social constructs of the region,' which were always more fluid (Willis 1997: 587). Rather than mechanically reproducing a rigid hierarchy, Nyoro political thought unites three strands: 'obedience within a hierarchical structure,' 'powerful local egalitarianism,' and 'a moral charter of good governance' under which 'rulers…should govern with compassion and fairness as well as strength' (Doyle 2006a: 14).

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[19] Beattie notes the *Babito* aristocrats did not form a coherent social class in the 1950s, although he assumed they had previously (Beattie 1971: 95–100). Uzoigwe claims Bunyoro society was 'heterogenous' even in remote oral history (Uzoigwe 1972: 429).

Among DWG members, hierarchy was not always endorsed. Esther told me one leader was loved by all because he would sit on the ground with other disabled people, 'even he can eat from the same place.' By contrast, another potential leader was 'proud' and didn't associate with other disabled people. Esther's concept of a good leader does not reject hierarchy – his actions are positive because there *is* a distinction between him and other disabled people – but the good leader was considered rightfully superior because of how he acted, while the 'proud' man was resented and would not be followed. Ordinary members of DPOs were also criticised and ostracised for 'pride.'

Hierarchy was not given, it was judged continuously via moral conduct: was someone worthy of legitimate exception from 'local egalitarianism'? This judgment was never simple. Discussions of politico-economic dependence and patronage frequently describe 'chains of dependence' (Chabal & Daloz, 1999, p. 28) in which everyone is 'simultaneously a patron to those below and a client to those above them in society' (Swidler & Watkins, 2007, p. 151). But among DWG members, someone may be a patron in one sense and client in another within the same relationship, even at the same time (see chapter 4), and hierarchies can reverse in different settings. As in south India,

> The patron-client relation is not a stable arrangement or a freestanding phenomenon, but a normative formula. While the roles remain constant, the practical content of such relations alters ceaselessly and the actors are ever changing, often switching back and forth between the two roles, as suits their purposes. (Piliavsky 2014: 24)

Unlike Ferguson's paradigmatic example of contemporary dependence – unemployed Black South Africans asking his American friend to be their boss (Ferguson 2015: 142) – almost no-one relied primarily on a single patron. Where this did happen, as with some child sponsorship organisations (see chapter 3), the moral implications were distinctly different to most situations in Rubuga. The context to this difference was competition between general valuation of patronage and specific NGO-promoted narratives that *did* pathologise dependence in the way Ferguson describes, but this was an exception, not the rule.

'Chains of dependence' did not link pre-existing individuals in stable arrangements. In the context of 'relational personhood', people were formed in enactments of multiple

relationships involving mutual implication in the exigencies of the other's life (see Povinelli 2006: 85–88; for relational personhood in Africa, see John L. Comaroff & Comaroff 2001: 273–274; Gyekye 1997: 67; Jackson & Karp 1990: 19–20; Menkiti 1984: 176; Wiredu 1996: 158–160). In Rubuga, claims based on being dependent sit among a plethora of what I call 'claims-in-relationship.' Rather than dependence, the element integrating this concept is obligation, seen, as Englund suggests, not as external constraint but as constitutive of 'ethical subjectivity' (Englund 2008: 36; see also Butler 2012: 141).[20] A crucial constitutive relationship for DWG members was that with government, envisioned as either with Museveni as a 'father' or mediated through the CDO.

As political clients of the NRM, DWG members experienced obligation to be loyal. This was, in Englund's terms, 'existential.' Its force cannot be understood as an outcome of pragmatic self-interest, nor of following rules; it was 'a subjectively experienced involvement in relationships through which' disabled people appeared as capable political actors and adult members of their society (Englund 2008: 41). Because 'disability' as a status was so closely linked to the NRM, to identify as disabled in Rubuga was to be obligated to the state: it was difficult to be a 'disabled person' otherwise.[21] The obligations understood to belong to this 'type' of person consequently exerted a profound force on the self. Active 'disability movement' participants also generated reciprocal obligations on state functionaries, who had to give them special attention. This was widely acknowledged by local council leaders during my fieldwork (usually through a statement of identification with the NRM and its defining political changes).

However, the multiple relationships within which disabled people are constituted in Rubuga mean that, while one dependent relationship can have a huge impact on a person's self-conception and behaviour, it cannot circumscribe all possibilities for relating to others.

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[20] Ferguson's failure to focus on obligation causes difficulty recognising that some connections are *not* desired because the obligations involved could harm the relational self (see Neumark 2017: 2). Hence the overwhelming impression, despite his disavowals, that dependence is good.

[21] This may differ in Northern Uganda, which experienced war and oppression under the NRM. Research there describes constituents distrusting disabled politicians (Muyinda 2013: 177; Jezari 2012: 40).

Disabled politicians can therefore, despite their construction as political clients, have subtle and changing stances on other dependent and equal relationships.

In Bunyoro, mutually obligated relationships can be hierarchical, but they are as frequently relationships involving people with equal status. One example is the social norm Beattie glosses as 'neighbourliness' (behavioural obligations that arise from living together over time). Obligations to neighbours can be fundamental to livelihoods, particularly for the poorest families. These long-term connections make people 'of this place,' and mean they *should* socially engage each other: 'a man who lives apart from his fellows lays himself open to suspicion of sorcery,' especially within relationships understood to be equal (Beattie 1959: 83, 1963: 51–2). In this sense they are also 'existential.' They are often expressed through a language of being among 'one's 'own' people' (Beattie 1957: 333). This is an elastic concept deriving from kinship but going far beyond it to include claims to equality (between friends, clanspeople, Banyoro, 'fellow disabled people') *and* claims based on hierarchy (those of a junior kinsman, a political follower).

In this context, why treat subordinate relationships separately from others, as Ferguson does? Putting the emphasis so strongly on rehabilitating dependence means starting from the anti-dependence position of the stereotypical 'emancipatory liberal mind' Ferguson criticises (see Englund 2013).

The conduct of disability politics

The political subjectivity I have described profoundly affects the comportment of disabled people's politics in Rubuga, encouraging a 'civil' style.[22] Within the municipal council chamber, combative confrontations were common. Once during my fieldwork, a journalist was physically ejected from the meeting following violent threats from a councillor. Such tactics were usually employed by young men or the single opposition councillor, a woman who relished her role as a disruptive force. The councillors for disabled people and some other 'special interest groups' (women and older people) criticised this behaviour, labelling

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[22] My use of 'civil' should not be confused with Mamdani's, which refers to rule by legislation, associated with colonial urban governance. I draw from the moral-aesthetic concept of 'civility', without implying a civic context.

aggressive councillors 'mad.' Disabled councillors never used combative approaches, instead embracing a form of discourse Cooper describes as 'quiet,' in which speech conveys 'respect' by 'speaking in a good way, building, encouraging' (Cooper 2018: 675; Cooper is writing about young women in Kenya). During the ejection of the journalist, Esther told me (using the same words as Cooper's informants) 'I just kept quiet.' Although she raised her hand to speak during the subsequent motion, she quickly lowered it again as the dispute became more agitated.

'Quietness,' however, is not passivity. Rather than loudly asserting their views, disabled councillors might refuse to sit down, standing silent and dignified, until allowed to speak. Extending Bayat's 'quiet encroachment' (Bayat 2000), Sprengel defines 'quiet politics' as an approach that avoids explicit confrontation 'through the principles of humility, ambiguity, and *in*directness' (Sprengel 2020: 209). Most political interventions by disabled councillors happened outside the council chamber, where Esther and her male counterpart, Mugisa, worked to recruit powerful others to their cause, for example by including them in disabled people's social activities and celebrations. Esther explained 'sometimes in council we don't speak, and [the Secretary for Social Services] speaks for us,' therefore more effectively embodying the 'humble' and indirect approach suitable to their position as clients. When they wanted to question their allies' actions, they did so in private, in their offices.

'Civility' is an important value across many East African settings (Brisset-Foucault 2019: 162–190; Brown 2016: 601; Durham & Klaits 2002; Strong 2020: 114–5; Werbner 1999: 10–20; Whyte & Siu 2015). The features of 'civil' discourse include many that disabled councillors adopted, such as avoiding directly naming people accused of misconduct, especially if they were not present (Brisset-Foucault 2019: 180–1). Regarding Bunyole, in eastern Uganda, Whyte writes 'Courtesy implies formality and restraint…A dignified person does not shout at people, or show anger, or cruelty' (Whyte 1998: 157).

Two main explanations are given for the importance of civility. One looks at interdependence, invoking uncertainty. Whyte and Siu describe 'civil' behaviour from clients in health settings as an 'ethos of contingency' in which people 'keep quiet' to foster relationships for their future potentialities (Whyte & Siu 2015: 28). In the context of financial and population pressure in western Kenya, Shipton argues the potential future

need to borrow 'helps keep the social tenor and etiquette of the countryside as agreeable as it is' (Shipton 2007: 69). Civility is considered 'practical wisdom,' etymologically linked to 'politic behaviour,' as an 'interactive performance' of self-restraint (Whyte 2002: 182; Jackson 1998: 12).

The second explanation, which is class-based, is seen predominantly in research on Uganda. Civility is described similarly, though not identically: discussing 'ebimeeza' (open fora for political debate, broadcast by radio in the 2000s), Brisset-Foucault describes 'civil' speech as based on 'self-control, academic excellence, and politeness' (Brisset-Foucault 2019: 164). This etiquette derives from a dual heritage of Baganda elite sociality and British upper-class practices, which substantially coincided during the colonial period (Brisset-Foucault 2019: 185; Summers 2006: 743–745). Colonial British and Baganda elites stressed the similarities to distinguish Buganda as more 'developed' than the rest of East Africa (Peterson 2012: 82–85). Though many participants in *ebimeeza* were not from the Baganda elite, they shared a 'desire to be extricated from the masses' through distinction as more 'civilized' (Brisset-Foucault 2013: 185, 191). Here, civility works as an exclusive mark of status with a hierarchising effect.

Both motivations influenced my interlocutors. Esther 'kept quiet' when other councillors demanded the Town Clerk be sacked because 'I might find him somewhere else' in the future. Disabled councillors relied on the good will of council staff to maintain sufficient budgets for the Special Grant. Openly questioning performance, as one District-level councillor claimed to do, was risky and never happened at Municipal level, where relationships with key staff were good. Behaviour at the Municipal resembled Whyte and Siu's concern for the contingent future – a mode they associate with hierarchical relationships with government workers.

But disabled councillors also stressed their 'professional' status, claiming equality to salaried civil servants despite being paid only 'allowances.'[23] Ahikire argues council elections are class-based; to be successful, candidates must be 'teachers, traders or retired civil servants,' healthworkers, or 'wives of church or other opinion leaders' (Ahikire 2007: 110). Disabled

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[23] Salaried status is a common aspiration in east Africa. It is called ('with unintentional irony') 'working class,' (Lockwood 2019: 1187) and associated with the state.

councillors were usually among the poorest within their councils and had particular reason to uphold standards of etiquette confirming their status. Establishing oneself as a particular type of person is a powerful motivation for 'civil' behaviour, which, although it involves the 'self-restraint' and calculation of the contingency model, also demonstrates identification of civility as a moral good.

Civility does not banish conflict from Ugandan society; quarrels were common in the market and generally viewed as entertainment (as was Moses' fight, described in the opening section). My interlocutors presented argumentativeness as characteristic of 'us', defined as 'Africans' or 'Banyoro,' with Esther often remarking 'we are bad,' sometimes with a gleeful chuckle. *Amagezi* [cleverness] is valued alongside civility, and can be celebrated even in its socially destructive forms of 'cunning' or cheating, with 'grudging respect for a vice that is only a virtue in excess', especially when those 'tricked' are more powerful than the perpetrator (Whyte 1998: 157; Zoanni 2020: 4). The 'civil' style is not universal, even in disability politics, despite its dominance there. As Englund writes, 'the analytical task is to discern the contexts in which one register of speech was more appropriate than another' (Englund 2018: 9).

In chapter 2, I describe a rupture within DWG, during which a member left the group because of disagreements about policy and political aesthetics. The member who left, Nabila, contrasted her behaviour to other disabled leaders in Rubuga (especially at District level), who she said did not help constituents. In contrast, she 'fights' for disabled people: 'I don't fear.' Nabila demanded exact details of financial arrangements, shouted at political leaders, and named those she suspected of 'corruption' to third parties. However, what Nabila considered 'truth telling' others described as 'rudeness.' When she stood for election as councillor for disabled people and received no votes, she was offended and alleged corruption. Esther explained: 'people were saying if she goes to the LC5 [District Council] she will embarrass [Disabled people].' The concern with status involved in 'civil politics' means its imperatives are greater higher in the hierarchy of local government. At LC5, the need for disabled councillors to act in accordance with their status – as professionals and as clients – seemed absolute.

I understand this event as part of an ongoing conversation within the 'disability movement.' When apprehended as going beyond the formal representative structure, this is a plural space where disagreements can occur about desirable types of relationship and the forms of comportment that foster them, even while one interpretation is dominant. This is a question of 'political aesthetics,' where aesthetics are 'a delimitation of spaces and times, of the visible and the invisible, of speech and noise, that simultaneously determines the place and the stakes of politics as a form of experience' (Rancière 2013; see Nielsen 2017: 139), or, as Englund puts it, 'the form that various artifacts of human creativity have to take in order to have an effect' (Englund 2011: 182). Under the conditions of the political disability movement, the 'tacit agreement of how collective struggle ought to be conveyed' (Jolaosho 2015: 444) emphasises civility and humility, rather than making 'claims in a direct and confrontational fashion' (Englund 2015: 143).

However, politics draws on many sources even under elite dominance. Nabila attributed her manner to being trained as a legal representative for disabled people by an international NGO in the 2000s. Klaits argues that in postcoloniality, constant negotiation of the common good and political accountability is invoked because concepts of society draw on diverse sources, including ideas about interdependence and liberal individualism (Klaits 2005: 652–4). Identifying as disabled in Rubuga delimits political options by tying the self to the NRM as a client, but it also offers other connections, including to entrepreneurship and its individualising effects. The divergent personhood of disabled politicians draws on 'seemingly opposing political principles' (Nielsen 2017: 140), held together through the aesthetic of 'keeping quiet'. The phrase's emphasis on discipline and self-restraint applies equally, although differently, to the non-confrontational politician and the parsimonious businessperson, who must both distinguish themselves through self-control.

The coloniality of disability

Official histories of the Ugandan disability movement locate its beginnings in the 1950s visit of the Director of the Royal Commonwealth Society for the Blind (Nalule 2012: 3). This has implications for the relationship between disability and race. When I asked Nabila if support for disabled people in Uganda was sufficient, she replied: 'Somehow. We were very very very very backwards, but at least now we are somehow ok. Before it was worse.' Asked

what accounted for this change, she replied: NUDIPU 'sponsor people from outside[24] to come and teach us…to make accountability…how to…have a business…fighting for the rights of Persons with Disability.'

Although this view is not universal throughout the disability movement (see for example Adoch & Kankunda 2009: 51, 58), it was predominant in Rubuga, along with a pervasive sense things were better for disabled people elsewhere, especially Europe or North America (Kim cites similar views in South Korea (Kim 2011: 94, 100)). When a (visibly) disabled friend from the UK came to visit me during fieldwork, market workers were surprised, saying they had thought there were no disabled people in the UK because 'abajungu bain'amagezi gaingi' [white people are very clever] and could 'fix' anything. Nabila's and the market workers' comments fit the 'basic structure' of modernist development discourses: 'the division of the world into a progressive, superior part and a backward, inferior part' (Ziai 2015: 33). Quijano argues this temporal orientation originated in the colonisation of America but continues to structure epistemologies of post-colonial societies (Quijano 2000: 220–1, 231; see also Chakrabarty 2008: 37–42).

Disability is implicated in maintaining this structure: Szántó and Ingstad argue NGO 'project language' portrays disabled people (in Sierra Leone and Botswana respectively) 'living in a state of utter misery and neglect' (Ingstad 1995: 246). Their societies are 'depicted as a backward, almost barbarian social world lacking the virtues of empathy and solidarity' (Szántó 2019: 186; see also Meyers 2019: 163–4). Similar language is used about Uganda, for example, an NGO webpage prominently features a quote from 'Beatrice, Disability Activist, Uganda': 'Because of societal practices, disabled people are considered to be very inferior. They are looked at like people who are nobody.'

Conversely, positive treatment of disabled people is mobilised as 'nationalist propaganda': while the USA uses the Americans with Disabilities Act to portray itself as a global moral leader, China and South Korea launched major disability-related public relations campaigns while hosting the Olympics. Kim cites a newspaper article published before the Beijing Olympics: 'Caring for the disabled is a sign of social progress…It showcases the country's

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[24] In Ugandan English, 'outside' denotes something from beyond the speaker's community, usually the Ugandan nation, and implies hierarchy: things and people from 'outside' have higher status.

vowed respect to human rights' (Kim 2011: 98–9; see also Kohrman 2003: 220). For Uganda, with a population acutely aware of its categorisation as a 'least developed country,' this schema reinforces an internalised sense of 'backwardness' (on internalisation of colonial values, see Fanon 2008; Ngũgĩ 1986; Ziai 2015: 31; but note Pierre 2013: 114–122 argues such values are both affirmed and contested).

Ingstad suggests the pathetic image is created to evoke 'sympathy' and raise funds. While this is likely, reducing the phenomenon to the disingenuity of NGOs is inadequate. DWG members were just as likely to produce this language as NGO staff, and even the market vendors, who were not associated with the 'disability movement,' considered disability an 'African' problem. The issue runs deeper than misrepresentation by NGOs, even though the 'gloomy' picture of disabled lives is unequivocally discordant with the experiences of actual research interlocutors, including mine.

Occasionally, the 'other places' where my interlocutors claimed things were better were elsewhere in Uganda. After Moses' tools were confiscated, as described at the beginning of this introduction, he told me local authorities in 'other Districts' provided disabled people with dedicated spaces and equipment for work (as far as I know, this is not the case). By contrast, in Rubuga, the council was corrupt and 'ate' the money intended for disabled people. Here it is 'the local' that is presented as deficient in comparison to an unspecified – potentially national – norm.

Claims that disabled people in 'local' places are worse off than elsewhere can be strategic moves aimed at securing improvements (see Krause 2018: 292–3). Moses' statement resembles the creation of imagined utopias in other nations that Kim describes among disabled Korean activists, which were 'intentional political strategies' of aspiration (Valentine & Hassoun 2019: 249). However, literature on utopias interprets them as 'valuative processes' involving a 'form of attunement…oriented to the hope, desire, and belief in the possibility of other, better worlds' (Sliwinski 2016: 433; Davina Cooper 2014: 3). The relationship between hope and critique has different evaluative outcomes for Moses. He did not seem to aspire to a better future, instead using utopian thinking about 'elsewhere' to express the abjection of 'here' in the present, along with anger toward the council.

This narrative has purchase because it is coherent with the epistemological experience of post-coloniality inflected through structures of indirect rule. According to Mamdani, countries formerly ruled by the British inherited a 'bifurcated state,' with rural peoples largely governed through 'customary rule' and urban elites under 'civil rule' (Mamdani 1996: 23, 298).[25] What was 'customary' was, at base, what the local chief said it was (Mamdani 1996: xiii). Customary rule was therefore multiple and those subject to it were 'Forcibly locked within…a localized ethnicity' and, 'with prominent exceptions, had to articulate…needs in local terms' (Pierre 2013: 36; Mamdani 1996: 51). In contemporary Ugandan idiom, 'local' is frequently contrasted with 'civility and modernity' (Brisset-Foucault 2019: 188).

NGO discourses about disability in Africa foreground societal 'attitudes' as the source of the problem, consequently obscuring questions of 'social setting' such as health systems: 'in this framework negative attitudes are unequivocally attached to 'traditional beliefs' which are set in contrast to appropriate 'modern views'' (Ingstad 1995: 246, 252; Szántó 2019: 188; see also Meyers 2019: 163–4). Narratives from Ugandan activists are similar: 'in our traditional governance systems, because disability was believed to be a curse or a result of annoying certain gods, pwds [sic] were regarded as sub human beings' (Nalule 2012: 24). With 'traditional' or 'customary' systems identified as 'the problem' for disabled people and strongly associated with 'local' settings, Moses' belief things are better elsewhere and Nabila's assertion positive change came from 'outside' seem obvious.

Like the Black nationalist movements Pierre describes, disabled activists experience 'ambivalent and unresolved tensions with the "customary" [which] result…in the inability to address and dismiss the structures of White power and privilege' (Pierre 2013: 34–5). When only knowledge from 'outside' is valued, it is difficult to consider 'local' disability activists experts, even when the actors involved profess commitment to the slogan 'nothing about us without us,' which proclaims disabled people should lead all decisions affecting them.[26]

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[25] Mamdani stresses the structure was never absolute and gives examples of its postcolonial adaptation (Mamdani 1996: xiv–xv, 8, 215).

[26] The phrase was popularised by Charlton, who heard it from disability activists at a conference in South Africa (Charlton 1998: 3). International NGOs, including those working in Rubuga, profess commitment to it.

In chapter 5, I describe the ranking of 'expertise' in sign language interpretation. The connection with race was obvious in how I, as a White British woman, was treated: I was accepted unquestioningly as a sign language interpreter, where the more experienced DWG members were rejected. This experience arises from a structural international phenomenon. Kothari quotes a Black development worker in Zimbabwe: 'People listen if you are white, they think you are more competent' (Kothari 2006: 16; see also Pierre 2013: 86). Pierre argues assumptions of 'White merit' are intimately linked to the legacy of indirect rule and the related association of Whiteness with 'modernity and technological advancement' (Pierre 2013: 85). As a result, the vital role of locality I identify in disabled community – including relationships of neighbourhood, care, and linguistic community – disappears behind state and NGO technical interventions associated with 'modern' forms. In this thesis, I focus instead on the emplaced specificity of Kicweka's disabled community.

Methodology

This thesis is based on eighteen months of fieldwork, carried out between 2017 and 2019, preceded by short visits in 2013, 2015, and 2016. My first visit raised interest because DWG differed from descriptions in existing literature: it was run entirely by women; two of its three officers had no formal education; and its members represented several impairment groups, including deaf people, who are often excluded from 'mainstream' DPOs (compare Whyte & Muyinda 2007; Yeo 2001).

Most literature on the post-1995 disability sector takes a geographically broad survey-based approach and/or focuses on governmental structures such as NUDIPU or councillors for disabled people (Abimanyi-Ochom & Mannan 2014; Blackler 2008; Katsui 2020; Lang & Murangira 2009; Lwanga-Ntale 2003; Omona et al. 2017; Owens & Torrance 2016).[27] These studies give little insight into the lived experience of most people participating in disability organising. Small-scale DPOs have proliferated outside the NUDIPU system due to the Special Grant's requirement to register as CBOs. Much of ordinary members' engagement

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[27] There are some exceptions, including Schuler and Muyinda on refugee and IDP camps (Schuler 2020; Muyinda 2013). An article by Whyte and Muyinda looks at a local DPO but is limited by its length (Whyte & Muyinda 2007).

with disability infrastructure is through these organisations. I therefore wanted to provide a detailed view, not across the whole disability sector, but *from* a non-governmental DPO.

My early visits showed that Kicweka market, in a dense low-income neighbourhood on the outskirts of Rubuga, was a key location. It was where the core group of members spent every day, working at their stalls. DWG meetings were held there and the CDO visited frequently, as did disabled people who wanted help from Esther as a councillor. Deaf people gathered at Lidia's shop. Kicweka market was a centre of gravity for disabled people from across Rubuga. Much of my fieldwork was therefore spent in the market, working alongside the group members at their stalls and joining meetings held there.

I lived next door to Esther, a short walk from the market, and ate as a member of her household, often discussing my emerging findings with her in the evenings. I interacted with family of DWG members, neighbouring stallholders, and domestic neighbours, and could therefore observe relationships of friendship and practical care between disabled and non-disabled people. I also witnessed rivalries and exclusions in the market, noting who was *not* drawn within the DWG sociality centring on Safia, Lidia, and Esther's stalls. The market and surrounding streets offered my research a grounding point and insight into daily activities of a large pool of disabled people.

I broadened my focus in four ways. First, I followed DWG members out of the market. I travelled to source trade goods, including to Kampala, and accompanied DWG members to regular government and NGO meetings in Rubuga, as well as national celebrations for disabled and deaf people. I visited DWG's main funder in Kampala with Esther and Lidia. I accompanied Esther to council meetings, and on council-related travel. I visited DWG members' families with them, travelling to other Districts with members who were migrants.

Secondly, I identified other people in the market who fit the Ugandan government's definition of disability but were not members of DPOs, notably men (and occasionally women) considered 'mad'. I traced the presence and/or absence of relationships they had with DWG members, as well as interviewing them, their family members, neighbours, and friends. I could not join the work of these people as a participant observer (attempting to do

so inhibited their casual 'employers'), so, with their agreement, I observed their interactions from a distance.

Thirdly, I traced DWG members who were not regularly in the market, who were often peripheral to the group's workings. I spent periods staying with two members of DWG in villages outside Kicweka. Both women lived with physical impairment but were also sometimes categorised as experiencing psychosocial disability. I participated in their daily routines and interviewed them, their family members, and neighbours. After these intensive periods, I regularly visited their homes and joined them at meetings.

Finally, I spent short periods as a participant observer in institutions, including the Municipal Community Development Office and the office of the main INGO providing business training to disabled people in Rubuga, followed by regular visits and attendance at their events. My participant observation was supplemented by 136 formal interviews during fieldwork and 5 telephone interviews after returning to the UK.

Because of the 'emplaced' nature of my fieldwork, I have more data on some groups than others. DWG lacks members living with severe visual impairment, even among the peripheral membership. Two factors influence this: DWG's association with market work, which requires vigilance for thieves; and competition with the Blind Association, which is the best funded DPO in Rubuga, offering a more appealing 'home' to people with visual impairment. My information about the experience of visual impairment comes from the male councillor for disabled people and his constituents.

I did not meet adults living with extensive cognitive impairment, although some children with conditions involving cognitive and physical impairment attended workshops organised by USDC. It is unsurprising there were no DPO members living with these impairments (because of the focus on capitalist small businesses), but it is unexpected that there seemed to be either no adults with these conditions at all in Kicweka, or they were so isolated I did not hear about them, despite my widely known interest in disability. I suspect these adults were cared for 'in the village,' which is cheaper than urban areas, or in the few existing residential institutions (see Zoanni 2018). They were utterly absent from DPOs in Rubuga.

My association with DWG was an asset, allowing entry to settings that would otherwise have been difficult and enabling intimacy arising from trust. However, it also inhibited some areas of research. The account I give is deliberately a view *from* DWG, but other disability activists in Rubuga receive less attention. Historical disagreements and political rivalries made it difficult to access some actors at all, especially at District level, while others sanitised what they told me. The rancour between DWG and Nabila was at its height during my fieldwork, and she avoided areas frequented by members. I therefore could not thoroughly investigate her approach to disability politics, although she always welcomed me at her home.

My position as a White British woman living in a poor Ugandan neighbourhood impacted my fieldwork experience and hence this thesis. The combination of gendered and raced characteristics allowed me access to intimate female spaces and loaned me unearned official status enabling my presence at some male-dominated events such as council meetings. It also prevented me accessing other spaces. I have little to say about young men, as the social and sexual dynamics of spaces where they gathered placed them off-limits for me.

'Informed consent' processes with people living with mental distress or cognitive impairment are complex (Abell et al. 2007; Addlakha 2005; Coons & Watson 2013; Nind 2008; University Research Ethics Committee c2011; Wong et al. 2000). My approach involved repeating and reformulating information in multiple sessions and using visual presentation (Cameron & Murphy 2007; Walmsley 2009), as well as working with a consultant, Robinah Alumbuya from the DPO Mental Health Uganda. I established an additional informal ethics committee to review my material relating to this group, with members from Ugandan academia, NGOs, and DPOs, and European academics. After discussions with this committee, I excluded data on one interlocutor.

I spent six months in Kampala studying Runyoro and UgSL, achieving conversational fluency in both. I therefore did not regularly use translators, except when interviewing hearing interlocutors who did not know Runyoro and deaf interlocutors who did not use UgSL. In the latter case, Betty Najjemba, a fluent UgSL user, acted as a deaf interpreter (see Boudreault 2005).

Chapter overview

Section 1 of the thesis contains three chapters describing the activities of the core DWG members who work in Kicweka market. These members provide the basic identity of the organisation: a group of traders fostering business engagement and orientation toward hard work among disabled people and distributing funding targeted at small businesses.

In chapter 1, I introduce DWG and consider its dynamics in the market and in interaction with government and NGO programmes targeting disabled people. I introduce a major division between more prosperous members of the group who consider themselves 'managers' – effective and committed independent businesswomen – and less economically successful members, who the managers criticise as 'inactive.' Income perceived to remove mothers' responsibilities for family subsistence (such as certain types of child sponsorship) is considered a threat to the emerging persona of the new, 'active' disabled person.

In chapter 2, I investigate DWG's management of a grant from NEF, a European funder, revealing how funding requirements lead group leaders to assess business activity on evidence of continuing market presence. The discourses involved value productivity and 'pathologise' dependence (see Ferguson 2015). However, DWG leaders' criteria are not identical to those of NGOs, notably seeking to foster long-term relationships rather than considering them problematic. I discuss how the distributional politics affects the political subjectivity of disabled leaders amid the incoherent priorities of entrepreneurship and relational obligations.

I end the section, in chapter 3, noting the group does not easily divide into two sub-categories endorsing different models of livelihood and comportment (hard work in the market versus seeking to attach oneself to patrons). Most members blend livelihood strategies, including commercial, familial, and institutional approaches. I investigate how child sponsorship income can be reconciled with a businesswoman identity. Nevertheless, the group remains stratified between 'managers' and less 'active' members, with receiving sponsorship a major factor in categorisation.

In Section 2, which contains two chapters, I move away from the infrastructural environment to discuss how DWG members arrange types of support missing from formal

services. This includes, in chapter 4, physical care for women living with mobility impairments and, in chapter 5, interpretation for deaf members. These activities rarely intersect with infrastructural support or funding, instead operating as mutual aid. I expand on the concept of obligation based on long-term interactional history, describing the creation of 'disability solidarity,' through spatial arrangements that integrate the core DWG members into each other's intimate lives. These arrangements give a different picture of what the 'disability movement' is to that which emerged in Section 1.

In chapter 4, I revisit the issue of dependence, finding that despite the importance of self-sufficiency to DWG's self-identity, DWG members rely on relationships of care taking the form of dependencies, often enthusiastically. In this context, financial and ideological resources derived through the disability movement are valued as material for managing relationships with carers.

In chapter 5, I describe a form of collective competence for visual language that has developed in Kicweka market, centred on the stalls run by DWG members. I detail how different types of 'deaf space' interact to create a complex dialogue between belonging to disability community and opposing it as 'ONE DEAF' [a united deaf community]. The interaction of these communities facilitates patchy forms of linguistic inclusion in Kicweka market, which is nevertheless more accessible for deaf people than other spaces in Rubuga's disability movement.

Provision for physical care and linguistic interpretation in DWG's spaces is based on forms of obligation that draw from intimate histories of association over long periods. This feature makes it difficult for new people to access the networks of assistance. In section 3, which has two chapters, I therefore move away from the core group, to look in detail at the lives of those who are marginal to the disability movement.

In chapter 6, I return to the exclusions of the independent businessperson model discussed in section 1, to look at disabled people whose livelihoods rely on economic assistance from others. This includes some peripheral members of DWG, as well as people who beg in Kicweka market. I consider how discourses about disability ('obulema'), including the figure of the 'new disabled person' – who runs a business and conspicuously *does not* beg – define those whose livelihoods are based on being a recipient outside the category of *obulema*.

Instead, this group are considered 'abaceke' [weak people]. Being categorised as an 'omuceke' [a weak person] can mobilise obligations for assistance from those who have long-term histories with the person, which resemble the relationships on which DWG's spatialised communities are built. These obligations are critical for the livelihoods of many marginalised disabled people.

In chapter 7, I consider the outcome of the two discourses about bodily-mental disadvantage – 'obulema' [disability] and being 'omuceke' [a weak person] – in relation to land disputes. Agriculture is a vital part of many peripheral DWG members' livelihoods, unlike the core group. I look at two members who have experienced land loss (related to industrial sugarcane farming), considering the disadvantages of the 'omuceke' discourse in this context and contrasting the minimal engagement they received from the disability movement with the interventionist approach taken for a better-connected disabled person.

I conclude with an overview of how members of DPOs are both constrained and facilitated by the infrastructure of the disability movement.

Section 1

Chapter 1 - The 'new disabled person' in Kicweka market

The history of DWG

DWG is a registered 'Community-based Organisation' (CBO), which coalesced from a cluster of disabled women living close to each other near Kicweka market because of their involvement in programmes targeting disabled people. I was given multiple stories about DWG's founding, identifying at least four origin points. All were valid ways of describing DWG's early history, with each event verified from several sources. Some differences reflect varying pathways into disability organising taken by different members. Members also gave different narratives at different times, depending on which elements they wanted to emphasise. The multiplicity of narratives demonstrates the vigour of the disability sector in the 2000s, as earlier patchy provision from churches and the Uganda Society for Disabled Children (USDC) was replaced by a rapidly expanding and differentiated sector, drawing on new initiatives introduced by the NRM and the NGO support these attracted.

Several members who used wheelchairs described being 'found' as young women in the nearby villages by a man from the Anglican church, who set up a functional adult literacy class for disabled women in Kicweka. These women had no previous schooling, due to de-prioritisation by family or the physical difficulty of getting to schools. Those attending the course needed somewhere to stay, and one future member, Jovia, who lived with her mother nearby, invited several others to sleep at hers. After the class finished, attendees were invited to perform a 'cultural dance' at celebrations for the International Day for Persons with Disabilities (IPDP), held in Rubuga that year. They enjoyed themselves and wanted to continue seeing each other. Baganyire, the Municipal Community Development Officer (CDO), advised them to form a CBO and register it with the government, so they could receive grants. This became DWG.

Esther described a different history. She was educated, having completed senior school at a nearby private school for disabled children followed by a secretarial diploma, so she did not attend the literacy course. She was, however, known to authorities in Rubuga through the local branch of UDSC, which had donated her first wheelchair. Several of those who later became the core of DWG already worked in the market, but initially Esther did not want to

associate with other disabled people. However, Alinaitwe, now Chairperson of DWG, repeatedly visited her. Esther attributed a social motivation to her: Alinaitwe enjoyed visiting young disabled people and wanted to draw them into her life. Eventually, Esther came to see the market as a place of possibility that could be combined with a political career, so she joined Alinaitwe's organisation.

A third story located DWG's origins in the loss of a previous organisation. Members of DWG and other disabled women had set up a disabled women's organisation at District level in the early 2000s, with Alinaitwe as chairperson. However, she was ousted when the group received funding from an international NGO because she was uneducated and therefore considered unable to manage funding. From there, the group's resources were progressively 'personalised' to the new leaders. Esther, originally Treasurer of the group, was voted out in a secret meeting, only finding out when she checked the bank account and found it empty. As a result, Alinaitwe, Esther, and other women angered by events decided to form an organisation they would control. This became DWG. The events of this timeline ran alongside the 'literacy group' origin.

The final story made the market central. In this version, narrated by Jovia, the women who danced at the IDPD celebrations were noticed by a staff member at the local branch of a national seed company, who offered them casual work sorting grain for which they were paid in kind. Jovia suggested they should sell the grain in Kicweka market and reinvest the takings to establish businesses, rather than consuming it. This worked, and eventually several members moved into lockups in the market (at the time, a cheap unofficial housing option directly next to Kicweka's rubbish skip), originally sharing each between two people.

There they met Lidia, the first deaf member, who was living in a lockup with her then husband and already running a business. Initially, stallholders from the official produce market (located behind the lockups) objected, arguing the location was not licensed for foodstuffs and DWG selling grain there was unfair competition. However, the produce market was inaccessible for wheelchair users and DWG members successfully argued they should be allowed to sell consumables from their homes. They therefore pioneered expansion of the food market in this direction.

Accounts of what happened after the 2004 founding are more standardised. All core members of DWG attended a UgSL training course run by the Uganda National Association of the Deaf (UNAD), which allowed them to communicate with new deaf members coming to work with Lidia. DWG received the Special Grant from the District council in 2010, enabling business expansion. Shortly afterwards, NUDIPU introduced them to a northern European funder, who gave them a larger grant. Securing this grant involved a visit by white staff members from Europe, an event remembered with pride. Following successful use of this grant, DWG received three further grants from the funder.

During my fieldwork DWG had seven core members working regularly in Kicweka market, alongside a fluctuating 10-15 peripheral members. Because of the shared history, most core members operate in the same area, running small businesses in a lane just outside the produce market. Esther, Lidia, and Safia run established stalls from a row of permanent brick-built lockups, and there are four smaller stalls across the narrow lane, built from poles and iron sheet roofs. These belong to Jovia, Alinaitwe, Lidia, and Yakubu.[28] The stalls are all within sight and shouting range of each other (see figure 2). The women (and Yakubu, Alinaitwe's disabled brother) form an identifiable group with a clear social identity within the market scene.

Many more stallholders also sell from the strip of lockups, which has continued to expand, some competing directly with DWG. The rate of increase has been dramatic and there was intense competition for selling space (see Monteith 2018: S17 on space pressure as an 'entry barrier' protecting established traders from competition; in DWG, this played out in generational divisions, discussed in chapter 2). Businesses include tailors, grocers, manufacturers of car-tyre sandals, mending broken items including shoes, selling soap, oil, firewood, and matches, a video hall, salons, and brewing and consumption of local beer (*kwete*). During the Friday clothes market, held on a field beyond the makeshift row of stalls, it is difficult to walk down the lane by the lockups because of the crowd.

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[28] Another member, Alice, used to work on Esther's stall but now runs a shop in a nearby side street.

Safia	Mama Karolin (friend to Safia)	Unrelated person	Lidia and Khadija	Esther	Unrelated person (sublet from Esther)	
						Entrance to produce market ↑
Stalls continue to the left ←		Street				
Unrelated person	Unrelated person	Yakubu (brother of Alinaitwe)	Lidia and Khadija	Alinaitwe (half sublet to unrelated person)	Jovia (half encroached by unrelated person)	
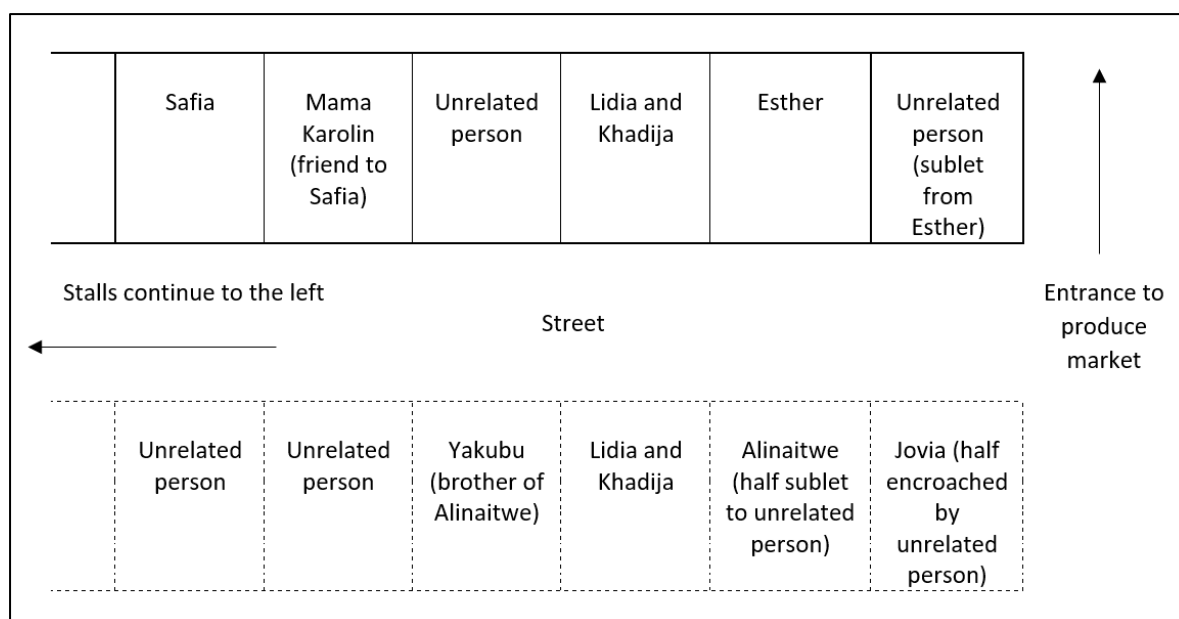
FIGURE 2: POSITION OF CORE DWG MEMBERS' STALLS IN KICWEKA MARKET. SOLID LINES REPRESENT BRICK-BUILT LOCKUPS; DOTTED LINES REPRESENT SHELTERS WITH NO WALLS. SOME PERIPHERAL MEMBERS HAVE STALLS IN LESS BUSY AREAS.

In this expanding context, the local government had begun to regulate and tax businesses. Those working in the line of lockups and the stalls facing them became liable to pay market license fees, which are one of the major sources of revenue for cash-strapped local government in Uganda (Ahikire 2007: 61). This made license policies intensely political in the local arena, producing explosive effects like the fight I described in the Introduction, triggered by Moses' tools being confiscated for non-payment of fees. There was little threat of actual expulsion from the market, even for informal stalls like Moses'. Like violent campaigns against street hawkers by the Nairobi police (Dragsted 2019: 70), enforcement aimed not to exclude, but to include on the official's terms, in a (violent) profitable way.

Money and life in the market

The market's expansion made businesses extremely fragile. Increased competition slashed numbers of sales, which are the main drivers of profitability, as most staple goods have fixed prices (see Wan 2001: 230, 235). Some vendors think saturation has been reached; however new traders continue to enter, encouraged by the market's reputation as a place where people are 'selling well.' Profit from Safia's grocery stall hovered around 5-6000 shillings daily (£1-1.25), although during the Friday market it could double this. There were businesses smaller and larger than Safia's in the market, although it was on the small side

for businesses operating from a lockup: most smaller businesses ran from shelters instead. In practice, therefore, many market workers' activities are better described as 'survivalism' than entrepreneurship,[29] 'as saturated markets with low financial entry costs negatively affect (already low) profit margins' (Rizzo 2017: 11; see also Ferguson 2015: 98–9).

Four members of DWG ran grocery businesses, sourcing their goods from small wholesalers in the centre of Kicweka and selling with minor mark-ups. These businesses relied on local customers who had very low incomes and could only afford food, oil, and matches on a day-to-day basis, in tiny amounts. The bulk of transactions consisted of these micro-sales, but for Safia, daily profit could double because of a few particularly large sales, or conversely be lower than usual if she made no big sales. Bigger sales were usually to one of two groups: those coming from villages to do infrequent big shops, who included regular and one-off customers; and sales to other stallholders who used products like oil to produce their own goods.

Other stallholders bought on credit and often delayed payment, shifting their custom from stall to stall to find more leeway. Jašarević describes a newly impoverished market in Bosnia similarly: 'deferrals can extend indefinitely, tensing and suspending their relations until the debt is settled or the expectations of its settlement expire' (Jašarević 2017: 94). Managing the relationships involved required financial skill and tact, an intense 'emotional labour' a member of DWG described to me as having to be 'a friend' to all.

The market starts around 9am most days, but many stalls do not open until 10:30 or later. There is a distinct 'temporal organization' with different kinds of customers appearing at different times (Malefakis 2019: 126–7). Mastery of these rhythms is part of the competence of a successful trader. For grocery stalls like Safia's, customers increase as women start to prepare lunch (usually eaten mid-afternoon), followed by a lull, and the major peak around sunset when workdays end.[30] Outside busy times (a relative term, as it

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[29] I define entrepreneurship as 'accumulation of an expanding capital fund managed by the owner' (Hart 2000: 103).

[30] Lidia, who sells bags, cookware, and hair products as well as groceries, experiences an earlier peak before work as well (see Wallman 1996: 76).

was rare for more than one customer to approach a stall at once except on Friday) hours could go past without a customer.

Day to day experience in the market is consequently marked by oscillating feelings of boredom and insecurity. Most stallholders argued the experience of 'waiting for customers' was draining and took 'patience.' This was usually expressed using the verb 'kuguma' [to be hard, firm, courageous]. 'Ngumiire' [I am patient] literally means 'I have hardened.' 'Ngumiire' was translated into Ugandan English as 'I keep quiet' and UgSL as 'PATIENCE QUIET.' Tenacity to withstand the challenges of market life with a steadfast and dignified comportment was considered an important virtue.

As well as physically strenuous work, the market was hard because of uncertainty. Stallholders had many outgoings with divergent temporalities. Rent was usually paid monthly, but many DWG members were in arrears, and some (including Safia, Jovia, and Alinaitwe) lived under threat of eviction. The second biggest lump-sum outgoing, and the one people most worried about, was school fees, which were paid termly (although instalment-based schedules could be negotiated). When payments were missed, children were 'chased' from school, being sent home until enough payment was made to convince the school they would eventually get their money. Most children in the market missed parts of the school year as a result. Savings groups were used to smooth the impact of school fees, so weekly payments, sometimes for many different groups, also had to be made.

Against this background, stallholders had to ensure they had enough money to restock when goods ran low. Describing a fruit market in Brazil, Morton reports a simple system of 'cash-out, cash-in accounting', with money put into a particular pocket until enough to buy the next day's merchandise had been reached, after which, as one interlocutor put it, 'you get lazy', storing the subsequent 'profit' anywhere. (Morton 2019: 674, 681). DWG-run businesses were nothing like this. Turnover times were longer and less predictable; for example, a box of soap bought from the wholesalers contains ten bars, which are cut into pieces (as small as an eighth) for sale. The full box takes weeks to sell, necessitating complex planning and profit calculation.

Four members of DWG used a system of plastic pots to store and separate the cash from sales of different goods. Esther explained the system was designed to help the business

owner calculate and track her profit: the cash should be kept until the whole stock of the item has been sold, at which point the owner can subtract the price at which she bought the bulk unit from the gross income. Subsequently, she uses the capital to restock and the profit (ideally) to reinvest in the business, or to pay living expenses if necessary. The profit-tracking system facilitates long-term memory without written records (Wan 2001: 236 describes a similar system). Each stallholder had multiple pots tracking different goods; Esther had at least six.

Esther and Lidia learned this technique from women working in the market when they arrived as young women and passed it on to two other members: Alice, who started as assistant to Esther, and Safia. Other members did not use the 'plastic pots' system, simply keeping all their takings together, tied into a scarf or skirt. When turnover is high this is not problematic, but if it slows (and profit per day therefore reduces) there is no way for traders to recognise if they need to reduce expenditures to preserve their ability to restock.

In practice, those DWG members using the 'pots' system did not always wait until they had sold all of a product before withdrawing from the pot. Safia had a business with particularly low capitalisation and therefore a low ratio of profit to essential needs. She often had to remove money early. Usually, this was for contributions to one of the ten savings groups she attended, although it could also be for essential expenses such as food and rent. The 'plastic pots' system of profit tracking was a form of 'earmarking,' a practice through which moral orientations toward types of spending are endorsed and advocated, sometimes coercively (Zelizer 1997; see also Green et al. 2012 on disciplining developmental futures through control of money). Taking money out early happened, but the system worked to express disapproval of doing so.

Whenever I was present when a DWG member removed money early, they expressed discomfort, sometimes embarrassment. For example, while removing money for a savings contribution, Alice told me 'amagoba gakuba gahaa, ndya' [[when] profit is not there I eat]. To explain this, she clarified in English with 'I eat the capital.' 'Eating the capital' is a common phrase that invokes the multivalent concept 'eating', which in Uganda refers most commonly to wielding power (legitimately or illegitimately) but can also reference corruption or sex (Nannyonga-Tamusuza 2002). Saying someone is 'eating' can be a positive

or negative judgment: the term 'you are really eating' is used to recognise prosperity (see also Lockwood 2020a).

This usage, 'eating the capital', refers to capitalist concepts of the productivity of money, while mobilising the moralising overtones of negative forms of 'eating.' 'Eating the capital' can be justified, especially for payments to savings groups: in an environment where women's finances are extensively scrutinised, spending in a 'responsible' way can establish a good reputation (Dolan et al. 2020), and women in Kicweka were constantly exhorted to save by NGOs and government. However, it is also dangerous. The Municipal Community Development Officer (CDO), who was responsible for several grants and loans to DWG, complained that some members' businesses had collapsed because they tried to save too much, tying up the capital. Managing the overlapping and moralised temporalities of income and outgoings was a precarious and difficult art.

Being *omwekambi* [a hardworking person]

Two members of DWG always used the 'plastic pots' profit-tracking method and almost never removed money early. These members, Esther and Lidia, were recognised as masters of their trades. Alongside their adherence to this method of financial discipline, they were extraordinarily rigorous about the time they spent in the market, arriving before most other members of DWG and in Lidia's case leaving after 11pm, when she went to sleep. Lidia repetitively discussed the time she arrived in the market each morning, contrasting her early arrival with the behaviour of her junior business partner Khadija, who was frequently late or absent. She boasted she was constantly attentive throughout the day: for example, she would notice immediately if someone took something from her stall, because she remembered every item and its value precisely.[31]

Esther and Lidia cultivated an image as self-sufficient and self-sacrificing businesswomen, able to 'manage' their own affairs to produce business growth and other forms of success. Lidia emphasised her bodily strength, working through periods of illness and childbirth, while Esther described her 'suffering' and 'patience' to those who came to her for business

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[31] The boast was accurate: during one busy Friday market, Lidia noticed a missing pair of shoes and tracked down the thief.

advice, to discourage them from thinking the market offered easy wealth. These features of their identities formed ingrained emotional orientations as well as being instrumental self-presentations. During a period of depression in the market, I asked Esther how her day had been; she told me sales had been awful but 'it is still better than being at home.' When she doesn't come to the market 'I worry that I am missing money.' This is a moral as much as a commercial question: when you are a 'manager', she said, 'there is a culture of accountability. What you get is what you eat.'

In Catholic Brazil, Mayblin argues similarly that hard work is a moral good. Those who achieve the status of *trabalhador* [hardworker] through practicing physically strenuous 'true work' receive respect and approval. The women Mayblin encountered greeted each other by reciting a list of tasks they had completed, emphasising how early they had started working (Mayblin 2010: 95); the similarity to Lidia's recitation of her arrival time is obvious. Lidia and Esther were both recognised as 'omwekambi' [a hardworking person], a category with similar content to the *trabalhador*: it required driving the self hard and showing a willingness to 'suffer,' particularly to provide for one's dependants.

Lidia self-defined as working hard to provide for her five children, for whom she was 'MOTHER FATHER' [both mother and father], a role recognised and valued by those around her. Esther, who had no children, described herself as working for other disabled people, including through her personal example as an *omwekambi*. She also trained several nieces and other assistants 'to work;' Lidia did the same with a series of young deaf women. The phrase described earlier, 'ngumiire,' which expresses the ideal steadfast attitude to the rigours of the market, is closely associated with the *omwekambi*. In Lidia's usage, it was said with pride, never despair.

Cooper describes the Kenyan English term 'being serious' (also used in Uganda) similarly, as a 'measure of distinction' gradually adopted as young women 'subject' themselves to 'life's inevitable hardships' (Cooper 2018: 671, 677–8; 'being serious' and 'ngumiire' are both associated with the English 'I keep quiet'). There was also an element of coerced subjection to Esther and Lidia's comportment. Hard work was often tied to motherhood, which was conceptualised as a burden: children were 'on [a mother's] head,' as a woman would carry water or other heavy items.

Associating hard work with providing for children is widespread, perhaps 'nearly universal' (Cooper 2018: 672; Clark 1999: 719). However, in Uganda, there is a gendered specificity to the expression. Carrying heavy items on one's head is part of virtuous womanhood, a crucial skill trained into young girls.[32] In Bunyoro, the ideal woman's contribution to the family is everyday subsistence, particularly food; men should provide large investments, particularly in cash (for example school fees) (see also Whyte & Kyaddondo 2006: 179 on eastern Uganda). Women's work is therefore dogged and unrelenting, like headloading, and the *omwekambi* is closely associated with appropriate female responsibility.

Welding the *omwekambi* with being a 'manager', the other phrase Esther and Lidia use to describe themselves, can even substitute for men's dereliction of duties to their children. The 'manager' operates in a new realm of 'accountability', which opened for disabled women through entry into entrepreneurship in the NRM era. As discussed in the Introduction, identifying as disabled in Uganda entails loyalty to the NRM and the system of disability support it established. Accountability requires not just hard work but also economic accumulation, which can provide the cash fathers should deliver.

This was not just about external constraint. For Esther and Lidia being an *omwekambi* and a 'manager' was actively desired as a virtuous new form of disabled womanhood. Esther regularly chose to stay at work rather than attend social events including a nearby funfair, even refusing an invitation to be an honoured guest at a graduation party. When I asked why she refused the latter, she replied, laughing, 'I wanted to stay getting money in the market!'

Recognition as an *omwekambi* also had practical benefits. Despite the apparent formalisation that had occurred through introducing market fees, personal negotiation with authority remained important to running a market business. Market management was outsourced from the Division council to a 'market tender,' an entrepreneur who had bought the contract to run it as a tax farm. She had considerable leeway, derived from the

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[32] Inability to 'headload' is practically and conceptually disabling, contributing to low marriage rates for physically disabled women (see Geurts 2009 on Ghana).

outsourcing policy, to add unofficial categories of fees and decide sanctions and exemptions (see Bear 2015: 114–6; Kamunyori 2007: 57–8 on structural production of informalization).

When I investigated DWG members' interactions with the market officials on the day Moses' tools were confiscated (see Introduction, p16-17), I found their treatment varied. Esther had 'given [the tender] a new date,' promising to pay that Friday. They did not attempt to confiscate anything because, in her words, 'they know I will pay.' Jovia, whose business was at that point very small, had been excused because she told them 'nkyali mpyaka, sente zaaha' [I am still new, money is not there]. Safia faced a more forceful sanction, having to pack away her goods and losing the revenue for much of the day (until the officers went away).[33]

The officials assessed each stallholder's socio-economic position to decide whether they should be 'made to hurt' (as Safia put it) to force them to pay. In Jovia's case, the officials accepted she was temporarily unable to pay and acted to foster future potential for tax income if her business should succeed. Esther's carefully cultivated reputation as an 'omwekambi' and a respected municipal councillor gave her leeway to dictate her own terms, and thereby manage the impact of lump sum rates payments among the vicissitudes of her cash flow.

However, despite the moral and practical benefits, not everyone endorsed Esther and Lidia's self-fashioning. Both women required the same abstemious hard work they practiced themselves from their assistants, who had historically included family members and fellow disabled people. Alice started working in the market as an assistant to Esther. However, by the time I started fieldwork in 2016, she had broken off and established her own business. There was some tension between the women, and many observers believed Alice had left because she felt aggrieved she had worked so hard for little reward. While this was partially true, Alice also felt grateful to Esther, describing her as 'like a torch' (by which she meant a guiding light) and claiming Esther 'taught me to work.' Esther and Lidia viewed themselves as providing a service with this 'training', and Alice partially agreed.

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[33] Lidia had already paid.

More serious problems arose from Esther and Lidia's attempts to 'teach' younger female relatives who lived with them: both women experienced the withdrawal of support from some family members because they were perceived to be driving their relatives too hard; Lidia's mother and sisters refused to contribute to her children's school fees as a result (see chapter 4 for Esther's experience). Both women, however, continued to attract young assistants who wanted to work with them to learn how to be entrepreneurs. For Esther, these were nieces, for Lidia, other deaf women.

Lidia attributed other people's disapproval of her practices to 'jealousy,' considered a dangerous emotion in Bunyoro because of its association with witchcraft. Social differentiation can also be linked to increases in perceptions of witchcraft (see Beattie 1963: 51–2 on Bunyoro; Geschiere 1997: 94–100 on Cameroon), however, this does not necessarily mean accumulation is considered negative in itself. Rather, as Englund argues, particular kinds of mitigation are required: 'success as an entrepreneur requires careful management of the image of the entrepreneur as a moral person' (Englund 1996: 267).

The narrative of the hardworking 'manager' contributed to this negotiation, conveying merit through emphasising the effort put into working for others (in Lidia's case, her children and the deaf women she 'helped' with training). In addition, the performance of effort was important because wealth without a visible source was particularly likely to trigger suspicions of witchcraft. One afternoon while I was in Lidia's shop, her business partner Khadija speculated about why she was more successful than other members of DWG, accusing her of using '666.' This is one of several ill-defined conceptions of illicit magical business practices that circulated in the market, in this case involving recruiting the devil to increase an individual's wealth. Lidia denied it, arguing her success was simple: it was because 'God gave me skill and made me a manager.'

Receiving child sponsorship

While Lidia's business thrived and Esther's seemed resolutely stable, most other members of DWG did not make enough for their basic needs, even before restocking and paying school fees. Alternative sources of income were essential. Often, these came in the form of another small business grant, which could be used to boost dwindling merchandise or revive a collapsed business. Working in the market was therefore often about stretching an

insufficient capital fund so a grant could sustain the family for longer, rather than a realistic prospect of accumulation. However, there was one other important source, which interacted in sometimes challenging ways with running a business. This was child sponsorship, which was common in Kicweka, although it was unevenly provided and unpredictable. None of the large international sponsorship organisations worked in Rubuga, although some had in the past and sponsorship is the most widely understood idiom for charitable support from overseas (NGOs providing other programmes for youth complained they were expected to act as substitute 'parents' as a result).

Sponsorship was provided by a patchwork of small organisations (trends across East Africa show an increase in 'do-it-yourself' and small missionary sponsorship organisations Chege 2018; Clarke 2010: 210; Jones 2015). At least five members of DWG had some or all of their children sponsored, but the fragmentation of the sector meant levels of support varied from, at the lowest end, irregular and unreliable payments covering only school fees, to full payment of all school requirements plus rent at the highest. While all members of DWG had received some form of 'charitable' income during their lives, sponsorship was the only way any DWG member could rely mostly on one major patron. Such extensive support through sponsorship was, however, rare. The unequal distribution of sponsorship among the members caused debate and resentment.

One afternoon, I was at Lidia's stall when Jovia's younger daughter came to greet DWG members. She and the other children of DWG members did this most days after school. On this day, she was wearing a new princess-style party dress and was obviously shyly proud of how 'smart' she looked. Picking up on an earlier conversation about Jovia and Alinaitwe asking for money for school fees, Lidia commented 'SEE, SUPPORT HAVE.' She went on to describe her own continual worries about her business and how to feed and educate her children, concluding by signing that, in contrast, Jovia 'WORRY-negative, SIT HOME REST, WORRY BUSINESS NONE.' She pointed out Jovia was not at her stall and hadn't been at all that day.

This discourse picks up on the narratives of unrelenting hard work described above; Lidia and Esther frequently commented on those who 'cannot work as we do' when discussing their relationships with other disabled people. It also expressed conflict about the distribution of sponsorship: two of Jovia's three children had their school fees and other

educational needs paid fully by a small NGO and another organisation sometimes paid half the fees for her older daughter, while none of Lidia's five children were sponsored.

Lidia and Esther frequently speculated on this unequal distribution, evidently considering it illegitimate (similar concerns are noted by Bornstein 2005: 87; Jones 2015: 264–5; O'Neill 2013). Their explanations varied from conversation to conversation, reflecting the contingent and serendipitous process of obtaining a sponsor (see also Elizabeth Cooper 2014; Chege & Schweppe 2018). Sometimes Lidia attributed the difference to oppression of deaf people, accusing her fellow DWG members (including Esther) of deliberately not telling deaf colleagues about sponsorship opportunities. But usually, it was linked to the different working habits of members. Although it was rarely expressed as explicitly as in the episode with Jovia's daughter, the implication was that Jovia and Alinaitwe worked differently because sponsorship relieved pressure on them.

Jovia's presence in the market was indeed remarkably different to Lidia's. While Lidia prided herself on arriving early and staying late, Jovia only spent part of her time there. She was more often at home, often engaging in labour from there, including both unremunerated and quasi-commercial activities such as braiding a friend's hair for a small payment. She also spent hours every day at church. Lidia and Jovia are both Catholics who attend the same church.[34] However, Jovia is a member of a lay charismatic group within the congregation, which meets every day, and spends the whole day at church several times a week.[35] Lidia attended only the Sunday service at 6am, going straight to the market afterwards. She often remarked on the excess of Jovia's prayer habits because they kept her away from her stall.

Jovia's stall was almost never open before mid-morning and was more usually set up in the afternoon. While it was up, she frequently left the market to go to her house nearby, leaving her DWG neighbours to guard her wares and serve customers for her. Jovia sold basic dry food staples; her sales were irregular and more of them were in bulk amounts than any other DWG member, which meant she could survive on a smaller number of sales. After a particularly large sale, she sometimes chose not to go to the market for several days, for

[34] DWG is religiously mixed, including Muslim, Anglican, and Pentecostal members as well as Catholics.

[35] Charismatic movements in mainline churches adopt ritual practices from Pentecostalism, although in Catholic churches constraints arise from priestly hierarchies. (Kassimir 1996; Lado 2006, 2009: 18).

example cooking food for a relative in the hospital instead. However, she did not use a system to track her profits, and other DWG members believed the missed sales during her absences were problematic for the longevity of her business because her turnover was so low. During the time I spent in the market Jovia's income was below replacement level for her stock, and her business did collapse.

Two elements contributed to the tension between those who received child sponsorship and those who did not. The first was the unfairness of the distribution. Although its effects were considered potentially problematic, child sponsorship was still widely desired, including by Lidia. The second emerged from the criteria for the 'beneficiaries' sponsorship organisations choose. Being understood as needy was a key part of this, raising the possibility of being seen primarily as an 'unproductive' recipient. Jovia's younger children were sponsored by a UK-based organisation with a Ugandan operations manager named Solomon. Jovia told me the organisation's priority categories were: 'orphans, children who don't have a father, children of disabled people, and children of people who don't have a business.'

Her description was close to Solomon's, which focused on the idea of 'vulnerability.' Although he did not mention lacking a business, he claimed they looked carefully into families' financial situations because some rich people present themselves as poor, and added that potential donors in the UK respond better to children called orphans than to those whose parents 'are there but are lazy.' Judging someone to be an appropriate recipient is a process that 'blend[s] ideas of vulnerability and virtue' (Elizabeth Cooper 2014: 42). An appropriate beneficiary must want to support their own children but be unable to. This conflicts with the self-sufficient presentation of the 'manager,' though not necessarily the *omwekambi* [hardworker].

When I asked Solomon how he enrolled the DWG members in his programme (Jovia, and three more peripheral members called Alinda, Ninsiima, and Deborah) he explained that during a visit they had organised to Kicweka for sponsors to meet 'their' children, many local people had gathered to see the 'abajungu' [white people]. One of the spectators was Alinda, a DWG member who uses crutches after an amputation and is also deaf. A visiting sponsor noticed her and asked Solomon to investigate her situation. When he gave the details to the

sponsor, he told me, 'Because of Alinda's level [a euphemism for poverty that also implies an unequal situation (see Lockwood 2020b: 101)], the sponsor was touched…he looked at himself with two hands and two legs, then at Alinda with one leg, and she was digging on other people's land.' Alinda's disability stood for vulnerability in this image, her labouring for virtue.

The sponsor agreed to pay school fees for her older children, and shortly afterwards when Alinda's infant daughter was attacked by a relative, to pay rent in central Kicweka where she would be safer. This was unusual: the organisation's standard arrangement at the time was to pay school fees only. Jovia's children were enrolled through a referral from another child, but Solomon's description of the event also demonstrated the power of the disabled body: 'When we compiled her profile and sent it to the UK, it didn't take two days before they [assigned a sponsor].'[36] Disabled bodies acted in this process as visual shorthand for need. The effects were profound: all DWG members sponsored through Solomon's organisation had a particularly high level of support and personal contact with the organisation and their sponsors.

The unusually high levels of support were potentially threatening for the 'managers.' Displaying visible disabilities is a common strategy in Uganda among people who beg (Musubika 2017: 9; Tumusiime 2011); DWG members, meanwhile, insisted disabled people *did not* beg in Rubuga (see chapter 6 for further discussion). In addition, disabled people were aware they were seen as a group with powerful supporters. Other stallholders often believed DWG members had extensive support not available to most people; some believed their rent was paid by the government. Jovia and Alinaitwe, two of four members who lived in rental accommodation owned by a national company, had indeed been exempted from rent for a few months many years previously, but this situation was long past. During a rent dispute that occurred during my fieldwork, the manager of the properties publicly discussed the earlier exemption. Lidia was anxious about this, telling me 'she is going to spoil the name of disabled people' by making others think they all 'stay for free.'

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[36] The organisation did not put profiles of children on its website (see Chege 2018), so it was a staff member who made Jovia's family a priority based on the photographs and Solomon's emotive words.

This inaccurate perception created jealousy, with other stallholders occasionally trying to persuade DWG members' customers to buy from other vendors. Lidia's comments about Jovia's daughter's dress should be interpreted in this context. The dress was a visual index of Jovia's support. Combined with her lacklustre presence in the market, it suggested she did not need to work, breaching the expectations of virtuous womanhood and the duty the 'new' disabled person owes to create a self-sustaining business.

However, Lidia's image of the lazy sponsorship recipient as the opposite of the hardworking manager was inexact. In most circumstances, sponsorship recipients *were* able to present themselves as dynamic businesswomen (see chapter 3). The opposition Lidia presented arose from discourses about work associated with NGO and government grants for small business, which permeated the way market businesses were assessed, as I show in the next chapter.

Chapter 2 – Grants and the 'active' participant

The behaviour expected from recipients of government and NGO business grants is encapsulated in the word 'active,' which in Uganda denotes someone who is clever, enterprising, and hardworking. (The related term 'serious' (see Cooper 2018) is interchangeable with it.) Workers in NGOs and government frequently distinguished between 'active' and 'inactive' groups and individuals, praising the former and criticising the latter. Similarly, Esther divided 'active' members of DWG, whose working habits she approved, from those she did not. 'Inactive' members were liable to exclusion from future grant applications.

These were moral assessments. The CDO opened a meeting of the Special Grant committee (which assessed applications for the grant, with members representing different impairment groups, councillors, and civil servants) by explaining the grant exists because disabled people are discriminated against in employment, but it is only for 'those who are active, not lazy.' He complained about previous recipients applying again after their businesses had failed, arguing they had spent the money on 'their own needs' (such as rent) rather than their businesses, and therefore 'abused' the scheme.

Although the term 'active' was used throughout society, in the NGO sector its instantiations related specifically to capitalist conceptions of money as productive. 'If you eat the seed,' the CDO instructed recipients (using the same 'eating the capital' language I had heard from Alice), you will not benefit from it. Using business grants to stretch the time one can survive, without creating a permanent business, transgressed these values as it involved repeatedly 'eating the seed.'

The CDO conceptualised his role as changing the behaviour of people in 'vulnerable' categories, so that it would be possible to transform their lives with the tiny grants he could deliver. He told me he provided 'counselling' and 'training' to 'inactive' disabled people who stayed 'at home' feeling 'self-pity,' guiding them to join DPOs (through which they could be enrolled in government projects). He also exhorted those who were already 'active' to

'perform' better by keeping accurate records of their transactions, aiming to prevent overspending and attract commercial investment.[37]

The goal was to move from an initial state of relating to others mainly through kinship ties in the 'home' (conceptualised as problematically dependent and passive) towards individual self-sufficiency in a commercial sphere. Paying for rent with business grants represented shifting the dependency from family to government, rather than creating a productive income stream to be relied on long-term. This approach follows the anti-dependence welfare anxieties Ferguson describes, albeit with a shift away from understanding disabled people as appropriate recipients for ongoing support (Ferguson 2015: 41–2), leading to their inclusion among people who should be incentivised to work. Similar discomfort with dependency could be seen in NGOs. At the main INGO working with disabled people in Rubuga, staff explicitly worried about creating 'dependents.'

This moral assessment was tied to the specifics of funding programmes and was immensely influential. In what follows, I investigate a series of grants DWG received from a European foundation called NEF, which was 'established to promote the activity, human rights, equal opportunities and independent living of persons with disabilities in developing countries.'[38] I analyse decision-making about grant allocation to define the conceptual apparatus guiding it, finding that ideas about 'social welfare' are adapted and inflected by other sources, including neoliberal entrepreneurship and obligations arising from co-residence and shared history.

DWG had received two rounds of funding from NEF and were applying for a third invited round at the end of my fieldwork, based on their good performance. The funding was designed to build provide further capitalisation for existing small businesses so they could expand the volume or range of products offered, or to establish new small businesses. DWG applied as a group, but funding was allocated for individual businesses. Members received different kinds of inputs with dramatically differing values. The trajectories of their businesses varied widely. Esther frequently reflected on the outcomes, dividing the members into those who are 'active' and those who are not, based on a combination of

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[37] In practice, I know of no commercial investment in a disabled person's small business in Rubuga.

[38] The foundation channels funding from the European country's government.

criteria mostly geared toward reproduction of the business. Schematic outlines of selected business trajectories are below (see figure 2 for the position of members' stalls in the market).

Alinaitwe

Alinaitwe was the Chairperson of DWG, and a wheelchair user. She received one of the largest investments, a maize grinding mill. When I first visited DWG, it was set up in a shed on the edge of the field that hosts the Friday market but was not working because a part had broken. Without money to fix it, the mill stayed broken, and after several years it was stolen. Shortly afterwards the shed burned down. While unable to use the machine, and after its theft, Alinaitwe continued her previous business brewing and selling *kwete* beer. This produces little profit and requires intense physical work, difficult for Alinaitwe because of her impairment; she therefore worked fitfully.

Although Alinaitwe was central to DWG's operations and respected for her ability to 'talk to anyone' and resolve disputes, Esther rarely included her in the category of 'active.' Esther told me she had been worried when Alinaitwe chose the maize grinder project because she didn't know how to run it, especially regarding maintenance. She had expected her to bring someone to help, but she did not and so she wasn't using the grinder even before it was stolen. Esther compared Alinaitwe with her brother Yakubu, who received a small project selling clothes 'but he is still there working when Alinaitwe lost everything.' Esther's assessment partially changed towards the end of my fieldwork, when Alinaitwe received a UWEP loan to start a new business selling bedsheets and underwear. She worked more consistently on this business, setting up her stall most days, although Esther continued to note her absences.

Lidia

Lidia was a core DWG member who worked in the lockups and was deaf. She was not on the DWG executive committee, but in the third NEF application was listed as 'mobiliser,' a special position not part of the typical group makeup in Rubuga. When the group received the first NEF grant, she already had an established grocery business and operated as a

hairdresser from inside her lockup,[39] as well as brewing *kwete* beer to sell in a shelter opposite. Her NEF grant provided machines (including a hood hairdryer) and stock for a full salon. When I started my fieldwork, Lidia had expanded her sales business, adding backpacks and second-hand shoes. Toward the end, she added a line of homewares through a loan from UWEP.

Lidia was by far the most successful businesswoman among DWG members, but most of her income did not come from her salon – the business NEF supported – because she had few hairdressing customers. Esther nevertheless always described her as 'active.' Lidia forcefully attributed her success to her own work over the 19 years she had been trading in Kicweka, not the grants and loans she had received.

Esther

Esther was Secretary of DWG and managed the relationship with NEF including the application and reporting functions. She was a wheelchair user. Along with Alinaitwe, she received one of the largest grants, for a stationery business. The assets she received included a computer, printer-photocopier, and scanner, as well as consumables. During my fieldwork she did not fully use them, leaving them locked in her home during the day while she traded in the market on her existing grocery business, to which she added some of the small stationery consumables. She used the computer and printer to produce documents for DWG and other organisations, occasionally receiving payment for this work (without which DWG would also have faced higher administration costs).

When I asked why she was not running her stationery shop she explained it needed more stock to be viable, and she did not yet have the funds to add to it. If she tried to run it with what she had she would not cover her costs and would 'eat the capital.' Esther's income from her grocery business was higher than many DWG members because her capital (and therefore the range of goods she carried) was larger, but it remained much lower than Lidia's. However, Esther also received income through sitting and transport allowances as a Councillor for Disabled People.

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[39] An INGO had earlier trained Lidia in hairdressing and given her basic equipment and supplies.

Harriet

Harriet was a peripheral DWG member who had never had a permanent market stall. She lived with impairment of one leg and walked with a stick. For her NEF grant, Harriet asked for shoes to add to her existing business selling second-hand clothes, having noticed they produced a good profit for others. She was given a full sack, also second-hand. By 2016, Harriet was selling only children's clothes again, at a subprime location during the Friday market. With some other members who also received shoes, Harriet complained she had been given 'little', particularly in comparison with members who had received much higher value assets. (I discuss the outcome of the complaint below.)

Talking retrospectively about the controversy, Esther told me the shoes sold quickly, which should have been good for the business, but 'there is nothing to show for it' because Harriet did not use the income to restock. When I suggested she may not have had other ways to pay essential expenses (several members had told me they had to spend the income on rent and school fees, suggesting their capital was too low to generate sufficient profit for their needs), she rejected my interpretation, insisting the collapse happened because Harriet didn't know how to 'balance' her expenditure and income. Esther considered Harriet and the other shoe-selling women particularly inactive and, along with others who had immediately sold their assets on receipt, told me she would not 'give' to them again. They did not receive allocations from later NEF grants.

Akugiziibwe

Akugiziibwe was an original member of DWG but has always been peripheral to the group for two reasons: her home was outside Kicweka in a nearby village and she lived with a form of disability considered to affect her mind as well as partial paralysis of her right side. She is described as a 'slow learner' and experiences periods of mental distress (see Whyte 1998 and chapter 6 for discussion of these terms). Because she cannot count, the DWG committee did not believe she could manage a business. They therefore excluded her from the first NEF grant. However, when they had earlier received the government Special Grant (also intended for small business activities) they unofficially repurposed her portion, using it furniture for her home.

During the second NEF grant, Esther told me they considered it important that Akugiziibwe benefit, because of her long tenure as a member. They therefore tried to design a business she could manage: charging neighbours' phones with a solar panel. This would avoid counting, because she could accept payment in the form of a 500-shilling coin, which is easy to recognise. In the last dispersal of the second grant, they therefore bought her a solar panel.

A few months later, Akugiziibwe's father complained there were no customers for charging and asked for more help. Esther told me: 'those people are not serious, even I think I will stop helping them.' I asked why, and she claimed they were not advertising their service. 'If you give to them, they just want you to give more,' because they think 'donors are rich, they can just spend money anywhere.' By contrast, Esther said, she 'feels bad' if a donor gives money and it does not 'do' anything.

Factors of the 'activity' standard

Three main aspects to Esther's judgment of 'activity' emerge from these examples. Firstly, and most importantly, she looked at whether a business was properly reproduced and continued to survive. This factor turned on the need for 'something to show' for donor funds, which she understood as a scarce resource that should be cultivated. Esther subscribed to the capitalist discourse of 'seed capital', considering taking on the entrepreneur's task of the 'accumulation of an expanding capital fund managed by the owner' (Hart 2000: 103) the proper reaction to receiving this kind of funding.

Boner notes similar orientations among the leaders of a Tanzanian savings group, linking them explicitly to conforming with NGO priorities for 'sustainability,' under which the support relationship should have a short temporal horizon, but giver and recipient both have a duty to ensure the impact continues indefinitely (Boner 2011: 128). Lidia was the only DWG member fully embodying this ideal of the expanding business, and, although her success did not arise from her NEF grant, she was prominent in DWG's management of the relationship, accompanying Esther to Kampala for meetings with staff members. She was also the member Esther most consistently considered 'active.'

Some members whose capital wasn't visibly expanding but whose businesses continued to exist over extended periods with fairly stable capital were also judged 'active'. This was particularly the case if they met a second of Esther's criteria: demonstrating commitment to the business and steadfastness of purpose. Esther herself fell into this category, along with DWG's Treasurer, Safia. Esther judged this factor in several ways, including looking at time spent in the market. Khadija, another member whose business still existed but had not grown, was judged 'not active' because she was frequently absent, only consistently attending on Friday market day.

Perceived lack of commitment to the business also drove Esther's decision that Akugiziibwe and her family should not be given further funding because they had not made enough effort seeking customers. Steadfastness of purpose is an important social quality in Bunyoro; lacking it stereotypically indicates indolence or, potentially, mental 'incompetence' (Cooper 2018: 678; Whyte 1998: 156). Wandering from place to place, never sticking with one social situation or task, is considered to indicate mental illness (Edgerton 1966: 413–4; Whyte 1998: 164–9). Akugiziibwe was often described like this (see chapter 6), which made Esther more likely to interpret the lack of customers as indicating low commitment, even though this was probably unfair. Solar power has steadily increased in Uganda in recent years, especially for micro-scale domestic use (Twaha et al. 2016). Akugiziibwe's neighbours already had access to solar charging and did not need to pay for it.

The third factor was whether the member had 'balanced' income and expenditure. This strand followed NGO and government discourses closely. During a training for recipients of the government's UWEP (Uganda Women Entrepreneurship Programme) loan, a trainer explained that grocery businesses produce little profit and counselled recipients not to overconsume, concluding 'amagoba matito, turaara enjara' [[if there is] little profit, we sleep hungry]. 'Kuraara enjara' [sleeping hungry] was repeatedly invoked in discussions of responsible business practice; Esther's 'what you get is what you eat' expresses the same idea.

Esther usually refused to accept that a member might need to use capital to pay essential bills because she had no other way to do so. She argued the member should 'suffer', as she herself had early in her business, to protect the capital and foster a prosperous future.

Jovia's business collapses were understood through this lens. Esther critically reflected on her spending as well as her absence from the market, concluding she was unable to 'balance' business and life correctly. Esther's severest criticism was for those who had received assets and immediately exchanged them for cash, including a member called Ninsiima. Such evident intention to consume was considered completely illegitimate. Esther's 'activity' standard paid close attention to NGO and government discourses, with which her personal commitment to abstemious hard work was closely aligned.

NGO and government bureaucracies in Uganda require beneficiaries to organise into corporate actors to function efficiently. This structure systematically creates positions for 'brokers,' as entry points for institutions to access a population, and influences how brokers operate: 'The incentive to be recognised as a legitimate partner [is] a powerful one' (Morange 2015: 261; see also Bear 2015: 117; Boner 2011: 121–2). Esther positioned herself as able to deliver the 'development' targeted by NGOs and government through guaranteeing 'active' orientations; Lidia took a similar role for the deaf community (see chapter 5).

Esther, for example, exhorted members of a new group she was mentoring through the Special Grant application in similar terms to the CDO, telling them to be 'active' (using the English word although she was speaking Runyoro) and imploring 'mukole mukole mukole kandi mutanswaze' [you work, work, work, and don't shame me]. Shame was a conventional part of governmental language about being 'active', for example, during the UWEP training the CDO and other officials argued those who did not pay back would be shamed. However, Esther claimed that by not paying back the group members would shame *her*, not themselves.

Brokers are often imagined as ordinary members of their 'community.' This conceptual equality obscures processes of distinction common in situations, like Rubuga, where connections with development institutions offer a compelling route for social advancement (James 2002: 179). Lidia and Esther, as guarantors of development, were positioned differently to other group members; the behaviour of other disabled people had a large impact on their image with funders.

Esther's decisions to remove members from future NEF funding reacted to a realistic threat of support being withdrawn if group members did not behave as stipulated by programme officials. Nevertheless, they were exclusionary, particularly for women like Akugiziibwe living with impairments understood as 'madness' or 'slow learning.' The standard established made little space for variation in life circumstances or bodily-mental characteristics. While Lidia sustained constant presence in the market by performing all her domestic tasks there (including washing and childcare), this was harder for others. Jovia, as a wheelchair user, could not easily transport washing into the market or quickly protect it from rain, because she moved around her leaky stall by pushing with her hands. This left no way to carry at the same time. Pain arising from impairments was also a factor, contributing to Alinaitwe's failure to work 'steadily' making *kwete* beer.

Clark argues that despite evidence trading is considered ideal 'nursing-mother work', this is not because it is physically easy to integrate the two, but because the regular supply of cash it provides suits female financial responsibilities for family subsistence (Clark 1999: 725). Markets are dangerous for children and most stallholders arranged childcare elsewhere if they could. Lidia brought her baby with her to the market and criticised Safia and Khadija for staying away for their infant children's sake. However, Lidia's baby was cared for outside school time by her older daughters, while Safia and Khadija had no older children. Safia, a wheelchair-user, could not chase her toddler, so he was liable to get lost. Possibilities for childcare elsewhere are no more evenly distributed than physical capacities (see chapter 4 on disability-related personal care). Within the 'one size fits all' entrepreneurship-based approach, differences arising from impairment effects and family situation were discounted.

Obligation and the 'activity' standard

Careful consideration of the business trajectories above also demonstrates some decisions not aligned with judgments of 'activity.' Esther searched for a business Akugiziibwe could run, feeling it important that she benefit despite knowing she was unlikely to meet the standard. Her attempt ultimately failed, but creative thought and work went into it. She also continued to include Alinaitwe after the disaster of her maize mill and her failure to work steadfastly brewing *kwete*. Other factors than 'activity' were part of her decision-making, particularly in relation to the history of DWG.

Alinaitwe was the founder and Chairperson and took an important role within the group that was unrelated to NGOs and government: she was a social mediator, particularly with neighbours in the market. Akugiziibwe was also a founding member and Esther explained the commitment to her explicitly through this long-term association. Although these motivations did not fit with the 'activity' standard, they could not be completely separated from funding decisions.

Esther also developed funding proposals for a joint business, variously a hardware store or wholesale business. This would be owned by the group, managed by 'active' members, and provide employment or other support for those who 'do not know how to run a business.' None of these proposals were successful, one being ruled ineligible because the organisation 'targets household income,' and used a reporting system that tracked specific benefits to individuals (imagined as heads of households).[40]

Rossi argues situations conceptualised as 'development aid' construct a 'political game' that structures aid 'recipients' and the brokers working with them into different 'worlds of knowledge.' However, this conceptual structure does not accurately describe how either party acts (Rossi 2006: 28); rather, people respond dynamically to situations using ideas with different conceptual bases. DWG funding decision-making drew on multiple strands of thought about obligation and entitlements. Esther was committed to the 'active' persona and worked with the CDO to shape other disabled people this way. However, she also recognised not everyone would, or could, follow this route, and valued her relationships with those who acted differently. These relationships were based on different social norms, discussed in chapters 3 to 6.

As a disabled councillor, Esther had a complex position. As Secretary of DWG, she was a broker conveying benefits from NGOs that assumed she was distributing to an association of equal individuals. But she was also an intermediary patron for the NRM in its patronage, rather than its developmental, form. In this mode, 'gifts' arrived from the Office of the

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[40] Organisations, too, are accountable to others, in this case for promoting 'independent living' for disabled people. Requiring individual businesses makes sense to demonstrate results in this form but did not fit recipients' desires.

Prime Minister (OPM) or MPs seeking re-election and Esther sought to obtain them for her followers, especially DWG members, working with the CDO to influence lists of beneficiaries. The institutions she connected to held contradictory images of 'community.' In her words, she had multiple 'accountabilities.' Toward funders she was responsible for fostering capital into a sustainable input; toward her disabled clients she must foster obligations arising from and necessitating long-term connection and support.

These accountabilities were not easily reconciled, and Esther's decisions were sometimes challenged. Some of those Esther judged 'inactive' and consequently stopped funding experienced the change as personal rejection. Alinda, the deaf DWG member who uses crutches (see chapter 1), told me DWG had 'helped her' in the past, donating beans for her to sell. However, after she used money from the sales for school fees and some of the beans were stolen, she asked Esther for more but was refused: 'akaleka kubitwara' [she stopped bringing them [the beans]]. 'Tibanyeta baha…banagire obwire bugenzire biingi' [they never call me…they dumped me a long time ago]. The verb she used, '-kunaga' typically refers to throwing something away.

Alinda expected an ongoing relationship, based on an idiom of patronage common in Uganda, in which someone initiating hierarchical giving (with no expectation of return in kind) is expressing affection and desire to bind patron and client together. This draws on the pre-colonial political infrastructure of Ugandan kingdoms, where power was expressed as 'love' and 'relationships of mutual obligation between people with authority and those they ruled' were made 'visible in gifts of land, gifts, and service' on a grand, kingdom-building scale (Hanson 2003: 1–5). Although disrupted as a national political technique before and after colonisation (in Bunyoro, particularly due to British imposition of Baganda chiefs (Doyle 2006a: 96–110)), similar understandings of obligation remained. In charitable activities, 'prior giving…creates a precedent and…obligation for future gifts' (Scherz 2014: 89); one interviewee told me NGOs have a 'responsibility' to support disabled people 'because it was them who first came and started helping.'

Esther's frustration with these expectations was clear in her comments about Akugiziibwe and her family: 'If you give to them, they just want you to give more' (see also Whyte 2020: S136). This was not possible, because there were no more goods to distribute from the NEF

grant and she could not apply for more without an additional business plan demonstrating 'progress' in Alinda and Akugiziibwe's livelihood security. However, Esther's frustration did not mean she considered the women's claims on DWG invalid. Her assertion that it was important Akugiziibwe benefit from the NEF grant because of her long-term membership demonstrated Esther too considered obligations to correlate with relationships.

In what follows, I investigate objections that were raised about the NEF funding distribution and how these were negotiated within the group and with the donor. Most objections arose from disagreements about the types of relationships along which resources should flow. These experiences evoked turbulent emotional responses, leading to allegations of corruption, and one former member, Nabila, leaving the group.

Criticisms of funding decisions were directed at the officers of DWG, not the organisation whose policies they implemented. Similarly, in Kenya, Cooper reports sponsorship recipients not believing that an organisation had downsized the support they sent to children and blaming local staff for skimming it, feeding into a broader discourse of 'confidence in foreigners and disparagement of locals' (Elizabeth Cooper 2014: 44–5). The broker role was key in this dynamic, as Esther negotiated over substantial distances between unequally powerful ideas about how support should work, read frequently through a lens of white supremacy that assumed European donors were benevolent and 'local' brokers would 'eat.'

Negotiating the 'activity' standard

Three other challenges (in addition to Alinda's) were raised about Esther's distribution of the NEF grants, with one triggering concerns about 'corruption' and negative attention from the donor. Firstly, as described earlier, Harriet and other members who received shoes as their asset complained about the low value of their allocation compared to the leaders' larger portions, reporting their objections to NEF staff on a monitoring visit. Secondly, Nabila took up their dispute, arguing the money should have been divided equally between members and that by assigning different amounts to different businesses, with the highest going to their own, the officers had 'eaten' the money.[41] After this intervention, Esther was

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[41] This common phrase is associated with 'corruption', a major concern in development circles. However, the unambiguously negative interpretation of 'eating' seen in anti-corruption campaigns, which make 'eating'

summoned to a meeting at the NEF office to explain her actions, endangering her position as controller of 'development' inputs and revealing the precarity of the broker role.

Thirdly, Khadija complained to her friends that Esther had 'stolen' her idea for a business and given her instead one that did not suit her abilities, being routine and 'boring.' The first two objections turned, like Alinda's, on claiming the standard of 'activity' was illegitimate and the money should have been allocated otherwise. Khadija's was different: she accepted the standard of 'activity' but argued it had not been applied in her case.

Esther's uneven distribution of funding matched NEF policy. Explaining her role in assessing applications, an NEF staff member told me she considered: 'do these people really exist, is it a right target of people [i.e. are these really disabled people], what are their capacities?' NEF did not intervene in decision-making about the distribution of projects, arguing they were thereby empowering the group. Group leaders are told overall maximum budgets and then it is the role of the group to determine how to assign individual businesses. Disagreeing with Nabila's argument, she added:

> 'We don't say "they have to get equal share." No. It is your idea, what matters. Because it is that thing that you think you are going to do that is going to…add value to your life. But then you know, we have to see, if you have asked for a salon, then we have to see, what will you need for your salon? You start outlining "this, this, this," what is the cost for each item?'

During the meeting she had been summoned to, Esther described the process she had followed, and staff members concluded it matched their policy.[42] Harriet had *asked* for a shoe project, and Esther had costed the requirements. It was not a problem that Harriet received less valuable assets than the more complex stationery shop, particularly because Esther was more experienced and had higher 'capacity' to manage a bigger business. The staff member dismissed the dispute, claiming there are always people who join a group

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symbolic of an outdated 'culture which we must denounce and do away with if we are to start a new nation' (Winnie Byanyima, quoted in Tripp 2000: 1), is not the only attitude towards it, as explored below.

[42] The exception is Khadija's case, because her 'idea' was not respected. However, she never complained to NEF.

after it had become successful: 'for them, they don't mind how much you got, they think that money is always there for them to benefit from…They forget that you have to follow…your budget line…that was approved from your donor.' According to the staff member, these are the people who claim: 'that person is eating our money.'

Different implicit group structures underlie Nabila's and the staff member's concepts of fairness. Nabila, who, as I explained in the Introduction, takes a combative approach to disability justice after being trained by a UK-based NGO, thought the group should be based on a presumption of equality. She concluded her argument by telling me DWG gives money to those who are 'close' to the leaders, but those who are far away or 'weak in the mind,' like Akugiziibwe, get nothing. Personal and historical reasons for unequal distribution were illegitimate; funding should not follow *particular* relationships but be allocated impersonally, as though each member had the same relationship with the group and with the donor.

This model resembles the 'associational' mode of community conceptually tied to 'civil society' and citizenship (see for example Guyer 1994: 223). NEF, however, saw themselves as funding a 'community.' Khadiagala argues development interventions' failures to theorise community leave it with an idealised content, 'emphasiz[ing] the values of social harmony, co-operation, and compromise' and 'obscur[ing] the ability of local elites to use informal institutions for purposes of social control' (Khadiagala 2001: 57–9). NEF pictured the group as internally differentiated, with a constitution enforced by an elected officer group and members with different levels of 'capacity.' There was no assumption of equality. However, they also assumed, unless it was proven otherwise, that decisions were made fairly, according to a constitution that was the product of Khadiagala's 'co-operation and compromise.'

Neither model matched DWG. Nabila was the only member who demanded complete equality; most thought funding should be determined partly by personal history. And 'co-operation and compromise', while present, had limits. Nabila left the group after the dispute was resolved in Esther's favour, a decision also associated with her failed bid for election and therefore part of a power struggle within the 'disabled community.' During my fieldwork, she no longer even greeted the members when she passed in the market.

Esther was able to reassert her legitimacy and regain the donor's trust, partly through familiarity with bureaucratic techniques of audit. With NEF staying out of DWG's internal governance, oversight of the grant was based on just one thing: 'are they still following their budget line?' After the controversy, Esther was particularly diligent with reporting, providing additional 'accountabilities' reports.

Most anthropological literature on audit considers 'The culture of auditing…[to be] based on an emphasis on efficiency and consequentialism which does away with the notion of duty' (Giri 2000: 192), hence working to obscure or deny responsibilities (Bear 2013). While NEF's approach could be read this way,[43] it does not do justice to the range of conceptions of accountability in DWG and NEF. Recent literature on audit in the humanitarian sector emphasises the ethical work carried out by actors throughout the aid chain, who 'w[eave] several kinds of responsibility together' (Halvorson 2017: 80).

In practice, despite the claim to stay out of the group, NEF's oversight required relationship building. The staff member expected to build trust with a group gradually: 'you don't just believe them,' but must investigate through visits like the one during which Harriet complained. Once trust was built, as eventually it was with DWG, she lessened her intervention. Later visits were not about compliance but conceptualised by both parties as affectionate, 'between friends.' 'You don't just leave them because a project has ended so no more interaction.'

'Friendship' however, can always be fragile. Esther's continued pre-emptive removal of 'inactive' participants from new applications and her commitment to appear 'transparent' through audit seemed rigid, but it was motivated by her care for the relationship between DWG and NEF (Neumark 2020: 132 argues similarly about excessive documentary surveillance conducted by informal bureaucrats in a Nairobi slum). Through fostering the

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[43] NEF annual reports cite termination of funding relationships but every report since 2013 has stated 'No reimbursement demands were made' because 'There was no indication of misuse of funds.' Some DWG members *did* allege misuse of NEF funds, but using a different definition of 'misuse,' claiming funds should have been evenly divided, whereas NEF reports principally on whether 'persons with disabilities had been the main beneficiaries of the disbursed funds.'

relationship, she could discharge some of the discordant obligations entailed on the 'new' NRM-era disabled leader.

'Eating' and leadership

Audit was never used *within* DWG. Esther used her personal comport, particularly her status as an 'omwekambi' [hardworking person] who was willing to 'suffer,' to assert her authority to lead. Nabila's accusation that Esther was 'eating' was powerful; however, it was evaluated in context and did not invalidate her authority. 'The semantic field of 'eating'…comprises diverse meanings that range from positive nurturing and feeding to the negative acts of stealing and radical destruction' (Behrend 2013, 28). In pre-colonial Ugandan kingdoms 'eating' formed a component of legitimate power, and rituals such as the blood brotherhood rite, which involved 'eating friendship' by consuming each other's blood, were considered essential for social cohesion (Beattie 1958a, 1960: 90; Behrend 2013: 29; Ward 2005: 101).

Certain kinds of 'eating' still have substantial legitimacy. The term was widely used in Rubuga to positively index prosperity. In addition, with insufficient government salaries prompting government officials to seek cash incomes from places like markets, in which 'the line between formal and informal management, and 'eating' and corruption [becomes] blurred' (Gombay 1997: 135), ordinary people can claim they are entitled to 'eat.' Makara writes that when he asked a residents' association that had lost a valuable contract for collecting garbage whether they were 'purely voluntary', a representative argued 'voluntarism in a poor community was problematic because "people have to find what to eat"' (Makara 2009: 387).

Esther, who is not paid for her role as Secretary of DWG or mentorship of other groups but spends a substantial amount of time on them, made a similar argument, telling a friend, in relation to her councillor role, 'I am poor, how can I not eat?'[44] (See also Gupta 1995: 386.) After complaining about a district-level disabled politician appropriating a cow intended for

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[44] Although Esther's father was rich he had a very large number of children, so she had not inherited assets from him.

disabled youth, she commented 'You can eat a little, but at least you make sure that the poor get something.'

Muir and Gupta write 'accusations of corruption can function as powerful but unpredictable political weapons, capable of subjecting normally tolerated practices to harsh scrutiny and opprobrium' (Muir & Gupta 2018: S8). Where Nabila saw illegitimacy in channelling resources to those with a high stake in DWG, others considered this appropriate; where she thought Akugiziibwe should get more and Esther less, NEF disagreed (see van Schendel & Abraham 2005: 8). Most disabled people in Rubuga considered Esther's actions within the bounds of the 'normally tolerated' in the political push and pull of distribution, even though she received more than others.

At times when the legitimacy of Esther's resources could be questioned, she made efforts to ensure she was judged deserving. In 2017, I attended a parliamentary election with Lidia, who was part of Rubuga's electoral college, and Esther, attending as Lidia's UgSL interpreter. As delegates affiliated to the NRM, Lidia, Esther, and their colleagues expected the NRM 'flagbearer' candidates to give them allowances for food and accommodation, which would normally be larger than their actual expenses. Instead, they received only a smaller allowance from the electoral commission.

Palpable anger simmered among the NRM electors,[45] but many spent the electoral commission money to fill the gap. Lidia, Esther, and I, however, 'stayed hungry' for several days, my companions refusing to spend the electoral commission allowance or accept my offers to pay for food. Esther explained they could not spend the allowance because they had to 'make accountability.' Confused, I questioned whether we shouldn't therefore use the money as it had been intended. Esther replied 'no, for us we have many accountabilities.'

Their 'many accountabilities' required them to mobilise the behaviour of self-sacrificing parsimony proper to the businesswoman, using the money on the way home to buy stock in Kampala for their businesses. We could have used a little of the allowance to buy street

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[45] The election results may have been affected: the NRM 'flagbearers' were beaten by challengers from within the party.

food, but even this was refused: *all* the money had to be invested. In Catholic Brazil, Mayblin writes: 'the ability to suffer…defines the moral person. It brings the person closer to God' (Mayblin 2010: 80). For Esther and Lidia, their suffering while 'staying hungry' was similarly redemptive, legitimising their right to the position of elector and assistant and the income the positions brought.

Because the behaviour proper to a self-sacrificing businesswoman took such an important role in debates about leadership and the resources it brought, Khadija's complaint was more problematic than the others. Before the first NEF grant, NEF staff came to Kicweka to ask each member what business they wanted. Khadija told them she had been trained in computing in Kampala by UNAD and wanted to open a computer hub and stationery shop. However, when Esther submitted the application, she had changed the requests, writing that Khadija wanted a grocery business, and asking for the computing business for herself.

Khadija told me Esther 'STOLE IDEA MINE' and claimed Esther had (discriminatorily) thought a deaf person would fail if they tried to run this kind of business. Khadija's complaint was twofold. Firstly, she had been cheated of her 'idea' and left with a 'boring' business when she was capable of running something more complex.[46] Secondly, Esther's implementation of the idea was flawed. Esther was not using the goods she received because she did not feel they were enough to make the business viable. Khadija pointed out she had left the computer in her house, where rats had eaten the cables and 'spoiled' it. Khadija's criticism turned the metric of 'activity' against Esther and found her wanting, threatening the root of her justified authority. Khadija never communicated her complaints to NEF, but her discussion of them may have furthered the sense among deaf DWG members that they were side-lined (see chapter 5).

The consequences for Khadija were severe. During my first visit to DWG, she worked in the market every day, but as the months and years went by and she was still working as an assistant on Lidia's stall, she became less diligent, complaining customers were too far between, until eventually she was only coming for the Friday market. When I greeted her in the market, asking 'LIFE HOW?' [How is life?] she typically responded 'SLOW+ BORED SELLING+'

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[46] Esther questioned this assertion, and NEF probably would have too. Khadija was being 'trained' on Lidia's market stall and was not yet considered to have demonstrated extensive business skills.

[Very slow. I'm bored of just selling]. Almost everyone in the market expressed boredom sometimes – it was part of the market's hardships – but it was not equally distributed.

Khadija was unusual within DWG. She was from a later generation than other core members, having joined in the early 2010s, and was still a 'youth.' She also had a slightly richer background than most: her mother ran a small but successful shop that had enabled her studies in Kampala. Using a smartphone her family bought her, she kept in touch with a group of 'elite' deaf youth focused on the capital city (see Lutalo-Kiingi & De Clerck 2015). While Lidia and Esther found fulfilment in their businesses, and for Safia and Alinaitwe the market was where they had their most important relationships (see chapter 4), Khadija seemed like the youth described in literature on 'waithood' (a termed coined in Honwana 2012 to refer to an underemployed generation trapped in perpetual youth status).

Mains and Masquelier argue the experiences of 'boredom' their interlocutors describe arose from the blockage of their aspirations: young men who had *expected* to 'progress over time' (Mains 2007: 660) were unable to find resources to do so and 'Out of their disengagement with the flow of things,' 'a condition of reiterative 'bare' repetition,' 'emerges a distinct feeling of alienation and anomie' (Anderson 2004: 746; Masquelier 2013: 481–2). Esther and Lidia felt the monotony and rigour of their routines of selling, and sometimes complained about them, but their evident feeling of 'building' (Nielsen 2013) made this bearable. For Khadija, the promise of the disability movement seemed blocked.

Conclusion

Moral debate within DWG draws on varied strands within disability politics. Some interventions, like Alinda's complaints, clearly opposed tying funding to successful navigation of entrepreneurship. Others, like Nabila's, had more ambiguous relationships with the neoliberal style of capitalist market at the base of NGO models. She drew on conceptions of civic equality derived from teaching from the same NGOs that promoted entrepreneurship but rejected market differentiation between members.

Nabila's challenge caused a major disruption within the politics of disability in Kicweka when she left DWG. Ironically, her challenge was more sustainable as a critique of NEF's funding model than of Esther's leadership. While she argued Esther's personalist relationship-based

distribution of funding was what disenfranchised those who are 'weak in the mind,' like Akugiziibwe, my analysis shows Akugiziibwe's exclusion was produced by the funding design. It was Esther's commitment to obligations based on long-term shared history, contrary to NEF policy, that linked Akugiziibwe to NEF funding at all. Her attempt to do so aimed to reconcile the competing and partially contradictory obligations to entrepreneurship and clienthood facing the disabled leader under the NRM disability dispensation.

Khadija's accusations involved negotiating the relational obligations between members of the group *within* the activity standard: was the young and inexperienced Khadija, still an assistant to Lidia, an appropriate person to receive such a big investment? After she was refused, was it worthwhile for her to sink time into the market with only a small capital? The complexity meant Esther and Lidia were always facing multiple audiences as leaders. The need to distinguish, brought about by the requirements of funding, was only reinforced by the internal politics of the organisation, working to further entrench Esther and Lidia's 'omwekambi' behaviour to justify their greater shares.

Within these questions, it is important to pay attention to material conditions of life in Kicweka. While Esther refused to accept businesses could legitimately collapse because essential expenses were too high for the capital to sustain, DWG members struggling to meet her standard raised questions about the possibility of progress (touching on Khadija's blocked aspirations), which I discuss in the next chapter. In practice, no DWG member's livelihood relied entirely on entrepreneurship, and most were evident hybrids between survivalist business and projects of connection to patronage. The next chapter looks at how the apparent contradictions could be managed.

Chapter 3 – The recipient in the businesswoman, the businesswoman in the recipient

Institutions providing business grants envisaged their recipients having particular kinds of livelihood, involving strict division between business and personal expenses. Their assumptions were taught explicitly in 'financial literacy' classes, which recommended a form of planning based on meticulous book-keeping. On her return from one of these sessions, Safia told me they had been asked to define where they wanted to get to and then write down all the steps they would take to get there. Afterwards, they must diligently monitor their progress using accounting techniques, recording all transactions in 'purchases' and 'sales' books and using them to calculate rates of profit daily.

This system contrasted with the 'plastic pots' method used by DWG leadership (chapter 1), particularly in its relationship to the future, which must be pictured and worked toward precisely rather than roughly projected. The underlying epistemology is based on a form of causal reasoning Morton calls 'homogenous time': 'The cause and…effect must remain linked through some mechanism—a chain of other proximate events leading from one to the next—otherwise the claim to causation will be judged illegitimate' (Morton 2019: 679). DWG members saw value in this approach, reading and recording the headings of sample tables during trainings with an unusual intensity. Nevertheless, none of the members adopted it, not even Lidia, who did use written records to track restocking and pricing.

Most people in Kicweka blend financial modalities in a way that is difficult to capture through income/outgoings analysis. Some spending is speculative, some is long-term investment in family safety nets. Family and friends often make legitimate demands on traders' resources; the difficulty of managing relationships while protecting one's 'capital' is so widely understood it is the subject of jokes.[47] None of the women I worked with was

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[47] Alice's neighbour once exaggeratedly pretended offense when her request for some peanuts from Alice's stall was denied. The neighbour kept pushing, accusing Alice of not wanting to be friends, until Alice said 'businesi tekwenda abanywani' [a business doesn't want friends] and the neighbour burst out laughing. One way to 'protect' capital against legitimate requests is through savings groups (see Guerin 2006: 555; Vokes & Mills 2015: 333). This may have contributed to the over-saving the CDO criticised in DWG members.

financially secure enough to keep her business fully separate from 'personal' spending. This blending of financial modes was necessary because of restricted capital and demand, which made the micro-businesses established by disability-related inputs insufficient for survival.

Sponsoring the 'active' businesswoman

Some NGO staff members recognised this problem. Li argues NGO action involves 'understandings and practices worked out in the contingent and compromised space of cultural intimacy' and Neveling points out NGO workers engage with '(global) plurals,' including contradictions within the development industry (Li 1999: 295; Neveling 2017: 165; see also Shakya 2011). Just as Esther's position is more complex than it first appears, NGO and government workers' actions do not always fit comfortably into the 'different worlds' conception that considers the 'active' businesswoman the opposite of the 'lazy recipient.' In fact, for grant-based entrepreneurship programmes to work at all it must be possible to combine the recipient with the businesswoman.

Receiving child sponsorship is more complex to incorporate into a businesswoman persona, because the target of the grant is family subsistence, conceptualised as the motivation for mothers to work hard. However, despite the strength of this moralising strand, sometimes being a sponsorship recipient can be made discursively coherent with being an 'active' businesswoman. Solomon, the Ugandan manager of the organisation that sponsored Jovia and Alinda's children, did not only present the women as 'needy,' even though their need formed a large part of his narrative. He frequently used DWG members, Jovia in particular, as examples of resourcefulness, asking them to give 'testimonies' during training meetings to exhort other guardians to greater efforts.

By comparison with other women, who 'just sit, waiting for their husbands to provide', he described the DWG members 'grabbing every opportunity.' Here DWG members were presented as self-sufficient, exactly as Lidia and Esther wanted (Solomon did not know Lidia or Esther and based his assessment of Jovia on the less 'active' DWG members he did know). The example Solomon gave me was that Jovia was constructing a house to rent out, a project he became inserted in through advising her to use some discretionary 'gift' money

(received from her younger daughter's sponsor) for roofing.[48] The Jovia he described was a dynamic investor, able to transform herself (with the organisation's help) from a straightened situation in which she only sold firewood, making a very precarious living, into a prosperous future.

The coherence of neediness and economic activity could also be communicated to donors in the UK, but, because of fears about 'dependency' and desires not to support those who are 'lazy', it took a particular form. In 2019, Jovia appeared in the organisation's monthly newsletter. Below a picture of a smiling Jovia seated in her wheelchair outside her house, the profile read:

> *Disability, not Inability*
>
> In Uganda people living with a disability face hostility and opposition. Once regarded as a burden, Jovia has overcome all the odds and now takes care of her 3 children, 7 orphaned children and her elderly mother.
>
> Jovia, 43, a single mother was left paralysed after catching malaria as a toddler. Because of her disability her parents didn't see any value in sending her to school, so [she] wasn't educated.
>
> Two of Jovia's children are sponsored through [Solomon's organisation] and thanks to their support, and an adult education project, she is now able to read and write a little.
>
> In 2017 the…Child Sponsorship team delivered some training for caregivers to address a 'poverty mindset.' During the training participants were tasked with identifying their skills and potential, and considering what they could achieve.
>
> 'The training was an eye opener,' says Jovia. 'Because of my disability I grew up in a very negative environment, I was continually belittled, isolated and rejected. I wasn't included in school, social activities or church. I wasn't considered to be of any value, I

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[48] Bornstein notes discretionary additional gifts from sponsors are the most common cause of jealousy in recipient populations (Bornstein 2005: 83). Jovia's younger daughter received particularly high-value gifts. The princess dress that triggered Lidia's criticisms in chapter 1 was bought with Christmas money.

was just a burden to my parents and my community. Thanks to the mindset training I began to believe in myself and was determined to move on in life.'

Since the training Jovia has opened a stall in the local market selling household goods and grains. She now makes enough money each day to feed her children well.

Building on her success, Jovia has been able to purchase some land on which she plans to build a house and a two room commercial unit to rent out; and she has bought a sewing machine to train her daughter in tailoring. This amazing woman is looking after her late brothers' 7 children, her own 3 kids and her elderly mother.

Once a burden, Jovia is now taking care of 11 family members!

It is easy to dismiss this narrative by pointing out factual errors: for example, Jovia did not start her business after the training on 'poverty mindsets;' she had been the first to suggest DWG should trade in the market, in the 2000s.[49] There appeared to be a link between the training and her business because her previous business had collapsed, and she received a UWEP loan to start a new one just after the training. However, the profile is more interesting as an example of how business activity can be legitimately combined with recipient status.

There is a specific temporal relationship between need and success: need belongs to the time before the sponsorship organisation intervened; after receiving support, Jovia achieves success and becomes a provider for her family (similar narrative structures appeared in many of the organisation's profiles). This articulation is closely tailored to its intended audience, the organisation's sponsors. Jovia's movement can only be legitimate in one direction: forward to a prosperous future. However, the gaps between the profile's narrative and a longer-term view of Jovia's life reveal a more complex temporality. Jovia has experienced repeated business failures and the reversal of flows of resources. One of the collapses happened during my fieldwork, and affected the new business described in the profile.

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[49] She was also given her sewing machine by an NGO that trained her in tailoring, rather than buying it, and her family was supportive of her, not 'negative.'

Jovia is a second-generation migrant, a Lugbara woman born in Rubuga to parents from Arua District, over ten hours away by public transport. In November 2018, Jovia's brother was murdered, and she returned to her family home in Arua District for the funeral. She stayed away for a month, leaving her daughters to run the business. When she returned, she found they had 'eaten the capital': selling her entire stock and using the money for living expenses.[50]

Jovia was an important contributor to the funeral, donating goods from her business, and getting herself and her son to Arua district to attend would have cost almost 100,000 UGX. She was also a conduit for other people's gifts, collecting money from members of her clan living nearby and foodstuffs from DWG members, including Safia who is also a second-generation Lugbara migrant. However, after the business collapse Jovia was unable to contribute more to her family for a long time. My questions to Solomon and Jovia revealed Jovia's account of her role in the funeral was the basis of the profile's statement that she now supported her mother and late brothers' children. The profile must therefore have been written *after* the business collapse. Jovia did not hide her economic troubles from Solomon.

If Solomon knew about the reversal in her fortunes, why did he present such a triumphal narrative of Jovia's life? Solomon tailored his account to what (he thought) the donors wanted, as he did when searching for 'orphans' rather than children whose parents were 'there but lazy.' The profile was also likely rewritten by employees or volunteers in the UK. Although the results were misleading (and troublingly so, if contingent life events could endanger recipients' belonging in the sponsorship scheme), he and the others involved were attempting what they thought of as a sensitive act of cultural translation.

Sponsorship typically happens through 'epistolary engagements' (O'Neill 2013: 212) conducted at a distance, making it difficult for sponsors to understand recipients' marginal economic lives. Although Solomon's organisation promises on its website 'you get the chance to build up a friendship with [the sponsored child] and become like their Aunty or Uncle,' in practice the connection is highly attenuated. Sponsorship organisations, including

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[50] The children may have had to do this to survive, but Jovia nevertheless complained about their extravagance.

Solomon's, routinely redact names and addresses of sponsors from the letters delivered to sponsored children, to prevent the child making additional requests (Bornstein 2005: 78; Elizabeth Cooper 2014: 44; O'Neill 2013: 213). The difficulty of communicating across country and class contexts places intense scrutiny on the letters exchanged, especially for the children, who are heavily coached on the task. In Solomon's organisation they were gathered in a conference hall and instructed to write about topics that seemed strange to them, such as their dogs; O'Neill reports the same non sequitur: in Uganda and Guatemala, dogs are not usually pets (O'Neill 2013: 214).

'Aunties and Uncles' in Bunyoro are paradigmatically people who can be asked to provide for their nieces and nephews. On the father's side, they are 'one's own people,' bound by normative expectations of mutual aid within which support can be negotiated; on the mother's, an 'affectionally intimate' (though potentially dangerous) relationship exists in which children have a right to demand food and can borrow any item from their mother's brother's home without asking (Beattie 1957, 1958b). The relationship with a sponsor is different; any 'intimacy' is felt by the sponsor but not the sponsored and arrangements are made by the former with little consultation of the latter.

Solomon, however, knew the economic dimensions of relationships sponsored families had with their kin, including the opportunities and dangers. In Kicweka, networks of kin are an essential hedge against hard(er) times, but, as other ethnographies show, legitimate demands for resources are viewed positively or negatively according to circumstances: as building relationships that can be relied upon, or as draining resources and potentially endangering a livelihood (Bähre 2007; Han 2012; Neumark 2017). Recognising the importance of fostering a familial safety-net, as well as its negative concomitants, Solomon did not criticise Jovia when her business collapsed because she was absent at her brother's funeral. Instead, he praised her for giving support to her family.

Lidia, by contrast, criticised taking time off for funerals, arguing that when someone is poor, they must minimise their time at burials (a rule she applied to herself). She followed the advice of NGO trainers, who advised putting the business above all else, reducing even essential expenses when there is not enough capital to sustain them: 'amagoba matito, turaara enjaara' [when there is little profit, we sleep hungry]. However, Lidia, as I discussed

in chapter 2, had little prospect of support from her extended family. By contrast, Jovia worked hard to foster kinship connections.

This activity was enabled by, not separate from, her sponsorship income, as well as her business grants and loans. Some access to money is necessary to make effective kinship claims, especially in situations involving migration and large distances: 'Attending and appropriately participating in funerals…is often a condition of being able to claim full membership in kinship groups' (Ferguson 2015: 134). Being able to return 'home', either as a refuge in old age and misfortune, as Jovia's mother had when her son was murdered, or for burial, was very important to many migrant Lugbara in Rubuga (see Alidri 2016).

The resources Jovia used for the funeral came primarily from the loan she had recently received from UWEP, which was supposed to expand her existing business. She used part of the cash to pay for transport and bought household goods for sale with the rest, taking some of them with her as a contribution to the funeral catering. Later, she used 'gift' money from her children's sponsors to contribute to her late brother's children's expenses. However, the directionality of familial support was not fixed. At less prosperous times (particularly between business grant/loan instalments) she received help from family members.

Giving to her family when she had resources was a method of keeping options open for the future, particularly retaining a claim on family land. Writing about migrant Lugbara in the 1950s, Middleton claims: 'The lands of southern Uganda are divided up, as far as the Lugbara themselves are concerned, into extensions of the sub-clan areas in Lugbaraland…and they are known by the corresponding Lugbara clan-names' (Middleton 1969: 44). Jovia's family controlled a network of land outside Arua district, with compounds and land rights in at least two villages in Rubuga district, one close to Kicweka; it was here Jovia planned to build rental accommodation. Even though Jovia was far from her family's home area, going back there was important to obtaining weight in family affairs in Rubuga. However, she had only 'gone home' to Arua for the first time as an adult, to join the celebrations for an International Day of Persons with Disabilities in the 2000s. Her ability to make claims on kin relied on disability-mediated resources from the start.

One-directional movement from recipient to provider was not an accurate way to understand Jovia's life trajectory or the effects of child sponsorship. Nor was the idea that sponsorship demotivates mothers. In scathing attacks on anthropologists equating positive sociality with an 'inner sphere' of the family, Geschiere and Ferguson argue against the 'tendency to oppose the "logic" of the market to the "logic" of communal solidarity, along with the related view that resources are accumulated in the cash economy (according to one set of rules) and distributed in the moral economy (according to another)' (Ferguson 2015: 121; Geschiere 2013: 29–31). 'Distributive work' like Jovia's with her family takes intellectual and physical effort and is economically interested, though it cannot be reduced to economic reasoning (Beattie and Geschiere also link family distribution to preventing spiritual dangers from jealousy, an issue that arose when I visited Jovia's family; see Beattie 1963: 51–2; Geschiere 2013).

Jovia's approach involved opportunistically combining the types of connection she could create and personae she could inhabit. However, she did so amid inequalities of wealth and power. For Solomon as an individual, her business collapse did not invalidate her identity as a dynamic and hardworking investor; but Solomon reported to managers and funders in the UK who worried about donor money not 'doing anything' (to change situations). 'Donor disillusionment' was a problem for the organisation.

Elisha argues 'compassion fatigue' among evangelical US Christians is produced by a fundamental incoherence in the theory of giving, not just clashing expectations of behaviour. In the evangelical approach, support offered by activists should be a 'free gift' of grace and ultimately unrepayable; however, if 'truly' accepted, it should fundamentally transform lives. When transformations do not run as deeply as expected, resentment arises. Jovia's business collapse would have triggered similar incoherence because it contradicted the developmental model of time: with 'development' inputs things *should* get better; if not, the inputs or recipient have failed. The 'progressive' temporality of development (see Ferguson 2006: 177–8) acts as a dominant 'time-map' (Bear 2014, 2016), normatively shaping accepted narratives.

These concerns are not restricted to religious sponsorship, just as Euro-American secular concepts of gifting are not divorced from Christian ideas (see Parry 1986: 468); Elisha calls

the Evangelicals' approach as 'much an effect of modern liberalism and middle-class idealism as…a testimony to the resurgence of conservative Protestantism in public life' (Elisha 2008: 183–4). Surviving in Kicweka market is unlike middle-class Euro-American ideals of continual growth. It is often subject to reversals like those experienced by Jovia, who was not the only stallholder whose business collapsed because of absence due to family illness and death.

As Whyte argues, lives are not lived in the temporality of calendar-based 'development project time;' their temporality is Guyer's 'arc of life,' which involves contingent events. Prosperity can be followed by 'subsequent impoverishment, indebtedness or the birth of new children.' Obligations that are tied to life-time rather than the calendar are a 'zone of constant mutual adjustment where obligation may cover a whole range of ways of being tied to one another' (Whyte 2020: S132; Guyer 2012: 496).

While Solomon presented donors with a straightforward narrative of exit from the recipient category, his actions in Kicweka were different. While parents had an attenuated relationship with sponsors, they interacted directly with Solomon and a network of area 'secretaries' in each village where the organisation sponsored children. The secretaries were usually relatively prosperous, educated women who had a child sponsored by the organisation. They disseminated information from Solomon and gave advice to other parents about childcare, government bureaucracy, and schooling.

Secretaries paid particular attention to parents with additional challenges, including some DWG members. Cooper argues villagers in Kenya engaged opportunistically with sponsorship, but relied on it less than 'interpersonal (often kin-based) relations of care and patronage' (Elizabeth Cooper 2014: 38). For Alinda, the relationship with her local 'secretary' Grace resembled the 'care and patronage' Cooper assumes belongs to *non-sponsorship-related* relationships. Alinda had experienced violence from her family, including an attack on her infant daughter. The organisation reacted to this event by rehousing her in a room in Kicweka within sight of Grace's house. Grace monitored Alinda, delivered additional material support, and referred tailoring customers to her; Alinda was a frequent visitor at Grace's home. This patronage relationship was mediated by the sponsorship organisation, not alternative to it. Alinda contrasted the 'help' received from

Grace with her experience of being 'dropped' by DWG, presenting it as better reflecting the ideal of a patronage relationship.

Alinda's case, however, is extreme; no other parent received this level of care. While Solomon had leeway to argue for special treatment and negotiate contingent life events, it was not limitless. Jovia's sponsorship could be endangered through repeated setbacks contradicting the newsletter profile. Even successful articulations of recipient and businesswoman may be unstable.

Building the future: uncertainty and the injunction to hope

NGOs and their donors are guided by a 'before/after' time-map (Bear 2014: 16; see also Gell 1992: 294), specifying the temporal and causal relationship between 'development' intervention and transformation. While Solomon did not expect separation of family and business resources or 'homogenous time'-based planning, his practice nevertheless enforced behavioural requirements derived from developmental time.

Jovia avoided the repetitive, ubiquitous presence Lidia considered crucial to business expansion and did not meticulously plan the route from investment to business success. Instead, her imagination constantly leaped ahead, projecting future advances to her businesses. Projects she described to me included using her sewing machine to make children's clothes, having a local missionary teach her how to make 'English' cakes to sell, building a property to rent out (as she told Solomon), and investing in farming via a relative. She had also been trained in hairdressing and given equipment by another NGO, a skill she occasionally used for profit but could not fully exploit because she had no power connection.

Like Lidia's constant presence in the market, Jovia's continual innovation could be interpreted as virtuous. When Solomon used Jovia as an example for other parents, he sometimes invoked constant effort, sounding more like Lidia than Jovia. However, his highest praise was for her openness to opportunities, exemplified by her attempt to become a landlord (hardly an example of commitment to sustained hard work for one's living).

Jovia practiced a modally diversified livelihood, putting resources into generating commercial, family-based, and patronage-oriented opportunities alongside each other,

blending multiple understandings of the causality of success. Many of her plans were unrealistic: there was not enough space to use her sewing machine at home, nor could she use it in the market because her shelter leaked; accumulation of materials for the rental property was so slow they degraded as she stored them on her family's land. Nevertheless, the plans were an important imaginative technique.

Fassin argues supplicant narratives of suffering elicited in applications for aid constitute 'an imposed exercise of subjectivation of the poor – that is, of the construction of the self as a subject of aid.' The narratives produced represent 'a skill acquired via years of contact with the bureaucracy of assistance' (Fassin 2012: 80). In Kicweka, the 'subject of aid' must display hope as much as suffering, generating multiple plausible schemes of accumulation that could meet the imperative for transformation over short timescales. Women who are used as exemplars for others, like Jovia, are particularly subject to the 'deep entrenchment of female heroism' (Segal 2015: 43). In Rubuga, women's assumed commitment to their families requires them to search endlessly for opportunities.[51] Jovia was highly skilled in producing narratives that charismatically recruited powerful others into her projects.

Jovia was often confident she would succeed. In Kicweka, personal progress is commonly expressed through whether one is 'building' (see also Nielsen 2013 on Mozambique); someone who is not able to build a house is not truly prosperous. The house stands symbolically for secure, respectable sufficiency.[52] During a conversation about her clever, though now deceased, brother, Jovia assured me: 'nanyowe ngenda kwombeka. Mukama arampereza, nyombeka' [and me I am going to build. God will give to me, I'll build]. At other times, Jovia doubted her ability to achieve her ambitious dreams.

Her conversation oscillated dramatically, from how windfalls such as sponsorship gifts and disability-related business grants could let her build a house so she could 'work properly,' to lamenting her businesses failures and their contingent causes, and back again. She told me 'nkwenda kukora businesi tibikurugamu' [I want to do business [but] nothing comes from it]. Her words reflected common complaints about the non-productivity of businesses in the

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[51] I benefited from discussions with Anna Wood on this topic.

[52] For Wan, writing about Yorubaland, building a home is 'tied to uncountable indices'; not simply an act of construction, it builds expansive social networks that constitute success (Wan 2001, 249).

market. Jovia's reference to God's role in her success resonates with a widely accepted assumption: each person's 'portion' [emihendo] is determined by God.[53] In Jovia's interpretation, this meant she had to 'wait' [kulinda] on God. There was trust and hope in this orientation, but also uncertainty: a common saying is 'Ruhanga wenka nuwe akumanya' [it is only God who knows].

This approach to planning, which Johnson-Hanks calls 'judicious opportunism', requires 'recognizing the difference between a promising and an unpromising offer' rather than following delineated steps toward a defined goal (Johnson-Hanks 2005, 370, see also Guyer 2004, 174). Enacting this is challenging. Among Kicweka's fragmented social provision it is difficult to judge what the outcome of a particular investment will be. As a resident of Farendé in Togo (another location with fragmented services) told Piot: '"We used to be able to count on things, knowing that if you did this you would get that…But today everything is in disorder. You never know when it will be your time, when you might get lucky and when not."' (Piot, 2010, p. 164)

When hopeful talk recruits powerful others into one's projects and one must seize every opportunity, constant fluctuation is a likely result. Jovia was frequently disappointed, including when, twice in a row, she lost money she had given a relative to plant maize to drought (they expected to split the profits, the relative using his portion to pay bridewealth). Like developmental temporality, 'judicious opportunism' is future-oriented. However, it may be better adapted than 'homogenous time' to the unpredictability of livelihoods in Kicweka.

Discussions of the non-productivity of businesses in Kicweka often used an implicit contrast with salaried work. In Rubuga English slang, 'you are working' is a greeting (used especially between young people), meaning 'you look good/healthy' (a metaphorical translation of a typical complimentary Runyoro greeting, 'onyesire' [you have become fat]). The phrase refers to aspirations to join the 'working class,' which was assumed to ensure an adequate regular income. Moses, the disabled cobbler whose tools were confiscated by market authorities (see Introduction), pointed out: 'if you [only] sell 20,000 [shillings worth of stock]

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[53] Lidia, who like Jovia is a devout Catholic, also assumes this.

per day, and you are paying rent of 80,000 [monthly], are you working?' Profit from 20,000 in sales would cover daily rent and food, but not further expenses, let alone saving. There is no way out: building a house, conceptualised as the solution to the rent trap, is impossible. Moses' implication was that labour that only produces enough to cover living costs is not 'real work'; to be 'working' is to be able to project a more secure prosperous situation into the future.

This commentary critiques the overwhelming problems of making a living in impoverished circumstances. Survival is most likely when multiple 'plans that seem to orient one's path into an unknown future are…developed and acted upon while knowing that their successful completion is uncertain if not unlikely' (Nielsen 2013: 85). Although hard work was expected and valued by Moses and others, they were ambivalent towards Lidia's single-minded endorsement of it, recognising that, with insufficiencies in capital and customer buying power (especially given high competition in petty trading), Lidia's approach was risky.

'Activity' and developmental temporality

Assessing how Lidia's repetitive presence and the imaginative projects Jovia generated relate to the positive assessment of 'activity' is not straightforward. It might seem Lidia's approach would fit the criteria better, but in fact *both* elements were necessary to be judged 'active.' One must show commitment through steadfastly executing projects *and* have ambitious plans for future development involving transformation from current circumstances. Homogenous time is not the only time associated with market-based capitalist activity (Bear 2014; Guyer 2007). Institutions delivering project funding carried two constraints: the need to show transformative 'development,' and the use of 'project time,' which set a limit within which results had to be demonstrated.

Jovia's plans were perfect as a project of self-fashioning oriented to such judgments (although this was not the only role they played for her), because they contained an ambitious leap that suggested radical change could happen on the short timescale of a development project rather than the nearly two decades Lidia had taken to build her business. Paradoxically, Jovia's lack of meticulous planning could be seen not as evidence she was not 'modern' and business-minded enough to succeed in the marketplace (as NGO financial training would suggest), but as demonstrating an exemplary progressive

orientation to the future and the ability to seize opportunities. Demonstrating the ability to 'transform' Jovia into such a person could provide 'evidence' for the NGO, as it did in Solomon's profile of her.

Two concepts of productivity were widely accepted in Kicweka: one based on homogenous time and meticulous financial planning; the other on gift, grace, and serendipity. Both responded to an unpredictable capitalist market environment. Economic life in the saturated market, where profit margins were tiny and new entrants appeared constantly, was extremely unpredictable, both in its dangers and its opportunities. For DWG members, who had access to multiple but small-scale funding sources based on disability, it was characterised by minor bonanzas, such receiving a grant or loan, followed by protracted periods trying to make the investment stretch until the next opportunity. Fragmentation of provision and the associated inability to know how an appeal would be judged (a common feature of assistance coded as 'discretionary,' see Fassin 2012: 65–6) triggered a generalised improvisation, where people tried out the strategies and arguments they thought would work best.

The behavioural imperatives of each mode differed, but they were rarely used alone; even Lidia, the most extreme DWG member, did not subscribe to a singular idea of temporal causality. Her focus on punctuality measured by clock-time invoked one kind of capitalist temporality, in which 'visible adherence to a regimen of punctuality and probity over the use of time…stands symbolically for a person's value in the market for credit' (Guyer 2004: 156–7), but she also recognised the productivity of Jovia's 'excessive' prayer, even if she didn't endorse her actions. During one conversation about Jovia's absence, Lidia told me Jovia prays all the time to get 'omugisa' [blessings], while Lidia herself prays a little and works a lot to get her money. Interested, I asked if Jovia gets the blessings she prays for. Lidia replied affirmatively: 'don't you see she has support for two of her children?'[54]

Jovia and Lidia's Catholic church was dedicated to St Jude Taddeo, the subject of an 'official-popular' devotional cult that encouraged lay involvement in church activities (Kassimir 1996: 254). The form of worship, even in the main sessions Lidia attended, was inflected by

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[54] No link existed between Jovia's church and her children's sponsorship; Lidia knew this.

charismatic responses to Pentecostalism (see Lado 2006). While Jovia, like many people as the influence of Pentecostalism increased, saw intercessory prayer as essential to producing prosperity (see Kauppinen 2018 on Ghana), Lidia was ambivalent. Both women recognised the efficacy of prayer, but they differed in how they assessed the practice of frequently calling upon it.

Lidia's claim 'God has made me a manager' spoke to *both* God's will *and* hard work, rather than opposing them (even though she did oppose them in other moments). Discussing the concept of 'self-sacrifice' in Brazilian Catholicism, Mayblin draws together two aspects of its 'productivity': 'thaumaturgic intervention in the affairs of the living' and 'the productive social relations it gives rise to in the present [world],' emphasising their similarities (Mayblin 2010: 92). For Lidia, these two forms of productivity were not equally virtuous. The physical rigour of hard work was superior to the bodily discipline of fasting and wakefulness involved in charismatic prayer (see Behrend 2013: 90).

Lidia and Esther often criticised Jovia's reliance on prayer and sponsorship for her prosperity, emphasising its risk to her business, and through that to the collective reputation of disabled people. Risk, however, also stalked businesses run on 'homogenous time.' Lidia frequently emphasised her 'strong' body and enormous capacity to work and suffer; however, misfortune such as illness could soon exhaust her capital. This was why Esther reflected so often on Lidia's responsibilities and sources of support. She used the same language whether referring to organisational sponsorship or family support: Lidia had 'all these children on her head' and no-one else to help. She worried about Lidia's failure to build a personalised safety net focused on child support, either through family relationships or sponsorship links. By considering only market-based entrepreneurial work valid, Lidia neglected the effort Jovia put into making her diverse income streams build different kinds of relationships.

Jovia's familial and entrepreneurial strategies were entwined. Despite criticism by DWG's leaders, Jovia's approach may better fit the role of NGO recipient in a fragmented projectized setting. Nevertheless, Jovia's relationship with Solomon and her sponsors became a source of suspicion and motivation for criticism by other DWG members, affecting their willingness to include her in future business grants, through judging her insufficiently

'active.' Judgment by different people, against imprecisely knowable criteria, was a general condition of the patchwork livelihood, with consequences that could not all be anticipated.

Section 2

Chapter 4 – Care and dependency in DWG

Alice was a core DWG member and wheelchair user. She ran a small shop from the veranda of her one-room rented home on a busy side-road, near the market where most DWG traders are based. When we first, Alice was living with her only child, a daughter, Gift, who was 16 and in secondary school. On evenings, weekends, and holidays, Gift helped in the business, as well as doing most of the domestic work. This arrangement is normal for adolescent girls in Kicweka, but Gift also provided non-standard assistance. As a wheelchair user, Alice could not perform some routine activities in Kicweka's built environment. Many items were stored high up in her home because of limited space; Gift provided essential support to reach them, making her more-than-usually tied to the shop, even when her specific tasks were completed.

Gift also provided some personal care. To use the shared latrines, Alice, whose wheelchair was too large to enter the cubicle, would have to crawl on the floor, which was often filthy. Instead, she used a plastic pot inside her room, which Gift emptied. In conversations I had with Lidia about her own expanding family (Lidia had five children and wanted one more) she contrasted her situation to Alice's, arguing only having one child was perilous. If Gift were to leave or refuse to help, Alice would have no-one. Beyond being problematic in the present, this would be disastrous for her old age.

Before moving to her shop on the side-road, Alice had worked as assistant to Esther in the market. The women pooled their resources and shared the profits (unevenly because Esther invested more capital). Working on an established vendor's stall is a common route into the market, usually accessed through extended families (see Monteith 2018: S20). In Kicweka, identification through shared disability can play this role. Through their shared business Alice saved to form her own capital, breaking away from Esther in 2015 (Gift had left school and become available throughout the day). She explained 'I am older now and I wanted to start my own business and have the responsibility alone.'

One motivation for the split was to address her care situation. Now able to use business funds without reference to a senior partner, she offered a home and support with school fees to her nephew Byaruhanga, whose father – Alice's brother – had been murdered.

Byaruhanga took over tasks Gift had performed at the shop in the evenings, while Gift retained the domestic work. Alice explained her decision as both assistance to Byaruhanga, who had no-one to care for him, and a source of help for herself. Nevertheless, paying Byaruhanga's school fees was difficult: sometimes Alice had to deplete her capital or use inputs intended for business expansion. Because of the moral sanctions against using business money for 'personal' needs and Esther's role in enforcing them (see chapter 2), she could not have used resources from the shared business this way.

Several months later, Gift suddenly left, travelling to eastern Uganda with a boyfriend. This provoked incredulity because Gift was considered a 'good' daughter who felt responsibility to her disabled mother. Gift might not have left had Byaruhanga not been there. However, her abandonment caused Alice intense emotional and practical vulnerability despite Byaruhanga's presence. Because Byaruhanga still attended school, Alice was without a helper for most of the day. Consequences included discouraging repeat custom, because customers who wanted firewood now had to climb the tall, dirty stack inside Alice's lock-up to extract a bundle, something Gift would previously have done in Byaruhanga's absence. The event also triggered more comments from Lidia, threatening Alice's sense of herself as an established householder, in an environment where 'having people' is an indicator of status and provides security and happiness (see Scherz 2014: 2–3, 19).

Six months later, I was at Alice's shop when she pointed to a passing boy of about 5, telling me she wanted a child that age to help her. In Bunyoro, poorer families often send a child to live with a richer relative who can pay school fees and subsistence in return for domestic labour (Cheney 2016: 253–4; see also Shipton 2007 on Kenya). I asked if her sisters and brothers had any appropriate children to send, but she explained she couldn't afford to support another.

Although the assistance Byaruhanga provided was currently (minimally) sufficient, he was growing up and expected to leave. An adult man would, anyway, be unwilling to empty Alice's waste into the latrine. Byaruhanga's attachment to Alice would likely continue, but not at the depth of a uterine child like Gift; and, as Alice had learned, even the uterine bond is no guarantee. With the attachment of dependents unstable, Alice's strategy had to be dynamic.

Alice's former partner Esther, also a wheelchair-user, faced a similar care breakdown, however, it produced different sentiments and outcomes. In 2017, Esther's 8-year-old niece Precious lived with her as home-help, just as Byaruhanga did later for Alice. Esther saw herself as helping Precious, by paying her school fees and (more importantly in her view) shaping her as a responsible woman. Precious did a huge amount of housework, including things Esther could have done herself. Esther aimed to make Precious into an *omwekambi* (see chapter 1), a hardworking person, to improve her life chances. Precious was a lively, cheeky child who frequently frustrated adults around her; she did not easily adopt the comportment Esther desired, resulting in frequent punishment.

While Esther's treatment of Precious was not unusual, not everyone agreed it was 'helping' her. One day, Precious unexpectedly came home in the late morning and packed her belongings. She told me she was leaving and didn't know if she would come back. Precious's mother had removed her from Esther's care, demanding she return home the same day. Precious's sudden withdrawal left Esther alone. Worried about whether she would be able to stay in her home, I asked how she was feeling. Unexpectedly, she said she was fine: there were others around, including another (older) niece, Betty, who had recently moved to Kicweka and started working with Esther,[55] Betty's two young children, and me, her neighbour. She concluded 'so I have people.'

Betty immediately took over emptying Esther's waste into the latrine, but other work previously done by Precious fell to Esther, an untenable situation. For a few days, discussions took place in the extended family, with Esther's brother (Precious's father) attempting to send an elder daughter in her place. Ultimately, however, Betty assumed the other essential tasks, although she did not move in with Esther. She started arriving at Esther's early in the morning and staying with her until 10pm, when they had supper before she left with her children to sleep. Although the shock of Precious' removal was a short-term challenge, Esther's extended family provided a quick solution.

For the next year, Betty provided support from dawn until after dusk, including fetching and carrying, hanging out washing, serving customers, operating the electricity meter (located

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[55] Betty's partner had failed to pay their children's school fees. Esther helped her move out of his house, paying her first month's rent.

high on the wall), and the limited personal care needed. Esther's role in the business became more cerebral, concentrating on planning and money management, but she also transported goods from wholesalers using her tricycle wheelchair, an exhausting task. Esther did not pay Betty a salary. She bought the food Betty and her children consumed, sometimes paid her rent and the children's school fees, and irregularly gave her small amounts of money for specific items.

A year after Betty became Esther's assistant, one of Esther's sisters, Birungi, returned to Kicweka. In 2016-2017 Birungi had been selling some of her own goods from Esther's stall but stopped in late 2017 after a disagreement. Now, Birungi's husband (like Betty's partner) had failed to pay their children's school fees and Birungi decided she needed to earn money. Esther welcomed her sister back, telling me she couldn't refuse help even though they had parted on bad terms because 'God would look badly at it.' Birungi relished staying at Esther's until late evening; this released Betty, who started leaving immediately after their return from the market around 8pm (Betty had restarted her relationship with her children's father). Birungi became responsible in the evenings for tasks Esther could not manage.

How I initially understood Esther's dependence on others to live in her own home made her relationship with Precious seem irreplaceable. Esther also considered arranging assistance difficult, once telling me 'that person is hard to find.' But Esther's family acted as a reserve of people willing to attach themselves to her as carers, making individual relationships substitutable. Each arrangement was potentially temporary (though open-ended): as Esther repeatedly remarked about Betty 'anytime she can go'; but the multiple possibilities for sourcing care distributed her dependency and mitigated her vulnerability. Esther's calmness after Precious was removed contrasted strongly with Alice's enduring distress.

Resources and attention

Anxiety like Alice's, or its lack, can index relationship qualities (Cohen 1995; Vatuk 1990). In this chapter, I look at the different arrangements DWG members living with physical disability make to secure care. There is no support for these efforts through formal disability infrastructure. I show that physical dependency interacts in complex ways with other forms of obligation and attachment, some of which also take the form of dependencies. Ferguson

argues the ability to choose between multiple dependencies is a 'mode of action' leading to greater freedom (Ferguson 2013: 226; see also Winchell 2017: 172). Similarly, I find the ability to choose whether to enter or maintain a particular relationship is one factor determining whether it is experienced positively or negatively. In the examples above, Esther's family provided multiple care options; Alice's were comparatively restricted. Alice's greater anxiety indexed the difference in resources available to her.

Esther was an educated English-speaking daughter of a semi-professional father. She had a successful business and elected political office. Alice was less established. She had emulated Esther, who she described as 'like a torch' (a guiding example), becoming a member of the Disability Council at LC3 (Division) level. However, due to the Council's dysfunctionality (see Introduction) she did not derive significant resources from expense allowances, as Esther did as Councillor at LC4 (Municipal) level. She also had fewer personal relationships with resource-giving people than Esther, and those she did have were less solid; for example, the CDO visited her shop less frequently than DWG stalls in the market. Alice's connections with disability infrastructure extended over a limited scale, reaching Rubuga Town but no further, whereas Esther mobilised relationships with people in Kampala and Europe.
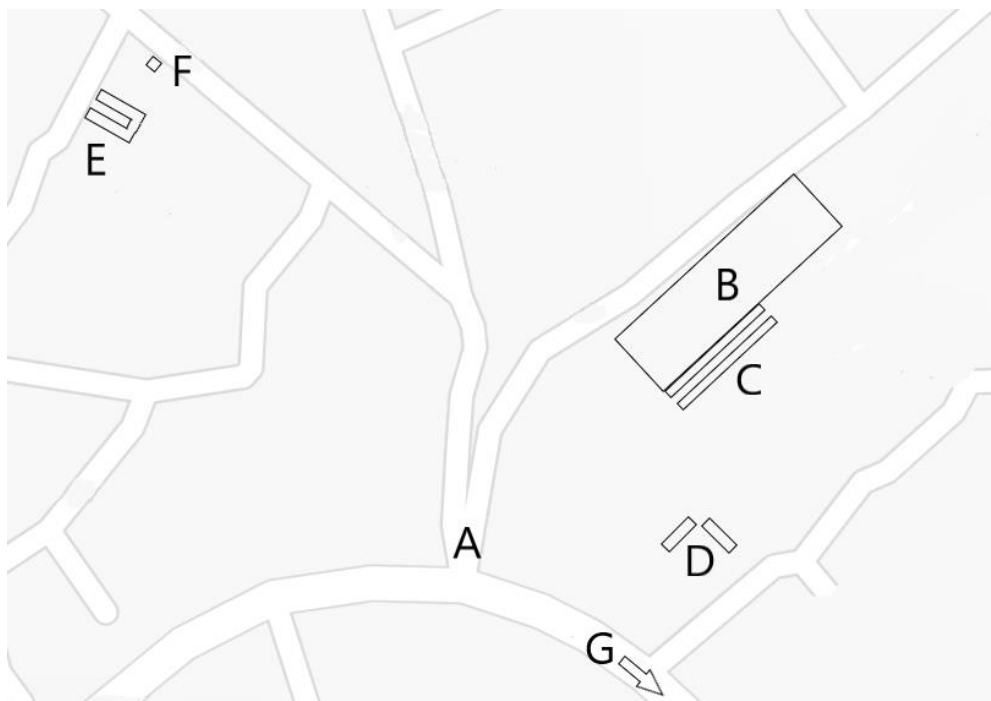
FIGURE 3: MAP OF KICWEKA. A = CENTRE OF KICWEKA. B = PRODUCE MARKET. C = DOUBLE ROW OF STALLS IN WHICH MOST DWG MEMBERS' BUSINESSES ARE LOCATED. D = 'THE RAILWAY COTTAGES,' HOME TO FOUR DWG MEMBERS. E = COURTYARD IN WHICH ESTHER'S HOME IS LOCATED. F = ALICE'S HOME/SHOP. G = ROUTE TO CENTRAL RUBUGA.

Alice had lower variety and lower value income streams than Esther. This limited her ability to attach client-carers; Alice's helpers were all children, connected to her by a quasi-legal dependence based on guardianship. Alice's fertility was therefore a factor in her care, where it was not for Esther, who I never heard pitied for childlessness (despite the importance of motherhood to women's status and quality of life: Stephens 2013: 51, 82; Calkins 2019: 41). Esther's resources made her an attractive patron for adult as well as child dependants (though she never paid all a dependent's costs), enabling her to articulate her physical dependency on carers with others' dependency on her in multiple ways.

In Bunyoro, children (especially girls) are trained to practice continual vigilance for adult commands, particularly within the intimate family group. When called, they should respond immediately with the word 'waitu?', which literally means 'our person' and acknowledges obligation due to connection.[56] Adults, however, are not compellable. They should not be pressured to do or feel things not already in their *emitima* [hearts/intentions]. Showing too much interest in someone else's intentions suggests witchcraft (Beattie 1963: 52). Despite valuation of social connectedness, mental independence is important: 'buli muntu ain'emiringo ye' [every person has their own way]. In this context, displaying the right forms of mutual attention helped maintain balance between client-carer and cared-for patron.[57]

Dokumacı describes gradual development of 'care intimacy,' a mutual engagement 'through intimate and unspoken' anticipation of the other's needs, between chronically ill people and their carers (Dokumacı 2020: S103). Betty and Esther's relationship was similar: Betty would notice when Esther's phone rang and fetch it so she did not have to move; Esther would immediately begin to make change while Betty served a customer. Esther also cared for Betty's children, for example, defending them against scolding from neighbours. Winance argues care collectives work when carers' needs for care are also recognised (Winance 2010: 106–7). Between Betty and Esther, needs were perceived reciprocally, and usually met without needing overt expression. Alignment of mental and bodily practice over time is an artefact of the co-constitution of subjectivities, demonstrating a relationship involving 'the embeddedness of self in others' (Guyer 2012: 498). For Esther, for whom norms of civility

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[56] An alternative translation is 'what do you need?', but this misses the relationship content.

[57] Attention is a key component in many ethical accounts of care (see Fassin 2008; Kittay 1999).

discouraged overt claim-making (see Introduction, chapter 2), this approach enabled a care relationship that maintained dignity.

However, just as dependence cannot be assumed to be entirely negative or positive, neither can attention. Care and attention can form regulatory regimes that highly scrutinise particular bodies (Becker 1994) and even care relationships involving empathetic attention can foster problematic solutions (Garcia 2010). Unwelcome attention to Alice's predicament after Gift left compounded her sense of vulnerability, even though it also helped mobilise her neighbours to assist. *Not* paying attention can be a form of care for relationships. Esther did not probe Betty's re-established relationship with her partner, perhaps having learned from the earlier relationship breakdown with Birungi, which was prompted by Esther trying to dictate how Birungi used money she had given her. Esther did not have complete control over her carers. Her careful martialling of resources and relationships to construct a socially meaningful life entailed psychological and financial pressure.

Through further analysis of Esther and Alice's cases and investigation into care arrangements for those who could not rely solely on kin, this chapter identifies two care modalities among DWG members: 1) a kin-based model in which DWG members are cared for by members of their family who are tied to them through either patron-client or guardianship relationships; and 2) care performed within a micro-community of unrelated disabled people, where categorical solidarity enables shared households. These are not mutually exclusive, but they feature differentially in members' lives. Both are modifications of existing mutual assistance practices everyone in Kicweka would recognise. I trace the determinants of care and consider how physical dependency in an inaccessible environment is articulated with other forms of dependency and obligation, using cultural and financial resources derived from the disability movement.

Theorising care and dependency

Alice's anxiety was not about being dependent per se, because *inter*dependence was considered normal in Bunyoro. In northern India, Vatuk argues physical dependence in old age does not put 'the elderly's own sense of self-respect…under threat or attack' (Vatuk 1990: 85), as it might elsewhere (see Clark 1972), because independence is not expected. Nevertheless, they experience 'dependence anxiety' about losing physical capacities, and

'with them the respect, care, and love of the younger family members upon whom they depend for support and intimate companionship' (Vatuk 1990: 67). Cohen distinguishes two types of dependence anxiety: '(1) the fear of being a burden, and (2) the fear of inadequate support' (Cohen 1995: 320). Alice's anxiety took the second form. Her distress when Gift left came from her precarious position and Gift's failure to fulfil expected obligations (interpreted as refusal of the proper relationship with her disabled mother), without a sense of being an improper burden on others. In Uganda, as in India, dependence anxiety isn't about the existential state of having to rely on others and thereby losing a putative independence, but about whether you *can* pragmatically rely on others in impoverished circumstances.

My approach to dependency does not prejudge it as negative (see Introduction). Drawing from the concept of exposed interdependency developed by Butler (as precariousness) and Povinelli (as vulnerability), I treat dependency as 'a condition…common to all beings, by virtue of an embodied existence' (Han 2018: 332; Butler 2004; Povinelli 2006). Povinelli argues a participant in a dependency may be '*vulnerable to* rather than *subject of*' their other (Povinelli 2006: 9). She explains dependency is a mutually co-constitutive relationship, so it can be difficult to isolate the origin of actions undertaken through it; consequently, dependents are not solely acted-upon. Povinelli's approach works in Bunyoro, where receiving assistance demonstrates 'having people,' and prestige accrues to a person who is given to, as well as the giver, by demonstrating belonging and connection (see Durham 1995 on Botswana).

Esther's statement, 'I have people,' recalls 'wealth in people', a concept developed to describe west African societies where wealth and prestige are accumulated in rights in people (for example, rights to labour) rather than tangible goods (Guyer 1993; Kopytoff & Miers 1977). While this concept has been applied straightforwardly to nearby Buganda (Scherz 2014: 19–22), Esther's use was different. She was not primarily claiming to have political-economic followers (although she does have these), but saying she had people who were tied to her in co-constitutive relations, who could extend her social self.

I follow Whyte and Siu's assertion that 'contingency' (depending on another event or person over which there is uncertainty), while potentially problematic, may also offer 'a quality of

possibility' including 'links to…resources' (Whyte & Siu 2015: 19–20). Relying on another can extend a person's capacity. Dokumacı and Muyinda draw analogies between disabled people's carers and assistive technologies, describing how access is created in inaccessible environments through choreographing 'people as affordances' (Dokumacı 2020: S100; Muyinda 2020: S123–S125). The increased physical dependency of DWG members within their built environment intensifies the contingency or precariousness of their lives. However, it also spurs forms of long-term entrustment, which articulate political, economic, and physical resources to mobilise *inter*dependence. The affective outcomes can be positive or negative.

Various typologies of dependency exist. While most emerge from (post-)industrial Euro-America, they are nevertheless helpful. Walker distinguishes life-cycle, physical/psychological, political, economic/financial, and structural dependencies (Walker 1982: 116). Fraser and Gordon delineate physical, economic, sociolegal, political, and moral/psychological forms (Fraser & Gordon 1994: 312). Recent Africanist literature focuses on economic and political dependence (Ferguson 2013, 2015), dimensions corresponding with the older anthropological literature on patronage and clientelism it resembles (although it excludes class from the analysis, see Shore 2016).

One element missing from many typologies is how different forms of dependency interact.[58] This is vital because diverging implications emerge for understanding obligation. While Ferguson notes the intersection of care systems with political-economic infrastructures (Ferguson 2015: 105–6), he does not explain how articulations are made. The two care 'modalities' I describe articulate physical and political-economic dependency through differential mobilisation of concepts of shared substance and the compellability of other actors, relying on diverging forms of hierarchy. In the next section, I investigate how physical dependency can be managed by converting other forms of dependency into dispositions to care, as DWG members fill the 'care' gap in disability provision with changing assemblages of people.

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[58] Fraser and Gordon recognise dependencies sometimes exceed analytical categories, blending forms. However, their focus on epochal shifts leaves little space for actors to articulate forms in different ways.

Care and kinship

DWG members' care needs are temporally open-ended, due to the biological rhythms of daily physical care (Whyte 2020: 132; Livingston 2005: 19, 47). The temporality is of what Guyer calls the 'arc of life,' based not on reciprocity, with its ties to calendar-based debt and possibility of fulfilling (and therefore ending) obligations, but mutuality: a temporally indefinite mutual exposure to the other's needs (Guyer 2012). 'Mutuality' is a temporal form, not a judgement about positivity or negativity (see de Pina-Cabral 2013). While it can be desired and often features as an ideal of relationships (especially kinship), sometimes its indefinite obligations are unwelcome (see Neumark 2017). The temporality of physical care means relationships in the form of 'mutuality' are particularly important for people living with physical disability, making 'the question of our responsibilities toward one another…more overt.' In long-term care, 'Key relationships undergo…scrutiny' (Livingston 2005: 3), as they did when Gift left her mother.

In Bunyoro, kinship is the obvious institution to bear indefinite mutual obligation. Kin are ideologically the same substance as the self; they are 'one's 'own people'' (Beattie 1957: 333), ideally related in exposed, indefinite interdependency. In practice, however, whether one can rely on kin is uncertain. The kinship relationships my participants most emphasised had accrued a history of 'enactions': acts including care and giving that made the qualities of the relationship visible, such as the material flows between Betty and Esther (Fox 2019: 38–9; Sneath 2006: 90).

When Beattie writes 'one's 'own people,'' he is referring to paternal agnatic kin; however, Esther's carers included relations through her mother, even though Esther's (patri)lineage-mates in the area were myriad. Birungi was a half-sister on her mother's side with a different father, and therefore from a different clan. Historically she would not be considered part of the same corporate unit. However, when we discussed their relationship Esther added: 'but we count on the mother's side…because we came from one womb.' A corporeal concept of intimacy replaces the patriarchal hierarchy scholars have identified

underlying the unilineal descent system (Beattie 1957, 1964; Doyle 2007; Needham 1967; Roscoe 1923).[59]

Esther's emplacement in Kicweka matters here. Gender relations in Kicweka were understood by its residents to be different from Banyoro norms. Most women were not married.[60] Many had experienced disputes with partners or other kin in their villages and subsequently moved to town (see Iliffe 1987: 181–182 on towns as refuges for divorced women). Society in Kicweka is highly matrifocal at the household level (Tanner 1974), which may be common among disenfranchised urban populations in the region (see Neumark 2017 on Nairobi). This female space offers an alternative mode of kinship, in which the corporeal closeness of sharing a womb can create relatedness.

As an urban dweller, Esther was surrounded by relative strangers. Her caring relatives moved into and were secured in her space through relationships of 'clientelism' (Anciano 2018; Auyero 2001; Piliavsky 2014). Esther provided refuge: female relatives in uncomfortable positions in 'the village' could move to town through activating a mutual dependency with her. Betty owned no land and had no usufruct rights. In town, she rented a room, necessitating regular rent payments. Discounting Esther's contributions, her only income was part-time seasonal labour, paying 6000 shillings (£1.20) a week: insufficient for rent, let alone school fees and clothing. Esther enabled her move to town, and without her help she could not have remained there.

Birungi's dependency on Esther in 2018 was multiple: she sold her goods from a shack Esther owned, and Esther paid her first month's rent, allowing her to leave her husband's house. Esther also supported Birungi in her dispute with her husband; as a respected councillor she successfully intervened with the village council, who were threatening to arrest Birungi for 'stealing' the children.

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[59] Beattie recognised people in Bunyoro often lived with matrilineal kin, but continued to stress patrilineal descent in Banyoro ideology (Beattie 1957: 317). Esther's normative statement rejects this.

[60] Marriage rates have been low in Bunyoro since colonial times (Doyle 2006a: 139, 214), but the predominance of female-headed households in Kicweka was particularly striking.

Esther acted as a patron towards these client-helpers economically and politico-legally. However, Esther also depended on Precious, Betty and Birungi. Most accounts of dependency conceptualise it running only one way. Even Chabal and Daloz's argument that patron-client systems form 'chains of dependence' (Chabal & Daloz 1999: 28), which recognises a client can also be a patron in other situations, pictures a configuration in which, at each dyad, one person is clearly a patron and the other a client. This does not fit Esther.

Esther stored her portable valuable goods at home overnight, and lower-value bulky items in a lock-up behind her stall. It was impossible, in this environment, for Esther to transport goods between home and market alone. When she was not in her wheelchair (which is too large to enter either building), she used her hands to move around the floor, leaving them unavailable for carrying. Every morning, Betty came first to Esther's house to load stock onto the goods tray underneath Esther's wheelchair, which Esther then cycled to the market. At the other end, Betty unloaded and set up the stall, then brought out the items from the lock-up. Betty was reliable, but some days she was late, leaving Esther sitting waiting at her doorway, lamenting that she was 'missing money.' Esther's day to day economic success depended on the time Betty arrived to start work.

In addition, Esther did not pay rent for Betty or Birungi as an exchange for their help; instead, she did it as a richer relative to a poorer, with no specific expectation of return (although knowing contributing could be crucial to maintaining a relationship, with unspecified potential benefits (see Graeber 2012: 103–105)). Esther also did not pay Betty a wage – this was not a contractual arrangement. Instead, she assumed liability to contribute toward Betty and her children's needs. The amount of contribution was decided contextually, taking into account Betty and Esther's comparative situations;[61] in Povinelli's terms Esther made herself vulnerable to contingency in Betty's life (Povinelli 2006: 9, 85–88). Their mutuality co-constituted a way of life, enabling Betty to change her residence and prospects and Esther to extend her bodily capacity, enhancing her wellbeing.

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[61] The amount was not negotiated. Esther decided what she would give, and Betty could leave if it was insufficient. Their power was thus unequal, but Esther's physical dependence and desire to be respected as a good patron motivated generosity.

Esther may not have even wanted Birungi's help. She was unenthusiastic about Birungi's return, feeling obligated to help but complaining about her 'laziness.' Her manner toward Birungi diverged from her behaviour to Betty, with whom she joked and played the board game ludo during lulls in work, secure that Betty's hard work justified levity. However, Birungi stored her goods in Esther's rooms overnight (her own home was far away); therefore, she was at Esther's every morning and evening. The materiality of Birungi's dependence on Esther led to Esther's reciprocal dependence on her: given she was around (and related through a shared mother, an ideologically intimate relationship (Beattie 1957: 330–332)), it would have been strange *not* to help Esther. Such behaviour would be interpreted as indicating a major problem in the relationship, entailing moral condemnation. Birungi's presence released Betty to go home earlier, allowing her to focus on the re-established relationship with her partner. Esther subsequently had to rely on Birungi at night, even though she preferred Betty's support. Esther's dependence on care stabilised Birungi's position, making it easier for her to attach herself as a client.

Converting dependencies

Esther's ability to attach relatives as carers was mediated through resources assembled via the disability movement. Her initial capital, additional grants, sitting and travel allowances as a Councillor, and NGO meeting allowances all derived from her position as a networked, political disabled person. Esther converted resources derived from her position as client of various patrons, including NGOs, into her own patronage resources to attach clients. This politico-economic relationship was transfigured into a reciprocal service of care, managing a physical dependency operating in the opposite direction, where the economic patron depended physically on her client. However, this account remains insufficient: Esther also depended *economically* on Betty. Economic and physical domains cannot be fully separated because economic success implies physical (and cognitive, social, and environmental) capacities.

Devlieger describes a form of begging in which a business owner and a group of disabled people sign annual 'contracts' to donate money, writing 'beggars can find more flexibility, security, and value in a large network of looser relationships…than in a small number of deeper relationships with more mutual obligations' (Devlieger 2018: 11). The substitutability

of Esther's carers was similarly related to the size of her network, but otherwise care dependencies differ. Care must be available every day; Esther could not save up benefits to be used when other resources were unavailable, as she could from economic dependencies delivering large but irregular cash gifts. Esther's *economic* situation would be damaged by irregular care. She therefore converted between resources with divergent temporalities, taking cash injections resembling Devlieger's irregular donations and repurposing the money for quotidian care, best secured through relationships lived in the temporality of mutuality.[62] These mutual relationships were intense, involving obligations that could become an economic threat (see Neumark 2017: 10–12). Consequently, Esther activated a small number at once.

Das and Addlakha argue predominant concepts of disability rights 'locate the subject positions of the disabled firmly within a liberal political regime,' consequently excluding issues coded as 'domestic' (Das & Addlakha 2001: 511; see also Friedner 2010: 55). In Uganda, NGOs and government's moral campaigns for 'proper' use of business funding stigmatise spending on 'personal needs,' including family support. Without alternative support for care, this reinforces a conceptual wall between care as a 'domestic' issue and the economic realm, despite the problems separating the two (feminist anthropology has long challenged 'privatisation' of domestic realms, see Harris 1984; Yanagisako 1979).

Nevertheless, NGO and government resources can be plugged into networks of caring relationships. DWG members repurpose resources intended for individual businesses into material for managing care relationships crucial to maintaining urban residence. Even Esther, who presents herself as a 'manager' able to guarantee the correct use of money by members (see chapter 2), did not keep absolute separation between income streams. The divergence between programme design and DWG members' use of funding should, however, not be overemphasised. Funding from international NGOs made Esther relatively independent of male kin – those who typically control access to land in agrarian Bunyoro (see chapter 7) – giving her greater control within relationships. The image of 'independent living' NGOs promote is not entirely illusory; funding can allow greater choice about which

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[62] Cash grants were also conceptualised as care, with DWG members interpreting them to mean the givers 'love us so much' (see Cole 2019: 112, 118; Livingston 2005: 214).

potential dependencies to engage, creating not independence but greater influence within interdependence.

In the next section, I look at the second modality of care: creating a collective in which disabled people and their children help each other directly. This enables care for those whose financial resources and/or family situations make kinship care impractical.

DWG's 'care collective'

Four members of DWG rented rooms close to the market, in two old houses owned by the Railway Corporation of Uganda, located at the edge of the field that hosted the Friday clothes market. Each was divided into four one-room dwellings, accommodating eight households in total (see figure 4). There were four non-DWG households, where no residents were disabled. The DWG members were Safia, Alinaitwe, and Jovia, all wheelchair-users, and Lidia, who is deaf. All were core DWG members working in the market, but the three wheelchair-using members had lower incomes and less connection outside DWG than Esther. Lidia had a more successful business and hence larger income (see section 1), and was well connected beyond DWG (see chapter 5).

Some of the DWG members partially shared households: two of Jovia's children slept in Safia's room, and Alinaitwe and Safia usually cooked and ate together, pooling resources. This interdependency resembled arrangements common among kin in Bunyoro and was underwritten by solidarity within the disabled community, which was occasionally expressed in kinship terms. Within this community, 'housed relationships' acted as generative processes based on shared space, in which everyday acts of housing and caring for others created meaningful relatedness (Klaits 2002: 92–97).

Residential contiguity among disabled people has a long history in Africa. In 1824 Kano City had 'distinct villages for the blind and for the lame,' functioning similarly to residential guilds elsewhere in the city (Iliffe 1987: 40). In 21st century Kampala, an NGO-donated block of 'slum' housing was inhabited by disabled people making a living through begging (Tumusiime 2011). These arrangements do not necessarily indicate stigma or segregation. Szántó argues 'polio-homes' in Sierra Leone (formerly abandoned buildings, now occupied as residences by organisations of polio survivors) 'are not closed, segregated places.' In

them, 'a community of disabled members and leaders integrate a greater number of able-bodied individuals,' not the other way round (Szántó 2019: 70). Similarly, DWG residents of the 'railway cottages' formed a distinctive, organised sub-group that was nevertheless fully integrated with the other households, whose members socialised with them in the shared courtyard and provided neighbourly assistance. A savings group led by Safia, Lidia, and Alinaitwe (discussed in chapter 5) was held in a beer shelter belonging to one of their non-disabled neighbours, at the edge of the courtyard.
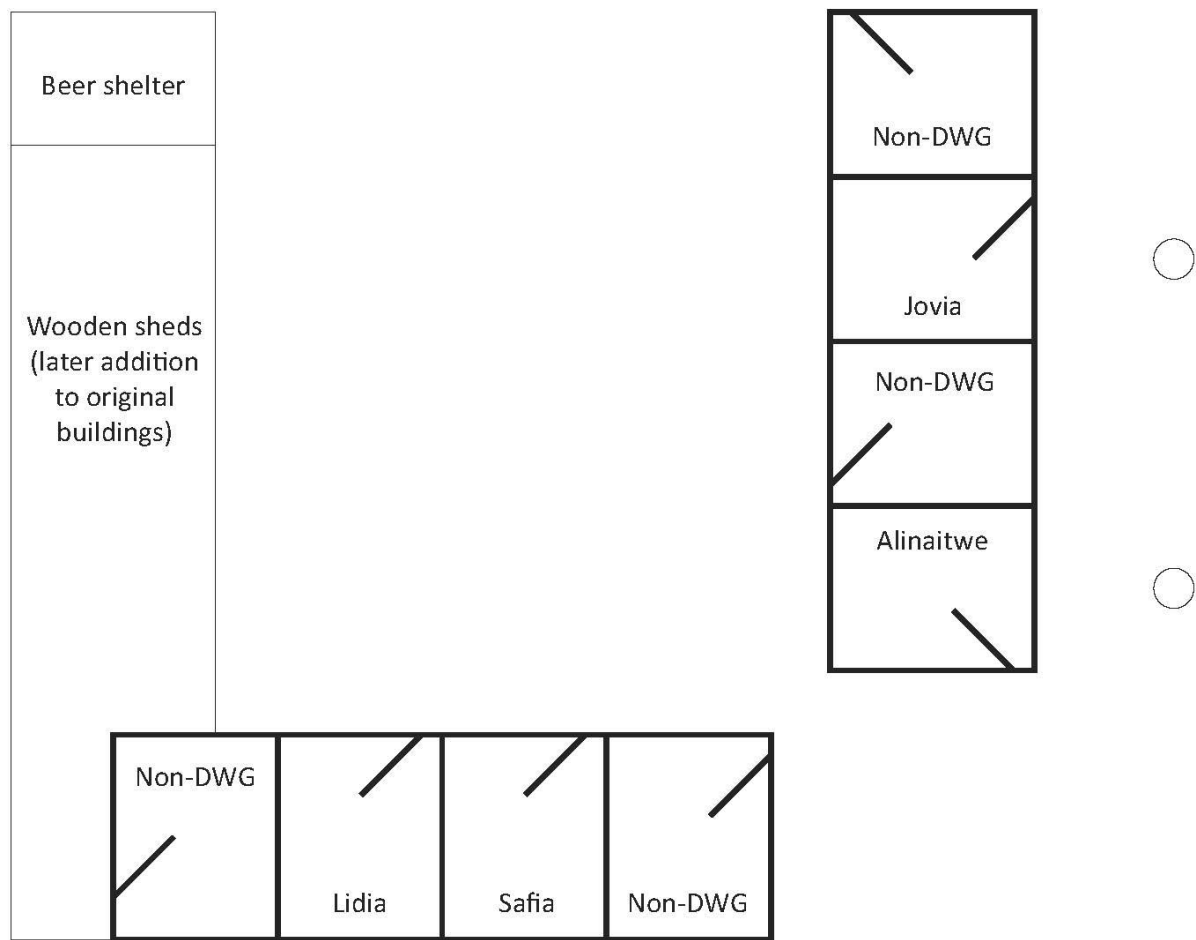
FIGURE 4: LAYOUT OF THE RAILWAY COTTAGES. ROOMS INHABITED BY MEMBERS OF DWG ARE LABELLED WITH THEIR NAMES. THE CIRCLES ON THE RIGHT-HAND SIDE REPRESENT JOVIA AND ALINAITWE'S COOKING FIRES.

The yard around the houses, like most of Kicweka, was unpaved; rain turned it into deep mud. Safia, Alinaitwe, and Jovia's wheelchairs were too large to use inside their rooms (which were standard size for rented accommodation in Kicweka), so they transferred from them at the threshold and entered using hands and knees or hands and hips. In fine weather, Alinaitwe shuffled on the ground from her doorway to her firepit 5 metres away.

When it rained, she was stranded until someone brought her wheelchair from a shelter across the yard.

The existing latrines had filled up and management refused permission to dig a new one, even at residents' expense. The residents found latrines elsewhere or urinated outside and defecated into plastic bags, throwing them in the municipal trash. Wheelchair-users found this difficult: urinating outside meant sitting in the mud and wheeling along the uneven path to the skip required more effort than walking. Consequently, the wheelchair-using members, like Esther and Alice, had others dispose of their waste. With their children and neighbours, the residents improvised 'microactivist affordances,' using each other's bodies and capacities to mitigate the problems of the environment (Dokumacı 2020: S100, S102). These improvisations made the market liveable, if not comfortable, for wheelchair-users. While Lidia, the deaf DWG resident, did not usually need physical assistance, she received other help: the resident DWG members interpreted into UgSL for her (see chapter 5).

All DWG members living in the railway cottages had children who helped them, except Safia, whose oldest son remained very young. Alinaitwe, who, like Alice, had one biological child, lived with a poor nephew who supported her alongside her son. Her income was insufficient for his school fees, which were paid by a richer uncle; Alinaitwe's contribution was food, shelter, and emotional care. The children fetch and carry, dispose of waste, bring wheelchairs to and from the stores, and help push their mothers on long trips, or if they happen to be walking behind them at any point. They do not only help their own mothers, having been raised with the expectation they will aid their mothers' 'fellow disabled.' It is normal for a child living in a compound in Kicweka to be sent on an errand by any adult living there, regardless of relation, but the frequent assistance DWG members' children provided is normally reserved for kin.

DWG members also directly helped each other more than usual. Safia is a migrant born to Lugbara parents. When she gave birth to a child by caesarean section, her mother and sister came to help, as is customary. However, their stay was limited by care needs at their own homes. Once they had gone, Alinaitwe and Jovia took turns sleeping in Safia's house, providing night-time assistance until she had fully healed. Lidia helped more than usual with tasks requiring easy mobility. Among the resident DWG members, a form of 'urban kinship'

(Bjarnesen & Utas 2018) drawing on the concept of being 'among one's own people' can substitute for difficulties mobilising care through kinship networks, including for those like Safia who have insufficient resources to support a niece or nephew. Although 'one's 'own people'' applies primarily to kin, it is an expansive category that can be creatively applied to other collectives.[63] This makes it available as a justifying ideology for disability solidarity.

Care can function as a 'mode of attention' which 'helps join the dots, make connections, identify actors and establish patterns' (Tironi & Rodríguez-Giralt 2017: 102). Many of those in railway cottages' micro-community had become expert at aiding women with mobility difficulties. This does not mean all needs were met – temporalities of care can clash, when 'we all need care simultaneously' (Piepzna-Samarasinha 2018: 28; cited in Dokumacı 2020 S106) and divisions existed between DWG members as well as solidarities – but requests for help were easier to make in this space than elsewhere, as I explore below. The residents lived with a primed attention to access needs recalling Dokumacı's 'care intimacy.'

DWG members asked each other and each other's children for assistance (toward children, often peremptorily), but it was also common for help to be given without need being expressed, as when a DWG child walking behind a wheelchair user automatically pushes. The disposition triggering these acts is a 'somatic mode of attention': a 'cultural' habit of perception that feeds into action without an intermediate moment of reflective objectification (Csordas 1993). Guyer (drawing on Mauss 1973) argues it is the result of 'the cultivation of sentiment…[through] practice and repetition in mutuality' (Guyer 2012: 499). The child does not (usually) reflect on the disability experienced by the person they are pushing; the act just feels natural.[64] For the children of DWG members living in the railway cottages, sharing between their mothers expanded the group of people to whom one owes attention beyond those related through kinship.

This social environment mitigated the physical challenges of the railway cottages and market for wheelchair users. Its ability to do so depended on concentration of people

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[63] Other have also noted relationships of neighbourhood accruing kinship-like features through long term co-residence (Fortes 2004: 242–5; Carsten 2013: 248).

[64] This does not mean the children liked being assistants. Although they often enjoyed the prestige of helping adults, heavy parental demands conflicted with schoolwork.

experiencing similar needs, enabling a 'distributed' form of care obligation (Kavedžija 2020: 217) through building a skilled carer community. In Uganda, concentration of disabled people is an urban phenomenon. Kavedžija also notes differential geographic distribution of care outcomes, arguing distributed care in rural areas is more likely to produce 'zones of abandonment' (Kavedžija 2020: 220). People living in rural areas near Kicweka did not access physical care through disabled collectives, although neighbourhood-based economic care was 'distributed,' as I discuss in chapter 6.

Unlike the first care modality, in which disability-based financial resources attached client-carers, the care collective did not require money. Nevertheless, it drew on other resources developed through the disability movement, including the embodied and spatialised solidarity of the resident group. Interactional history was critical to obligation in Kicweka. DWG's history of co-residence dates to the 2000s, when members were living in the market lockups (see chapter 1) and provided motivation for ongoing solidarity between those who 'have ever been together,' as members put it.

Discussing neighbourhood-based 'memory practice', Chari argues reference to a 'canonical event' can shape 'spatial imaginations' and create 'social and spatial connection' (Chari 2014: 154–155; Chari & Gillespie 2014: 146). For DWG, narratives of organisational origins shaped the spatial belonging of members. However, these narratives did not include all members equally, heavily referencing events that only involved physically disabled women, such as the adult literacy group and the 'cultural dance' performed at the IDPD in the early 2000s (see chapter 1). Deaf women joined later. This partially explains why Lidia does not blend her household as her wheelchair-using neighbours do, although her higher income and adherence to the 'manager' ideal also contributed. Divisions between impairment groups run through patterns of care, particularly the division between hearing and deaf disabled people, discussed in chapter 5.

Sharing space and history can create positive emotional intimacy. When Safia was threatened with eviction for non-payment of rent during the covid-19 lockdown, Alinaitwe was distressed, sending me a message that predicted 'I will be sad…for being left alone in [Kicweka] by my partner.' As Bjarnesen and Utas note, however, 'urban kinship' is ambivalent; physical proximity does not always entail emotional intimacy (Bjarnesen & Utas

2018: S4). For Safia and Alinaitwe, the market and railway cottages were home; they rarely spoke about future residence elsewhere. By contrast, Jovia continually planned building elsewhere (see chapter 3). During my fieldwork, Alinaitwe and Jovia, who shared a room when DWG first formed, rarely sat together when they cooked, even though their firepits were adjacent (see figure 4). Each woman preferred sitting with her own visitors.

The separation between the former cohabitants may have been exacerbated by the stark difference in benefits received from child sponsorship (see chapter 3). Neighbourhood disputes over relative financial success or distress can lead to fear of witchcraft attacks (Bornstein 2005: 84) and disturbed interaction between households (Laheij 2018: S32). Even though Lidia claimed Jovia and Alinaitwe 'did not speak,' they continued to interact, borrowing one another's wheelchairs and child assistants, participating together in conversations, and providing reciprocal assistance, including acts requiring substantial trust such as delivering each other's savings group contributions. Howland describes continuing support between quarrelling siblings, despite claims to have 'cut relations,' as 'categorical fidelity,' an ongoing commitment to the ideals of kinship involving, but not reducible to, efforts to retain practical benefits (Howland 2020: 73–80). In the railway cottages, expectations of mutual obligation, developed through a history of 'being together,' similarly enabled the assistance structure to coexist with personal antipathy.

Social aesthetics of assistance

In the Introduction, I described an interactional aesthetic of 'civility' pervasive in Bunyoro. Whyte writes: 'Respect…belongs to those who show respect, who behave circumspectly and gently…and restrain themselves' (Whyte 1998: 157). Most literature discusses civility in relation to hierarchical relationships (Brisset-Foucault 2019; Englund 2015; Whyte & Siu 2015); however, in Kicweka, similar norms often apply with social equals. Englund argues 'the analytical task is to discern the contexts in which one register of speech was more appropriate than another' (Englund 2018: 9). Below, I analyse Safia's requests for assistance in two settings to illustrate how expectations of assistance (and consequently, obligations to assist) are spatialised.

One evening while I was staying overnight with Safia, the 17-year-old daughter of one of the non-DWG neighbours ran into the room. She announced the opposition politician Bobi

Wine, a youth icon, had been attacked and possibly killed. More young women from neighbouring households joined as we discussed the case, several coming to retrieve mobile phones they had been charging using Safia's electricity connection – an unusual asset, which she let them use for free.[65] The women, sitting sprawled across Safia's chairs, chatted about body shapes and relationships, debating Lidia's recent behaviour towards her youngest child's father. This register of speech is called 'kunyumia,' [chatting] and is considered enjoyable but inconsequential.[66] Woven through the dynamic conversation, Safia requested help preparing the room for sleeping: to lift blankets down from a ceiling-high pile of possessions; to tie a mosquito net over the bed. In the cheerful, intimate atmosphere, these requests were straightforward, needing no elaborate phrasing, and all were immediately fulfilled.

Accessing help in the market was more difficult. A year into my fieldwork, Safia secured a UWEP loan. She used it to expand beyond groceries, buying a bundle of second-hand baby blankets in Rubuga. Over the next weeks, I watched confused as most days she did not put them on display. When asked about it, she explained it was the rainy season, so she had a problem: 'tinyin'omuntu akunyamba' [I don't have anyone to help me]. Having spent the previous week at Alinaitwe's stall, racing to protect her goods from sudden rainstorms, I understood. I had been working alongside Alinaitwe's son or nephew; Safia did not have dependents she could call on. Rain was a moment when everyone needed assistance at once, so their respective dependents were unavailable to others. If a member was stuck with her goods out, other DWG children would run to help after dealing with their own mother's stall, but by then the goods could be ruined.

After a storm, Safia's goods were often brought out and re-displayed by her neighbouring stallholder, Mama Karolin, a tailor who spent much of every day chatting with her between jobs. The women liked and respected each other. Mama Karolin's help usually came about organically: seeing a customer at Safia's, she would immediately get up to help, recognising

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[65] The connection was funded through Safia's NEF grant (see chapter 2).

[66] While this night was unusual because of its dramatic news, Safia's room was consistently busy.

Safia's difficulty moving quickly to the front of the stall.[67] However, when Safia requested help from Mama Karolin, her manner differed from the easy register used at home. Sometimes, goods blocked Mama Karolin's view of Safia's stall. If Safia needed help at these times, she quietly called 'Mama Karolin, okubazira?' [Mama Karolin, are you sewing?], gently probing her availability. If Mama Karolin did not reply immediately, the question was not repeated.

Safia did not ask Mama Karolin to put the UWEP blankets out, even when she was sitting at her stall unoccupied. Doing so raised the problem of bringing them back in. There was no guarantee Mama Karolin would still be present when the blankets must be protected from rain; given she had goods of her own, it was likely Safia would have to forcefully assert her need, breaching the expected circumspect gentleness.

The wording of Safia's statement: '*tinyin*'omuntu' [I *don't have* anyone] is suggestive. Mama Karolin was not Safia's in the sense of 'having people.' She was her friend, but not obligated by kinship, politico-economic patronage, or a history of co-residence. A very young woman, she had started working in the market two years before. With their relative lack of connection, Mama Karolin did not owe Safia her attention – although she often gave it. To demand help too explicitly could threaten the relationship. Instead, Safia missed potential sales, embodying the virtue expressed as 'ngumiire' which translates 'I endure', 'I am patient' or 'I keep quiet' (chapter 1): she waited for fortuitous moments of unforced attention.

In the railway cottages, a pool of people shared a history of co-residence with DWG members. Among this pool – particularly for those categorised as children – a trained habit of mobility assistance had come to feel natural. Within this space, it was rare for no helper to be available. In the market, DWG members were a minority and had less intimate and less historically deep relationships with most stallholder neighbours. Mutual help occurs between stallholders but is not considered fundamental to their identity *as* stallholders, whereas it is to being a neighbour, kinsperson, or 'fellow disabled.' The spatialised group of

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[67] Safia's stall projected into the road to catch attention. Safia sat on a rear table, where she was sheltered. To access the front table, where goods were displayed, she crawled.

politically conscious DWG members brought mobility-related needs into shared consciousness, enabling Safia to create social affordances extending her bodily capacity.

Conclusion

With no institutional support for care, wheelchair-using members of DWG met their needs through two models. The first, and most common, mobilised kinship, and came in two types: clientship ties with adult kin; or caring for siblings' children to secure rights to their labour. Attaching adult clients required extensive financial resources and was unachievable for most DWG members, who instead relied on the childcare approach. The temporally shorter horizon of support from a child, who will grow up and leave, could bring higher levels of anxiety. Both forms of kinship arrangement were more stable and less burdensome for better-off members, especially if they had a diversified income including national or international connections with NGOs and other bodies.

The second model used solidarity between co-resident disabled people. While it did not require financial resources to establish, its ability to feed into members' small business activities was limited, as Safia's problems in the market demonstrated. This model worked within the space of the railway cottages, where spatial proximity was accompanied by intimate histories. Market neighbours were unlikely to be appropriately compellable because they were not thought to share substance with the self (like one's 'fellow disabled' and their children) or to have accrued obligation through shared history.

Attaching and maintaining care required intense emotional labour from disabled people and their carers. In her discussion of US mothers caring for disabled children, Kittay implies the process of 'grafting the substance of another to one's own' is a threat to carers' self-'integrity' (Kittay 1999: 34–5). However, dependency need not be antithetical to self-integrity. In Kicweka, where 'independence' is not such an indispensable marker of adult humanity as in the USA, disabled people actively desire co-constitutive relationships with others, through which they demonstrate 'having people' and secure temporally repetitive open-ended care.

However, such relationships also entail financial and social burdens. DWG members practice 'selective solidarity' (Raudenbush 2016); no DWG member wants all their social connections

to take the form of mutuality, in which partners are exposed to contingency in each other's lives. In this context, DWG members' conversions between different forms of care enable choosing fulfilling forms of life and the relationships supporting them. The monetary care of NGOs would not work to support 'independent businesswomen' (to the qualified extent it does) without these conversions of scale and temporality, but the resources to perform conversions are distributed unevenly between members.

Chapter 5 – Deaf belonging and linguistic collectives

Communication was fundamental to the role of the microentrepreneur, who had to negotiate personally with suppliers and customers. Language barriers made this difficult. For many deaf people, 'sensory asymmetries' mean they cannot learn majority spoken languages, even over time (De Meulder et al. 2019), making this barrier particularly insurmountable. Linguistic exclusion features prominently in deaf people's accounts of the Ugandan disability movement (Lwanga-Ntale 2003: 22). Beckmann argues the movement has failed to transform deaf people's lives because 'important transitions that take place through the creation of a sign-language-related polity…were disregarded' (Beckmann 2020: 180). DWG was an anomaly: although most members were hearing, deaf people were involved and took prominent roles, including liaising with donors (chapter 2).

In Europe and North America, deaf people frequently argue they are an oppressed linguistic minority, not a sub-category of 'disabled people' (Branson & Miller 2002: xiii, xvii). This argument was rarer in Uganda, where many deaf people strategically claimed the label 'disabled' because it provided resources. However, visual language was crucial in Ugandan deaf people's lives, forming the basis of communities. It was also sometimes invoked to differentiate deaf people from 'disabled people.' Its role in deaf people's wider disability movement participation cannot be overestimated.

In this chapter, I argue the relatively strong inclusion of deaf people in DWG arose from a collective competence for visual language developed in Kicweka market, which operated on similar spatial principles to the care collective described in chapter 4. Hearing and deaf members of DWG attended a Uganda National Association of the Deaf (UNAD) training course in UgSL in the mid-2000s. While municipal employees who attended the course quickly forgot their skills, in the market, the presence of Lidia, a deaf trader who is bilingual in Runyoro and UgSL, enabled constant practice, solidifying a core of hearing signers. Lidia also drew other deaf people into the market, creating a strong signing social group.

This chapter investigates the communicative mechanisms used, showing that multi-modal experimentation allowed for direct communication between deaf and hearing people, alongside an informal regime of sign language interpretation. Both approaches drew from

dense and varied relationships of friendship, neighbourhood and – at times – solidarity between people in the market. I found a situation far from fully accessible (the market was not a 'deaf utopia' (see Kusters 2010)), but markedly different from Søgaard Andersen's description of Kenyan schools, where deaf people were marked as 'incompetent' by refusal to recognise Kenyan Sign Language (Søgaard Andersen 2004: 143). The importance of the market's collaborative communicative practices is revealed through a contrast with interpretation in more formal spaces, where communication is fraught for deaf participants.

My close reading of Kicweka's visual language practices elaborates two related concepts: 'distributed competence', which locates social functioning in relationships, not just individuals (Whyte 1998; Beckmann 2020), and 'deaf space': spatial arrangements oriented to deaf communicative practices that enable deaf sociality (Gulliver 2006; Kusters 2015). In the market, deaf people's ability to achieve socially valued goals including successful businesses, saving and investing, and caring for a family, were enhanced through collective orientations toward linguistic inclusion. 'Self-sufficient' businesspersons were built on a web of collective linguistic action. In spaces without this rare asset, deaf people I worked with found it more difficult to succeed as entrepreneurs.

Deaf communication in Kicweka market

Deaf stallholders in Kicweka market were skilled in multi-modal communication, in which different channels of communication (including gesture, pantomime, mouthing, and writing) are 'chained' into communicative projects between deaf and hearing people (Green 2017; Kusters 2017a). They commonly pointed, picked up and moved objects, used conventionalised gestures (particularly for numbers), wrote on their skin or the ground, and, in some cases, spoke or mouthed, as they served customers.

In most cases, deaf stallholders and their customers successfully communicated directly using these techniques. Crasborn and Hiddinga suggest ability to communicate across modal language barriers is common in deaf people, produced through deaf experience as a linguistic minority in a hearing world (Crasborn & Hiddinga 2015). Kusters argues multilingual markets are ideal places for multimodal communication, because hearing people communicating across language barriers also 'chain' different channels (Kusters 2017a: 284; Blackledge & Creese 2017).

However, not all market interactions were carried out this way. While most customers attempted the techniques deaf stallholders demonstrated, sometimes they failed to understand or refused to try. When this happened, deaf stallholders called on other DWG members to interpret. Three members usually took this role: Safia and Esther, the most fluent hearing signers, and, most frequently of all, Lidia, who was deaf but spoke and speechread Runyoro.[68] Although Lidia usually engaged in market-based interpretation as the interpreter, acting for other deaf people who did not use speech, very intransigent customers caused her to ask Safia or Esther to help. Other DWG members and friends with less developed signing also sometimes interpreted.

The following example involves Basemera, who worked with Lidia during my later fieldwork. She sold skirts from a section of Lidia's beer shelter, across the lane from the main DWG stalls, and assisted on Lidia's main stall (see figure 2). A customer approached Basemera's stall and tried on two skirts. She asked the price, first by speaking and, when she wasn't understood, by pointing. She easily recognised Basemera's closed-fist gesture to mean '5000' (the closed fist, meaning '5', is used by hearing people in busy or noisy situations). The customer verbally requested a reduction, and Basemera, understanding from the conventional pattern of the conversation, shook her head.

The customer turned to Lidia, who was resting in the beer shelter, and repeated her question. Lidia replied, speaking, that the skirts belonged to Basemera and she had refused, but when the customer realised Lidia was deaf (from the sound of her voice) she stopped listening, looking around for someone else to help. She saw Mama Karolin across the lane and walked over, gesturing that she would return. After a few words, Mama Karolin called Basemera. She repeated the request, pointing to one skirt then the other and gradually moving her right hand downwards to indicate a reduction. Basemera shook her head again and signed 'PROFIT NONE.' 'PROFIT' is signed by tapping a 'K' handshape on the lower right-hand side of the stomach, and 'NONE' by sweeping two '0' handshapes outwards from the centre of the body. 'PROFIT' is potentially intelligible to non-signing people despite the unfamiliar handshape, because the area tapped is where women keep money tied in their clothing (the sign therefore makes use of spatial 'representational techniques' available to

[68] 'Speechreading' is a more accurate term for 'lipreading' (see Senghas & Monaghan 2002: 73).

sign languages, Green 2017: 338). Mama Karolin tapped her hand on the same area and then signed 'MONEY' (a common gesture among hearing people) with a questioning expression. When Basemera nodded, she told the customer Basemera could not give a discount because she bought the skirts at a high price and there would be no profit.
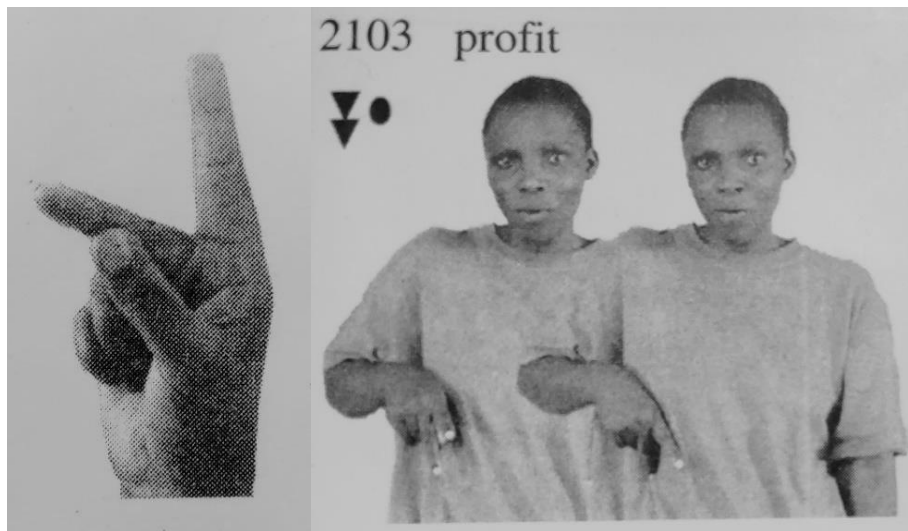
FIGURE 5: 'K' HANDSHAPE AND 'PROFIT' SIGN IN UGSL. REPRODUCED FROM: SIGN LANGUAGE RESEARCH PROJECT 2006. UGANDA SIGN LANGUAGE DICTIONARY, FIRST EDITION (EDS L. WALLIN, D. LULE, S. LUTALO & B. BUSINGYE), P405

When I asked deaf stallholders to describe their communication with customers, they all responded with the sign phrase: 'TRY+', made by twice repeating the verb 'try.' Iteration is a common strategy for verb plurality in UgSL, used to convey ongoing or continuous action or high intensity (Lutalo-Kiingi 2014: 133). In this case, both verb modifications were involved:

deaf stallholders' strategy involved iteration *and* a high degree of 'trying.' 'I keep trying hard' is a possible translation, although the identical phrasing used by many people suggests 'TRY+' names a specific conventionalised technique. The phrase invokes repetition and experimentation, a commitment to repeating communicative attempts until understanding is achieved (Kusters 2017a: 293–4 also notes repetition and remodalisation in communication between deaf customers and hearing stallholders in Mumbai).

Discussing 'direct communication' (i.e. without an interpreter) between deaf people who use different signed languages, Green argues 'difficult sign interactions' involve 'heightened relationships' that constitute a 'moral orientation', necessitating 'turning towards' the other person (Green 2015: 72; see also Canagarajah 2013: 178–180). In my example, the customer did not accept this task, shifting it onto Mama Karolin, a neighbour who knew no formal

UgSL but spent every day with deaf people because her market stall was sandwiched between her friend Safia's and Lidia's (see figure 2). Mama Karolin had learned some basic signs, but, more importantly, she understood the expressive capacities of visual language and believed communication with her deaf neighbours was feasible. When she interpreted for Basemera and her customer she elaborated on Basemera signs, drawing on their shared knowledge as stallholders to expand Basemera's 'PROFIT NONE' by explaining *why* there would be no profit if she reduced the price. She thereby demonstrated investment in her deaf neighbour's attempt to keep the price high.

For 'TRY+' to work, the deaf person needed their conversation partner to commit to co-creating meaning. This did not always happen, although desire to purchase could generate a time-limited shared motivation. Where it was not possible, friends and neighbours with experience of visual communication – including those not using formal UgSL – were crucial to enabling deaf stallholders' projects. Between Basemera and Mama Karolin, 'informal interpretation' happened through the modality of 'TRY+,' because the customer rejected the (more effective) deaf interpreter, Lidia.

However, even when the interpreter does know UgSL, interpretation events in the market mirror the back-and-forth ad-hoc experimentation typical of 'TRY+'. The style resembles Forestal's 'community interpreting,' a mode developed by deaf interpreters, which stresses 'the importance of interactive dialogues and rapport with all parties, especially Deaf consumers' (Forestal 2014: 40) and Cokely's account of early US interpreters who emerged from deaf communities (Cokely 2005: 4; see also Kent 2012). Interpretation by DWG members in the market was conversational, often including questions between interpreter and deaf stallholder, or asides and comments that were not communicated to the customer. Interpretation happened as part of a flow of social life, based on shared experience and knowledge and, usually, with a relaxed temporality making it possible to prioritise the deaf partner's needs.

Nevertheless, deaf stallholder's support needs were not considered in a vacuum. From Esther and Safia's perspective, Lidia was a successful rival as well as a friend and fellow DWG member. Safia, Esther, and Lidia all had general grocery stalls, selling household consumables. Although each stall had specialisations (Safia sold sweets, Lidia sugar, and

Esther firewood), the core of their businesses was in direct competition. Lidia also had several other stock areas: shoes, bags, and cooking equipment. She told me when she needed help with the grocery, Safia and Esther would not interpret for her, and she would not ask them; however, they interpreted when customers wanted items they did not sell themselves.[69] 'Informal interpretation' happened within complex social relationships, which included Lidia's position as the most successful businesswoman in DWG.

Simultaneous interpretation

For disability organisation at the Rubuga (District and Municipal) level, the predominant format was the meeting. Formal meetings exhibit specific tempos, which are often highly conventionalised (Brown et al. 2017: 17). Critical Access Studies argues material *and* discursive phenomena are outcomes of 'design,' responding to implicit or explicit concepts of intended 'users,' and shaping inaccessible outcomes for people living with body-minds different to imagined users (Hamraie 2017: 10, 14–16).

Most meetings deaf stallholders attended were associated with 'development' initiatives. They acted as 'validations of project spending…[and] mark[ed] the temporal progress of projects' (Brown & Green 2017: 57). Meetings had to fulfil the required forms, constraining formats. Common features of NGO and government meetings included rigid agendas and extended hierarchically organised speaking turns. These features presume specific forms of communication, folding exclusion into the format for deaf people, who were accustomed to dialogic linguistic norms[70] and lived with sensory affordances that were only catered for second-hand, through an interpreter (on sensory asymmetries between deaf and hearing people, see De Meulder et al. 2019).

Deaf-hearing communication in meetings occurred mainly through 'simultaneous' or 'nonstop flow' interpreting (Forestal 2014). The interpreter was expected to replicate speaker's utterances precisely and simultaneously (this resembled the 'conduit' or

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[69] This claim was exaggerated, but Safia and Esther did interpret for Lidia's non-grocery businesses more frequently.

[70] This also applies to some hearing people. Class-based exclusion occurs in NGO and government meetings, especially when conducted in English.

'machine' model common in the early phase of interpreting professionalisation in the USA (Janzen & Korpinski 2005: 168; Witter-Merithew 1999: 2)). Often no pauses were added to facilitate interpretation, and no regular checks occurred to ensure deaf participants were understanding: it was a monological form of interpretation.

In Rubuga, interpretation was not monitored to check fidelity to the origin utterance; the conduit model was assumed, but not enforced. The only (unspoken) stipulation was that interpretation happen in the same timeframe as the hearing-dominated meeting, allowing it to disappear into the background. This approach makes 'nonstop flow' the only possible form of interpretation. The conduit model is criticised for misrepresenting the complex 'cultural mediation' interpretation involves (Friedner, 2018; Janzen & Korpinski, 2005, p. 170), and for encouraging forms of rapid sign production, more closely resembling transliteration than true interpretation (Cokely, 2005, p. 10; Forestal, 2014, pp. 34, 39-40; Kent, 2012, pp. 2-3). These problems were evident in Rubuga.

Formal interpretation during meetings was a recent introduction in Rubuga, promoted by the NGO Skills Action to make disability organising more accessible for deaf people. (Previously the only meeting-based interpretation available had been ad-hoc arrangements with hearing DWG members. This had its own problems, discussed below.)[71] Skills Action used 'semi-professionalised' interpreters: people without formal qualifications who were nevertheless employed in schools as interpreters, lending them a professional air; they were not bound by a code of ethics.

Skills Action's favoured interpreter, Charles, was a physically disabled man who had attended the UNAD course and was subsequently hired to interpret at a government primary school. The alternate was a teacher, Elizabeth, from a low-cost private school for disabled children, which Lidia, Basemera and some hearing DWG members had attended. The school used limited signing in teaching. Deaf alumni complained about the quality of signing at the school, which used an institution-specific form of signed English, not UgSL. They could only pick up isolated words, which did not link together because there was no grammatical content (see Søgaard Andersen 2004 on similar problems in Kenya).

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[71] DWG members continued to interpret in non-Skills Action settings, including local government meetings.

During meetings interpreted by Elizabeth, her poor sign language excluded deaf participants; consequently, in an election for the district association of disabled people (RUDDIPU), deaf women's votes were initially misrecorded (until I intervened). The deaf participants openly discussed their incomprehension in UgSL and repeatedly asked Esther for clarification; the (hearing and non-signing) chairperson also noticed deaf people were not understanding. Nevertheless, Esther was not substituted for Elizabeth, who continued her incomprehensible simultaneous interpretation. The same interpreter continued to be used in subsequent meetings. Charles was more comprehensible, but deaf participants still struggled in meetings he interpreted; during fast-paced sessions his narrative became incomplete and disjointed, sometimes transliterating instead of interpreting. Simultaneous interpretation is a challenging task needing fluency in both languages and technical training, benefits unavailable to these interpreters.[72]

Replacing the existing interpreters with DWG members would not solve the problem. After one meeting Esther had interpreted, Lidia complained, telling me 'akomabukoma' [she picks and chooses]. At the same time, Lidia signed a narrative that pictured Esther sitting and watching the meeting, then signing a bit, then sitting watching, then signing a bit. DWG members were usually present as delegates of meetings and were therefore concentrated on their own participation or learning. Speaking and signing at the same time is difficult, especially for those who are not completely fluent (Baker-Shenk & Kyle 1990: 72).

Meetings were never temporally adjusted to the needs of deaf participants or interpreters and there was no acknowledgement of the power differential involved in access through an interpreter. Kermit, Morten, and Olsen argue 'the presence of interpreters may camouflage the communicative barriers' that exist, as interpreters strive to appear professionally competent, despite their – unreported – concerns about lack of understanding (Kermit et al. 2011; see also Cokely 2005: 9).[73] Meeting organisers put the entire burden of accessibility onto an interpreter who is expected to solve all communicative problems. For 'semi-

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[72] Kyambogo University runs a degree-level sign language interpreter programme, but no Rubuga-based interpreter has attended.

[73] This problem also occurs for minority spoken language communities (see Angermeyer 2009).

professionalised' interpreters, the receipt of 'expense allowances' for their time (often major components of their livelihoods) makes them unlikely to object.

Tukolengane, a Community Savings and Loan Association

Meetings are also held in Kicweka, with some controlled by DWG. Here interpretation differs again, functioning in the 'community' mode but with serious constraints due to the meeting form. This section uses examples from *Tukolengane*, a community savings and loan association (SLA), which was founded by DWG members. DWG members continued to hold important positions: Safia, who used a wheelchair, was Chairperson, and Lidia was Secretary. Safia's neighbouring stallholder, Mama Karolin (see chapter 4), recorded transactions. *Tukolengane* meetings were held in the 'railway cottages' compound, in the beer shelter belonging to one of the non-DWG members (see figure 4).

The SLA model mobilises 'social capital' (pre-existing links producing mutual obligation between group members) to ensure repayment; *Tukolengane*'s emerged from DWG. Wheelchair-using DWG members called *Tukolengane* 'our' savings group, although its constitution did not mention disability and the thirteen disabled members were a minority among a membership of sixty. Seven of these disabled members were deaf. Two hearing members of the group had good working knowledge of UgSL: Safia, and Alice, an ordinary member who also used a wheelchair.

SLA meetings, while not featuring formal speakers, involved rushing to get through high volumes of transactions while holding the attention of busy participants. Like more formal meetings, they lacked the relaxed temporality enabling experimentation and repetition in market communication. However, in this DWG-controlled space some adjustments had been made to attain inclusion of deaf members. In what follows, I discuss how the adjustments worked and investigate their successes and limitations.

SLAs were common in Kicweka and vital to the financial affairs of its people. The micro-businesses typical in the market could not run without SLA loans, which facilitated bulk purchasing of stock and major expenditures like school fees. It was therefore crucial for deaf stallholders to access them. Most stallholders were members of an SLA; many attended multiple groups each week, which pushed up their savings totals and provided diverse

sources for loans. Nevertheless, repeatedly borrowing and paying off loans could be draining. As Alice put it: 'ntekaho, nkweihaho, ntekaho, nkweihaho, njwahire!' [I deposit, I withdraw, I deposit, I withdraw, I am tired!].

Tukolengane meetings were nearly identical to the hundreds of other SLA meetings occurring weekly; they used the same technology, including individual savings booklets for each member and large counter books where all transactions were recorded. This paperwork was kept in a locked box that could only be opened when three 'keyholders,' all trusted group members, were present. Money collected was also kept in the locked box. The group used standard categories of payment prevalent across Kicweka, taking savings in increments of 2000 shillings up to a maximum of 10,000 per week (approximately 40p to £2), and requiring small weekly payments for a 'welfare' fund. Loans were either interest bearing business loans drawing on the main savings fund, usually given in the hundreds of thousands of shillings, or smaller interest-free 'welfare loans' originally intended as a short-term emergency facility for members facing specific problems such as a family funeral.

Like other SLAs, *Tukolengane* meetings were usually quiet, with members sitting in a rough circle focused on the officials consulting the books and collecting money. Progress was narrated by the person holding the active book, who announced stages of the meeting, amounts of money, and called individual members to make a contribution. Most members were seated too far from the books to follow by reading, so instead relied on this spoken guide. However, for deaf people it was inaccessible. The deaf members persisted in their membership of this group because an informal interpretation system operated through the hearing UgSL-users. There was no simultaneous interpretation of the spoken narrative, but most major transition points were indicated in UgSL (with problematic exceptions, discussed below), and deaf members regularly asked questions and had them answered in UgSL.

While patchy, this system was better than other SLA meetings. Deaf members also may not have desired simultaneous interpretation: I never saw it requested in *Tukolengane*, in contrast to common requests for DWG members to interpret in meetings organised by local government. The aim of the *Tukolengane* system was to make it safe and viable for deaf people to access this essential business service, rather than ensure they understood everything said. Most hearing members did not try to follow everything either; savings

groups also act as rare spaces for relaxing, especially for women (Jones 2020: 255). Deaf members of *Tukolengane* valued it as a deaf gathering point, using the time to chat in UgSL or joke with their hearing neighbours in a setting where linguistic mediation was available, as well as a way to access loans.

Deaf inclusion within the expected 'users' of the group's services had prompted changes in format which, like the 'care collective' discussed in chapter 4, contributed to 'collective access' (Hamraie 2013). The most important of these involved how members requested loans. As Secretary, Lidia maintained two lists: one for members wanting business loans and another for the smaller welfare loans. Each week, at any point during the meeting, members could approach her and add their name, which Lidia wrote at the bottom of the appropriate list, 'booking' a future opportunity to borrow.

The 'booking' system was common among SLAs as a tool for transparency, because additions could only be made in the public meeting when the group's lock box had been opened by the key holders. However, it was usually applied to business loans only. *Tukolengane* extended it to welfare loans because it had an additional importance for deaf members: it put the timing of requests for loans in their control, because they could add their name any time, rather than only when the officers had announced the relevant meeting stage. It therefore lessened pressure to understand everything the officers said and consequently reduced the need for interpretation. Deaf members did not have to gauge the right moment to engage with a group process governed by verbal announcements and dominated by hearing people: the temporality of the meetings had been (partially) adjusted to accommodate them.

Linguistic affordances and deaf sociality in *Tukolengane*

Deaf communication in *Tukolengane* cannot be understood without considering sociolinguistic differences between deaf members, which made their modes of accessing the meeting divergent and affected their relationship with ideas of 'deaf community.' UNAD teaches that there are four types of deafness: 1. Congenital – being born deaf; 2. Pre-lingual – being born hearing but becoming deaf before fully learning spoken language; 3. Post-lingual – being born hearing but becoming deaf after acquiring spoken language; and 4. Hard of hearing. UNAD argues most people in the first two categories cannot use spoken

language, but some in the latter two do, possibly alongside UgSL. Deaf members of *Tukolengane* fell into several categories, and the differences between their linguistic affordances impacted their participation in the meetings.

Three of the seven deaf members acted as a corporate group-within-a-group, sitting and conversing together throughout the meetings. These people – DWG member Khadija, her partner Ayesiga, and a young man named Namutebi – were either deaf from birth or became deaf before acquiring spoken language; they all solely used UgSL. As well as operating as a sub-group in *Tukolengane*, they were all core members of Rubuga's Deaf Association, along with Lidia, the deaf Secretary of *Tukolengane*.

Lidia was born hearing and became deaf after learning to speak. She was therefore fluent in Runyoro, which she speechread and spoke. While many authors emphasise the difficulty and inaccuracy of speechreading (Kusters 2017a: 286), Lidia's was remarkably reliable. Nevertheless, some things caused problems, especially people not facing her while speaking or multiple speakers at once. Unusually among Deaf people in Kicweka who used speech, Lidia was fluent in UgSL as well as Runyoro, and comfortable in the socio-linguistic communities associated with both; she was what Boudreault calls a 'balanced bilingual' (Boudreault 2005: 324).

As an officer, Lidia sat at the central table, not with the 'deaf corporate group', but she frequently interacted with them in UgSL. She was critical to the integration of UgSL-using members because she could bridge between deaf and hearing groups. Designating these three (or four) deaf members a 'corporate group' is not just a comment on their communication during the meetings; the linguistic relationships created and responded to other social and financial links. These can be illustrated through analysing informal practices of lending and caretaking money between members.

Microfinance institutions typically seek to inculcate prescriptive financial disciplines, including preventing risky or 'non-productive' borrowing (Chaudhry 2016: 181, 187; Lazar 2004: 305–6). *Tukolengane* featured systems to prevent these actions, designed by an NGO that provided the leaders with initial training before they set up the group. Members were prohibited from holding a business loan and a welfare loan at the same time, and welfare loans were only interest-free for the first two weeks. However, members frequently avoided

these policies through practices based on extremely short-term borrowing from a friend. These exchanges took place openly, including among the group's officers.

In a typical example, Khadija discovered during a meeting that her turn to withdraw a business loan had arrived, earlier than expected. She had been waiting a long time and desperately needed to restock her business. However, there was a problem: she had an open welfare loan, which would prevent her receiving the business loan. The tight payment-to-payment nature of market finances meant she did not have cash to pay the welfare loan back early.

Lidia advised her to ask 'friends' to lend her the money. Khadija went straight to Namutebi. He repaid her welfare loan, resetting her position so she could withdraw a new, bigger, business loan. Khadija separated the amount Namutebi had paid from the 'business loan' she received and paid him back immediately. Performing this accounting trick required help from a friend or patron with greater financial liquidity, which was temporarily treated as though it belonged to the debtor. The process was called 'adding,' a term that made evident the conceptual blending of the two loans – against formal group standards – and erased the specificity of the welfare loan as an emergency facility.

These transactions, which were explained to me as forms of 'helping' that could only occur between 'friends,' were used by many *Tukolengane* members. However, analysis of transactions undertaken specifically by deaf people reveals distinct grouping. Deaf UgSL users loaned to and received loans from each other regularly. Namutebi, who had higher than average income from his carpentry business, often gave loans to other members of the 'deaf corporate group,' but also received them occasionally (for example from Khadija's partner). Lidia loaned to members of the 'deaf corporate group,' to Basemera, and to hearing members of DWG, particularly Alinaitwe, whose business was struggling. I never saw her undertake this type of transaction with anyone who was neither deaf nor a member of DWG. In practice, deaf members' 'friends' were those with whom they shared 'deaf' identity and language, as well as, for and through Lidia, hearing members of DWG for whom interaction with deaf people was part of daily life.

Lidia's interactions with Basemera were particularly illuminating. Basemera was not part of the 'deaf corporate group,' sitting instead near Safia, Lidia, or Alice, the members capable of

interpreting. Basemera had an unusual, temporary, position in the Kicweka deaf community: she had only recently started working in the market and was learning UgSL, having previously used the school system of signed English discussed earlier (combined with speechreading).

During one meeting, Basemera was absent at a funeral, and Lidia used her own money to pay back Basemera's welfare loan, immediately withdrawing another for her. This practice, another version of an extremely short-term bridging loan, renewed the interest-free period on the welfare loan and could, if repeated, avoid interest payments entirely, producing a long-term welfare subsidy. Lidia acted without Basemera requesting help, explaining she was trying to avoid the interest adding up because it would 'kusiisikara sente/SPOIL MONEY.'[74] Lidia's relationship with Basemera was explicitly pedagogical: she saw herself as 'teaching Basemera to work' (see chapters 1 and 4 on this role). This included paying attention to her business interests, because Lidia believed Basemera did not yet know herself how to care for them in the face of problems like compound interest (see Guyer 2004: 160).

Lidia played an important, authoritative role in relation to signing deaf people, particularly women, advising Khadija and performing transactions for Basemera. As I discuss below, her ability to broker spoken language and her close engagement in DWG structures (including *Tukolengane*) positioned her as a deaf leader, like deaf bilinguals described in other settings (Adam et al. 2011). Engaging in these practices required strong affective bonds, including a high level of trust. Jašarević describes loans carrying 'noneconomic surpluses,' arguing that interpersonal loans can carry greater affective weight than institutional loans (Jašarević 2017: 97–8). The pattern of micro-term loans in *Tukolengane* suggested the bonds capable of sustaining this weight were strongest between the 'deaf corporate group' and Lidia, and between Lidia and hearing signers in DWG.

This constellation of relationships articulated deaf UgSL users with hearing signers, expanding deaf members' sociality by linguistic means via the nodal link of Lidia's 'disability movement'-related relationships with her wheelchair-using neighbours. Although I did not see loans pass directly between hearing members of DWG and members of the 'deaf

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[74] Lidia often signed USL and spoke Runyoro simultaneously.

corporate group', other forms of financial entrustment did occur between them; for example, when he was unable to attend the week's meeting Namutebi would bring his contribution to Safia and Alinaitwe in advance, asking them to complete his (sometimes complex) business transactions. This route was particularly important at times that deaf politics, discussed below, was fractious.

By contrast to the thick connections between UgSL-using deaf people, deaf people who relied on speech alone were largely excluded. Alinda, like Lidia, was 'postlingually deaf' but did not use UgSL. Aged 45, she was from an older generation of deaf people who did not learn any kind of sign language at school. She was invited to UNAD's UgSL course but attended irregularly and learned little, perhaps because, as she put it: 'I use the mouth.' However, her speechreading was less accurate than Lidia's and she struggled to follow conversation; in meetings she understood little.

Alinda sat on the other side of the shelter from the 'deaf corporate group,' when possible near Safia, who attempted to answer her questions by slowly mouthing words supported with gestures. Alinda was never involved in the web of informal financial transactions between deaf people. As well as being deaf, Alinda lived with physical disability and was formally a member of DWG, although she was not closely involved and complained she had been 'dropped' by the leaders (see chapter 2). Communication problems, I argue, played a big role in this.

During one meeting, Alinda asked for a business loan and became very agitated when refused because her name was not at the top of the 'booking list.' Safia advised her, using exaggerated mouthing and simple gestures, to take a welfare loan, suggesting that the next week they would 'kwongeraho/ADD': they would use the trick of short-term borrowing from a friend. This attempt to bring Alinda into the web of financial transactions based on disability-mediated friendship was unsuccessful. Alinda did not understand and refused to accept the welfare loan, thinking it would prevent her from accessing a business loan the next week. She became very angry. Eventually, she was given a business loan scraped together from the dregs of the loan fund, which was consequently less than she wanted and needed.

Despite Safia's attempt at inclusion, multimodal communication failed in this setting, preventing the development of trusting patronage relationships that could have facilitated Alinda's financial management. Partially this was due to Alinda's inability or unwillingness to use multimodal forms, but the temporal pressures of the meeting may have been more significant. The exchange happened near the end of the meeting, with Alinda feeling urgency as available loan funds dwindled. She ignored Safia's appeals to 'be patient,' pressuring the communication beyond the capacities of multimodal forms. In the next section, I show the same temporal pressure caused problems between hearing and UgSL-using deaf people, but mechanisms existed to deal with the resultant conflict, one of which was the ties of solidarity between Lidia and the 'deaf corporate group.'

'They have discriminated against deaf people': debating inclusion within *Tukolengane*

My analysis of 'friendship'-based financial transactions suggests deaf sociality in *Tukolengane* occured mostly in two groups: the deaf corporate group and DWG members, with Lidia bridging between them. Although interactions happened across the categories without Lidia's involvement, they were rarer. Given this relative division, did deaf people understand the group as 'theirs', as hearing DWG members did?

Most of the time, members of the 'deaf corporate group' were evidently relaxed during meetings. The meetings were a deaf gathering point, a cherished time to be with each other and their hearing neighbours. Khadija often signed across the shelter to people on the other side, including Safia, Alice, Alinaitwe (all hearing members of DWG), Basemera, Mama Karolin – even occasionally Alinda. After the meetings, deaf participants, especially women, stayed in the market to chat and share news. When deaf-hearing communication was working smoothly, as it usually was, *Tukolengane* was space where, for the duration of the meeting, 'being deaf is unremarkable' (Lee 2012: 174).

However, deaf inclusion remained relative and variable. At moments when it did not work, explosive interactions revealed ongoing divisions between deaf and hearing members of DWG. During one meeting, the welfare loans stage had almost concluded when Lidia loudly claimed the other officials 'basorooriire abadeaf' [have discriminated against deaf people] by leaving them until last. The Vice-chair had started the welfare loans stage by calling 'oh'akwenda welfare?' [who wants a welfare loan?], rather than following the 'booking list,'

as he should have. Available credit was divided among those who responded, without referring to the list. No-one had interpreted the question into UgSL. The deaf members whose names were at the top of the list had not known they needed to make another request until Lidia intervened.

The deaf members did receive their loans after the complaint, and after the meeting Lidia told me she thought the proper systems would be followed in the future because her complaints had made the other officers 'afraid.' (Lidia particularly criticised the Vice-chair, whose stall, like Mama Karolin's, was between Safia's and Lidia's; despite this, he made no effort to communicate visually with his neighbours.) Increased effort to ensure deaf members did not miss out was evident in the following week's meeting. When the welfare loans section started, Safia signed this information, first waving to get the attention of all deaf participants. Alinaitwe repeatedly called the names of deaf members at the top of the list until the scribe had written them on her distribution list. Through everyday acts of attempted inclusion, these hearing disabled members obviously considered deaf people a core part of the group's membership and purpose.

Despite this, deaf inclusion in *Tukolengane* went through cycles of intensified improvement and subsequent neglect. Even with sympathetic officers, the pressures of the meeting form meant Lidia took a crucial role when things were difficult, pushing the group toward greater effort by communicating dissent. As a bilingual, Lidia's linguistic affordances differ from non-speaking deaf people's. The difference became evident in another moment when the flow of information across the modal language boundary proved difficult, but Lidia was temporarily absent from the meeting.

On this occasion, it again seemed that available funds would not cover all requests. Khadija, who had requested a welfare loan so she could restock on a trip to Kampala the next day, waved at Safia, and signed 'WELFARE FINISHED?' Safia was talking to Mama Karolin and did not immediately acknowledge Khadija, although she could clearly see her. Khadija stood and indignantly signed 'me-WANT WELFARE,' agitated she might miss out because her request had not been registered. In this second phrase, Khadija signed quickly and emphatically, scowling and striking her hands together hard: a manner even non-signers recognise as

angry. However, the signs were not intelligible to those without UgSL.[75] Khadija's message could only be understood by signing members of the group, who are few: Safia was unavailable and Alice, sitting far from the books, could not answer Khadija's question.

Unlike Lidia's loud complaint, Khadija's objection did not lead to improvements in subsequent meetings. Lidia's vocalisation made it possible to directly communicate dissatisfaction to the whole group. Weidman writes 'the force of the voice comes not only…from its power to name, but also, and perhaps more often, from its sonorous, material, and affective qualities', which gain meaning in a complex heteroglossic world of shared experience (Weidman 2014: 42–6). While Khadija could communicate anger through her style of signing and facial expression, for most hearing people this did not entail the emotional resonance of past experience Lidia's shout mobilised. Lidia had an advantage in eliciting real-time affective responses (in this case fear) in her hearing interlocutors.

Moments when it seemed deaf members might miss out arose in three of the eleven *Tukolengane* meetings I attended. Lidia played a crucial role: as a speaking deaf person she was substantially more able to influence the flow of the meeting than those using signing alone. Adjustments to the meeting form were partial, maintaining inequality for signing deaf people. Deaf people's relationships to *Tukolengane* were therefore not homogenous. In addition, some deaf members were also members of DWG while others were not. Lidia, with evident pride in her influence over *Tukolengane*, actively encouraged other deaf people to join, seeing it as a place deaf people could co-shape alongside DWG members. However, even she became frustrated when the cycles of accessibility were at a low ebb. One solution proposed between deaf people was to set up their own, deaf-only, savings group.

Lidia's support for this idea, while also championing deaf people's participation in the mixed group, exemplified her ambivalent relationship with the category 'disabled people.' On the one hand, disability organisation had enabled improvements in her life; on the other, the linguistic specificity of deaf people's access needs was not fully accommodated. A form of

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[75] 'WELFARE' is another 'initialised sign' using the 'W' handshape, incomprehensible to non-USL users (Lutalo-Kiingi & De Clerck 2015: 47).

oppositional solidarity with other deaf people, *against* disability, helped her deal with this contradiction.

Deaf community in Kicweka

Calls for a deaf-only savings group emerged particularly strongly in a meeting of the district-level Deaf Association in early 2019. This was held after a period of division in the deaf community. Lidia claimed several deaf men had lobbied companies for funds to attend Deaf Awareness Week (DAW) celebrations the previous year but did not actually go, keeping the money for themselves. Some of the men retaliated by claiming it was Lidia who had 'eaten the money.' The community had split – largely along gender lines, which are common in the region's deaf communities (Beckmann 2020: 153; Lee 2012: 183) – and a meeting had not been held for many months. Lidia and Namutebi, a leader among Rubuga's young deaf men, had recently reconciled and were attempting to bring the association back together to hold elections, which were long overdue.

Participants at the meeting expressed a normative discourse of 'UNITY' aimed at achieving 'deaf development.' 'UNITY' was contrasted to acting 'ONE-ONE' [individualistically], or, as Basemera put it in her opening prayer, against 'COMPLAIN++ GOSSIP+ PHONE' [continually spreading complaints and gossip through phone messages]. As such, it involved criticising the behaviour of deaf people in the town, responding to the controversy over DAW; Namutebi commented 'DEAF DISAPPOINT' [deaf people are disappointing]. However, the problems against which 'UNITY' was constructed were not all attributed to deaf people. When Lidia proposed the deaf-only group she signed:

> y/nq
> INDEX-all DISABLED DEVELOP, GROUP DEAF-negative, MIX+-negative, GROUP DEAF ONLY WANT
> [All other disabled people are developing, the deaf group is not, mixing all the time is bad, do you want a group for deaf people only?]

Deaf people as a group were here contrasted to hearing disabled people, arguing that deaf people benefitted less from the 'development' understood to emerge through disability organising.

Lidia used other disabled people as a foil against which to argue for 'UNITY' among deaf people throughout the meeting. Other participants concentrated on a related but distinct conceptual grouping: all hearing people. Namutebi, for example, signed:

<div style="text-align: right">wh-q</div>

INDEX-you-all UNITE THANK-YOU, SEPARATE NO, UNITE. MAN WOMAN UNITE, ONE. WHY. DEAF ONE[76] QUOTE.

[Please, all of you be united. Don't be separate. Men and women unite, be one. Why? Because all deaf are one, as they say]

He then pointed at himself and slowly around the group, followed by pointing at his ear with a questioning expression. Then he mimed speaking, exaggeratedly flapping his mouth, before ending by pointing around the group again with a questioning expression. This was a rhetorical device, asking if anyone in the group was hearing and used speech, and fully expecting the answer he received: a decisive collective 'NO.' Namutebi used features of the shared embodiment of deaf people to assert obligation to act as a group.

Language shaped the 'community' of the association, with the meetings using UgSL exclusively. This led to unequal participation, with those fluent in the language dominating; often this meant those with more education (including Namutebi and Khadija, who had studied with UNAD in Kampala) (Lutalo-Kiingi & De Clerck 2015 also note stratification by education level among Ugandan deaf people). Other attendees, like Basemera, were less familiar with UgSL. Basemera told me she would not run for leadership in the proposed elections because she only had a little 'SKILL' [referring to her UgSL]. She worked doggedly at improving it but remained nervous in settings where signing deaf people were conversing rapidly.

Deaf people who preferentially used speech rather than sign never attended the meetings because their linguistic affordances differed so dramatically from deaf people who do not or cannot use spoken language, even though some (like Alinda) were technically members. Namutebi's rhetorical exaggerated flapping mouth established a prototypical speaking

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[76] Namutebi's 'DEAF ONE' recalls 'DEAF-SAME', a normative expression of 'deaf sameness across difference' due to shared linguistic abilities, commonly used in transnational meetings (Green 2015: 76; Friedner & Kusters 2015).

character against whom the deaf group were defined as non-speakers, dismissing the relevance of speaking in deaf lives.

However, the oppositional view of deaf and hearing people, and particularly deaf and hearing *disabled* people, was not followed in every situation. Lidia was involved in cross-impairment disability groups and encouraged other deaf people to join too, supporting Khadija, for example, to run for election to the municipal Council for People with Disabilities. She was proud of the unusually high participation of deaf people in Rubuga's associational life, frequently boasting about these successes. At the point of writing this thesis, the proposed deaf-only savings group had not been started and deaf people continued to attend *Tukolengane*.

The deaf association can be considered a 'community of practice,' which Wenger defines as a group of people displaying mutual engagement, joint enterprise, and a shared repertoire (Wenger 1998: 77). The deaf association had periodic meetings, shared orientation to creating 'development' and 'unity' for deaf people, and constitutive linguistic and technical practices, particularly using UgSL and producing appropriate rhetoric within it (DEAF UNITY/DEAF ONE). While 'communities of practice' foster particular orientations of the self, they are not mutually exclusive: a person can engage in multiple communities of practice (Eckert & McConnell-Ginet 1992: 464) and draw into them discursive resources from other sources not necessarily aligned with their aims and repertoire (Wilson & Peterson 2002: 456–7; Keating 2005). Identification with a community of practice can be a contingent, restricted form of subjectification in play with other dimensions of belonging. The discourse of oppositional unity operated as a specific 'contextualized identity' (Wilson & Peterson 2002: 458) within the association meetings.

Lidia's leading role in the meeting demonstrates this. Speakers in multilingual environments mobilise appropriate (ethno-)linguistic identifications by producing linguistic details that 'focalise particular aspects of identity' (Lüpke 2016: 25–7); Cobbinah et al describe these as 'prototypes': 'conceptual cores' of linguistic identities that *otherwise distinctly overlap* (Cobbinah et al. 2016: 90–2). Whereas Lidia usually signed and spoke at the same time, during the association meetings she used UgSL only. Communication for deaf people is predominantly a visual-tactile phenomenon (Bahan 2008; Edwards 2018). Namutebi's

rhetorical mime demonstrates that having different embodied communication, a physicality geared towards visual communication (and not the flapping mouth of speakers), was important: it was an indicator of meaningful sharing that made the Association a community.

Lidia's exclusive use of UgSL within the meeting signalled her participation in its deaf space, but she did not change her communication practices elsewhere. She was a vital resource for deaf people *because of* her speech, accompanying monolingual UgSL-users to the police station or hospital and writing most reports on deaf activities (with Esther's help if English was required). Deaf bilinguals provided similar functions in many historical deaf communities, frequently being assigned leadership roles (Adam et al. 2011: 383). The oppositional 'UNITY' of the deaf association meeting worked as a 'prototype', marking this space as distinct. Producing the appropriate discourse claimed membership. Lidia could credibly do so because her role as language broker placed her squarely within the group of visual communicators, even though she used speech extensively elsewhere.

'Deaf Space' has been defined in two main ways: as deaf-friendly 'safe spaces' in which sign language is unremarkable and widely understood (Heap 2006; Lee 2012), or, more restrictively, as spaces of deaf-deaf sociality that centre deaf experience and facilitate identity-formation based on shared embodiment (Gulliver 2009; Kusters 2015). The Deaf Association is an example of the latter. For those fluent in UgSL, it provided a space where communication was oriented solely to deaf needs and therefore experienced as easy, allowing full political participation. Less fluent attendees, like Basemera, were oriented toward improving UgSL to achieve this. My interlocutors distinguished 'deaf space proper' based on shared embodiment from 'deaf-hearing visual communicative space' (Kusters 2015: 20–1).

But the Deaf Association was not the only grouping deaf people wanted to engage with in Kicweka; identifying with it did not overwrite other forms of belonging. When Namutebi exclaimed 'DEAF DISAPPOINT' [the deaf are disappointing], this comment formed part of a longer denunciation including 'BANYORO SELFISH ONE' [Banyoro are the most selfish]. For him, local deaf people were part of the Banyoro, united in some characteristics with their hearing neighbours. Mugeere et al found many deaf people in Uganda 'would be more willing to

identify themselves with the main religious groups, tribes or cultures in the country' than with a deaf community (Mugeere et al. 2015: 7; see also Beckmann 2020: 178–9). The authors appear to consider this pathological and insist deaf people must be excluded in these realms because they 'rely on 'home-made gestures.'' Their discomfort may derive from considering alternative models of deaf association monolithic and incompatible, something Friedner cautions against (Friedner 2017: 131–2).

In Kicweka, deaf people engage multiple identities, some specific to being deaf and others not. Deaf-hearing and deaf-deaf spaces also interact in deaf people's lives and it can be difficult to draw boundaries between them (Friedner 2010: 62). Deaf association meetings are a form of 'NGO-centric' association, which Mugeere et al argue is the dominant mode of deaf sociality in Uganda (Mugeere et al. 2015: 5).[77] Many practices in the meeting were identical to those seen elsewhere, not specific to the deaf group. Members enthusiastically signed attendance registers (see Whyte 2020: S135), laughing at Namutebi for being 'a villager' when he made a mistake while doing so.[78] Many willingly gave higher contributions to fundraising for DAW than requested. NGO-related practices felt natural and positive to the deaf people present.

Even the 'UNITY' so carefully targeted was not *only* an idea about deaf-sameness. It also related to specific needs associated with 'developmental' forms. Explaining why the deaf group should be united, Lidia signed 'INDEX-loc-distant SUPPORT WANT LEADER+ DEAF' [donors want there to be leaders of the deaf]. When officials are seeking for recipients for a project, she explained, they come to her 'asking to be taken to the deaf.' The 'UNITY' of the deaf community was partially a response to the technologies of bodies providing them resources. Through deaf association bureaucracy, members could understand themselves as part of a national deaf community imbricated with the state and other disability- and development-related forms.

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[77] In Kicweka, deaf people socialised outside NGO-linked forms more often than within them, but the 'NGO-centric' Deaf Association is the most obvious *formal* grouping of deaf people.

[78] Mamdani argues hierarchical urban-rural divides are endemic in post-independence Uganda (Mamdani 1996: 26). By teasing Namutebi as a 'villager,' deaf attendees participate in a value system shared with majority hearing society.

Deaf space and linguistic collectives in Kicweka market

The visual linguistic community in Kicweka market was less reflexive: there was no narrative about how to build community through informal interpretation or 'TRY+.' Nevertheless, these practices also created felt connections which sometimes constituted collectives. This occurred spatially. The other strand of 'deaf space' literature describes spaces fostering 'safe and open use of sign language' (Lee 2012: 5) without necessarily centring deaf-deaf interactions. In contrast to the intense focus on UgSL in the Deaf Association, in market life deaf people's linguistic communities were not bounded by 'formal' sign language. Kusters and Sahasrabudhe argue formal distinctions between gesture and sign are less likely when 'gesturing enables' expanded deaf communication (Kusters & Sahasrabudhe 2018: 46–53).

Those who regularly used visual modalities to communicate (even if improvising, like Mama Karolin) formed relationships with deaf people (see also Hoffmann-Dilloway 2011: 385–6). Those who did not 'TRY+' were ignored, sometimes even resented, like the Vice-chair of *Tukolengane*. Despite their stalls neighbouring, Lidia and Khadija never conversed with him; they did not even greet one another. Kusters describes her participants creating a temporary 'deaf space' in the disabled carriage of a Mumbai train by filtering out irrelevant people: '"It happens automatically that I do not really see the blind people, the people without legs and so on, I just do not see them, […] I'm just not thinking about them when I'm commuting as a deaf person"' (Kusters 2017b: 185). In Kicweka market, the same process filters out the Vice-Chair, but many hearing DWG members *are* seen.

Within DWG's area of the market, a number of hearing people have developed affordances for visual communication similar to those deaf people use in everyday life (Crasborn & Hiddinga 2015; Preston 1994: 9), along with the disposition to experiment and rephrase central to multimodal communication. Here, as in the 'shared signing community' of Adamorobe, Ghana (where common hereditary deafness has led to sign language being used by deaf and hearing residents), 'A gesturing person [is] generally more easily understood than a gesturing person "outside," because of context and…shared experiential knowledge' (Kusters 2015: 65). Lee reports the same in nascent 'shared signing communities' in Tanzania, based on high concentrations of deaf people moving in because of deaf institutions and livelihood opportunities (Lee 2012, chapter 7).

Most days, Kicweka market did not host large numbers of deaf people or major deaf 'takeovers' of space (Breivik et al. 2002; Lee 2012: 182–5) (although the periodic Deaf Association meetings were partial 'takeovers'). Nevertheless, the DWG section attracted young deaf women, exerting 'social gravity,' like other urban collections of deaf people in East Africa (Lee 2012: 175; Beckmann 2020: 37).[79] During my fieldwork, Helen, a young deaf woman who was fluent in UgSL and did not speak or speechread, asked Lidia if she could work at her stall alongside Lidia's existing assistants Khadija and Basemera. Lidia told me she wanted to help because without speechreading Helen would find it harder than other deaf people to run a business elsewhere. Unfortunately, there was no space so Lidia told Helen to wait.

Meanwhile, Helen was being pressured by her parents to marry a deaf man who had approached them, something she was resisting, hoping to find a 'reliable' partner herself. After trying other options including menial employment[80] and ambulatory sales, Helen rented a lockup in a street parallel to Alice's shop, setting up a small stall (see figure 3). She had few customers and none of her neighbours could or would interpret. Apart from rare visits from friends and family (hearing and deaf), she was alone throughout the day. Deaf women frequently told me working where there are no other deaf people is 'boring.' Helen remained only a few months before marrying her suitor and moving towns to live with him.

Khadija's working day was different, even though her personal linguistic repertoire was the same: she exclusively signed. She sometimes sat alone and bored in Lidia's beer shelter, excluded from the flow of market discussion, but she could rely on in-depth UgSL conversations with Lidia, and other deaf people often visited. She also communicated with hearing DWG members, particularly Safia and Alinaitwe, in modalities ranging from near-standard UgSL to improvised 'TRY+.' When she struggled communicating with a customer, Lidia or the hearing signers were available.

Khadija's business did not flourish; she faced common problems of low capitalisation and high competition, and resented Esther's decision to assign her a grocery business from NEF

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[79] DWG's presence also affected deaf men, albeit less directly as they worked elsewhere. Khadija's partner moved countries because of her description of deaf society in Kicweka.

[80] Which she left after harassment from hearing colleagues.

funds (see chapter 2), but these issues were not rooted in her linguistic situation and her business was much longer-lived than Helen's. Khadija's advantage can be understood as 'distributed competence': the concept that one's (in)ability to achieve valued social goals is 'a property of social relations, not just of individuals' (Whyte 1998: 154; Booth & Booth 1999; Edgerton 1971). The shared capacity for visual language facilitated relationships with fellow workers, boosting her emotional resilience to deal with 'waiting for customers' in an oversaturated market (see chapter 1).

Beckmann describes two ways competence is produced intersubjectively in deaf lives in northern Uganda. 'Distributed competence,' which Beckmann attributes to deaf-hearing relationships (particularly of kinship and village), refers to networks where people contribute in different ways, while 'shared competence' is associated with groups (for example communities of practice) sharing aims and repertoires. Beckmann locates the latter in spaces where deaf people socialise with each other in UgSL (Beckmann 2020: 32–3, 136). Kicweka market offered both. Deaf workers accessed intense deaf sociality based on UgSL *and* an instrumentally and emotionally valued opportunity, through the broader group of visual communicators, to extend sociality beyond the deaf group.

Relationships between deaf people were not always smooth; as time passed, Khadija increasingly resented Lidia's newer assistant Basemera, complaining Lidia neglected her. During these disputes, Khadija spent more time with her hearing neighbours than Lidia. Both communicative spaces were sometimes problematic and attitudes towards them varied contextually. It was important to access both; they could even be strategically manoeuvred against each other, as Namutebi did when he brought his *Tukolengane* contributions to Safia instead of Lidia during the period of gendered conflict in the Deaf Association. He used a 'deaf-hearing visual communicative space' to *avoid* an element of 'deaf space' he otherwise must engage.

DWG's role in visual linguistic competence

The binary division between 'shared' and 'distributed competence' must not be overemphasised. Sharing and identification exists in the 'distributed competence' of the family (as Beckmann beautifully illustrates), while the UgSL-oriented space of the Rubuga Deaf Association required differentiation of roles to create a deaf community that could

compete with other disability groups, with only some members able to take on leadership.[81] The binary theoretical approach obscures the role of DWG – a majority hearing organisation with an assertive deaf minority – in establishing deaf sociality in the market space (Kusters 2015: 21 makes a similar argument; see Murray 2007: 200).

Relationships between deaf and hearing DWG members were not 'shared competence': they contributed different things. Sometimes the interaction was explicitly conceived as mutually beneficial exchange: Lidia pushing Esther's wheelchair to meetings and Esther interpreting for Lidia, thus both accessing 'expense allowances' as aides. However, sharing and linguistic closeness were involved. Hearing DWG members did not imagine themselves as 'deaf people', but they thought they were closer to deaf people than others without their history. Esther claimed DWG members could better interpret than an 'outsider' because 'we know their ways.' Lidia agreed, telling me 'we want [an interpreter] who stays with us' (although she also complained about DWG members' patchy interpretation). Almost every time I witnessed a deaf person asking a hearing person to interpret, they asked a DWG member.

DWG members experienced a meaningful shared position between deaf and hearing people, most importantly based on a personal history of mutual engagement, although it also had roots in the bureaucratic forms that initially assembled DWG as a group. The deaf members were people with whom the wheelchair-using members shared characteristics because 'we have ever been with them.' For hearing signers this entailed a felt obligation to interpret visually when required, even though this demand was not always met (for example when it conflicted with the hearing member's interests). Fostering this disposition was a *collective* process.

New visual subjectivities were forged together in the process of everyday life and the dense ties of disability sociality in the market, strengthened through neighbourly and quasi-kin relationships involving commensality, care, pedagogy, and rivalry. I suggest the appropriate term is 'collective competence,' which involves identification, but not to the same level as

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[81] Lidia claimed deaf people in Rubuga wanted a leader who could speak. While monolingual USL-users never put it that way (and may not have agreed), Lidia was the only leadership candidate deaf women endorsed.

the in-group 'shared competence' of the UgSL-using Deaf Association, which defined itself by internal sameness, opposed to hearing people (Namutebi's 'ᴅᴇᴀғ ᴏɴᴇ').

This approach allows me to consider how different forms of competence and visual communicative space interact with each other, and to demonstrate successes and limits of the social forms created. In the discussion of *Tukolengane*, I showed the group went through cycles of increased and reduced adjustment to deaf members' communicative needs. I described one period of increased attention, which was spurred by Lidia's complaint that the group had discriminated against 'Abadeaf.'[82] This claim worked because Lidia could use two types of community against each other.

Hearing signers in *Tukolengane* could respond to her challenge because of their capacities for visual language and were inclined to because of their 'moral orientation' toward linguistic inclusion; in other words, because of collective competence *with* their deaf peers. Lidia's complaint was motivated through the oppositional conception of hearing and deaf people, fostered in the deaf-centric 'shared competence' of the Association. Lidia could speak from within a group opposed to the rest of *Tukolengane*, bolstered by solidarity based on shared embodiment, while still retaining her moral claim on the disabled collective through a different form of membership. Types of community, competence, and space were articulated in complex productive ways, based on a deep history.

Person and collective in disability institutions

Deaf-hearing communication in Kicweka market contrasts strongly with the formal meetings making up most disability-related activities in Rubuga. In the Introduction and chapter 2, I argued the group format of much disability organising imagines 'community' as a voluntary association between previously unconnected individuals. In institutions at a 'higher level' than DWG,[83] disability organising is heavily influenced by Euro-American citizenship-based models oriented to making demands on the state (see Das & Addlakha 2001: 511). The

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[82] The noun prefix 'ba-' indicates a group of people. It does not necessarily suggest a group is a meaningful collective (for example 'abaana' [children], 'abajonjoozi' [gossips]), but can also work to objectify group identity, for example nationalities: '*Ba*nyoro.'

[83] Disability movement structure mimics local government hierarchy (see figure 1).

model of deaf-hearing communication that fits comfortably with this approach is simultaneous interpretation, which indeed appears in Rubuga exclusively in meetings held at Municipal or District level, or by international NGOs.

Simultaneous interpretation envisages its targets as independent individuals: 'equals who will take care of their own business and agendas, as long as the lingual gap between them is bridged' (Olsen & Kermit 2014: 29). The crux of this issue is the concept of professionalism. In 2018, Lidia brought a court case against a customer who assaulted her. She took Safia to the first hearing as interpreter. At the start of the session, the magistrate asked Safia who she was; she replied she was Lidia's friend. The magistrate told Lidia she should not be using a friend in court and proposed the court would bring an interpreter from the private school for disabled children for the next hearing.

Lidia would be stuck with the incomprehensible school signing system because the court required an institutional guarantee of 'professionalism.' In addition, the school, which had been supported by UK-based NGOs since 1988 and regularly hosted white visitors, was prestigious in a context where 'Whiteness and the west provide symbols of authority, expertise and knowledge' (Kothari 2006: 10). In practice, the interpreter did not attend the next hearing. Lidia asked me to interpret; despite my lack of credentials, court officials assumed I was connected to the school and did not question my ability or right to interpret. My whiteness spoke for me.

The magistrate's complaint about 'friends' in court was significant: the court demanded professional interpreters *because* they were distanced from the plaintiff.[84] Lidia should come before the court as an individual, accessing information through disinterested means, equal to other participants. The relationality implied here is one in which 'the human being is a *sovereign, self-owning agent – essentially suspicious of others*,' a form linked with rights discourses (Asad 2003: 135–8). In this approach, linguistic access depends solely on technocratic modes that can easily move between contexts. After the hearing, Lidia reminded me about the failure of the school-based interpreter at the RUDDIPU meeting. She concluded, from the position of the deaf group, 'tukwend'omuntu ayaikara naitwe' [we

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[84] The 'semi-professionalised' interpreter the magistrate proposed was so distanced she did not share a language with Lidia.

want someone who stays with us]. For Lidia, the friendship and familiarity facilitating the market's integration of deaf colleagues supported successful interpretation, while for court officials it invalidated it.

Commitment by NGOs and government to simultaneous interpretation as the 'gold standard' for deaf access to disability organising, despite its obvious failings, reflected aspirations to 'a certain conception of distinct comportment and a sense of self that individuals with disabilities are expected to actualize,…associated with core Western political liberal characteristics' (Friedner 2010: 51). It also demonstrates unearned 'White merit' (Pierre 2013: 76) by association, valuing the practices of White-coded institutions like the school and UK-based INGOs above the system developed by 'local' activists.

Conclusion

Deaf participation in the DWG section of Kicweka market is based on collective linguistic competence of several kinds, creating differentiated but interacting forms of communicative space. UgSL is central to the historical development and continuing viability of these forms, both for deaf-deaf community development and for inclusion in the market through ease of communication with hearing people. But it is not the only form of signing present. Improvised gestural communication among a wider community also has a role in fostering group belonging for deaf people beyond the deaf community.

Improvised gestural communication draws strength from the presence of UgSL and its associated language ideologies, (for example, understanding sign languages as 'real languages' capable, like others, of complex expression (see Kusters & Sahasrabudhe 2018: 48)), and in turn consolidates UgSL-users' position in the market. In the market, relationships between the forms of sign are reciprocal, not opposing. Nevertheless, spaces that oppose visual and aural communication, and their respective users, are used to negotiate deaf people's relationships with their fellow market denizens through providing a space of deaf solidarity from which to object.

In other spaces associated with the disability movement, collective linguistic competence is not the basis of deaf-hearing communication. Instead, understanding is assigned to an individual, the interpreter, with little consideration of how the broader communicative

environment determines deaf people's access.[85] Developing collective linguistic competence was not targeted in any disability-related institution in Rubuga during my fieldwork. UNAD continued to hold UgSL courses in other areas of Uganda, targeting all those involved in deaf people's lives, but in Rubuga, the only activity concerning deaf access was a plan (which remained unimplemented) to demand local government provide interpreters for public services. This could help deaf people, if implemented well: the demand for Lidia to accompany monolingual UgSL users demonstrates high-quality interpretation was desired when interacting with government services. However, this plan did not build on DWG's experience.

DWG's historically and interpersonally grounded form of organisation made space for negotiation based on relational claims. However, it remained limited, particularly spatially – it was much smaller than 'shared signing communities' described by Kusters and Lee. As I have discussed, Khadija became disillusioned with her prospects in the market. She told me she thought Esther had refused her request for a computer business from DWG's NEF grant because she thought a deaf person would not be able to manage it. As Khadija insisted, she knew how to use computers: she had been trained in computing by UNAD.

Esther, however, had to consider Khadija's experience *and* her environment. This kind of business could not run from the DWG-dominated section of the market, because it would need a weatherproof building. Khadija would have been left running a complex customer-facing business without linguistic support. Within the constraints of the grant policy, the problem could not be solved, as there was no possibility of investment in 'sign language polities.' For deaf people, this was experienced as discrimination by the disability movement.

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[85] When deaf people organised seating for meetings they made a circle (see Kusters 2015: 88–9). NGO and government meetings put participants in straight rows facing the front. Deaf participants were sometimes placed where they could easily see an interpreter, but still in straight lines.

Section 3

Chapter 6 – Asking and giving: livelihoods at the edge of the disability movement

Atugonza was a middle-aged man who spent each day in Kicweka market, walking around asking stallholders for small casual jobs carrying water or rubbish, and receiving gifts from friends. He lived in a village outside Kicweka, walking an hour to the market every morning, and back in the evening. People in the market called him 'mad'. He had been diagnosed with epilepsy but remained untreated throughout his life; his family and friends described a gradual decline in his social and intellectual engagement, concluding that now 'his brain is half-half.' Atugonza himself portrayed 'ekiniga' [anger, a euphemism for fits] gripping him and making him 'omuceke' [a weak person].

Atugonza's life in Kicweka was not easy. He was jostled and mocked, assaulted and robbed. Women in the vegetable market said he stank; young men from a mechanic shop repeatedly grabbed his hat and ran away. He often had wounds, some of which he claimed resulted from people hitting or pushing him. During one week, the food he had bought or been given was stolen every day. Perhaps because of the violence he experienced, he moved through the market closed down on himself, ignoring those who shouted at him (even when not malicious) until he could take no more and shouted back.

Between jobs, he rested in locations where he knew the stallholders. Some were kin or quasi-kin: his cousin-sister and another relative both ran small bars. His relationships with these family members were not always warm. When I asked the latter about their connection, he forcefully asserted that, although they were related through Atugonza's father, he was not sure how, and it must be a distant connection because they were born in different villages. They did, however, offer relative havens from the street: during the same conversation I found the man was looking after the food Atugonza had gathered to take home, to prevent it being stolen again.

Other refuges were provided by relatively prosperous business owners, like a born-again woman who ran a small restaurant and often gave him a free meal. She claimed to be his 'best friend,' and said she helped him because she had 'the heart for helping', which came from God (see Scherz 2014: 27). One of Atugonza's favourite places to rest was the concrete

platform in front of Alice's shop. Originally, he had come to visit Alice's neighbouring stallholder Felicite, who lived in his village, but after Felicite's business folded, he continued visiting Alice. At her shop, he alternated between animated conversation and sitting silently facing away from everyone. During talkative times he shared his worries and ambitions with Alice, who took them to heart and tried to exert her influence in the disability movement to help him.

One of the first times I met Atugonza, I asked him to tell me his full name. He was in an animated mood and enthusiastically gave it to me, adding several titles ending with 'mayor of Kicweka.'[86] He deployed this title more seriously another time, when Alice was negotiating with a travelling cowpea salesman. Atugonza demanded the man give him a cupful for free. When he refused, Atugonza threatened him, demanding: 'don't you know me? I am the mayor of Kicweka!' He grabbed a mobile phone another visitor had left nearby and pretended to dial the market tender (see chapter 1), shouting 'yanguha, hurry', there is someone not paying their market rates! Atugonza's performance did not faze the salesman, and everyone else around laughed delightedly, Felicite exclaiming 'we! Atugonza' [what are you like, Atugonza?].

Atugonza's 'mayor acts' were ambiguously playful moments of self-presentation concerning his positioning in Kicweka. In them, he tried to manipulate his position as a universally-known Kicweka figure into social advantage. They were dramatic versions of a general tendency to use statements of relationship (joking or serious) to establish advantageous connections with others, which I discuss throughout this chapter (see also Durham 1995).

Financial modalities and self-presentation

Most livelihoods in Kicweka partially relied on material flows that ran along social relationships exceeding the individual transaction. Stallholders, despite commitment to commodified exchange, also solicited loans or gifts from family and friends in times of financial stress (such as health crises or burials), or when others experienced economic opportunity. Cooked and raw food was routinely shared alongside rounds of visiting.

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[86] Kicweka is a peri-urban village and has no mayor.

Material exchanges were expected between kin and unrelated neighbours, at least as much for the social pleasures they produced as for their evident economic utility.

Writing about the colonial period, Beattie described a Banyoro virtue of 'neighbourliness' instantiated in feasts and parties around the times of banana beer production, rites of passage, and resolution of conflict (Beattie 1959). Formalised occasions associated with rites of passage still occurred among wealthier residents. However, the association between sharing food and social pleasure was just as evident in the quotidian passage of men and women between homes and stalls in Kicweka market, during which visitors were welcomed as distractions from the boredom of waiting for customers, even while they entailed obligation to give 'at least something' – some tea and a snack.

For some people, the exchanges making up basic sociality were more central to livelihood strategies than for others. These people, including Atugonza and DWG member Akugiziibwe (see chapter 2), were consistently given *to* in face-to-face exchanges,[87] and did not give back (approximately) equally in turn. The livelihood strategies of this group displayed a mixture, with varying emphases, of donations and casual labour. This mode of livelihood diverged sharply from the model of the self-sufficient businessperson (see chapter 1).

Those using this strategy were often understood to have problems with various forms of mental competence (mental here being a category encompassing social domains, which is not individualised or separated from the somatic). While a small number of these people were formally members of DPOs (including DWG), most were not, despite the legal apparatus of the Ugandan disability movement ostensibly including 'mental impairment.'[88] Those with membership were without exception peripheral in decision-making and sociality

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[87] Face-to-face giving is distinct from institutional patronage, such as NGO grants or child sponsorship, which are discussed in other chapters.

[88] The Persons with Disabilities Act 2019, part 1, defines a 'person with disability' as 'a person having physical, intellectual, sensory, or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more of the major life activities of that person.' 'Mental impairment' covers 'psychiatric disability and learning disability.'

in their groups. Atugonza interacted with DWG members every day, but there had never been a suggestion he should join the group, or any other disability organisation.[89]

This chapter investigates the consequences of distinctions made between people who used different economic strategies, and the sociobiological processes of categorisation through which they were associated with the market and disability institutions. As DWG members and other networked disabled people distinguished themselves as the 'new' disabled person, 'Museveni's children' (see Introduction, chapter 1), their boundary work impacted people like Atugonza, who belonged very tentatively in the category of 'disabled,' despite the legislation. I draw out how these dynamics shaped the livelihood strategies of marginalised 'mad' people and look at how their social belonging was established through claims made in two discourses: the legal vocabulary of 'disability' and a more widespread language of being 'omuceke' [a weak person] or having 'ebizibu' [problems].

Disability and begging

In a review of literature from around the world, Groce et al report that 'in all societies, begging has been routinely considered an acceptable way, and in some cases the only way, for people with disabilities to make a living outside the home' (Groce et al. 2014).[90] Begging is seen as a paradigmatic occupation for disabled people in Uganda, fuelled by sensational (though sometimes sympathetic) accounts in newspapers (for example Tumusiime 2011) and personal experience.

By contrast, DWG members told me 'you do not see disabled people begging in Rubuga,' often contrasting the town explicitly with Kampala. At the end of my fieldwork, I was travelling with Jovia through Arua in north-west Uganda, when an older woman with no fingers or toes approached our bus to beg. Jovia immediately dug in her skirt, producing a few hundred shillings to give to her. Simultaneously, she commented 'caali!' [poor thing!], 'her family cannot care for her.' She then proceeded to make the usual contrast with

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[89] He was not disqualified by gender. Although DWG was conceptually a women's group, there were several male members.

[90] (See Abebe 2008 on Ethiopia; Bamisaiye 1974 on Nigeria; Devlieger 2018 on DRC; Fabrega 1971 on Mexico). Some authors identify associations between begging and impairments caused by specific diseases, rather than the broader 'disability' (for example, Navon 1998).

Rubuga, adding that, in the past, some disabled people in Rubuga did beg, but DWG had stopped this.

Jovia and other DWG members constantly repeated this mantra because it did boundary work related to their self-presentation, defining them against others. There *were* people who begged in Rubuga, including in Kicweka market: they were overwhelmingly people who were categorised as 'mad.' Atugonza was just one of a small number of men who begged or did dirty jobs like carrying rubbish, and usually wore dirty clothes. These men were immediately recognisable by their presentation, and their presence functioned as emblematic of what 'mad' people were and what they did. Many were dependent on alcohol or other drugs, and frequently other market people assumed these issues had caused their current state. DWG's claims that disabled people do not beg worked to define them *against* 'mad' people. This had important consequences for people like Atugonza, whose livelihoods and embodiments lie close to the boundaries established.

The concept of 'begging' homogenises a series of socially distinct practices, including groups as disparate as 'panhandlers' in US cities who are humiliated through their requests for change from passers-by (Lankenau 1999) and the economically independent *faqirs* or 'holy beggars' of pre-colonial India (Green 2014). 'Begging' is conceptually held together by its association with non-kinship relations: it is asking from (relative) strangers, not one's own family (Goody 1972: 41, 46; Groce et al. 2014: 2), and its paradigmatic instantiation is 'public and indiscriminate begging' (Fabrega 1971: 283).

Moral orientations towards begging are not constant. In the 1970s 'begging…[was] a socially accepted occupational alternative' among Hausa migrants in Ibadan, Nigeria, and there was a societal expectation that certain categories of people should beg from strangers in public (Bamisaiye 1974: 200–1). Bamisaiye argues Hausa people related this expectation to their 'narrow' kinship structure, which, unlike that of the autochthonous Yoruba, did not provide a sufficient pool of possible benefactors to support every family member. In a historical survey of poverty across Africa, Iliffe generalises this argument, tracing increased begging to the 'narrow' range of kin who can be called on for help in bilateral kinship systems (Bamisaiye 1974: 200–1; Iliffe 1987: 16, 33–4). In Rubuga, however, families are expected to sustain 'their own people.' It was this that elicited Jovia's pity for the woman begging in

Arua, whose family were tragically unable to support her. High rates of family breakdown, as described in chapter 4, often make this difficult, but it remains an aspirational norm (see also Iliffe 1987: 72–3).

When is soliciting legitimate?

A family not supporting one of their own causes regret and sadness: Jovia's response to the woman was pity, not distaste. Begging in itself does not always stigmatise the 'beggar,' perhaps because there is broad acceptance of asking for and receiving from others, both in playful small-scale everyday exchanges (similar to those Durham reports in Botswana, Durham 1995), and in relationships of patronage with richer connections, which Ferguson calls 'distributive labor' (Ferguson 2015: 94–7). In Bunyoro, almost everyone creates these patronage relationships, which are often with people only marginally richer, who are not considered socially superior in any obvious sense. The 'distributive labor' Banyoro undertake is an everyday activity involving diverse connections that must be balanced.

In Runyoro, the lexical distinction between begging and asking is less clear than in English. To ask or plead is 'kusaba' and to beg is 'kusabiriiza'. Both have the same root, -saba, with the latter adding an intensifying derivational affix to suggest asking often, asking for a lot, or asking forcefully. It is a judgment of degree, not a different kind of act. In addition, kusaba is regularly translated into English as 'to beg', and can be used in situations where, in English, a similar affective orientation to the act would be expressed through the verb 'to beg;' the distinction between asking and begging is very unclear. Consequently, begging is not always a problem or an act to be criticised.

In some situations, however, begging is stigmatising. 'Begging' became meaningful in Uganda (like many other places) through engagement in an intellectual history linked to long-running debates about poverty and vagrancy in England, including discussion of 'deserving' poor and fears of idleness and criminality (see Ocobock 2008; some of the relevant offenses introduced in the colonial period are still in force in Ugandan law, Mutesi & du Toit 2016). People involved in street begging sometimes fight this form of stigmatisation by arguing begging *is* work, in emotional, intellectual, and physical senses (see Kassah 2008 on disabled people begging in Accra, Ghana, also an ex-British colony; Lenhard 2018: 52 on Paris). The legacy of the moralising 'idleness' narrative is evident in

Kicweka, for example in the concept of 'activity' discussed in chapter 2. However, anxieties about asking for goods and money usually did not turn on whether someone was working or idle, even though these questions were raised at times, but rather on how someone was asking, and from whom.

One of the reasons most often given for assessing Atugonza as 'mad' was that he did not wash regularly and wore dirty clothes. Once, when I was sitting with Alice at her shop, we noticed Atugonza loudly disagreeing with some of our neighbours. We were told he had done some work earlier for Felicite, carrying a basin of dried cassava to the centre of Kicweka. On the way, he had fallen and hurt his leg. Felicite had bought food for him – meat, tomatoes, and oil – which had subsequently been stolen. He had returned to ask her to pay him 1000 shillings instead, which she refused.

Felicite's neighbours were loudly castigating Atugonza, laughing at his anger and scolding him: 'how can you ask for money from your sister?' The criticism of Atugonza was complex. Felicite was not Atugonza's sister (they were from different ethnic groups), but she was a close domestic neighbour: their families were neighbours on land that was lent to them by the same patron. In the market, Felicite was one of Atugonza's closest friends. He regularly called her sister, to reference and attempt to strengthen this relationship. It is also not unusual for siblings to request support from each other, and in matrifocal Kicweka (see chapter 4) requests are not always made by women towards men. Why then did the neighbours criticise him in these terms?

The criticism did not turn on Atugonza's general idleness or work ethic; everyone agreed Atugonza had worked for Felicite. However, one unexpressed consideration, understood by everyone involved, was that the food Felicite gave Atugonza cost more than the labour was worth. Carrying a single basin wouldn't usually be paid for at all; the common approach, if a stallholder did not want to carry their own goods, was to send a dependent child, or ask a neighbour who was going into town anyway to take the goods with them. Felicite had therefore already given, even excessively. Giving *money* was particularly unusual in the market, as almost everyone had tight cash flows, amid the necessity of paying rent and school fees (see chapter 1). Asking for money was therefore more likely to be judged illegitimate.

The neighbours objected to both the form and aesthetics of Atugonza's request. He asked for too much from someone not closely enough connected to him, and he made the request in public, while dressed and presenting as one of the group of men considered to be 'beggars.' Szántó reports similar perceptions among NGO staff in Sierra Leone, for whom polio survivors have 'the wrong look' because they resemble stereotypical beggars (Szántó 2019: 207–8). People presenting with dirty clothes are often assumed to have no family, because if they did, they would have someone to wash for them. How, then, could Felicite be Atugonza's sister? These factors made his request seem formally like 'public and indiscriminate' begging.

Atugonza, meanwhile, did not consider himself to be begging indiscriminately. By citing the theft of his food, he was trying to operationalise obligations Felicite would have as a family member – one who is of 'our people' – to respond to contingency in his life (see Esther and Betty in chapter 4). The neighbours disagreed with his categorisation: by invoking his claim that Felicite was his sister they were undermining it, implying he was really asking from a relative stranger and therefore inappropriately. They were amused by his claim, laughing as they argued. His attempt to make himself one of 'Felicite's people' had not worked, at least in their eyes.

Judgments about whether someone is a legitimate recipient were situational and different from person to person. There were at least two dimensions: who it was appropriate to ask, and what kind of person tried to ask from people who did not have an obligation to them. In the first case, questions of relationship arose and assessments were made of how people were obliged to each other. The resolution of these questions was not separate from the second dimension: certain aesthetic presentations could break relations by suggesting someone is *likely* to ask indiscriminately.

Atugonza's presentation, as an unwashed 'mad' man, meant it was easy to assume he was in the wrong, because he looked and behaved like the kind of person who demands gifts outside obligations. The stigmatisation of the group of men who beg in Kicweka market was as much to do with their categorisation as 'mad' as with the specifics of their requests. Now that people living with physical impairments no longer beg in Kicweka, the logic is circular, because being judged to be begging can indicate one is mad.

Disability and 'mental' impairments

The Persons with Disabilities Act 2019, which forms the legal basis of disability infrastructure, defines a 'person with disability' as 'having physical, intellectual, sensory, or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more of the major life activities of that person.' However, this understanding of disability was not widespread in Rubuga. In practice, those living with 'intellectual…or mental impairment' were understood not as 'disabled,' but as 'slow or foolish or mad' (Whyte 1998). They were not routinely included in DPOs.[91]

Two members of DWG were sometimes considered within these categories, but both also lived with physical disability. Deborah was 'mugufu' [literally 'short', indicating a 'Little Person,' a person with dwarfism], and Akugiziibwe had partial paralysis of one side of her body. All DWG members agreed these members belonged as 'people with disabilities' because of their physical impairments, but there was disagreement about whether they were doubly qualified by having an 'intellectual…or mental impairment', and, in Deborah's case, about whether she had such an impairment at all. It was Esther, DWG's Secretary, who originally told me these two members lived with intellectual disability, and she maintained her position throughout my conversations with her. A document in DWG's archive, prepared by Esther, categorised Akugiziibwe under 'mental' in a list of members' disabilities. But when I asked Safia, DWG's Treasurer, she told me Akugiziibwe and Deborah's status as 'mad' or 'slow' was irrelevant to their inclusion.

In a discussion of the 'competence' of the social person in Bunyole, eastern Uganda, Whyte describes five dimensions by which people are evaluated: 1) advisability, which is being receptive to other people's reasonable advice; 2) intentionality, the ability to conceive and follow through plans with steadfastness and without tiring or forgetting, the opposite of which is to wander around without purpose; 3) civility, which involves showing courtesy and attentiveness to others and 'avoiding any indication of aggressive feelings'; 4) conversation, which has 'a specific sense of trading talk and an extended one of living together in a rhythm

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[91] Ndeezi reports difficulty finding someone to represent people with 'mental' disabilities on the NUDIPU national board (Ndeezi 2004), and it is generally agreed the situation is worse at lower levels (see Yeo 2001: 23).

of social exchange'; and 5) cleverness, being lively and 'ingenious at solving problems' and creating plans (Whyte 1998: 155–158). All these elements were brought up by my interlocutors in discussions of the 'foolish/slow'-'madness' complex. People who breached the related expectations are liable to be considered 'muraru' [mad].

'Muraru' has a capacious semantic field, which at its edges is indistinct. However, like Whyte, I found certain stereotypical 'mad' behaviours form a conceptual core (see Quinn & Holland 1987: 22–24 on categorisation by narrative 'prototypes'). These behaviours – exemplified by talking, and especially shouting, incoherently and throwing stones – breach the expectation of 'civility', are glossed as 'wildness', and are highly feared (Whyte 1998: 164; see also Orley 1970: 43). They are thought to particularly endanger normative family relationships. These stereotypes played into the assessment of Atugonza as 'mad' during the dispute about Felicite's payment, making it easier for the neighbours to laugh at and dismiss him.

In Runyoro, people living with what is (in English, as in the Act of Parliament) considered 'intellectual disability' were referred to using a range of terms including 'muraru' [mad person], 'omuntu w'obwongo busiisikaire' [person with a spoiled brain, a phrase also used for people exhibiting what are judged to be excessive confusion, distress, or 'wildness,' all stereotypical markers of 'madness'], and a range of improvised phrases indicating a problem with the head, for example 'omuntu ow'ain'ekizibu ky'obwongo' [person with a problem with the brain] or 'h'omutwe agutali kurungi' [not good in the head], or just 'ogwo w'obwongo' [literally: that one of the brain]. This shared linguistic field resisted distinction between 'foolish'/'slow' and 'mad'.

Some people considered 'foolish' and 'mad' different points on the same scale. Atugonza's landlord told me Atugonza was not 'mad' because the 'degree of his mental disability' was not high, whereas Atugonza's wife Silivia (discussed below) was 'mad' because her behaviour was more 'extreme'. DWG Chairperson Alinaitwe (who did consider Atugonza 'mad') described Deborah, Akugiziibwe, and Atugonza on a scale of increasing deviation from what she considered the norm, with Deborah having 'amagezi mataito' [little intelligence], but not being 'zonto' [an idiot, an offensive term] like Akugiziibwe, who in turn was not 'muraru' like Atugonza.

'Foolish/slow' and 'mad' were therefore not always considered qualitatively different. Akugiziibwe's father talked about her 'failure' at school, a factor clearly linked to Whyte's fifth dimension of cleverness and associated with the 'foolish/slow' stereotype. But at the same time, mixed into this discussion, he described her failures to 'kwikiriza' [agree or accept advice], a characteristic usually associated with 'madness.' He concluded: 'she can understand or she cannot understand; she can agree or not agree.' Understanding and advisability were conceptually linked, not distinct categories relating to different 'cognitive' functions. It was therefore not possible to systematically map 'foolish/slow' and 'mad' onto the dimensions Whyte identifies. Her description is not a typology of mental characteristics: it more closely resembles a schema for good social behaviour. As this suggests, social disapprobation results from breaching the schema.

Whyte's approach does not treat 'intellectual' or 'mental' characteristics entirely as features of the individual, instead understanding their emergence in social interaction. In everyday situations, people were considered 'mad' when they broke social expectations. Atugonza's wife Silivia was categorised 'mad' because she did not kneel to serve her father-in-law, and because, when she briefly lived with Lidia, she kept forgetting chores she had been given. There is a disciplinary element to these claims; being called 'mad' often resulted from judgments someone had not fulfilled situated, gendered, and aged expectations of behaviour.[92] When I asked Safia if Atugonza was 'muraru,' she immediately said no, clarifying that he sometimes seemed mad, but was not, because 'ebintu ebyona abikora' [he does everything], unlike 'ab'iraru' ['mad' people]. Atugonza worked in the market and took home food to his wife and elderly father, as he should.

Conceptual distinction between 'foolishness/slowness' and 'madness' did exist, at times, for some people. A male councillor for disabled people, Mugisa (who lived with visual impairment), told me people with 'intellectual disability' should not be called 'mad', and the difficulty finding linguistic terms to distinguish them led to regrettable confusion. People wanting to make this distinction sometimes used the phrases 'obwongo butaito' [little

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[92] Young women could be (jokingly or seriously) told they were 'mad' through 'stubbornness' when they did not immediately do what other people told them. A similar assessment was (less commonly) made of young men who were particularly aggressive.

brain/intelligence] or 'omuceke w'obwongo' [person who is weak in the brain] to refer specifically to people who are 'foolish' but *not* mad. I also occasionally heard the similar 'amagezi mataito' [little intelligence] used among DWG members and others in Kicweka market.

In neighbouring Buganda, Zoanni also identified an intertwined linguistic field referring to 'madness' and 'cognitive disability'. However, he observed 'the tentative emergence of cognitive disability as something outside the more well-known domain of mental illness' through the 'thin network of professionals and institutions' diagnosing conditions considered 'mental' (Zoanni 2020). In Rubuga, this had not happened, due to provincial absence of most of the institutions Zoanni cited.[93] However, a parallel emergence of an alternative understanding of 'foolishness/slowness'-'madness' (and their moral implications) can be identified in Mugisa and a few other disabled people in Kicweka. This is evidenced in their linguistic usage, and their practical response to 'foolish' or 'mad' people.

An alternative language existed to describe the situation of disabled people, without specifically referring to disability. Instead of 'obulema' [disability], this utilised the terms 'ekizibu' or 'ebizibu' [problem or problems] and 'omuceke' [a weak person] (the terms were interchangeable). Both 'ekizibu' and 'omuceke' could refer to all categories of disability included in the Persons with Disabilities Act: physical, intellectual, sensory, and mental. As such, this discourse was more inclusive than that of 'obulema' [disability].

Like the clinicians Zoanni investigated, innovations by Mugisa and the DWG members drew on established concepts that were broadly shared. In this case, the 'shared concept' related to how misfortune was addressed, through a holistic assessment of relational situations (Middleton 1960; Whyte 1997). Someone was 'weak' not just because of bodily-mental impairment. Other factors, like poverty, landlessness, or orphanhood, must be involved, and the discourse could also refer to people who did not live with any form of bodily-mental impairment but had the other types of problem. An impairment spoken of as a problem ('ekizibu ky'obuguru' [problem of the legs], for example) would be *one* of someone's many 'ebizibu' of different kinds.

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[93] Most people in Rubuga did not think 'mad people' could be treated by the medical system.

The 'omuceke'-'ebizibu' discourse was routinely used in arguments for maintaining connection with and helping others. Once, I described an incident in which Atugonza had been refused payment for his work to Safia. Following this discourse, I asked her what she thought was his 'ekizibu' [problem]. She launched into a long list: he had to walk into Kicweka every day from the village, he did not get enough food, his family did not have land. Unprompted, she added he also had a problem with his head, calling this 'oburwaire' [sickness]. I followed up, asking her whether, because of this 'sickness' or 'problem,' he was a disabled person. She replied 'kwaha, baitu ain'ekizibu' [no, but he has a problem]. Safia's implication was that, even though Atugonza was not formally a disabled person, he too deserved special attention and treatment.

Regarding Bunyole, eastern Uganda, an area that is culturally similar to Bunyoro, Whyte writes:

> a deaf person is not omuleme [a disabled person], nor is a mad or foolish one…Yet in other contexts, all kinds of impairment are referred to as 'sickness' (obulwaiye) including blindness (Sentumbwe 1995: 162–3) and strange behaviour. They are all considered misfortunes amenable to treatment in the explanatory idiom and the same kinds of agents are said to cause both 'physical' and 'mental' disorders. (Whyte 1998: 171)

In Rubuga, arguments phrased in terms of 'omuceke' or 'ebizibu' were occasionally explicitly used to make connections between forms of disability central to the term 'obulema' (particularly physical disability) and those that were marginal, including those in the 'foolish/slow'-'mad' complex. Explaining why no-one wanted to buy a small hank of rope from one of the market's 'mad' men, Alice told me people don't want to buy something that has been picked out of the rubbish, and maybe they also don't want to buy from 'mw'iraru' [a mad person]. She then added, in English, 'we have many problems', grouping herself *with* the discriminated-against 'mad' man. To explain, she told me sometimes people see her crawling to move around and then don't want to buy from her: 'they feel bad' because she touches the (dirty) ground and then touches their goods.

Directly linking the experiences of 'mad' people and 'abalema' [physically disabled people] was unusual: Alice was an innovator, at least sometimes considering people judged as

'foolish/slow' or 'mad' to be within the 'disability' category. I return to examine her approach in the last section of this chapter.

Blameable 'madness'

It was more common to acknowledge commonality between physically disabled people and 'foolish/slow' people than with 'mad' people. One reason was that many people considered madness to be blameable. People were thought to be 'mad' because they were 'bad' or had done something wrong. Leticia was an older woman who (unusually) had a formal psychiatric diagnosis and lived with her husband and some of her children in a village close to Atugonza's. Leticia and her family told me her illness first appeared after she had given birth to one of her children and was diagnosed as perinatal psychosis and bipolar disorder.

Leticia was often in Kicweka market, particularly when her condition worsened, and she experienced confusion. She was well-known to DWG members because she used to trade in the market. They had been friendly with her while her condition was considered mild; at one point she slept beneath Esther's stall, rising early each morning to sweep in front of it because she knew it was difficult for Esther, as a wheelchair user, to do so. During my fieldwork, Leticia was shunned by stallholders, including members of DWG: Esther told me she 'chased' Leticia away when she started defecating where she slept beneath her stall.

The stories I was told about her illness contained strong elements of culpability. One narrative claimed Leticia had been accused of poisoning a neighbour's child. To clear her name, she pledged to go to a church that was known as a place of truth, where it was impossible to lie without becoming 'mad'. Leticia went and swore an oath on her innocence, but, because she had in fact poisoned the child, her illness resulted. Esther told me she didn't know if the church story was true, but she agreed Leticia had 'bad behaviour' because she would become angry and spill what others were cooking into the fire. Esther's niece Betty, who was clearly unhappy about Leticia's presence whenever she was sitting at a DWG stall, told me 'tinkwenda kukimanya' [I don't want to know [about] it], and claimed people made themselves mad, for example by abusing drugs.

Consequences of the negative attitudes towards 'mad' people were severe. Atugonza was frequently refused payment by those who contracted him to carry out small tasks.[94] Although I never saw this happen, I witnessed the aftermath several times, seeing Atugonza distraught and Alice and her neighbouring stallholders denouncing the person responsible. Felicite explained the usual course of events. When Atugonza went for payment, the person would say 'ali muraru' [he is mad] and dismiss him. Atugonza's words of complaint were then discounted because he was 'talking wildly,' a socially unacceptable act. Atugonza's reactions were indeed dramatic: he shouted and threatened.

Several authors have noted an association between 'a proliferation of uncontrollable' language (Zoanni 2020), 'excited, abusive and aggressive' or 'nonsense' talk (Orley 1970: 34) and a paradigmatic form of madness: the 'wild madman', who may 'shout and strike people' (Whyte 1998: 165; see Edgerton 1966 for a distinction between 'mild' and 'wild' madness in other East African societies). Atugonza's behaviour in response to being cheated fitted the stereotype and provided supporting evidence for the reneging employer, even if not everyone agreed with their actions. However, it was not different from what would be expected of any male Munyoro treated this way. Stallholders could sustain a dismissal of him because the *combination* of his behaviour, his appearance (especially his unwashed clothes), and his reputation supported the interpretation that he was 'mad.'

The incidences of non-payment made Atugonza's limited income even more precarious. To counter, he routinely tried to move himself away from 'stranger' sociality, to become included as one of 'our people' in others' lives, as he did by calling Felicite his sister. These attempts often failed. To better understand the conditions of success for establishing connections that could be activated in misfortune, I look next at Akugiziibwe, who was more successful.

Recipient livelihoods

In what follows, I investigate Akugiziibwe's livelihood strategies and associated types of sociality. Akugiziibwe was a peripheral member of DWG, who lived with physical impairment of one side resulting from childhood illness. She was also described as a 'slow learner' and,

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[94] There is a specific verb for refusing payment in Runyoro: -kunyaga.

periodically, as 'mad'; she had been treated in hospital for psychosis during these episodes. She was a founding member of DWG, and the officers told me that therefore it was important she benefit from the group's resources. Nevertheless, she did not have a business. When DWG was given the government-funded 'Special Grant' the officers decided Akugiziibwe could not start a business because she could not count; instead, they used her portion to buy a bed and mattress for her house. Akugiziibwe's full history with DWG funding was discussed in chapter 2.

Akugiziibwe lived in a village near Kicweka, in a small self-built house with her two children, set behind her elderly parents' house.[95] Akugiziibwe's father used to own agricultural land on the hill behind. However, in 2015, the wife of the 'Omukama' [King] of Bunyoro evicted them. When the family had access to land, Akugiziibwe farmed, although her yield and income were low. Since the eviction, the whole family's livelihood had been extremely precarious.

During my fieldwork, Akugiziibwe's livelihood had two main modalities. She was highly social, and most days during the rainy seasons received a gift of food from friends. Some were unsolicited, simply being offered when visited; others she explicitly asked for. The gifted food formed the bulk of nutrition for her household in some seasons. However, alone it would not be enough to survive, because when gifts were not forthcoming (especially during dry seasons, when most people in this urban periphery village had to buy their food) they were not enforceable.

The rest of her income came from casual work. During the rainy seasons Akugiziibwe did 'leja leja' [casual labour] on other people's land for payment in cash or kind, and during the dry seasons (when the ground was too hard for her to dig because of her limited strength) she did other informalised jobs like packing maize at a nearby branch of a national seed company. Akugiziibwe's mother, who was in her sixties, worked almost every day in the seed factory as a daily casual worker without a contract. She was a classic proletarian.

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[95] Building is a significant achievement. However, Akugiziibwe's house was on her father's plot and made from unfired bricks. It was not considered equal to the ambitions for building among core DWG members (chapter 3).

Akugiziibwe was different. She managed to convert her identification as an 'omuceke' into a mixed livelihood: part proletarian, part recipient of village-based social assistance.

During my fieldwork, I spent one extended and several short periods accompanying Akugiziibwe in her everyday life. During one rainy season period she worked on a close neighbour's land in the mornings, returning home to bathe and cook lunch before spending the afternoon walking to visit her many friends. These visits were a typical and expected part of female sociality in village life; using them as a safety net for periods when a family is low on food was also usual behaviour. In the dry season, her routine varied more. She spent some long working days with her mother sorting maize at the seed company, which limited her ability to visit; otherwise, she collected mangoes from her tree and took them into Kicweka market to sell from Safia's stall; and sometimes she was called by friends who had surpluses to harvest staple food for herself.[96]

Akugiziibwe characterised all of these relationships as 'friendships' and the related transactions as 'gifts', even those she also referred to as 'leja leja.' In the latter cases, she said her friends gave her 'omulimo' [a job]. This language demonstrated her awareness that, like Atugonza, many of the jobs she did would not normally be paid for. They were the result of (often only slightly) richer neighbours deliberately creating a job they could pay her for. One neighbour told me she asked Akugiziibwe to weed a small patch of land in front of her house 'so she gets money,' because she knew she had a specific financial need that was unfulfilled. Akugiziibwe enjoyed the sociality involved in maintaining even the most transactional relationships I witnessed. She viewed connectedness positively, even when it entailed significant work.

Akugiziibwe's opinion that her relationships were friendships was not always shared by the other party; like Atugonza's claims, they could be considered imaginative creations that did not always succeed, although her success rate was higher. Her distress when they failed was enormous. Above all, Akugiziibwe desired *witnessed* connectedness. When I left her house to return to Kicweka, she loaded me with foodstuffs she had received from her neighbours,

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[96] Sweet potato and cassava are often harvested 'piecemeal', so can be still in the ground during periods of relative hunger (Nduwumuremyi et al. 2016; Smit 1997; Tumuhimbise 2013). Some of Akugiziibwe's neighbours kept small plots of cassava unharvested for emergencies, from which she was invited to harvest.

plus a few she had bought. She repeatedly instructed me to tell DWG's officers that 'Akugiziibwe ain'abanywani baingi' [Akugiziibwe has many friends] and 'abanywani b'Akugiziibwe bamperee-za!' [the friends of Akugiziibwe give her a lot!]. I should share the food with them as evidence. Tucking in a last little bag of peanuts, she mimed throwing her head back and tossing them in her mouth, and explained she wanted us to walk along eating them on the way back to Kicweka.

This enthusiasm for being seen as a recipient should be kept in mind throughout the following discussion. Because of it, the informal jobs she does for neighbours are conceptually important, even though non-payment is a constant possibility because of their extreme informality, as it is for Atugonza.

Akugiziibwe's relationships

Akugiziibwe engaged in three types of relationship, with correspondingly varying levels of reliability and obligatoriness. The first was based on an ingroup ideology of 'our people,' most closely associated with being kin; the second mobilised friendship over time, and was most evident in gifts of food she received when visiting; and the third was with relative social strangers through informal 'contracts', in which she agreed to provide pre-specified labour for an agreed amount of money or in-kind payment.

This typology should be understood as an idealised abstraction similar to the model developed by Hart in relation to Nima in Accra (Hart 1988).[97] Treating the categories as distinct illuminates the ways trust and obligation become crucial (and problematic) dimensions in relationships, even while the categories blur into each other extensively. Akugiziibwe often received forms of income that appeared to be associated with two different categories from a single other person (for example, I witnessed one neighbour allow her to harvest free cassava from her plot, and when I returned months later, I found she was weeding the same neighbour's land in return for cash). The categories are therefore not rigidly assigned to particular people.

I demonstrated in chapters 3 and 4 that kinship relations in Kicweka are often unreliable, and those along which resources move must be deliberately activated and cultivated.

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[97] My account of 'contracts' differs from Hart's, see below.

Formal arrangements of people in corporate groups matter, and like Atugonza shuttling between 'refuges' in Kicweka market, Akugiziibwe includes people connected to her by explicitly biological kinship and by clan co-membership in her visiting. However, obligation in kinship depends just as much on previous 'enactions' of the relationship as structural form. Akugiziibwe does not visit every family member during her daily rounds. I define the word 'enaction' following Sneath, as 'materialisations of various types of social relations' that respond to and shape obligation and expectation (Sneath 2006: 98).

In material terms, the most important of Akugiziibwe's relationships was with her parents. Although she usually cooked separately from her mother, there was a continual flow of resources between the households, and at times of extreme stress they were pooled. This relationship operated through the idea that parents and children belonged together. Beattie argues kin in Bunyoro are paradigmatically one's 'own people': of the same substance as the self (Beattie 1957: 333).

Graeber argues material flows in ingroup situations like this are grounded in the principle 'from each according to their abilities, to each according to their needs' and operate without any accounting (Graeber 2012: 94–102). However, not all kin could be relied on to share in the same way. Akugiziibwe had a brother who lives nearby and might be expected to contribute to her in need. In practice, he did not. Although obligation between kin was strong, it was not decisive: it could also be 'fragile' (Fox 2019: 39), particularly in the conditions of extreme scarcity experienced by landless families (see chapter 7).

Relationships falling into the second category (what Akugiziibwe called 'friendship' and Beattie 'neighbourliness') took on dimensions very similar to the 'from each according to their abilities, to each according to their needs' principle of 'our people,' associated with kinship relations. In Bunyoro, people who are not kin incorporate in ways similar to kinship relationships, because 'our people' is a notably elastic concept: I heard it used about ethnic groupings and even, occasionally, shared disability status.[98] Studies of clan formation in pre-colonial western Uganda suggest some clans, despite being understood through kinship

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[98] This elasticity may be related to Bunyoro's history. Doyle argues Bunyoro's idealised past as a multi-ethnic empire and desire to attract outsiders to repopulate the Kingdom after colonial depopulation led it to be 'a more inclusive, tolerant society than any of the other ancient kingdoms' (Doyle 2006b: 467–8).

idioms, were formed based on association through employment or occupation group (Willis 1997: 594–5). The addition of non-related people into the domain of 'family' is an old and general tendency in the region.

Once, when sitting with Akugiziibwe, her father, and a woman called Jane who lived immediately next to them (and was a close friend of Akugiziibwe), I asked about the relationships involved: how would they categorise Jane? Akugiziibwe said she was not family, or a clanmate, but, although born elsewhere, she had been in 'this place' for 20 years. When I suggested 'friend' Akugiziibwe's father demurred, calling Jane 'mutaahi', a neighbour. Shortly afterwards, Jane stood and picked up the skins of the bananas we had been eating. Akugiziibwe's father challenged her: 'niwe ozinage?' [is it you who should throw them away?], referencing the impropriety of a guest doing household work. Jane responded 'ndi omuntu wa kunu' [I am a person of this place] and continued her actions, asserting her close connection. While kinship relationships remain practically and ideologically central, neighbourhood could approximate it (see Beattie 1959). In Akugiziibwe's urban periphery village, where kin were outnumbered by unrelated neighbours, this was particularly important.

As Akugiziibwe visited her friends' homes during the afternoons, hosting obligations required she was given refreshment when she arrived and also something to take away.[99] These gifts provided much of the food she consumed with her children at home. Although Akugiziibwe called these people 'friends', the relationships were understood by other people through the 'neighbourliness' dynamic. Akugiziibwe's neighbour-friends talked about giving to her differently to how stallholders in Kicweka talked about giving to Atugonza. While both sets of people told me they gave because their recipient needed it, because they were 'poor,' in Atugonza's case people repeatedly invoked two words that I only rarely heard in relation to Akugiziibwe: 'omutima' [heart] and 'ekisa' [kindness, pity, or mercy].

Atugonza's born-again restauranteur friend told me she gave him free lunches because she had 'the heart for helping' [in Runyoro 'omutima gw'okuyamba']. Scherz describes this

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[99] Hosting requirements in 'villages' are systematically greater than in urban spaces because food is thought to be grown rather than bought in the market. Akugiziibwe's village experienced intense land pressure but was still conceptually considered a 'village.'

discourse (*omutima omuyambi*) among Catholic nuns in Buganda. There, the phrase was invoked to refer to 'actions of kindness and generosity between kin and nonkin *that exceed specific obligations*' (Scherz 2014: 25). The flow of material goods associated with this discourse was always in one direction: from the person with a helping heart, and it was particularly often used about giving to an unknown or distantly connected person.

Most of Akugiziibwe's relationships with neighbours were different to this. When Akugiziibwe wanted 'greens' for dinner one afternoon, she went to ask a close neighbour (a woman who grew greens to sell in local markets) to give her some. The neighbour filled a large basket for her, much more than she needed for one meal, and added a bag of peanuts. When I asked the neighbour why she gave these things, she told me 'nyin'omutima gw'okikora' [I have the heart to do it], adding that when you see 'omuceke' [a weak person] you help them. Akugiziibwe added 'ain'omutima gw'okuyamba' [she has the heart for helping]. However, the neighbour immediately corrected her, clarifying that she had 'omutima gw'okuyambira Akugiziibwe' [the heart to help Akugiziibwe].

The neighbour's clarification marked a distinction between different uses of the noun 'omutima.' In the phrase *mutima gw'okuyamba* it indicates a disposition, a generalised willingness to help people in need 'whether they know them or not' (Scherz 2014: 87). However, it can also reference specific momentary feelings. 'Mutima' is one of the locations of thought, particularly closely connected to intention and making decisions (Orley 1970: 1–3; Whyte 2020: S135 also cites an interlocutor using 'heart' to discuss his intentions). The neighbour was claiming she helps Akugiziibwe specifically, not everybody. Relationships of friendship, in this environment, occur within a context of co-residence over time. Long-term co-residents, particularly those who regularly visited each other, formed an ingroup in which Graeber's needs-based principle of distribution applies. As a result, certain types of friendship exhibited equal or even greater reliability as sources of livelihood than kin.

Friend-neighbour relationships enacted by giving food items were conceptualised as operating in both directions; although Akugiziibwe was clearly poorer than the friends she visited, I was struck by the frequency and emphasis with which they insisted she also gave to them. When I asked for examples, most explained that Akugiziibwe worked digging or washing clothes for them, but a few also insisted she gave food when she could, for example

she had given them beans when they had a shortage.[100] These relationships were explicitly considered to be of a 'normal' neighbourly form, in which everyone was expected to give, with no-one keeping a balance book. Although the flow of resources was consistently weighted towards Akugiziibwe, this was not 'a problem in need of explanation' but an outcome of unequal distribution of resources (Sneath 2006: 97).

In these accounts, rather than invoking 'ekisa' [pity] and mutima [heart], Akugiziibwe's donors were more likely to say they were made to hurt by seeing their friend in trouble: 'nkamurumirwa' [I was made to hurt by her]. One inevitably feels the hurt of 'one's people' in the self, it doesn't depend on a disposition but is the product of intersubjectivity, like the long-term co-residence relationships underlying DWG's care and linguistic collectives in Kicweka market (see chapters 4 and 5).[101] In *ekisa* and *mutima omuyambi*, by contrast, a specific relationship with another person is not involved, nor is obligation.

Despite Akugiziibwe's largely positive experience of neighbourly relations, anxieties remained. Akugiziibwe's father argued their relationships with their neighbours were no longer normal because 'titwin'ekintu ekituyamba' [we don't have anything to help us / any means of production] (Akugiziibwe and her friends, as demonstrated above, disagreed). Rhetorically he asked: 'they will help you until when?', invoking a situation where one-sided help would be needed far into the future. He argued that, in their current state, the people who helped them were those who had 'ekisa' [pity] or 'mbabazi' [grace]. Unfortunately, this meant they could not predict who would help, because it was only God who knew people's hearts.

Expectations about mutual help among neighbours initially developed in a situation where most households had access to productive resources. However, in the urban periphery, pressure on land was high and events like this family's eviction were common. In these circumstances, especially given most people purchased their food in the dry seasons

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[100] I suspect these incidences were from before the eviction, when Akugiziibwe farmed her family's land.

[101] However, in this less urban setting there is no co-resident disabled group, so Akugiziibwe's co-resident relationships were mostly with non-disabled others.

because they did not have sufficient land to grow food for the whole year, Akugiziibwe's father argued you cannot 'sit and trust that someone will help.'

In extreme need, local richer people sometimes acted as patrons, providing explicitly non-reciprocal help. The family credited the owner of a mill next to their compound with their survival during a period of severe illness, because he donated maize meal in bulk. During the same period, a Rwandan permanent employee at Akugiziibwe's mother's work gave them sweet potatoes. She described her help as motivated by 'ekisa', but also told me she was an orphan and had been helped by others, so she had to help in turn. This kind of serial or generational reciprocity is often seen in families (Shipton 2007: 116). Both donors were understood as motivated in and by pre-existing relationships: the colleague had worked with Akugiziibwe's mother for a long time and told me they had become friends, while Akugiziibwe's father explained that when the maize mill owner 'first came here, he found us already here'. The family's prior connection with the land and neighbourhood gave them claims on wealth derived from it.

Akugiziibwe's contracts

While the relationships discussed above, and the material flows they directed, were embedded in long-term relationships, some other sources of Akugiziibwe's livelihood involved people who were more socially distant. Following Hart 1998, I grouped the relationships in which Akugiziibwe performed labour for pre-defined reward together as 'contracts.' None of the agreements were formal or written down, and there was no effective legal sanction if the other party breached expectations for return. This category contained the most problematic of Akugiziibwe's 'enacted' relationships, where her expectations were sometimes painfully crushed. However, Akugiziibwe also repeatedly told me her friends 'gave' her jobs, and the friends cited Akugiziibwe's labour as examples of her giving to them within 'normal' neighbourly relations. To understand this divergence, it helps to distinguish further within the category.

Akugiziibwe transacted labour with three categories of people: those she considered friends, with whom she had ongoing relationships not coterminous with the contract; richer neighbours, who acted as patrons; and the agricultural company, for whom she was an informalised day labourer. The forms of obligation belonging to each of these categories

differed on a generally reducing scale, although within each group the specific histories of relationships created differences as well. Akugiziibwe had multiple ways to arrange labour for reward, with the diversity helping ensure she received enough to survive.

The agreements Akugiziibwe made with friends can be thought of, like many of the gifts she received, using the analytic of neighbourliness. These transactions arose with neighbours Akugiziibwe visited often and chatted with freely. Sometimes she explicitly asked for help, sometimes her friends spontaneously called her offering work, knowing her situation was bad. One thing characterising these arrangements was that work was 'found' for her: the tasks would usually be done by the householder, rather than contracted out; they resembled the work Atugonza did for Felicite in the market. One neighbour asked Akugiziibwe to weed a patch of ground in front of her house, while another asked her to prepare land for planting, a task she had been planning to do herself. Some of the transactions generated cash, but only ever in small amounts, and compensation was more likely in food.

Akugiziibwe's work for a group of richer neighbours was arranged differently: she did bigger jobs, often returning year after year at particular points in the agricultural cycle. The rewards were higher (and in cash), but consequently so were chances of non-payment. Everyone in the area was cash-poor, so at squeeze times, like deadlines for school fees (when Akugiziibwe most needed payment), even richer people did not always have enough. When I first stayed with Akugiziibwe, she was doing the first plough on land owned by a neighbour whose father was a retired Hajji, formerly employed driving buses. The family lived in a large house with glass windows, although it was aging visibly. Akugiziibwe had not worked for this neighbour previously.

While we were working, Akugiziibwe's employer was weeding a sweet potato patch down the hill, within hailing distance. Akugiziibwe was doing this work to pay school fees for her daughter, who had exams approaching and had been 'chased' from school for non-payment (see chapter 1). She called across the field, asking for half the money owing to her, and explaining the situation. The employer refused, using the stock phrase 'tiziriyo' [it [the money] is not there].

When I spoke to her later in the day, Akugiziibwe was annoyed by the refusal but convinced the woman would pay soon. Her father disagreed, criticising her complacency, and causing a long argument. He warned her to be careful who she works for, recommending she observe their behaviour before entering an agreement to make sure they were not someone who would 'kukunyaga' [refuse to pay you]. This had happened before, and he complained that every time 'the [agreement] is badly made,' a fact he attributed to her impairments, which caused her to reject his advice ('inadvisability,' in Whyte's terms). Some people are trustworthy, he argued, and some are not. 'It means you [need] to think perfectly, that this person I am working for, will she pay me?'

It is generally accepted among Banyoro that one can judge a person's character by looking at the history of their actions; this is the basis for declaring someone has a 'mutima murungi' [good heart], or the 'mutima gw'okuyamba' [heart of helping]. However, Akugiziibwe's father went further, recommending not just judging what kind of person a potential employer is, but also whether they will, in fact, refuse to pay. He addressed 'mutima' not only as a fixed disposition, but also as intention toward a specific other, a decision to act a particular way.

A 'good heart' is highly prized, but the heart is also a place of concealment and deceit. My interlocutors warned me (incredibly frequently) that people conceal their heart towards you: according to Lidia 'people show a face of friendship but in truth in their hearts it is different,' while Esther said people might act as a friend when they want something, but, as soon as they get it, they will abandon you. There was an existential sense in which other people's hearts at an individual moment were always unknowable. This is a sensitive area in Bunyoro, where hidden intentions (although considered common) are closely associated with the malevolence of sorcery (Beattie 1963: 37; Whyte 1998: 157).

As a result, inquiring into someone else's intentions could be dangerous. There was some indication Akugiziibwe's father agreed: even though his general argument was that one should try to intuit a potential employer's intentions, when I asked him why he thought this specific neighbour might refuse to pay, he replied 'buli muntu ain'emiringo ye' [every person has their ways], and that people are 'separate' and have 'different thinking.' He carefully disavowed knowledge of the specific person's intentions. I heard the formulaic

language he used frequently in Kicweka, along with similar forms such as 'n'ogwo amanyire mutima gwe' [it is [only] him who knows his own heart].

This discourse resembles what Robbins and Rumsey call 'the doctrine of "the opacity of other minds"', a 'widely-shared and taken-for-granted fact about the world' (as opposed to an occasional reflection): that it is impossible to know someone else's thoughts (Robbins & Rumsey 2008: 408). However, occasionally I found people did engage in, and even recommend, reflecting on others' intentions (see also Duranti 2015: 40, 176–8). Like Stasch in West Papua, I found expressions of the opacity of another's thoughts were 'topic-specific', arising in particular situations, often relating to social conflict, as 'statements of the terms of political coexistence' (Stasch 2008: 449).

Intuiting someone's emotional or intentional state[102] was a breach of 'civility', which Whyte argues involves 'formality and restraint' and 'must be seen in terms of the concern about envy, malice, treachery and anger that may lie hidden in other people's hearts' (Whyte 1998: 157). Discussing sorcery in Bunyoro in the 1950s Beattie writes 'a person who is too pushing or inquisitive and who is always poking his nose into other people's business will soon incur suspicion' (Beattie 1963: 52). Refraining from interfering with other people's intentions was part of the 'neighbourliness' behaviour I described as shaping Akugiziibwe's relationships with those around her in the village.

The disagreement between Akugiziibwe and her father can therefore be interpreted, not as an indication of intellectual deficit on her part, but as a product of their different positions. In his advice, her father conflated two types of judgment about others that are commonly distinguished: he said she should look at past behaviour and judge overall trustworthiness, relating to the 'disposition' element of *mutima*, *but also* she should speculate about whether the person will actually pay her, making an inference about the person's specific intentions. This was threatening, because Akugiziibwe's sociality depended fundamentally on her performance of normative factors of neighbourliness and civility (see Beattie 1963:

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[102] Duranti calls this 'meaningful "mind-reading"' as opposed to making an inference 'based on repeated, generalizable, and even routinized behavior' (Duranti 2015: 184).

52; Whyte 1998: 157). Because it is possible to manipulate the categorisation of relationships, moving people in and out of 'our people,' behaviour deeply affects outcomes.

When Akugiziibwe's neighbours explained why so many people gave to her, they said it was because she had many friends: 'ayend'abantu' [she loves people], 'abaaza na boona' [she speaks with everyone]. They remarked 'a person with good manners has many friends, a person with bad manners has none.' In this light, Akugiziibwe's orientation towards potential employers was a form of 'expectative waiting', involving hope but also aware 'that often…obligations are not materialized, or are delayed' (Fox 2019: 96–7). Akugiziibwe's openness and easy sociality with everyone sustained her distributive livelihood; she worked herself into other people's social lives by constant visiting, moving herself into her neighbours' spaces and engaging them in the 'conversation' Whyte sees as the basis of social life.

Akugiziibwe was particularly subject to these demands because her periodic categorisation as 'mad' put her social belonging at risk. When I stayed with her, she told me she had never previously received an overnight visitor and she rarely receives the visits most people expect daily.[103] To maintain her social bonds, Akugiziibwe herself constantly visited, including people geographically far from her like DWG members in Kicweka within her efforts. This placed her within other people's space, continually recreating the social bonds that kept her a relevant member of that person's circle (see Graeber 2012: 105).

Some women with whom Akugiziibwe made labour agreements were not part of her regular round of visiting (although sometimes their immediate neighbours were). It was here that problems of non-payment most often arose, as with the Hajji's daughter. In these cases, would it be valid for Akugiziibwe to infer an intention towards herself? It would be prudent to be calculative, but not polite. Given the (relative) lack of obligation and enforcement in these relationships, the aesthetics of Akugiziibwe's sociality mattered hugely. Inquiring too closely into a potential employer's intentions could breach vital social expectations. She was particularly sensitive to the demands of civility because (like Atugonza) she was part of a socio-biological classification particularly liable to be judged non-compliant.

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[103] Most visitors came to the homestead to see her father.

Akugiziibwe's approach involved deploying imaginative and anticipatory projects of connection, creating herself as a valued community member who can stroll down the road eating peanuts, a present from one of her many neighbour-friends, alongside her anthropologist-friend. Her projects did not always work and sometimes caused huge emotional and material strain, but most of the time they were successful, at least to subsistence level.

Success turned on her emplacement in a relatively stable community of neighbours, where connections were based on a situated understanding of her social and financial position, considered in the discourse of 'omuceke' and 'ebizibu' more often than in terms of disability. Her village was a place where the household's 'ebizibu biingi' [many problems], among which Akugiziibwe's bodily-mental affordances were just one dimension, were widely acknowledged. Becoming 'our people' to one's neighbours was possible in this space, if not inexhaustible.

'Our people' in the urban domain

Akugiziibwe's 'our people' relationships in the village were spatially limited, relying on constant co-presence. She also had some connections further away: for example, she sold mangoes from her tree at Safia's stall in Kicweka during their season. Membership of DWG enabled her to expand her social self beyond the village, but her most important relationships remained in village space. Atugonza, by contrast, spent most of his time in the urban environment, returning to his village at sunset to eat and sleep. This difference was driven, to a large extent, by different expectations of their respective genders.

Akugiziibwe was following expected scripts of female behaviour in her rounds of visiting. Consequently, she rarely had to ask for the food contributions she received (although she could, and did, at times). Even cash, always in short supply among her neighbours, sometimes came without her asking, when a neighbour noticed a 'critical moment' at which she faced a damaging lack (Han 2012: 65) and searched for a small task they could pay her for. Men cannot enter these cycles of visiting and provisioning.

Stereotypical ideals of gender and the family in Bunyoro expect women to provide everyday subsistence, particularly food, while men contribute large cash investments (see also Whyte

& Kyaddondo 2006: 179). These expectations systematically affect the location of men's and women's action, with women more likely to be close to the house during the day, working in nearby fields or cooking,[104] while men should be in town or cash-crop fields, working for money. There were almost no men in Akugiziibwe's neighbour's houses during the day.

Atugonza also followed gendered expectations, coming early in the morning to Kicweka and returning at sunset with food he had purchased, which he expected his wife to cook. However, the separation of his family life from his workplace negatively affected him because few people in Kicweka recognised him to be satisfying societal expectations. Most did not even believe him when he said he had a wife, considering his claim part of the 'wild talking' expected from a dirty 'mad' man. 'Mad' people were often assumed to be without social connections: being 'mad' could strain and even break relationships and was closely associated with alcoholism, another recognised wrecker of families. Men who seemed to be without others' care (interpreted through proxies such as whether they had dirty clothing, which should have been washed by a wife) were thereby confirmed to be mad.

Within the urban space of Kicweka market, Atugonza attempted imaginative connections analogous to Akugiziibwe's, including those based on 'our people' relationships in which the contingency in one's life is partially the responsibility of another. Earlier, I described an occasion when this failed. I also witnessed successful efforts. For example, when Atugonza's landlord's son visited Felicite's stall and greeted Atugonza as 'mwene waitu' [our brother] (a paradigmatic 'our people' acknowledgement) Atugonza successfully converted this into gifts of food, heavily deploying a reciprocal 'mwene waitu' address. Every time I saw Atugonza successfully use an 'our people' appeal it was toward people from his village, not urban colleagues. Developing 'our people' connections with non-kin in the market may not be impossible (DWG members had clearly done so through co-residence, see chapter 4), but it was more difficult.

In commercial environments, people recognise goods must be enclaved away from the legitimate demands of others. People feel strain about this, which was sometimes expressed in joking exchanges. The difficulty was summed up in how Alice ended one exchange: by

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[104] Urbanisation had affected these trends, with many women now also commuting into Kicweka to work in retail, but enough remained to make Akugiziibwe's visiting strategy workable.

loudly announcing 'businesi tekwenda abanywani' [a business doesn't want friends] (see chapter 3, footnote 47). Business owners must limit the number of neighbours to whom they are obligated to avoid 'eating the capital' and business failure. Atugonza's attempts to elicit gifting therefore could not be the same as Akugiziibwe's, and his rates of failed requests and non-payment were higher. Although Atugonza used 'our people' arguments regularly, he more often deployed other approaches, ranging from everyday presentation of need ('tinyina omukubi' [I don't have sauce], a stock begging phrase used to express dire need) to the extremely speculative episode described earlier, in which he pretended to be the mayor.

While 'our people' possibilities are less in the market, the uses of 'ekisa' and 'omutima' – the *non-obligatory* motivations for giving – may open up in urban spaces. It is not by chance that so many people labelled 'mad' spend their time in markets: markets are lively, social places where interaction with strangers is expected and accepted. This space, where some people accumulate surpluses and wealth disparities are obvious, is the paradigmatic location for non-religious forms of begging (Durham 1995: 124–5; Fabrega 1971: 284; Iliffe 1987: 17–18). It was here that Atugonza received born-again charity through the *omutima omuyambi*.[105]

Giving to strangers, as I have shown, depends on disposition, and is explicitly contrasted to obligation. As such, these forms of giving are more contingent and uncertain than those based on social connection (Makara 2009: 370 makes a similar argument, calling the few urban safety nets in Kampala 'fluid and temporary'). Atugonza tried intensely to secure the firmer 'our people' connections to various others, which could also help to establish that he was not, in fact, 'mad,' because he had social connections. He eventually found a chance through the disability movement. In the next section I describe a meeting at Atugonza's home, arranged by Alice. During that meeting Atugonza claimed to be 'our people' to a local councillor for people with disabilities, with some, although very limited, success.

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[105] This form of charity can also be delivered through religious institutions, as Scherz demonstrates (Scherz 2014). Church and mosque-based charity was suggested to Atugonza but he did not take it up.

'You are all my people': claiming connection with disabled officials

In the middle of a day in March 2018, I sat outside Atugonza's home with Atugonza, his father and stepmother, his wife Silivia, his friend Alice (a wheelchair-using member of DWG), Mugisa (a councillor for disabled people who lives with visual impairment), and Mugisa's assistant Idirisi, who had brought him from Kicweka on a motorbike. Atugonza's home was one of two rough huts (the other inhabited by his father and stepmother) in the sparse shade of a clearing among small trees, in a village forming part of the 'commuter belt' around Kicweka. Atugonza's wife Silivia,[106] who was deaf but did not know UgSL and was also considered by most people in Kicweka to be 'mad,' at this point lived with him in his one-room hut. Silivia was not always resident with Atugonza. She frequently left for extended periods of time, staying with other men or sleeping in Rubuga's central market.

Alice had organised this meeting and persuaded Mugisa to attend as a mediator between Atugonza and his parents. When talking to his friends in Kicweka in the previous few weeks, Atugonza had accused his father of mistreating both him and his wife. The relationship between his wife and his stepmother was reportedly also troubled, with both parties accusing each other of malicious 'disturbing', for example throwing clean washing into the dirt. Atugonza had also told his friends he wanted to construct his own house, using permanent materials like iron sheeting for the roof and a lockable door, so he could be alone with his wife and away from the disturbances of his parents.

Alice was one of the main audience members for Atugonza's complaints and had been moved by them. She was already planning how to arrange help for him through donors at churches in the upcoming Lent period. Mugisa did not previously know Atugonza, other than by reputation as a resident of Kicweka. As a Councillor with a remit to foster 'peace' within the local community (see Introduction and chapter 7), he was most concerned with scandalous accusations Atugonza had made about his father's treatment of his wife.

Mugisa started the meeting by explaining why we had come. Introducing the small group as representatives for disabled people, he explained to Atugonza that he considered him and

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[106] Atugonza and his wife had not formally married but were considered a stable couple, referred to as 'husband' and 'wife.'

his wife to also be disabled people, adding a repetition: 'tukumubaara m'ekiti ekyo' [we count you (plural) in this thing]. Although Mugisa addressed this phrase to Atugonza, his aim was also to establish credibility with Atugonza's father as a person with elected responsibility to mediate in the dispute between the family members. It is unusual for Mugisa to have to explicitly set out his jurisdiction in this way. Usually, he could assume his audience would accept his authority as a representative, but in this case it was ambiguous due to Atugonza's precarious belonging in the category of disabled people, as a man who lived with untreated epilepsy and the progressive deterioration it had caused in his 'amagezi' [cleverness].

While Mugisa questioned Atugonza's father, asking him how his opinion about their life and what problems they face, Alice tried to interpret for Silivia using UgSL. Silivia however was not paying attention; she wanted to have her own conversation. Mugisa asked Atugonza's father and stepmother about each of the younger people in turn and heard their complaints but did not bring up Atugonza's specific accusations. When the stepmother complained Silivia was overemotional and disrespectful, standing when she gives a cup of tea to her father-in-law rather than kneeling, Atugonza's father added 'ati nikyo tugambirege h'omutwe agutali kurungi' [you see, this is why we said she is not good in the head]. Atugonza, meanwhile, pushed the conversation towards securing the resources he needed for a new house, telling us he feared sleeping in his current one because 'enemies' could come and burn them alive during the night.

The meeting brought diverging aims to bear on the situation. Mugisa, who was a proud part of the Ugandan local government structure, tried to fit it into an appropriate genre: the mediating meeting. This genre draws on popular understandings of Ugandan society as consensus-driven, positioning the role of the local council official as a combination of judge, advocate, and mediator (Kizza 1999; see also Jones 2009; Abrahams 1971). Partly as a result of its roots in colonial stereotypes of African communities, this role entails an overriding responsibility to foster, perhaps even simulate, community cohesion (Khadiagala 2001); the approach nevertheless had popular legitimacy in Rubuga.

However, Atugonza did not submit humbly to Mugisa's leadership and judgement. While Mugisa and Alice tried to persuade him to make simple improvements to his home such as

smearing additional mud over the gaps in the walls and cutting the surrounding bush, Atugonza envisioned a more ambitious approach. He tried to steer the meeting into an alternative genre: planning a major project. When Mugisa offered to pay for new grass thatching for the hut and materials including an old iron sheet to make a solid door, Atugonza demurred.

Standing up from his seat on the ground, Atugonza loomed above everyone except Mugisa, who was seated on Idirisi's motorbike. He opened his appeal by telling his audience 'inywe muli abantu bange' [you are all my people]. Turning to Mugisa (and unfortunately addressing him with the incorrect *empaako*[107]), he appealed: 'eby'amabingo tubyeganyire. Tuhe pulani…kutekaho…' [this thing of the grass, let us leave that. Let us make a plan…to put there…]. As Atugonza's voice petered out, Alice, Atugonza's friend, finished the request by adding 'ibaati' [iron sheet], i.e., an iron sheet roof, repeating his earlier request for more sophisticated building materials. Atugonza was refusing Mugisa's suggested help and asking instead for a more elaborate and much more expensive investment in his home. The response was shocked laughter: first an uncertain chuckle from Mugisa, followed by growing hilarity from Alice.

With the word 'plan,' Atugonza had invoked an alternative genre, seeing the meeting as an opportunity to request material support. Major events in a man's life in Rubuga, including marriage and building a house, were conducted collectively with the help of a core group of friends who assist the instigator to develop a budget and find donors to support it. This is not just a practical consideration. In Botswana 'issues of who has helped [a person] build' are interpreted as indices of 'the love, care, scorn, or jealousy others feel for them', and 'because building is such a key aspect of social achievement, people perceive…their life chances depend on their ability to influence such sentiments' (Klaits 2010: 86). Building was understood similarly in Bunyoro; one friend told me having others involved in one's schemes 'shows how much you are loved' and is 'a sign of togetherness.' To undertake a big project like building or marrying without telling the people around you would be interpreted as a deliberate snub, inviting criticism for 'being proud.'

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[107] An 'empaako' is a 'praise name' used to communicate respect and familiarity (see Byakutaaga 1990; Rukundo 2007).

The people formulating a 'plan' should be closely tied to the self; they were usually a combination of immediate kin (especially cousin-brothers), neighbours of a similar age, and a man's closest friends. The roles were sometimes formalised into a 'committee.' Alice, who had vocally agreed with Atugonza's statement 'you are all my people,' was an unusual but not inappropriate choice for such a supporter, as a close female friend. Mugisa was not. While there is no requirement for those involved in planning a project to be social equals with the instigator, those who are distinctly hierarchically 'above' would usually be humbly asked for a contribution by an organiser, rather than being asked to *be* an organiser.

Atugonza nevertheless partially succeeded. As Durham and Klaits insist, asking in itself can be an act that establishes the self in relation to the addressee, as a person with self-determination who must be considered; in doing so it changes the benefactor, even if it does not make them give (Durham 1995: 125; Klaits 2011: 109–210).[108] Atugonza's request was a confident act of assertion. Mugisa and Idirisi dramatically re-evaluated their opinions of Atugonza after the meeting, moving from seeing him as a dirty 'mad' man to someone who can meet his social obligations. However, Atugonza had misunderstood the affordances of the representational system for disabled people, and therefore the form of connection between himself and Mugisa. Mugisa's assurance that 'we count you' within 'disability' did not necessarily make him one of Atugonza's 'own people.'

Friedner argues that inclusion within the category 'disability' takes work (particularly for people who are ambiguously situated in relation to it), requiring 'claims of sameness to be levied.' But the type of connection made through categorical identification is based on 'recognition' and diagnosis (Friedner 2018: 108–10). 'Our people' claims, as I have shown, are based on shared history, especially co-residence. Atugonza's daily visits to Alice and her long-term involvement in his life had established this connection. His link to Mugisa was different. Rather than Nabila's ideal version of the disability movement, in which all members have the same relationship to the category (see chapter 2), most connections

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[108] Durham emphasises seeking equality through the requests she discusses. However, her insights are not only relevant to relationships conceived as equal; Klaits notes 'Requests are often characterized by a delicate balancing of expressions of both self-sufficiency and dependency' (Klaits 2011: 209–210). In Bunyoro, equality and hierarchy are both valued (Doyle 2006a: 14).

within the disability movement are personalised. (There is one responsibility Mugisa owes to all his constituents: to act as advocate, but this is focused far more strongly on maintaining 'peace' than on co-producing a project, as this meeting demonstrated.)

The differentiation of connections to councillors produces clear inequalities benefitting those already networked with the disability movement, as I investigate in chapter 7. Without these connections, Atugonza was left with impersonal forms of giving based on 'ekisa' [grace], a term Mugisa used when discussing Atugonza with me later. These forms have a greater geographical reach, as they do not depend on regular or long-term contact, but a lower intensity; they are the uninfluenceable products of a 'good heart', not the negotiable contributions of 'one's own people' (Englund 2015: S139 similarly contrasts programmatic approaches to 'the poor' and patronage relationships conceived as 'kinship'). By refusing Mugisa's offer and asserting his own desires, Atugonza breached propriety, producing shock and amusement (though not offense). Help to construct an iron-roofed house was a huge request to make of a group only tentatively established as 'his people.'

Gender and categorisation

Akugiziibwe made her neighbours 'her people' through established norms of female behaviour. By contrast, male behavioural expectations excluded Atugonza. His claims that Felicite, and especially Mugisa, were 'his people' were unorthodox and creative, but as a result they failed more often than Akugiziibwe's projects of connection. Putting it in Whyte's language of social competence, introduced in the previous chapter, Atugonza's structural position as a man living with 'mental' disability created more 'social incompetence' (see Whyte 1998). In the market space, his repeated requests for help and jobs were more highly marked as aberrant than were Akugiziibwe's in the village, through his association with the exemplar of the 'wild' mad man.

Atugonza's impersonation of the mayor, described at the beginning of this chapter, showed him attempting to manipulate his position as a central and characteristic figure of market life into livelihood resources, just as Akugiziibwe does through her sociality and friendliness to all. But because his activities do not align with broader Banyoro social ideals, this did not translate into the kind of belonging to place that Akugiziibwe had in her village. Like the

DWG members improvising relationships of care in the domestic space of the 'railway cottages,' Atugonza was making new forms from scratch.

Although some people considered Atugonza to be within the category of disabled people, his inclusion was unstable and people with intellectual disability were formally excluded from the disability infrastructure in Kicweka: I did not come across any cases of people having membership of a DPO on the basis of intellectual disability. However, the *omuceke/ebizibu* [weak person/problems] discourse I have described provided some links. Alice's explicit discussion of similarities between her own 'ebizibu' and those facing the market's 'mad' men was an extreme version of a more general tendency to consider all bodily-mental debility in the same idiom of misfortune. This tendency meant wheelchair-using DWG members (who unambiguously qualify as disabled people) could also sometimes be spoken about as 'abaceke' [weak people][109] or as having 'problems.' This language could therefore draw analogies between their situations and those of more excluded disabled people.

Despite Atugonza's formal exclusion from disability organising, I was struck by the density of links between his family and DWG members. Atugonza regularly visited other DWG member's stalls for refuge from market abuse, as well as Alice's. Esther was one of the people he told about his father's aggressive behaviour. Atugonza's wife Silivia had been at school with Lidia, and she briefly stayed with her in Kicweka after she had first been found sleeping rough in Rubuga central market. Although a young deaf woman in need, Silivia was an unsuitable assistant-trainee (see chapter 5) because of her habit of forgetting tasks, so Lidia returned her to her family in a village twenty minutes' drive from Masindi, paying for the transport herself. When Silivia came to the market during my fieldwork she frequently sat at Lidia and other DWG member's stalls, although Khadija, Lidia's assistant, complained about this because Silivia's use of irregular signs 'disturbed' her.

Conclusion

The act of terming someone 'omuceke' [a weak person] is particularly widely used in moral arguments for helping others. At the end of my fieldwork, Akugiziibwe experienced a period

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[109] This is less likely for more prosperous members, of course.

of acute mental distress, when, as she put it, 'nkagambisibwa' [I was talking nonsensically]. She consistently described the situation in retrospect by saying 'ncekere' [I became weak]. Reformulating a diagnosis away from 'madness' is a common act among family members of people with stigmatised conditions (see Ingstad 1995: 254–6 for a similar process in Botswana).

Where a judgment of 'madness' can cut relationships (through the mechanisms of fear and blame), reformulating how a person's situation is understood towards being 'weak' expresses a powerful moral injunction to maintain connections and obligations to them. It is this moral injunction that Akugiziibwe relies upon when she visits her neighbours, and which usually prevents her having to vocalise requests for support. Indeed, Akugiziibwe's relationships with her neighbours appeared unaffected by her acute period of illness, unlike Atugonza's relationships with market workers, which were damaged by his display of behaviour linked with 'madness,' even when it evidently arose from other causes (such as being refused pay he had earned).

This precept is also behind some of the engagements between DWG members and Atugonza. Alice's behaviour towards him was notably protective. She castigated those who cheated him, often marvelling that they would treat someone 'like him' this way, and repeatedly tried to persuade him to leave his goods in her care to avoid theft, not trusting his distant family members to take proper care of them. In chapter 4 I described DWG members, their children, and carers developing an 'attunement' to other people's access needs through practice and repetition, especially within shared domestic space. In Alice, who is known for her kindness and desire to help others who are suffering despite her own 'problems,' I argue this trained 'somatic mode of attention' (Csordas 1993: 149) was extended beyond the objectified category 'disabled people' to embrace the more inclusive 'abaceke' [weak people].

Alice's connection with Atugonza took an 'our-people' form, based on physical proximity over a long history. Through her commitment, she was also able to attach other people to him with different forms of connection. Her recruitment of Mugisa relied on creating two forms of motivation for him to help: formal arguments based on disability diagnosis (recognition), which had a weak obligatory force *and* the non-obligatory 'ekisa' [mercy].

Alice's intervention combined these motivations into an important outcome for Atugonza: Mugisa's offer to pay for thatching on Atugonza's roof. Mugisa described his motivation for this by telling me 'I have that spirit of giving…I feel it strongly in my heart.' Alice also planned to ask 'abantu abaina ekisa' [people who have mercy] to help Atugonza at churches during Lent and mosques during Ramadan.

The ability to link forms of connection creates a window for engaging people who are conceptually excluded from being group members because of the label of 'madness' with some of the formal structures of the movement, in this case representation by councillors. However, it remains a personalised form of engagement, with no institutionalisation involved. One of the biggest problems Atugonza and Akugiziibwe both faced was casual employers reneging on their verbal contracts, an issue I never heard discussed in disability fora. Their needs were not considered within the institutional design of 'the disability movement.'

The *omuceke/ebizibu* discourse therefore does not make up for the exclusion this group of people faces because of the singular institutional focus on small business for disabled people's livelihoods. Rather than access to the full range of opportunities available through the disability movement (formal representation, voting, legal advocacy, business funding, skills training, attendance allowances for NGO meetings, and community belonging), Atugonza gained moments of connection, acknowledgement, and love.

Chapter 7 – *Obulema* [disability] and *abaceke* [weak people] in land disputes

This chapter uses case studies of land disputes to further investigate the livelihoods of peripheral DWG members living with forms of disability DWG found difficult to support. I focus on Akugiziibwe, who featured in the last chapter, and Alinda, previously discussed in chapters 3 and 5. Akugiziibwe was described as a 'slow learner' and sometimes experienced mental distress, while also living with partial paralysis of her right side. Alinda was deaf but did not use Ugandan Sign Language (UgSL) and walked with crutches after a leg amputation.

Land was particularly relevant for these members because, unlike the core group, they could not sustain residence in town through small business activities. Alinda's communication difficulties (see chapter 5) marginalised her within the group and contributed to her being judged 'inactive' and therefore ineligible for further business inputs (see chapter 2). Akugiziibwe was innumerate and considered to display too little steadfast purpose to sustain a business (see chapters 2 and 6). With their relative lack of entrepreneurial income (and Akugiziibwe's peri-urban residence), cultivation was important. However, both had experienced land loss, putting their livelihoods in jeopardy.

The previous chapter demonstrated that Alinda and Akugiziibwe's status as 'abaceke' [weak people] could mobilise obligations to help among family and neighbours. However, in this chapter, I argue being categorised as 'weak' has negative effects during land disputes, and likely contributed to their loss. I contrast their experiences with a land case undertaken by a more politically connected disabled woman, Audrey, who lived with visual impairment. Audrey, who was represented by a councillor for disabled people, phrased her arguments using the language of 'obulema' [disability], rather than presenting herself as an 'omuceke' [weak person]. She used *obulema* as a way of demonstrating strength through political connection, contrasting strongly with Akugiziibwe's mobilisation of support tied to being weak.

Through Audrey's case, I focus in more detail on the representation function of the 'disability movement,' investigating its relationship to the two discourses of disability identified in the previous chapter (*obulema* and *omuceke*), and the differential outcomes

produced for disabled people who are closely linked to the movement and those, like Akugiziibwe and Alinda, who are peripheral.

Sugarcane and access to land

Sugar is one of very few major industries in Rubuga and represents the main source of substantial wealth (other industries include large-scale maize and cattle farming and tourism, although income from the latter largely accrues to outsiders).[110] A nationally important sugar factory is located 15km from Rubuga, and trucks overloaded with sugarcane or workers being transported to the fields are a common sight. Sugarcane cultivation is carried out mainly by 'outgrowers': predominantly local men who contract their land to produce cane for the factory, receiving subsidised inputs. Because of economies of scale, a minimum amount of contiguous land is needed before a farmer can register as an outgrower. The outgrowers are organised economically and politically by an Outgrowers Committee, registered as a company at the District (LC5) level, which has an elected board.

Sugar wealth is an important part of national discourse as well; in 2007 President Museveni described a proposal to degazette part of a forest reserve for a new cane plantation as a 'goldmine' (cited in Zommers et al. 2012: 177). Sugar is highly politicised in Rubuga. The 'farmers' vote' is considered a single block, and politicians court the Outgrowers Committee around election times. Conflicts between the company and outgrowers are often framed by Banyoro nationalism, with outgrowers and other local people complaining the company, which is owned by a Kenyan-Asian conglomerate, illegitimately exploits 'our sugar.' There is also a divide between local people who have benefitted most from the company's presence and others who feel excluded. Cane cutters, who are usually casualised and/or migrant workers, complain the outgrowers 'steal' all the benefit; their own wages by comparison are tiny (see also Zommers et al. 2012: 187).

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[110] Rubuga is outside the oil-producing regions of Bunyoro.

The sugarcane industry has a significant impact on disabled people's lives in Rubuga, even though I never met a disabled person who worked for the company or grew cane.[111] DWG members working in the market sold to people who made their income from the industry (usually as casual labourers), with some timing restocks to match when the company paid wages. November, when the factory shut down for annual maintenance, was always expected to be a lean month.

The most significant impact, however, came through changes in the market for land. From the mid-2000s, the sugarcane company initiated a drive to increase the land under cultivation by outgrowers (Johnston & Meyer 2008: xii). Although there is no available history of land prices in the district, it is generally understood that land has become more valuable. Theorists of land conflict report that as land values increase, the diffuse and overlapping rights to land that characterise much of Uganda come under increasing pressure, producing 'redistributive conflict' (Boone 2014: 52). Rights are likely to be further delineated and made more exclusive (Deininger & Castagnini 2006: 323). This process directly affected some of the disabled people I worked with.

Alinda lived with her two younger children in a small rented room on the edge of Kicweka. One of her legs had been amputated in childhood and she walked using two mismatched crutches. She also lost her hearing as a young woman, so she relied on speaking Runyoro to communicate, and the few improvised signs her neighbours and friends had learned, combined with basic speechreading, to understand what others said to her. She could express herself comprehensively to other Runyoro-speakers but found it difficult to understand them, often misinterpreting instructions and questions. Alinda's linguistic embodiment made communicating with her challenging, especially for other deaf people, who needed an interpreter (the interpreter would also have to help Alinda understand their Runyoro). Perhaps because of this, she was often left out of DWG activities, although she was formally a member (see chapters 2 and 5).

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[111] Workplace accidents at the company often led to disability, but those affected did not generally join DPOs (see Meekosha & Soldatic 2011; Puar 2017 on the 'social model' marginalising those disabled through industrial production and colonialism). Space constraints prevent me covering this issue, which deserves further research.

Alinda was from a village 9km from Rubuga in the direction of the sugar plantation but lived in a rented room in Kicweka. She relied on a patched-together livelihood. She did casual jobs, including agricultural labour, and had been trained in tailoring by an international NGO and given a sewing machine, with which she occasionally did small sewing jobs brought to her by neighbours and friends. Alinda's rent was paid by a child sponsorship organisation, which also paid for her youngest daughter's school fees (see chapter 3). Alinda told me she had problems in her livelihood 'these days' because 'bagenzire nibakeehya omuka ab'emitima mbi' [bad-hearted people at home [i.e. her relatives] have been reducing me].

Having never married, she had previously accessed land to cultivate food for basic subsistence at her parents' home. While they were never rich, there was enough land for Alinda, her parents, and the other unmarried women of the home to survive. But a few years ago, much of her family's land was appropriated by one of her younger brothers, who she described as 'n'amaani' [energetic] but having 'omutima mubi' [a bad heart] and no 'amagezi' [sense]. Alinda was left with only a small plot of land high on the hill, which was assigned to her by the sister of a neighbour who raped and impregnated her with her first child. Even on this plot she faced problems because other family members harvested and stole her crops. Her parents subsisted on only what they could grow in their household *ezigati* [compound].

Describing her brother's actions, Alinda told me 'alesere abandi y'amaani kulimira ebikaijo' [he has brought other powerful people to cultivate sugarcane]; in other words, her brother had registered the land to grow sugarcane as an outgrower. It was unclear whether her brother had registered the land as an outgrower himself or if he had leased the land to a more established farmer who then arranged the contract with the company (a common arrangement for those lacking the resources to develop their land alone). This ambiguity was an important part of her brother's strategy.

Outgrowing payments were given in a series of lump sums (the biggest usually on harvest) to the individual who signed the outgrowing contract, and it was common for the contract holder (usually a senior man) to conceal the terms and amounts from other family members (see Bolwig 2012: 19–20 on contract coffee-growing in eastern Uganda). Alinda rhetorically asked me 'ogenda kuziha [ekitongole] dihi?' [when will you go to withdraw money from [the

company]?], meaning something like 'how could I go to [the company] to get money from them?' *Her* name was not registered, and the company would therefore not release information about the contract to her, let alone make her a payment.

Previously, many family members derived benefits of different kinds through diffused use-rights to the land. The arrangement with the company narrowed the beneficiaries to one person. The formal contract, which the company could and would enforce if it were breached, removed the land from the intra-family negotiation characterising land access in the area. Alinda's brother had sole control over the (much larger) income from all the land, from which he would be expected to help the others. Unfortunately he did not, and Alinda complained he had built himself a big house while leaving their parents living in one that was collapsing.

It is very difficult to hold someone to an ill-defined obligation. Alinda's right to access a plot at her natal home to cultivate food for her children (in the absence of a marriage) was widely accepted by Banyoro,[112] but there was no widespread agreement about how benefits from contracts on communally-held land should be distributed. Most people, even in the area around the sugar company, were not familiar with the details of outgrowing contracts. It was therefore difficult to know what to ask for, or when to time a request to have the highest chance of success. The brother's refusal to share the income among all those considered valid beneficiaries of his father's land was enabled by the hidden nature of contracts and payments with the company.

To understand the dynamics of the situation, we must look at how land rights and land disputes are understood in Bunyoro, an extremely complex topic. In the next section, I discuss the infrastructure and practices involved, emphasising the improvisatory nature of action in land disputes, and associated reliance on overt power and force. Alinda's frequent invocation of 'amaani' (which can translate as strength, authority, violence, force, or energy) in her narrative shows her awareness of this factor; she repeatedly told me her brother and the 'others' he had brought to cultivate on the land had 'amaani', and that her parents no

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[112] This is not the same as women's right to inherit freehold land, which is often linked with intense gender divides in patrilineal contexts (for example, Lockwood 2020a).

longer did: they had grown old, 'bahwire, amaani gaaha' [they are finished, there is no strength].

Land tenure and land law in Bunyoro

The main legislative instrument on land in Uganda, the Land Act 1998, recognises four main forms of tenure: customary; leasehold; *mailo*; and freehold (see The Land Act 1998, part II, article 2).

Customary tenure refers to land held in trust by a group of people (usually loosely defined as a clan, lineage, or other family group) and governed under what are conceptually 'traditional' norms held in dynamic continuity with pre-colonial political systems (Kizza 1999: 101–102), which in practice have strong roots in colonial stereotypes about consensus decision-making in rural African communities (Khadiagala 2001: 58). In the Western region, which includes Bunyoro, prevalence of 'customary' land reaches 70-100% (Troutt et al. 1992: 69).[113] Most land rights under customary tenure are use-rights and are not exclusive, resulting in a web of overlapping claims of different kinds.

Successive governments have created routes to formalisation. Under the Land Act, it became possible to 'upgrade' customary to freehold tenure. 'Customary' rights are not standardised and vary substantially between regions as well as between smaller geographical divisions (for example, based on the specific dynamics of villages). Responsibility for determining and enforcing 'customary' rights has historically moved between general local government structures (the local council (LC) system) and specific bodies set up to judge land cases (Land Boards and Area Land Committees). In contemporary Rubuga, LCs took the dominant role.

Leasehold is defined in the Land Act as 'created either by contract or by operation of law': it is established based on, and with features defined by, a contract between landholder and leaser. It can therefore vary dramatically, though technically subject to the restrictions of contract law. Leasing agricultural land is common in Rubuga but many leases are never formalised, often occurring between family members. One interlocutor with experience of land issues insisted all leases should be registered with the Land Tribunal and that this was

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[113] Areas close to urban centres (like Kicweka) have lower prevalence of customary tenure.

the main bulk of the Rubuga Land Tribunal's work. However, I never met anyone who had used this service. The outgrower contracts I discuss in this chapter do not fit easily into the category of 'lease' because the land remains in the possession of the outgrower; the company is entitled to the product, not to use the land. Hence, these contracts are not straightforwardly reconcilable with the categories in the Land Act.

Mailo land refers originally to a tenanted estate granted to the *Kabaka* (king) or a senior chief of Buganda under the Uganda Agreement (1900), a treaty signed between the leaders of Buganda and the British. *Mailo* represented the first time 'rights in land were vested in individual holders in perpetuity,' creating a rentier class and an extremely unequal distribution of secure and insecure land rights in areas it affected (Mafeje 1973). Tenants on *mailo* land are still liable for *busuulu* (ground rent), which also validates their tenure by providing evidence of long-term residence; however most *busuulu* is now not paid (Ali & Duponchel 2018).

Regularising the situation of *mailo* tenants was a high priority of Museveni's government when creating the 1998 Land Act (Hunt 2004: 177). A field study related to the process stated 'the land tenure law should facilitate the evolution of land tenure toward a single, uniform and efficient system for the whole nation' (see Joireman 2011: 62). This has not happened, but *mailo* remains politically momentous. *Mailo* is, however, rare around Rubuga. For my analysis, it is most relevant for how much space it takes up in national political discourse about land (to the exclusion of other issues) and because of its sideways influence on *kibanja* landholding in Bunyoro, discussed below.

Freehold refers to land held exclusively by a single owner, either in perpetuity or for a set period. (*Mailo* is freehold from the point of view of the owner, but most residents on *mailo* land are tenants; hence 'freehold' in land legislation specifically excludes *mailo*.) 'Freehold' derives from British colonial ideas of private property, although in practice much 'freehold' property in Uganda has experienced a complex contradictory route toward becoming so. This is especially true in Bunyoro, where the colonial government prevaricated about land tenure for decades, eventually introducing a 'disastrous, incompetent administrative reform' in 1931-3 (Doyle 2006a: 123). This aimed at avoiding the problems *mailo* had caused

in Buganda, but in practice led to the proliferation of similar estates, which in Bunyoro were known as *bibanja* (singular *kibanja*) (Doyle 2006a: 169; Mamdani 1976: 129).

As part of the reform, the administration offered certificates of occupancy, called 'five-shilling tickets' after the administrative fee charged, to anyone cultivating an area of land. These aimed at protecting the rights of tenants, preventing their eviction, and allowing heritability of rights to cultivated plots, though not sales. Forty years later, Mair reported most certificates had in practice been issued to landlords rather than tenants, and 'Everyone believed that the registration fee was the price of the land…So now the *kibanja*-holders believe they are, and behave as if they were, freehold landowners, even to the extent of selling areas of land' (Mair 1974: 191; Beattie's earlier assessment of the reform is similar: Beattie 1954a).

Current freehold land in Rubuga derives from splintering of former *bibanja* (through inheritance or selling parcels of *kibanja* land to third parties), purchases of formerly state- or church-owned land, or the ambiguous interpretation of *kibanja* occupancy certificates as freehold titles.

From the start of the NRM regime (1980s), local councils have had a prominent role in land governance. However, the NRM's 1998 Land Act established an 'ambitious' arrangement of Land Boards and Area Land Committees at District (LC5) and Sub-county (LC3) levels to replace the LCs' role, shifting administration from elected LC politicians onto 'the civil service and appointed citizens' (Ahikire 2010: 12; Deininger & Castagnini 2006: 326; Joireman 2011: 63). The reforms did not come with funding for implementation and were extremely problematic. In several areas massive corruption was alleged and the tribunals run by the Land Boards and Area Land Committees were temporarily suspended (Ahikire 2010: 14; Muriisa 2018: 12).

Through the Local Council Courts Act, 2006, jurisdiction over land disputes on customary land was returned to Local Council control, although without rescinding the structures in the 1998 Land Act. In research conducted in the late 2000s, Ahikire found Land Boards and Area Land Committees were difficult to identify and to distinguish from LCs and it was therefore difficult for litigants to know which body they were dealing with (Ahikire 2010: 14–15).

In the context of this complexity, land disputes are popularly understood through the language of force. 'Land grabbing' is a common phrase in newspaper reports and villager accounts, which also discuss participants in terms of power versus vulnerability (Ahikire 2010: 36; Etukuri 2021; The Independent 2020a). Many accounts link 'land grabbing' with the NRM regime, alleging corruption and patronage (Katungulu 2018; The Independent 2020b).[114] Khadiagala argues that people in politically weak positions, particularly women (who, because of virilocal marriage, are likely to face councils consisting of their husbands' relatives), therefore need to bring 'power from outside the local arena' to receive justice (Khadiagala 2001: 57).

Disabled people in Uganda are politically understood to be tied to the NRM regime as clients, because of their association with the flagship NRM 'Special Interest Groups' policy, which allocates them reserved places in parliament and local councils (see Introduction). This positionality assigns disabled people both a privileged standing (as those who are networked with government power) and a subservient role (as clients). When disabled councillors are involved in land disputes complex negotiation between these identities emerges. Disabled councillors represent the essential 'power from outside,' but also act within the constraints of their clienthood.

In the next section, I analyse a hearing held during a land case involving a well-connected disabled woman, drawing out choices participants made between different claim-making discourses. 'Obulema' [disability] and 'abaceke' [weak people], played distinct roles in council debate and negotiations with neighbours.

Audrey's hearing

In mid-2018, Audrey, a woman with visual impairment who lived in a village 15km from Kicweka, had a case brought against her at the Sub-county council (LC3) for encroaching on her neighbour's land and causing 'malicious damage.' She asked the district level (LC5) male councillor for disabled people to represent her during the hearing. The LC5 councillor delegated the responsibility to Mugisa, a councillor for disabled people at the Municipal

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[114] Academic research also ties NRM officials to 'land grabbing' (Carmody & Taylor 2016: 109–110; Kobusingye et al. 2017: 472–3), but here I am most concerned with public narratives.

(LC4) level, one level 'below' his own in the nested local council hierarchy. Both Mugisa and the LC5 councillor also lived with visual impairment, and Audrey knew them well through the District-level association of the blind. This association is the longest running and best funded DPO in Rubuga, providing a particularly strong network of solidarity between those sharing this impairment category (see chapter 1).

On the day of the hearing, Mugisa and I arrived at Audrey's house early in the morning. Audrey told us the background to the case from her perspective: when she got married (informally only; there was no bridewealth or church marriage) her grandfather had given her a section of his land, arguing it would not be safe for her to follow the usual practice of moving to her husband's village because she might be neglected due to her visual impairment. Instead, Audrey's husband should move to live with her family. After her grandfather's death, Audrey had experienced a long history of disputes with her neighbours, including her house being burned down, killing the goats she had received through a scheme for disabled people, and the destruction of crops and trees.

In the incident leading to this summons, the neighbours had accused her of cutting down maize they had planted on their side of the boundary between their lands and replacing it with her own groundnuts. They had gone to the police who had briefly arrested Audrey's daughter for 'malicious damage.' The case was to be heard by the LC3 (Sub-county) council,[115] who would observe the situation and 'kuhikya emitaano' [correct the boundaries]. However, on the appointed day the LC3 chairperson was unavailable, and it was decided to convene the LC1 (Village) council to hear the case instead, to avoid wasting the time of those who had travelled to attend. The LC3 chairperson deputised a lower-level official, the LC2 (Parish) chairperson, to take his place, just as the LC5 councillor for disabled people had by bringing in Mugisa.

The hearing, held at the LC1 chairperson's compound near Audrey's house, was long and contentious. Audrey claimed she had not encroached, rather her neighbours had moved the boundary-markers. Also, because of her visual impairment it was difficult for her to keep track of the boundaries. The chairperson of the LC2 (Parish) council, despite being deputised

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[115] The LC3 hosts the first tier of the land tribunal system, but it was unclear whether Audrey's case was to be considered by the council or the land tribunal (see Ahikire 2010: 14–15).

to stand in for the supposedly impartial LC3 arbiter, openly supported her neighbour's claim. (His own land bordered that of the accusers, so he claimed familiarity with the case.) Addressing Mugisa and me, he emphasised that the conflicts were not between 'abataahi' [neighbours, but here meaning 'outsiders' or 'unrelated people'], but between 'ab'oruganda' [family members/co-clanspeople]. Many of Audrey's neighbours were also grandchildren and great-grandchildren of the grandfather she claimed gave her land when she married, while some were more distant family members given permission to settle there by her grandfather's heir.

The LC2 chair told us Audrey was the aggressor in her disputes. Everyone in the village 'feared her' because she was quick to call the police and have her relatives imprisoned; the police always took her side because 'they don't think that a blind person can also make a mistake.' He presented her as outrightly malevolent and disrespectful: she boasted she could 'do anything' because she had an 'ekitebe' [organisation, here referring to a DPO] that would always take her side. He welcomed the 'ekitebe' (Mugisa) that had come to represent Audrey but begged them to 'fight based on the truth' and claimed 'if they fight in error' he 'would not allow it.'

Mugisa spoke for the first time immediately after the LC2 chairperson. He opened by introducing himself as 'omu h'abantu barwanira obugabe…bw'abalema' [one of those people who fights for the rights of disabled people]. However, he did not take Audrey's side straightforwardly; throughout the hearing he repeatedly stated 'tinyina rubajo' [I don't have a side]. He rejected the claim that her visual impairment led to not knowing where the boundary was, speaking from his own experience as a visually-impaired man who farms, and cautioned her not to 'okozesa kubi obulema bwawe, obukozese mw'ekyeju' [use your disability badly, to use it in stubbornness]. He pushed her to make peace, arguing even if she used her connections with the disability movement to bring 'lawyers,' they would not help her if she was in the wrong.

Mugisa's stance was informed by prior knowledge of the case and Audrey's character: Audrey had a reputation within the disability movement for being 'ever in court.' He cautioned her about her 'rude' tone and seemed particularly shocked and angry about the accusation she was using threats about the intervention of DPOs, telling her 'tinyizire

213

kumigiriza' [I have not come to oppress [others]]. Nevertheless, at regular intervals during the hearing he asked questions concerning Audrey's treatment and castigated her relatives for not helping her when 'you produced her,' reminding them that the Bible specifies one should help orphans, widows and 'lame' people.

The most significant other attendee was Audrey's maternal aunt Byakagaba, a 76-year-old woman who did not live on the land under dispute but had been recognised as Audrey's grandfather's heir at his death and so claimed 'ownership' of it. Byakagaba told the meeting she was 'tired' of disputes over the land and had given up any personal claim to using it after her attempts to farm there had been resisted by residents. She had come to settle the matter permanently and wanted to give a portion to Audrey, if it would end the problems.

After an hour had already passed, Byakagaba dramatically revealed she had brought legal documents proving her position as heir, prompting a crescendo of exclamations: 'Audrey told us the paper was at the sub-county, what what what?!' 'she has been misleading us!' These continued for several minutes until Mugisa shouted above the din 'Mukama asiimwe!' [God be praised!] Once quiet was restored, the documents were read aloud. There were two papers: a handwritten letter from Byakagaba's father dated 1977, which was written on yellowed paper torn from an exercise book and which she referred to as his will; and a certificate from the Bunyoro-Kitara government giving her father authority over an *ekibanja* covering the land on which Audrey and her neighbours lived.

The letter/will stated that Byakagaba's father was giving her authority over all his property ('Niwe alinobusobozi wenka habintu byange byona ebinyinabyo' [she is the only authority over everything I have]) and charged her 'aina okulinda abagenzibe bona' [she must care for all her relatives], especially his four unmarried daughters. Audrey's mother was one of those daughters. The letter stated that if Byakagaba choose, she could sell the *ekibanja*, but that no-one else should ever tell her what to do on the land, including her father's 'aboruganda' [clanspeople]. When the Chairman of the LC1 read the certificate aloud he identified it as one of the '5-shilling tickets' associated with the 1931-3 'kibanja' land reform.

After the documents were read, Mugisa asked Audrey about them. She claimed that before his death her grandfather had brought her to Byakagaba to care for, and that he had then made another will including the details of Audrey's land. Byakagaba, incensed, insisted this

had never happened: 'okudupira *kimu*!' [you are lying completely!]. After a short period of questioning by Mugisa, who focused attention on the past relationship between Audrey and Byakagaba, Audrey suddenly interrupted him to beg forgiveness from her aunt, recognising her officially with the formulaic words 'Ogwo mama wange niye ankuliize' [this is my mother it was her who fed me]. She thanked Byakagaba for the care she had received and begged her forgiveness.

This section of the meeting ended shortly after Audrey's apology, although not without further argument between Audrey and her accusers (backed by their advocate the LC2 chair), who were clearly not reconciled. Nevertheless, Byakagaba agreed to draw up a formal document to transfer ownership of Audrey's plot of land, under the authority of the councillors present. The meeting participants shifted to the land in question to inspect and determine the boundaries, before returning to the LC1 chairperson's compound to write and sign the title document. The wording used in this document resembled that in Byakagaba's father's *ekibanja* certificate and the letter; for example, it stated 'hatalibaho akumutalibaniza wena' [she should not be disturbed by anyone] on the three acres assigned to her. However, it also warned her not to encroach on land not included in the grant, hence also acting to limit her expansionary ambitions.

Although this outcome was probably less than Audrey had been hoping for, she considered it a positive development, thanking Mugisa and me for our attendance. In later conversations, she attributed her success in procuring more secure title to the presence of Mugisa and (especially) me, telling me we had 'scared' the other meeting participants. When I later asked Mugisa why Byakagaba had given Audrey land even though she had been found in the wrong he gave two reasons: 1) she realised Audrey thought she already owned the land and wanted to end the conflicts; and 2) she had been scared by the presence of a senior councillor and a white researcher on disability. Although I had said nothing in the meeting except introduce myself, I had 'done a lot' just by my presence (Ahikire 2010: 36–37 notes a similar effect from her case research).

After this hearing, in which Mugisa took an ambiguous role towards Audrey – supporting but critical – finalising the land transfer took several weeks. The land had to be surveyed and new boundaries marked and recorded. Mugisa took a more decidedly supportive role in

this period. Audrey was asked to pay remarkably high fees to the officials, land surveyors, and neighbours who provided labour, which Mugisa attributed to lingering resentment by the LC1 officials in charge of the process. He appealed, unsuccessfully, to the officials to have mercy on Audrey because she was an 'omuceke' [a weak person] and could not raise money easily. When this did not work, he changed tactics, calling a journalist from a local radio station to come and record the conversations, alleging discrimination against a disabled person. The requested payment was quickly halved, and Audrey raised the funds from her daughters and 'well-wishers' in Rubuga.

Gender and inheritance in Audrey's case

Two key points emerge from the case: first, it is possible to mobilise connections with institutions of the disability movement to gain advantage in land cases but doing so does not always work predictably; and second, systematic differences between people involved in the disability movement, in this case different genders, can affect whether representation functions in the interests of those calling on it. These divisions caused a mismatch between the claim-making strategies of constituent and representative that undermined Audrey's case, although it did not destroy it.

People in Uganda commonly employ 'institutional shopping' during land cases (Deininger & Castagnini 2006: 324). The key decisions for a claimant are which forum to choose, and which identities and relationships to highlight within it (Obika et al. 2017: 217–218). Literature particularly reflects women seeking intervention by higher courts or even Regional District Commissioners (RDCs), as 'power from outside the [viri-]local arena' (Khadiagala 2001: 57; Ahikire 2010).

Mugisa's presence in the meeting responded to this context. Audrey's accusers adopted a similar strategy, recruiting the LC2 chairperson to their 'side.' Audrey knew having a higher-level official like Mugisa present could put pressure on her opponents through demonstrating her political connections. However, in this case, rather than being perceived as a 'weapon of the weak,' her recruitment of outsiders was understood as a form of intimidation by a more powerful and connected actor, something Audrey's neighbours alleged she did regularly.

During the hearing, Mugisa's legal exegesis did not match Audrey's chosen strategy for presenting her claims. Rather than relying on special rights accruing to disabled people to support her, as Audrey had in our informal conversation before the hearing, Mugisa argued he was sticking to the documents. In the documents, he told Audrey and her daughters, 'amateeka tigakakurozereho' [the law has not recognised you]. Although Audrey's mother was specifically mentioned in the will, this did not help, because, as he continued: 'Omw'obukama bwa Bunyoro, haroho mwijukuru, haroho mwihwa. Oli mwihwa.' [In the kingdom of Bunyoro there are sons' children and there are daughters' children. You are a daughter's child.]

Descent and inheritance in Bunyoro are formally reckoned unilaterally through the patriline (with some exceptions, see chapter 4), so a son's child is an inheritor, while the term for a daughter's child, 'mwihwa' derives from the verb 'kwihwa' [to be removed] (Beattie 1958b: 17). While the daughter is part of her father's clan, the daughter's *child* belongs to the clan of the daughter's husband and is therefore 'removed' from the grandfather's point of view. An alternative translation for Mugisa's words could be 'In the kingdom of Bunyoro there are 'inheriting' grandchildren [son-grandchildren] and 'removed' grandchildren [daughter-grandchildren]. You are a 'removed' grandchild.' (See Beattie 1958b: 18.)

Audrey's mother, like many women in Bunyoro, which has long had low rates of marriage (Doyle 2006a: 139), had never married, so Audrey had been brought up on her maternal father's land rather than land belonging to her own clan. Mugisa advised Audrey to think about who had 'brought' her to the land and loved and cared for her, pointing out she was present there only on the sufferance of Byakagaba, and arguing she should humble herself, as he did before the heir of his own father's land.

Even though Mugisa presented himself as 'following the documents' and speaking only from the laws, none of the legal instruments governing land law in Uganda mention patrilineal inheritance or any difference between the rights of descendants of sons and daughters, and neither did Byakagaba's documents. The Land Act 1998 states communal land should be governed according to the 'customs, traditions and practices' of the community communally managing the land (Article I.1.j), which potentially legitimates patrilineal inheritance for 'customary' land. However, Audrey did not live on customary land.

Kibanja tenure, as it was popularly understood in Bunyoro, was a unique hybrid. Byakagaba's father's letter was a perfect example: it gave Byakagaba the right to sell (a freehold feature), but also charged her to care for all her relatives (a feature of 'customary' forms of tenure-as-trusteeship). This hybrid was not recognised in formal land law.[116] The law, and the power of the documents Byakagaba presented, were more ambiguous than Mugisa suggested.

In addition, the Land Act also states:

> Any decision taken in respect of land held under customary tenure…shall be in accordance with the customs, traditions and practices of the community concerned, except that a decision which denies women or children or persons with a disability access to ownership, occupation or use of any land…shall be null and void (Article II.27).

Mugisa could have argued otherwise, drawing on article 27's specific protections for disabled people. (He would have been unlikely to draw on this article to present Audrey as a mistreated woman, because Byakagaba, who was a widow with no surviving children and told the meeting Audrey had taunted her as unable to 'raise her voice' to complain because she had no-one to back her up, fitted closely with stereotypical stories of land injustice, which often feature widows.)

Instead, although he mentioned obligations to disabled people, he spent far more time and energy reinforcing his message of conformity and peace, utilising a rhetorical style of call and response which invokes audience participation and repetition to build a sense of consensus and establish the speaker's words as self-evident truths (see Besnier 1994: 294 on the same technique in Kenya). He did not appear to consider the case to be disability discrimination. Rather, he saw it as the norm that those whose position is not 'the heir' should respectfully petition for access to land, even accepting some level of bad treatment from their families.

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[116] Most studies of land tenure consider *kibanja* 'customary' and assimilate it to the idea of clan-based governance. However, the *kibanja* system 'does not reflect, and indeed is quite antithetical to, the underlying system of clan or lineage tenure' because it enables sale (Beattie 1954b: 183).

Mugisa's position – as a man and as a councillor aligned with the NRM – was important to his stance. His interpretation emerged from a gendered perspective that did not recognise disabled women's structural disadvantage in land cases. In much of Uganda, the normative way for women to access land is through their husbands, but 'their claims as wives are only as strong as their partnerships' (Whyte & Acio 2017: 31). Disabled women are less likely to marry, and, when they do, the chances of being abandoned by their husbands or facing other problems causing dissolution of their marriages are higher (for example abuse by co-wives) (Barriga & Kwon 2010: 24–25; Lwanga-Ntale 2003: 13–14; Sentumbwe 1995; Whyte 2020: S138–S139).

Among the disabled women I worked with in Kicweka, histories of abandonment and domestic abuse were remarkably common, even for an environment where nearly all women faced these problems to some degree. If women's normative form of access to land is 'only as strong' as their relationships, *disabled* women are particularly disadvantaged. According to Audrey's account before the meeting, it was recognition of this problem that led her grandfather to allocate her land in the first place.

Obika et al report Acholi women accessing land at their natal homes after relationship breakdown must demonstrate 'good behaviour' and an 'ability to live in harmony' with extended family to be acceptable, despite the widespread acknowledgement of women's right to this safety-net (Obika et al. 2017: 211). Khadiagala uses this point to challenge how 'community' is conceived in land law, arguing 'The idea that community 'connotes civility, solidarity, and democratization of social space', suppresses conflict by portraying diversity and dissent as exceptional and deleterious to community interests' (Khadiagala 2001: 59).

Audrey's disputatious manner was a frequent target of Mugisa's criticism during the meeting. Mugisa and other men in authority at the meeting (the LC1 and LC2 chairpersons) frequently cut her off or chastised her when she tried to argue her case. After Mugisa described his own submissive manner towards the 'heir' of his father's land, Audrey started to speak, saying: 'N'ekitongole ky'abalema?' [And [what about] the disabled people's organisation?] but was drowned out by the other meeting attendees laughing.

Mugisa was also constrained by the genre of the mediating meeting, and how it related to his own position. In the early days of NRM rule, the flagship local council decentralisation

policy was overtly conceptualised as a return to (idealised, even stereotypical) pre-colonial norms of harmonious collective decision-making (Kizza 1999: 101–102; Nsibambi 1991). Mugisa, as a political client of the NRM with a deep investment in NRM political norms, felt an obligation to produce the 'obusinge' [peace; absence of conflict] that the meeting should result in.

A strong emotional effect was produced for him because allegations about Audrey using threats about DPOs emerged *during the mediating meeting*. Although he warned he did not intend to 'oppress' others from the beginning of our pre-meeting conversation, his language in the meeting only became overtly critical of Audrey after he had heard the allegations against her, and particularly after Byakagaba had spoken. This consideration of genre may also explain why Mugisa felt free to act more confrontationally later in the process, when he provocatively called a reporter to record conversations as evidence of discrimination: at this point he was not constrained by the expectations of the mediating meeting.

Representatives like Mugisa act as 'bureaucratic entrepreneurs,'[117] who adjust the balance of power between parties. Ambiguity of jurisdiction was a key feature of the case, and the result was strongly reliant on dominant personalities in the hearing and their reactions in the moment. Displaying political connections in the disability movement could strengthen a claimant's position, but where disabled people were seen to be inappropriately coercive through this process they could experience push-back from their own representatives.

Women were particularly likely to be judged transgressive because of their structural opposition to lineage-based ideas of hierarchical harmonious order. In Rubuga, at the Municipal (LC4) level, they were also more likely to be represented by a man: Mugisa was far more mobile than his female counterpart, Esther, who as a wheelchair user found it more difficult to travel to constituents' villages.

In this context, the personal relationships between constituents and their representatives were consequential. Audrey's fractious former interactions with councillors, who had become 'tired' of repeatedly supporting her in conflict with her neighbours, undermined the

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[117] Joireman argues 'entrepreneurial bureaucrats' operate with more legitimacy in Uganda compared to neighbouring Kenya (Joireman 2011: 75).

effectiveness of her display of connection. Nonetheless, it still resulted in her being allocated land, even without an effective resolution between herself and her neighbours, which Byakagaba had originally demanded. If Mugisa had fully supported her, the result could have been even more beneficial.

'Strength' and 'being weak' in land disputes

Mugisa and other councillors only acted in a small number of constituents' LC cases; Audrey's was the only case about land that he attended during my fieldwork. Audrey's link to Mugisa was through the community of visually impaired people, with its unusually high resources and sense of intra-impairment group solidarity. As demonstrated in chapters 5 and 6, not all disabled people have such extensive networks within the disability movement. Those who had experienced complete exclusion from land were often the most tangentially connected, like peripheral DWG members Akugiziibwe and Alinda.

Alinda faced extensive problems with communication due to her deafness but was also not accepted into the Deaf community because she did not use UgSL. This meant she did not receive support from Lidia, the deaf interpreter who acted as a nodal point connecting deaf people with the political disability system (see chapter 5). Although she knew Esther, who was both the Secretary of DWG and the female councillor for disabled people at the Municipal (LC4) level, she was not on close terms with her, particularly because of her resentment at being 'dropped' by DWG (see chapter 2). She had no connection with Mugisa, the councillor most likely to attend meetings in villages; when I asked him about land cases it was clear he had not heard about hers.

The other peripheral DWG member who had experienced eviction was Akugiziibwe, who lived with periodic episodes of mental distress and was described as a 'slow learner.' Akugiziibwe lived with her parents in a village outside Kicweka rather than in the urban centre. While she was a founder-member of DWG, she was not involved in its daily operations and was often an afterthought for its leadership, including Esther, even though they felt an obligation to her because of her long association with the group. Nor did she have a connection to Mugisa. Neither Alinda nor Akugiziibwe and her family had contacted a disability representative about their land cases.

Comparing Akugiziibwe with Deborah, another peripheral member of DWG who lived with intellectual disability, reveals the impact of the eviction. The women were in similar economic situations: both had two children, whose fathers were utterly absent, and lived with family members on small family plots in villages a few kilometres from Kicweka. DWG had attempted to design businesses for them, but both failed (see chapter 2). Deborah, however, had access to her sister's land, located right behind the house she lived in. She grew food crops, and her family never went hungry. Since their eviction, Akugiziibwe's family was practically landless. Despite her significant mobility impairment, she worked as a casual labourer on others' land, paid in cash or kind, and relied on gifts of food from friends to make up what she could not earn (see chapter 6). Most of the time, these sources of support just sufficed, but hunger was always a possibility.

Akugiziibwe's father Muhumuza was in his 80s and considered himself also a disabled person, following a bicycle accident which left him unable to work. During my stay with the family, I discussed their land concerns with him. Like Alinda, he heavily employed the language of 'amaani' [strength], supplementing it with comments on his status as an 'omuceke' [weak person]. The land on which he built the family home had been given to him by his paternal great-aunt (his father's mother's sister), who had bought it in the 1950s, along with a tract of agricultural land on the hill behind the village, from a long-term tenant of the *Omukama* [king] of Bunyoro. His great-aunt had died before she could obtain formal title documents.

Muhumuza, whose parents were unmarried, was born and grew up on the land, raising his own family there. In 2016, the *Omugo* [principal wife of the king] seized the land to graze her cattle, claiming the existing tenants were squatters who had recently settled. The eviction affected many households and was resisted, but the police supported the *Omugo*. Muhumuza said they were driven off the land with 'amaani' [force], because the police 'fear' the *Omukama*. While former kings did not 'kutalibaniza' [disturb] people who cultivated the land, instead leaving them in 'obusinge' [peace], the current king and queen had 'omururu' [greed] and 'babingire abantu' [they have chased people away]. The similarity between his language and that contained in Byakagaba and Audrey's legal documentation was striking, forming a clear moral discourse that incorporates rights elucidated in the 'five-shilling tickets' of the 1931 reform.

The family remained with just the land their house was built on, which they retained because Muhumuza had planted the area with trees to produce timber to sell. The trees provided evidence of their long-term residence, giving them a claim under the 'bona fide occupancy' clause in the Land Act 1998 (Article II.29.2.a), but the annual crops they had planted on their farm on the hill were lost, left out of bounds behind a guarded fence.

Muhumuza also had a small plot in his father's village on the other side of Rubuga. As the child of a woman who was not acknowledged as his father's wife, and having not grown up in his father's home, Muhumuza's possession of this land was controversial. There had been many 'wrangles' after his father died, and as the only surviving member of his generation (all his half-siblings having died), he had frequently travelled to the village to lead negotiations to bring about 'obusinge' [peace]. Eventually, in 2010, the LC1 formally divided his father's land between the descendants, and they assigned him a plot – the smallest – in recognition of his role in the family. The formal record of the division, which specified the reasons each recipient was included, stated that because of his efforts and as a son of the landholder 'Naasemerra atungeho Omugabo nk'abandi' [it is fitting he should get a share like the others].

Because the land was far away, it was not very useful to Muhumuza's family. However, when eviction from their main plot left them with no livelihood, he attempted to cultivate sweet potatoes and bananas there. His nephews and nieces had never accepted his right to the land and responded by harvesting his banana trees themselves and physically attacking him when he visited to weed the sweet potatoes. He told me they thought they could push him out because he is weak: 'Habw'okuba bakundora, ky'okubanza nkuzire, kandi n'obutandwa nbutangire bunu, bakurora kimu, ah-ah, ndi omuceke' [Because they see me, firstly that I have grown old, and this accident that I got, they see everything, ah-ah, I am a weak person]. He added 'bakunyebengera habw'omwigo' [they disrespect me because of my walking stick].

Muhumuza's language closely recalled Alinda's description of her family's case; she even focused on the same symbol of weakness – the walking stick: 'n'abazaire bange…bahwire, amaani gaaha. Bali bakaikuru…Bakurubata n'omwigo' [and my parents…they are finished, there is no strength. They have grown old…They walk with a walking stick]. By contrast, her

younger brother and the outsiders he had brought to farm sugarcane were vigorous 'ab'amaani' [people of strength]. Both Muhumuza and Alinda reported their crops being stolen. They had stopped going to the plots to try to cultivate, as Muhumuza put it: 'habw'okuba nkuba ninkora[ho], ninbakorra' [because if I was to work [there] I would be working for them].

In addition, both had been physically attacked by their family members. Thefts and violence were aimed at driving victims away from the land. The level of violence inflicted on Alinda and her children was disturbing, including an assault on her daughter when she was two years old, requiring hospitalisation and leaving permanent scarring.[118] After being locked out of the family home, Alinda fled to a church some distance from her village and was eventually rehoused in Kicweka. When I worked with her, she was resident in the urban centre, supported by a child sponsorship organisation and isolated from her family, although she occasionally visited some older brothers who were among the group excluded from the sugarcane deal.

Theft of crops, while obviously beneficial for the perpetrators because they can thereby benefit from another's work, is more importantly a technique targeted at elements of land law emphasising rights arising from continual cultivation. These were formalised in the 'bona fide occupant' clause of the Land Act, but also formed part of shared conceptions of the right way to govern 'customary' tenure. In the division of land between Muhumuza's father's descendants, one female claimant was given two small plots in different areas rather than one contiguous one, based on the areas she had historically cultivated, while another was argued to have a valid claim because the land contained her 'ensambu' [old established garden] with its visible fruit trees.

In Acholiland, Obika et al point out that land rights taking this form often pertain to women: men use territorial and lineage-based arguments to talk about 'our land,' while women claim 'my garden[s],' based on their personal history of cultivation (Obika et al. 2017: 208). Although Muhumuza is a man, his claim to land in his father's village more closely resembles the individualised claims made by women than a lineage-based claim, because he is not

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[118] DWG helped her have the perpetrator of the attack on her daughter arrested but did not engage with the underlying land issue.

recognised as a member of his father's clan. Instead, he was awarded the plot by the LC1 based on his historic engagement with the land in question. An increasing number of men raised on land other than their father's means similar issues are widespread (sometimes referred to as 'the nephew problem' (Obika et al. 2017: 212; Whyte & Acio 2017: 28)).

Alinda's claim to land in her village was similarly individualised. As a woman, she would have been expected to access land in her husband's village, but her children were produced through rape, so she accessed land through individualised systems: 1) asking to cultivate at her natal home; and 2) (more unusually) receiving use-rights to a small section of the neighbouring plot belonging to her children's father's sister. With both these claims, continuous use is crucial to future access. The theft of crops saps motivation to continue putting effort into cultivation. Combining this with violence that physically drove the cultivator away was an effective way to invalidate claims over the medium to long term, as the land returned to bush and traces of cultivation were erased (see Ahikire 2010; Obika et al. 2017: 218).

Alinda and Muhumuza were both considered (by themselves and others in Kicweka) to have been targeted for exclusion partly because they were perceived as 'abaceke' [weak people]. As I argued in chapter 6, being perceived as an 'omuceke' [weak person] could be beneficial in some situations because it triggered moral responsibilities for close family members and neighbours to provide resources. Akugiziibwe obtained much of the food her family ate through this mechanism. But in an environment where land cases are conceptualised as contests of strength ('amaani'), where those with the most power were always the winners, being seen to be 'weak' could be a disadvantage, marking the person as a target.

The claims of *abaceke* were also less likely to succeed in land cases because many land disputes, even when between family members, involved people who did not live day-to-day as neighbours. Discussing the gifts Akugiziibwe received from her neighbours in chapter 6, I argued much of the force behind the felt obligation to help an 'omuceke' arose from regularly sharing space, in accordance with the Banyoro ethic of 'neighbourliness' (see Beattie 1959). In addition, kinship relationships along which resources move are not just formal arrangements of people in corporate groups, but must be strengthened through

'enactments' (see Sneath 2006) to make them meaningful. Without these relationships and obligations, arguments based on being an 'omuceke' were unlikely to work.

It is significant that Audrey almost exclusively framed her language around the term 'obulema' [disability] rather than claims to be an 'omuceke' [weak person]. Audrey did not recognise her neighbours as family members until she was forced to by the weight of opinion (and Mugisa's entreaties) during her hearing, and she certainly did not treat them in the way they expected as 'ab'oruganda' [clanspeople]; in turn, they did not feel reciprocal obligations to her. In addition, the landowner Byakagaba did not live on her father's *ekibanja* as a neighbour to the other parties in the dispute. Audrey's strategy was based on a different set of associations and obligations: one related to state and legal realms, framed in the language of 'obulema.'

During the hearing, Mugisa followed Audrey's example, talking about 'obugabe' [rights] and predominantly using the word 'obulema,' even though he was pushing back against using disability-related political connections to 'intimidate.' His single use of the word 'omuceke' [a weak person], which happened during the land titling process in the weeks after the hearing, was directed not at Byakagaba but at the resident LC1 chairperson and neighbours. Even there, it did not produce the desired effect, because the appropriate daily interactions to support it were not in place.

Obulema and *omuceke* compared

The term 'obulema' is not widespread among Banyoro. It is part of a longer phrase used almost exclusively by disability rights advocates: 'abantu abaina kwina obulema,' [people who have disability], a translation of the English phrase 'people with disability.' The Runyoro word derives from the term for someone living with physical impairment, 'omulema,' which literally means 'a person who fails' or 'an incomplete person,' but in contemporary use is best translated 'a lame person' (Zoanni 2020: 6).[119] 'Obulema' is formed by replacing the

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[119] 'Omulema' can be pejorative and most disability activists therefore object to it; however, they also acknowledge it is conventionalised: people using it in everyday life do not register its discriminatory derivation. Activists who object to it in certain contexts also use it themselves at other times.

'mu-' noun prefix (which indicates a person) with the 'bu-' prefix, which in this instance creates an abstract stative noun (see Rubongoya 1999: 141).

In Runyoro and similar Bantu languages, it is possible to make virtually any descriptive personal noun into a stative noun this way. But, in practice, this does not happen evenly. Most people in Rubuga do not talk about 'obulema,' instead referring to a person using a wheelchair using the personal noun 'omulema,' which makes the 'lameness' a characteristic of them as a person, not a state they experience. The objectified term 'obulema' makes disability something that can be referred to *without talking about a specific person*, and its use indicates a technical discourse usually restricted to those familiar with the disability movement or legal disability provisions.

The general linguistic rule that makes it possible to create an abstract stative noun from a personal noun means 'omuceke' [a weak person] could turn into 'obuceke' [weakness], just as 'omulema' [a lame person] turned into 'obulema' [disability]. However, this does not happen regularly, even among people who *do* regularly use 'obulema.' Instead, people talk about an individual *omuceke* or a specific, collective group of 'abaceke' (for example, 'Kicweka haroh'abaceke baingi' [there are many weak people in Kicweka]): about an instance of being weak, not the *concept* of weakness. This is usually the case even when they are talking in general terms. When I asked Akugiziibwe's neighbour why she was giving her food she told me 'when you see a weak person you help them,' (using 'omuceke', not 'obuceke') and then immediately afterwards clarified that the obligation she felt was specifically to Akugiziibwe, a 'weak person' who she personally interacts with regularly (see p186).

This structure is a general characteristic of political concepts in western Uganda; for example, it also applies to the understanding of power ('amaani'). While *'*amaani' is a semantically capacious word, covering everything from physical force to political influence, Vokes argues it 'has *never* referred to an *abstract concept*, but instead names something which is *always* manifest in, and extended through, material *things* [including living things such as animals and people]' (Vokes 2016: 667). Being divorced from these material flows is a crucial aspect of being weak. Therefore, claiming to be an 'omuceke' entails submitting to others judging one's connections to wealth and power.

To illustrate the consequences, I return to Mugisa's appeal to the neighbours when he found Audrey was being overcharged for their labour during land titling. Mindful of Audrey and her neighbours' co-residence, Mugisa appealed to them to have pity and recognise that as an 'omuceke' Audrey could not raise such large sums of money. The neighbours rejected his characterisation of Audrey, arguing that while she was visually-impaired, her daughters were not. They would also benefit from the land and could contribute to paying for surveying. Audrey was connected to their physical power and resources, so she was not truly 'weak.'[120] Claiming to be 'weak' and to therefore deserve redress could be a powerful tool, but it required one's audience to concur with the self-characterisation as 'weak.'

This practice made it more difficult to generalise about 'abaceke' [weak people] than about 'obulema' [disability], because 'abaceke' were 'abaceke' in their contextual circumstances (their experience of impairment being one aspect of this), while someone with 'obulema' would continue to be assessed so even if their situation changed dramatically. Responsibilities to 'abaceke' attached to particular people who had relationships with them, and claims based on these succeeded or failed based on assessing past 'enactments' of the relationship, which in Audrey's case went against her. By contrast, responsibilities to 'abantu abaina kwina obulema' are tied to the status of 'obulema' as a protected legal characteristic, rather than the personal circumstances of an individual and their history with others.

As demonstrated throughout this thesis, in Uganda, provisions for the rights of disabled people are closely associated with President Museveni and the ruling NRM party. It is therefore particularly appropriate to make claims based on 'obulema' in LC hearings, given that LCs were established by the NRM and remain conceptually linked to the party (as a structure, including even in opposition areas where the actual LC officials belong to different parties). During the hearing, none of the LC officials argued against special consideration for disabled people: they concurred that additional support for disabled people was part of their role and talked about their past efforts to support Audrey on this basis (for example, the LC2 chairperson pointed out he had registered her for the programme that gave her goats). Instead, they argued Audrey's disability was irrelevant to the case, telling Mugisa

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[120] Ebila and Tripp note a similar objection to academic Stella Nyanzi using protest techniques considered 'weapons of the weak' (Ebila & Tripp 2017: 39).

'no-one wants to fight with her because she is blind'; rather, they claimed aggression came from Audrey herself.

Audrey's status as a visually-impaired woman gave her the right to call on a disabled advocate who would take her side (although not always straightforwardly) and provide her with 'power from outside the local arena.' Political connection countered the problems of being perceived as physically 'weak,' instead enforcing respect or even fear. But this was only possible for disabled people who were well networked with the political system, who, by definition, were *not* 'weak' in the holistic sense. The representation system did not, in practice, work for those who were truly *abaceke* [weak people], through bodily debility and socio-political isolation together, like Alinda. For these people, 'being weak' remained the determining factor in their ability to access land, not belonging to disability community.

Below, I return to consider the violence against Alinda in the context of connection and disconnection that the difference between *obulema* and *omuceke* highlights. I link this to discussions of food security, which indicate there might be much more extensive land exclusion due to industrial sugar production in Rubuga than has so far been recognised.

Sugarcane technopolitics and violent expropriation

One feature of Alinda's case puzzled me. Family members targeted crops on the small plot she had been granted by her children's father's sister, not just on sections of family land she was cultivating. Her brother could not register this plot for outgrowing even if Alinda abandoned it, because it did not belong to the family. Why would her family members try to discourage her from cultivating it, when they had no hope to obtain the land themselves should she lose the right to it (when it would revert to the neighbour)? Extending attacks to this plot took effort, as it was at the top of the hill, away from the rest of the family's land.

I suggest the answer lies in technical arrangements for becoming a sugarcane outgrower. The Outgrowers Company attempted to ensure those who registered land with them had the right use it; however, in the context of the multiple overlapping rights characterising Rubuga district, this was difficult. Before a contract could be signed, the management committee visited the land to survey boundaries and check there were no disputes, stopping to speak with those around and phoning others who were mentioned to them.

However, rights-holders were sometimes deliberately kept unaware of the committee visits. Therefore, many objections only arose when bulldozers started levelling the land, providing a publicly obvious sign of development.

If Alinda were still cultivating her plot, she would (at least sometimes) be present at the family home. But with the theft of her crops, she despaired of any product from her work, so she did not visit to cultivate. She did not own a mobile phone, and rarely saw any family member. Her isolation broke the social networks that could inform her of development. Attacks on her individual plot (and violence against her family) were likely undertaken to drive her thoroughly away, making it more difficult for her to raise a timely objection with the sugar company.

Rubuga has not experienced the mass evictions seen where large tracts of land have been expropriated for sugarcane plantations (Africa Research Bulletin 2007; see Ebila & Tripp 2017: 33; Obaikol 2014: 130). Using outgrowers to access land rather than seeking to expand the 'nucleus plantation' which is fully owned by the company (see Mwendya 2010: 36–37) effectively avoids conflict between a unified 'community' and the company. However, this does not mean no appropriation happens, just that it is pushed below community level into intra-family dynamics. Boone argues that, where land disputes are managed at the family level, politicised and public violence is unlikely, but substantial violence may still 'play…out on the interpersonal level as domestic violence, homicide or threats thereof, or witchcraft' (Boone 2014: 189) – exactly as it did for Alinda through attacks on her crops and her daughter.

In Rubuga, this conflict is visible at public level in a disguised form, as concerns about 'food insecurity' around the plantation. During a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) analysis at a town planning exercise, council representatives for the division closest to the factory displayed ambivalence about its impact. They listed the presence of the company as a 'strength' and a 'weakness' of the area, arguing that while much of the division's wealth was derived from sugarcane, it also caused children to leave school to work in the fields, deforestation, and growing less food. Discussions of 'hunger' in the area are common (one report by the IUF & International Land Coalition c2003: 7, links it specifically to the outgrowing model), and many social problems are attributed to sugarcane

monocropping; for example, a visually-impaired man living just outside the plantation told me his cassava plot had been harvested in the night and the whole crop stolen because, with only sugarcane being grown, 'people don't have food.'

Management staff at the sugar company and the outgrowers company were aware of the problem and attributed it to 'bad planning', claiming they 'sensitised' outgrowers to allocate land to food crops, but the problem continued to arise because they failed to do so, choosing 'easy money' through cane instead (see also Mwendya 2010: 36). The presence of hunger when farmers are getting significant payments for a cash crop may indeed seem paradoxical. However, as Khadiagala argued, communities are riven with differing interests, particularly along gendered lines.

In Rubuga district, Ahimbisibwe et al found men prioritised 'highly profitable activities,' while women favoured food crops for domestic consumption, but men retained most decision-making power about land use (Ahimbisibwe et al. 2019: 15). This is because normative expectations are that mothers provide food for the household while fathers contribute cash for school fees and other major expenses.[121] Studying a rice-growing area of eastern Uganda, Whyte and Kyaddondo found a similar gendered distribution of responsibilities, associated with the same public discourse of 'profligate peasants' causing 'food insecurity' (Whyte & Kyaddondo 2006: 179–180).[122] 'Profligacy' is not a good way to understand this situation. Hunger in communities near the plantation was a result of unequal bargaining power between groups whose interests in the land conflicted.

Where previously land was put to several uses, enabling multiple parties to meet their responsibilities to the household, in sugarcane production land must be dedicated to a monocropping regime because the sugar company, constrained by economies of scale and the physical requirements of heavy machinery, requires a minimum amount of contiguous land to register as an outgrower. The result is dramatic consolidation of control over benefits from land into the hands of a few men, as seen in Alinda's story.

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[121] This is an ideal distribution. Many women in Rubuga did not have any support from their children's fathers.

[122] Bolwig also reported reduced land use for food around a coffee scheme, noting it particularly impacted women (Bolwig 2012: 20).

The losers in this process are those who are the least able to access redress. Those considered 'abaceke' – through physical 'weakness' and social isolation combined – are prominent among them. Disabled people who are marginal to the political disability infrastructure, including people living with mental distress and learning difficulties (like Akugiziibwe)[123] and deaf people who are not part of deaf communities (like Alinda), exemplify this group. The widespread narrative about 'food insecurity' suggests *abaceke*'s problems in land disputes in Rubuga may be the systemic product of sugarcane technopolitics.

Conclusion

My argument in this chapter had two strands. Firstly, people thought to be 'abaceke' [weak people] were disadvantaged in land disputes, because land conflict was imagined as an arena of power and force, marking them as promising targets for exclusion. Secondly, the representative system for disabled people could reinforce a disabled claimant's power in land disputes, but representatives were recruited through personalised networks. This meant 'abaceke' were, in practice, unable to access this possibility, because they were excluded from disability politics. The issues of land justice arising in my study consequently did not become subject matter for the Ugandan 'disability movement', just as problems of non-payment for menial tasks (see chapter 6) had not.

The patronage basis of disabled politicians' identity also limited disabled people's options in land disputes. As I showed with regard to Mugisa during Audrey's hearing, disabled politicians were committed to ideals of hierarchical harmonious community, which may require the subjection of subordinate people (those who are not 'heirs', who, despite Byakagaba's anomalous gender, are usually senior men) to some level of mistreatment. Land disputes were associated with significant violence in Rubuga District, illustrated by the attack on Alinda's infant daughter and the burning of Audrey's house. In such acrimonious

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[123] Akugiziibwe's family were not evicted to make space for sugarcane. However, increased competition for land raises prices, which can incentivise evictions. The price of general farm land doubled in 10 years in an area of Uganda with a coffee-growing scheme (Bolwig 2012: 18).

circumstances, 'quiet politics' and the attempt to create 'obusinge' [peace; absence of conflict] had gendered effects, disadvantaging disabled women.

Conclusion

Languages of claim-making

This thesis addresses the lacuna in scholarship on disability in majority-world contexts. It offers an account of how concepts of obligation based on interdependence can exist alongside and provide a counterpoint to models of disability justice based on individuals making claims on the state.

Two languages of claim-making operated in Rubuga in relation to bodily-mental disadvantage. The first, based on the concept of 'obulema' [disability], was initially a legal language with linkages to disability-focused NGOs in Europe and the NRM state regime. It was a restricted discourse used by people associated with the disability movement and its institutions. Categorisation of (individual) bodily-mental condition was the main mechanism determining its application, despite the stated commitment to a 'social model' of disability in Ugandan legislation.

The second involved identifying people as 'abaceke' [weak people]. It was a relational discourse of obligation, which involved a broader set of social considerations alongside bodily-mental condition and was widely shared by people across Bunyoro. The application of this discourse followed histories of co-residence over extended periods, in a context where most people agreed shared history creates obligation.

The two discourses were primarily used in different settings, as I showed in Audrey's land case (chapter 7). In that context, 'obulema' was a better choice for local council hearings, while claiming to be an 'omuceke' was more likely (although not necessarily successful) during discussions with neighbours and kin.

'Obulema', however, was not only an official language of state. While it contained elements of depersonalised rights-based citizenship, it was also an existential claim to be a particular type of relational person: one of 'Museveni's children' and a self-actualising student of disability-focused NGOs. Those who most commonly used 'obulema'-based claims, including the core DWG members, emerged as a particular kind of subject: an ambitious developmental client of the NRM and NGOs.

In Rubuga,[124] this figure experienced obligation along two lines: to Museveni and the NRM due to their role in creating the subject's social position, eliciting political loyalty; and to NGOs and government programmes, necessitating hard work and effective fostering of resources they had provided. Although the forms of obligation 'obulema' entailed were also relational, the relations involved were different to those of the 'omuceke' discourse: they were toward powerful actors and infrastructure, not neighbours. Like 'omuceke,' the obligations were based on co-history, but this co-history was categorical rather than personal, and did not involve co-residence or ideas of shared community between giver and recipient.

Disabled people experienced the NRM government in two forms, one patrimonial (towards which they were positioned as clients, expected to show ongoing obligation and loyalty) and one developmental (towards which they were expected to act as responsible citizens, progressively becoming more independent). These aspects were not rigidly separated. The CDO and councillors, who were the NRM functionaries with whom DWG members most frequently interacted, represented both,[125] although the CDO was more closely associated with the developmental form.

Disability-focused NGOs were also experienced primarily as patrons, but with greater emphasis on time limitations to patronage. NGOs expected disabled people to use the resources they provided to transform themselves into entrepreneurs capable of 'independent living', the core aim of Euro-American disability movements, and NGO staff experienced frustration when the termination of patronage was resisted.

The multiple audiences and discourses DWG members were subject to generated an incoherent subject, tied to both clienthood and entrepreneurialism (with its conceptual emphasis on self-sufficiency). In this, they were not unusual; I follow Moser and Mol in rejecting the assumption that discursive subjectification 'shapes how people perceive and think, and materializes in practices, bodies and relations, in a manner that is coherent' (Moser 2005: 668; Mol 1998). DWG members often related to their diverse audiences

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[124] The experience is likely different in areas of Uganda with prominent opposition to the NRM.

[125] For example, the CDO and councillors were involved in creating distribution lists for 'gifts' from the Office of the Prime Minister around election times.

simultaneously, blending influences and self-presentations from a heterogenous social environment and infrastructure.

The 'obulema' discourse was closely associated with state and NGO power. Because of this, it worked as a social claim in different ways depending on context. Toward social equals, it was often a claim to strength due to greater power. This power could be derived from patronage, as when Mugisa represented Audrey in her land case (see chapter 7), or from the self-discipline of entrepreneurship, for example in Esther and Lidia's claims to leadership of the disabled and deaf communities through their position as 'guarantors of development' able to protect relationships with key NGO patrons (see chapters 1, 2, and 5).

In relation to political and economic superiors, the core concept was 'civility', not strength. This encouraged a practice of 'keeping quiet' aimed at fostering relationships with powerful others for their future potentialities. As Whyte and Siu note, this could be problematically like political conformity but could also offer 'a quality of possibility' including 'links to…resources' (Whyte & Siu 2015: 19–20, 28).

Elites and exclusion

Together, these features of the 'obulema' subject position created a disabled elite, who were well-networked and able to display 'strength' and commercial success, while remaining appropriately 'civil' and self-contained. The disparate elements of this presentation were held together conceptually through the expression 'ngumiire' [I am patient], which could express both strength and civility.

Like Brisset-Foucault's version of 'civility', this was a practice informed by class hierarchy (Brisset-Foucault 2019: 185–191), and it produced exclusion. However, some of those who performed this identity did not come from privileged backgrounds and had experienced dramatic transformations through the disability movement. Safia was an example: an uneducated woman from a poor migrant family who became Treasurer of DWG and leader of a popular savings group. Like Brisset-Foucault's *ebimeeza*, DPOs effected 'the democratization of the aspiration to be distinguished' (Brisset-Foucault 2019: 191), even though those who benefitted most were often already better off.

The most dramatic exclusion produced by the newly ambitious and developmental character of disabled people post-1995 was of those considered unable to run an individual small business. With funding coming into DPOs restricted to business projects, such people were liable to be 'dropped' from groups, as Alinda reported (chapter 2).

Running a small business required behaviour considered impossible for people understood as 'slow' or 'mad,' due to the interaction between how these conditions were conceptualised and the model of ideal Banyoro social competence. Like the typology Whyte described in eastern Uganda, this included advisability, steadfastness, civility, appropriate communication (not too little or too much), and 'amagezi' [cleverness] (Whyte 1998: 156–8; see also Zoanni 2020: 4–6).

'Slow' people (like Akugiziibwe, see chapters 2 and 6) were expected to struggle with steadfastness (remaining committed to and engaged in a task) and 'amagezi', with the latter a problem because of the need for numeracy. 'Mad' people were typically thought to be inadvisable (they refused to listen to others), 'wild' and aggressive (breaching the expectations of 'civility'), to talk too much or too little, and, most problematically, to 'wander from place to place' never sticking to one situation or task (see chapter 6 on the effect of these stereotypes on Atugonza).

While DWG attempted to overcome some of these problems, creating a business for Akugiziibwe that avoided the need for numeracy, others were bigger barriers. Esther's assumption that Akugiziibwe and her family had failed to remain steadfastly committed to her new business (rather than there simply being no demand for purchasing solar charging in their village, see p78) was a dramatic example of the consequences of how mental-intentional conditions were understood.

In Alinda's case, the effects of being a deaf adult who did not use UgSL were similar, even though she was not thereby thought to be 'slow.'[126] Inability to communicate with customers and suppliers made running a business very difficult, as I demonstrated in

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[126] Deafness in Uganda is often thought to entail 'diminished cognitive capacity' (Zoanni 2020: 9). DWG members, however, knew this belief harmed their deaf friends and did not reflect their abilities.

relation to deaf people operating as traders outside the area of shared competence in visual language centred on Lidia's market stall (chapter 5).

Beyond this, Esther and other DWG leaders imagined the process of adopting the persona of the self-sufficient trader to be pedagogical, with new members 'taught to work' through practical example and verbal exhortation (chapters 1 and 5). Although she was fluent in Runyoro and able to express herself eloquently, it was very hard to communicate complex information about business practices *to* her, as her speechreading was weak. This feature of her social embodiment created 'inadvisability' in her. Whyte's insight that the 'social competence' she described is collective rather than individual is important here. Although Alinda was not considered 'slow' or 'mad', the social effects of her disability created an impact formally similar to these conditions.

Exclusion therefore emerged in the interaction between DWG members' practical knowledge of running a small business and impairments considered to affect steadfastness, sociality, and communication. People like Akugiziibwe and Alinda, who were unambiguously considered 'disabled' due to physical or sensory impairment but also displayed forms of psychosocial disability, were consequently marginalised within groups. It also became more difficult to expand the category of 'disabled' to include 'mad' and 'slow' people like Atugonza, who lived with epilepsy, despite the occasional conceptual linking of 'ebizibu' [problems] associated with 'mental' conditions and the situation of physically disabled people, noted in chapter 6.

These exclusions created a barrier between the life experiences of people considered to be living with mental-intentional impairments and the disability infrastructure. I identified two systematic problems affecting this group, which were not experienced by core DWG members: casual employers breaking verbal contracts and refusing to pay for completed work (chapter 6); and vulnerability to eviction during family land disputes (chapter 7). These problems were never discussed in DPOs or other disability institutions in Rubuga. Neither was it routinely possible to connect the material needs of marginalised disabled people to institutional resources.

DWG leaders were aware of the problems caused by exclusive focus on entrepreneurialism and sought to mitigate them. They did not, however, criticise the programmes, instead

attempting to creatively adapt them, improvising an atypical business for Akugiziibwe and

proposing a joint enterprise to employ members unable to run their own businesses.[127]

DWG leaders understood that criticism could endanger the continuation of projects. Like the

villagers Piot describes in Togo, they knew they must present themselves as the right kind of

beneficiaries to attract and retain the mobile, unpredictable engagement of transnational

NGOs (Piot 2010: 144). This meant demonstrating capacity to use and protect the business

investment NGOs wanted to deliver.

Just as importantly, overt criticism went against the 'civil' political aesthetic typical to the

post-1995 disabled person. Oppositional argument did exist in the disability space in Rubuga

but was inappropriate in some settings. As I showed in chapter 2, Nabila left DWG partially

because she disapproved of how funds were dispersed from the NEF grant. Nabila directed

her criticisms toward Esther, but given that Esther was applying NEF's policy almost exactly,

they were more tenable as criticisms of the funding model. Nabila was known for openly

criticising behaviour she disagreed with. She was called 'rude' and 'omugezigezi' [a smartass

(Zoanni 2020: 4; and Whyte 1998: 158)] for her excessive inquisitiveness about the NEF

distribution. Just as she was thought a liability when standing for election to the District

council, she was considered a threat to DWG's relationship with NEF.

After leaving DWG, Nabila continued her work alone, acting as advocate and interpreter for

deaf people who were not part of Lidia's inner circle. Esther praised her for this, saying 'she

is a good person and works hard to help people.' Different political styles could be tolerated

in disabled society, but they were deliberately isolated from government and NGO

infrastructure to protect the patronage relations that kept funding flowing.

Disability sociality beyond the infrastructural

DWG members were deeply influenced by their political and infrastructural context,

however, they also acted beyond it. The model of entrepreneurial development ignored

interpersonal and temporally ongoing needs including physical care and communication

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[127] These actions did not deliberately seek to include 'slow' or 'mad' people as a category within disability.
Rather, there were specific people, already connected to the disabled collective, who had been unable to
maintain a small business. Innovation was driven by historical-spatial relationships with these people.

support (for UgSL-users), as well as shelter and subsistence. These were coded as 'personal' spending and therefore outside the remit of institutions (see chapter 2). Disability sociality provided for these needs through alternative mechanisms, at least for core DWG members in Kicweka market.

Relationships between core members did not resemble what was expected in the entrepreneurial model: the 'agglomeration of individuals' qualifying only by bodily-mental categorisation as disabled. Obligations to members rested instead on rights in relationships, based on their role in the collective over time. Through this process, 'obulema' was expanded from a categorical association into an experiential and existential disabled 'community.'

This approach to disability sociality allowed me to analyse connections between relationships, revealing that multiple sources of income and social validation were needed to enable DWG members' urban lives. I revisited Ferguson's argument about desires for 'dependent' relationships, whilst recognising that hierarchical forms of dependency were usually not more important than relationships based explicitly on commonality and non-hierarchy. The latter included the 'fellow disabled' bond that enabled mutual support in the residential railway cottages community (chapter 4) and the neighbourhood-based forms of obligation providing for Akugiziibwe (chapter 6).

I drew on disability studies' attention to care relationships and physical dependency to investigate varying forms of obligation and need, and how these are articulated with each other. I looked at interactions between connections to powerful patrons, dependent carers, and, for disabled leaders, political followers. This approach incorporated Ferguson's recognition of desires for connection and the importance of having a plurality of options (Ferguson 2013: 226), without suggesting that 'Africans are different, that they somehow 'like' distribution and dependence' (Rossi 2016: 575).

DWG's innovations: spatialising care and performing conversions

In Uganda, creating obligation in relationships can be approached through providing long-term service and/or making repeated requests for assistance (for example Monteith 2018: S19–S21; Scherz 2014: 88): acting as a client is understood (ideally) to obligate the patron to

provide material support, and vice versa. Personal and repeated contact in a shared space is essential to these methods, as it is to non-hierarchical relationships of neighbourliness and solidarity. Meeting needs for care and linguistic inclusion were particularly space-bound processes, dependent in the market on a critical mass of people who through constant practice developed attunement to these needs and practical skills such as capacity for visual language (chapters 4 and 5).

Less intensive forms of support also operated spatially. Akugiziibwe's continued involvement in DWG was based not only on a long history but also her continued regular visits to DWG members in Kicweka market (chapter 6). She placed herself within DWG's space continually, constantly renewing the 'enactments' of their relationship (see Graeber 2012: 105; Sneath 2006). Alinda, by contrast, did not do this, and experienced herself as having been 'dropped.'

For DWG members, building a satisfying and sustainable life required manipulating connections between resources of different kinds to meet their (changing) circumstances. In the Introduction, I noted that few people relied on a single patron. Instead, DWG members patched together livelihoods through articulating connections with resources of different kinds, delivered through diverse relationships. In chapter 4, I showed Esther taking irregular payments from patrons (business grants from NGOs and government, and attendance allowances as a councillor) and using them to attach dependants who could provide quotidian care. I described this process as 'converting' between forms of dependency.

Three types of 'conversion' were involved. The first was between dependencies based on different types of need. DWG members who used wheelchairs were physically dependent on others to enable their social and economic success in inaccessible Kicweka. Esther managed this by acting as a political-legal and/or economic patron toward female kin who were in difficult living situations. Esther and her carers aligned their reciprocal needs and capacities to enable desired forms of interdependent life.

The second conversion was temporal: relatively large, unpredictable injections of resources with a short lifespan (because grants should end in 'independence' rather than being continually renewable) were transformed into ongoing daily care with an undefined endpoint.

The final form of conversion related to types of obligation. For DWG members, grants from NGOs were unenforceable; NGOs accountability structures answer predominantly to their funders (see Lewis 2004: 307–308). Project 'beneficiaries' qualified for grants due to their categorisation as 'disabled people.' Motivation for helping them was considered in a depersonalised manner based on bodily-mental assessment. There was no specific obligation to a *particular* disabled person, so any person applying to a programme could be refused.

DWG leaders attempted to create personal relationships with staff members responsible for dispersals, for example visiting the NEF offices in person rather than posting applications, and repeatedly soliciting advice (a form of behaviour associated with clientship). But while the staff member at NEF claimed 'friendship' had developed through these visits, she could not change the organisation's funding strategy to personalise the obligation to DWG.

Esther's assistants, by contrast, were obligated to her specifically. She converted her categorical qualification for grants into a personalised obligation for physical support that had to be regularly available. Safia's problems displaying the blankets she bought with her UWEP loan, which arose because, unlike Esther, she did not have a personal assistant (see chapter 4), demonstrated how important personalised obligation was.

Converting between forms of relationship, obligation, and resource was not easy. While Esther had diversified income streams, Safia's relied on tiny profits from her microbusiness combined with periodic business grants and loans. It was difficult to use grants and loans to contribute to her care, because they were monitored to ensure they were spent on the business (see chapter 2). Safia therefore faced an existential threat to her business and her standing in DWG if she diverted these funds to other needs, but she nevertheless had to do so.

Relationships bringing in different kinds of resource were particularly hard to articulate when they were based on different forms of assessment of the person. In chapter 1, I described Jovia's interaction with market authorities on the day Moses's tools were confiscated for non-payment of market dues (see Introduction). Jovia negotiated a temporary exemption from fees by arguing her business was still new and hadn't yet produced income. Moses retrieved his tools using a different argument: he used his

orphanhood to demonstrate he had 'no support' and could not call on others for financial support. Although he did not use the word explicitly, this was a claim to be an 'omuceke.'

The interactional context was crucial to Jovia's choice of discourse. Claiming 'no support' was highly effective, and a more obvious route to exemption than Jovia's claim to be 'new.' However, she spoke to the authorities at her stall, in full hearing of her neighbours, including Alinaitwe. There was an ongoing rift between the women, compounded by their different experiences of child sponsorship (see chapters 3 and 4; Jovia received much more income from sponsorship.)

If Jovia had claimed to have 'no support,' (a claim she did make at other times) she would likely have further alienated her neighbours, who knew she *did* have a major patron, connected to her through her status as having 'obulema' [disability]. This foreclosed the possibility of claiming to be 'omuceke.' While, in some circumstances, the discourses can be usefully brought together, as they were in Alice's friendship with Atugonza, in others they interrupted each other.

Conclusion

In this thesis, 'obulema' [disability] emerges primarily as a political identification. An option opened by specific forms of body-mind, it also involved making particular types of claims on the state, NGOs, and other people.

Although I take a social approach to the analysis, considering disability an interactive outcome, not a feature of individual body-minds, I argue the 'social model' is inadequate for understanding the situation. This is because of the emphasis on disability as the product of other's stigmatising attitudes, present in most of its instantiations. As I argued in the Introduction, the legacy of indirect rule codes 'the local' as a space of 'backward' attitudes. In post-colonial east Africa, therefore, the 'social model' pictures African societies as abject spaces for disabled people, particularly in rural areas.

In postcolonial situations, disability must instead be approached as produced in interactions between different ways of understanding marked bodily-mental difference, with varying temporal and geographical origins (see Durham 2002: 142; Klaits 2005: 652–3). In Uganda, this includes the discourses of 'obulema' [disability] and being 'omuceke' [a weak person].

Even though it translated as 'disability,' 'obulema' did not conform with the social model. Rather than a disadvantaged position, it could be a desired status conveying political power through connection to national and international development discourses and resources – even while disabled people also faced discrimination and experienced substantial social and bodily-mental suffering. The national and local intellectual history of the category, and of institutions, including DWG, Community Development Offices, and NGOs, vitally shaped the outcomes these interactions produced in disabled people's lives.

While disability activists in Kicweka articulated concepts of bodily-mental difference based on interdependence with their engagement with the state and NGOs, the infrastructure they dealt with continued to treat them as individuals, offering a one-size-fits-all solution of micro-entrepreneurship. This dramatically constrained the growth of vital intersubjective resources, including physical care and communication support. As a result, specific groups of disabled people – including deaf people, and people who were thought to be 'slow or foolish or mad' – were excluded from infrastructural resources and disability sociality.

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