

13

The Value of Socialization in Negotiating Livelihoods among the Youth: A Case of Bugembe Youth Group in Uganda

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Introduction

As the African continent moves into the 21st century, it is also advancing from an agro-economy to mixed economy. This is characterized by the development of cities as people move from rural areas towards modern facilities in the urban centres, including better markets for their goods, electricity, and running water, which are required for both business and improved livelihoods. This phenomenon has led to a growth in the number of families, and hence a growth in the number of children and youth, in urban spaces. Some of the children and youth have been born and grown up in urban centres while others arrive through rural-urban migration either with their families or on their own. Regardless of how the youth find themselves in urban spaces, increased youth presence, and how to accommodate their interests in the urban centres, is a key concern that deserves urgent attention.

Ogwal-Oyee (2002) categorized the youth in Uganda that need special attention. Among these are out-of-school youth, street youth, youth with disability, young labourers, orphaned youth, girls as a special group, and youth living in areas that have suffered conflict. He missed the youth in schools who also need special attention. All these categories are present in urban centres and negotiate their livelihoods in one way or the other. However, as Hebinck and Bourdillon (2001) advise, it would be productive to consider the negotiations in a given context. They argue that livelihoods should be considered as social constructs, ways of living built by people who make their own value judgements and who choose to follow trajectories to fit their own identities.

Although the youth in urban spaces in Uganda offer commendable services in a bid to negotiate their livelihoods, the general community remains sceptical about them. The socio-economic situations created by urbanization, HIV/AIDS, and several wars have changed the communities. Families have, due to a variety of reasons, failed to socialize their children through household chores and working in gardens as they used to do. In the circumstances, these youth find they have to negotiate their livelihoods on the streets and in market spaces within the towns.

The challenging realities in youth livelihoods in relation to the general populace's social mistrust and doubt about their integrity raises the need to reconsider socialization processes. Not much information is available on the role of socialization and the values it imparts in negotiating livelihoods. Moreover, much available literature reveals moral concerns, connecting youth to such activities as drug abuse, prostitution, increased theft and other crime in their effort to negotiate livelihoods. Perhaps values acquired through socialization could provide a resource for the youth to negotiate their livelihoods in a socially accepted and sustainable manner. On the other hand, such values could be restraints that would hamper the processes of negotiating livelihood. This whole scenario brings up questions such as: Is the socialization process still relevant to these youth? Would not this process instead compromise the youth's efforts in their activities by restricting their autonomy? What do adults say about it and how do the youth respond to it?

Based on field data collected from Bugembe Youth Group in Jinja, Uganda, this chapter addresses the relevance of socialization to the youth negotiating their livelihoods in urban spaces. The chapter considers what adults feel about the values of youth and how the youth respond to them. This leads to a discussion of tension between the youth and the adults, and of ways in which the youth can promote the negotiation of better and supportive livelihoods.

Conceptualizing Socialization in Terms of Youth Livelihoods

Socialization, broadly defined, is the process through which a child or other novice acquires the knowledge, orientations and practices that enable him or her to participate effectively and appropriately in the social life of a particular community. This in reality is a set of densely interrelated processes and is realized to a great extent by means of language, which is the primary symbolic medium through which cultural knowledge is communicated and instantiated, negotiated and contested, reproduced and transformed. Socialization may provide individuals with skills and habits necessary to participate within their own society, which is normally formed through a plurality of shared norms, attitudes, values, motives, social roles, symbols, and language (Baquedano-López 2002:339-361). Socialization is thus 'the means by which social and cultural continuity are attained'.

Since time immemorial, youth have been negotiating their livelihoods, but in different environments. The dominant current reality is urbanization characterized

by social problems such as HIV/AIDs, and the failure of governments to provide social services, among other problems and constraints that often make the contemporary urban youth vulnerable. The youth are not only vulnerable to politico-economic exclusion but also social exclusion. The situation of urban youth is characterized by lack of skills, knowledge, relations, and character suitable for social acceptance. The modern urban youth can be portrayed as 'a soldier' paraded on the frontline without a gun or a non-swimmer dropped into a lake. He or she has to survive. While some successfully learn and manage, others fail to cope. The risk of failure is that they turn to socially unaccepted activities for survival.

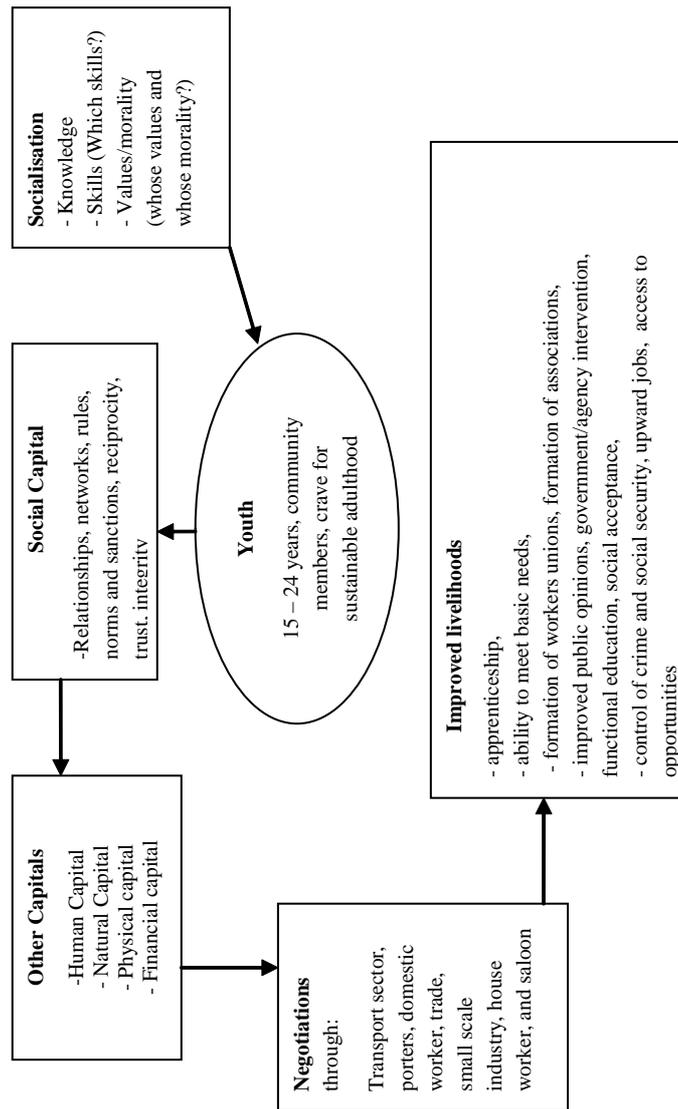
Although the processes of socialization in Africa have undergone changes due to the impact of modernity, education, and adaptation of foreign religions and cultures, its objective still remains relevant and perhaps more critical. This is because the youth at times lack the coping capacity to confront the world without the social support received through socialization or re-socialization. Besides the cultural paradox of socialization, youth are battling with issues of psycho-social and physical development. They often undergo inner tensions, and need understanding adults to guide or help them. Baquedano-López (2002) and Tienda and Wilson (2002) reveal that socialization has a significant contribution to the normative development of the youth.

Miller (1989:15) too quotes scholars in psychological development including Sigmund Freud (1946), Erick-Erickson (1959), Margaret Mead (1959), James Marcia (1967), Jean Piaget (1947) and Lawrence Kohlberg (1969), all of whom highlight that the youth are entangled in the problems of development and regardless of space and time. Youth development calls for mentoring and integration in the community. Otherwise, there can be a crisis among the youth. They may have resources and energy, but they lack the experience in life that can enable them to live sustainable adulthood. In other words, the successful negotiations of the youth require supportive adults to guide them through socialization. Figure 1 is an illustration of how socialization builds up the required social capital which later enables the youth to access other capitals that enable their livelihoods.

There is literature that gives theoretical justification of the pivotal role of socialization processes and values in the promotion and sustenance of youth livelihoods and normative development; nevertheless, the voices of the youth are lacking. It would be beneficial to hear their voices about the processes and values they are subjected to, in order to inform efforts to support sustainable livelihoods for the youth. The next section will discuss data and responses collected from youth in Bugembe about the roles of socialization in their negotiation of livelihoods.

The data came from a qualitative study that used focus group discussions, key informants, and open-ended questionnaires. It was conducted in December 2009, and included various categories of members of the youth group, the leadership

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework



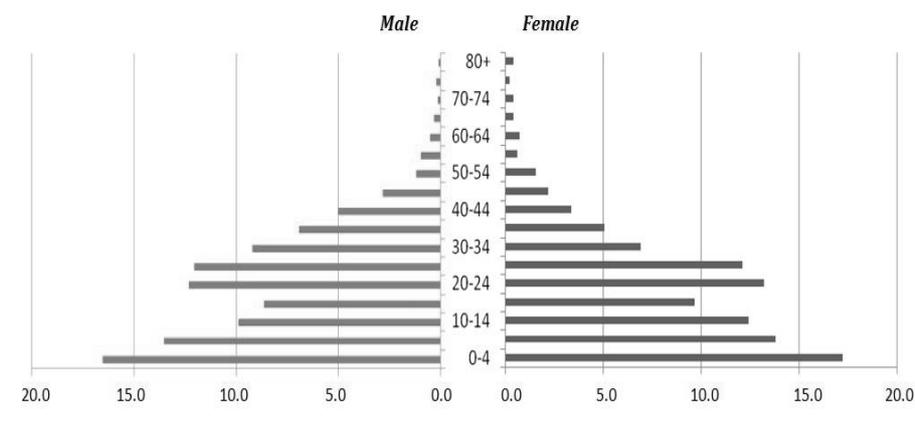
of the youth group and adults related to the youth group. Thirty people participated in the study, including five key informants, five adults/parents, five members of the youth group in school, and five members out of school, all of whom were purposively selected. Thereafter ten members, all students, were randomly selected and given self-administered questionnaires.

The Youthful Population in Bugembe Urban Space

Bugembe Town is semi-urban and was until February 2007 part of the sub-urban environs of the old Jinja industrial town from which it was carved to become a separate township. It is located in the eastern part of Jinja District along the Jinja–Tororo highway, about 4 km from Jinja Municipality, the second largest town in Uganda. Bugembe Town is bordered by Mafubira Sub-County in the north and east, while in the west it is bordered by Jinja Municipality and in the south by the second largest fresh water lake in the world, Lake Victoria. Bugembe Town consists of five wards (parishes) of Wanyama, Katende, Budhumbuli West, Budhumbuli East, and Nakanyonyi, with eight cells (villages).

Based on the provisional census data of 2002, Bugembe Town has an estimated total population of about 30,000. According to the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (2008), Bugembe Town has very high population density with a high youthful, dependant population. Forty per cent of the population is under 15 years of age. The age group of 20 to 30 years, who are included in the category of youth, is relatively high (about 25 per cent) as a result of a strong influx of young people coming from the rural areas looking for job opportunities (see Figure 2).

Figure 2: Age Classes Prevalence by Sex (UIS, Bugembe, 2006)



Economic livelihoods are concentrated around Budhumbuli, where the economic activity is high during the day. The market and taxi park are found in this ward though because of the town being along the Jinja-Kampala-Tororo highway, during the day the taxi operation tends to move to the Katende and Wanyama wards for easy capture of the passengers to Jinja Municipality. The major economic activities are buying produce and processing coffee, maize and beans. There are also retail and wholesale shops, bars, restaurants, butcheries and fish stalls. There are no major industries: however, since it is a semi-urban town, many people are engaged in subsistence farming. However, at night most economic activities take place along the Jinja-Tororo highway, where many people converge during evening hours.

Bugembe Youth Centre and the Activities of the Youth Group

Although literature normally concentrates on typically urban youth, the study of Bugembe Youth Group concentrated on youth in a semi-urban area, which means youth with closer links to rural life and family structures than have many urban youth. This is because whether or not in school, they are in close contact with their families and therefore have quick responsive support in case of need. With the town's semi-urban nature, most of the dwellers of the town council rent space in the town, but have homes of origin in the neighbouring villages of Wanyange, Wairaka, Musima, Wakitaka, and Kainhogoga. Some people commute from their villages to work in the town. These sell their agricultural products and other edibles such as bread, doughnuts, pancakes and samosas on a daily basis. Some youth commute from villages to study in the town schools. In other words, there is a continuous movement of people to and from the villages, especially in the mornings and evenings.

Bugembe Youth Centre was established by the Holy-Cross Congregation of Bugembe Catholic Parish in 1994, with the aim of evangelization and developing youth talents. The centre has a youth group whose number is irregular. Youth come and go depending on the activities running in the Centre and its attraction to them. The Centre has on average 40 regular members, though sometimes the number rises to between 80 and 100 during peak times such as school holidays, especially the Christmas holiday. The Youth Centre welcomes all youth regardless of the level of education and religious denomination.

The youth involved in the youth group are mostly students in secondary schools. They range between 14 and 20 years. They tend to leave the group when they join tertiary institutions because this requires them to change geographical location. Those out of school attend the Centre more regularly than the students, and range from 17 years and above. Some appear to be over 30 years old, but often hang around just in case they get an opportunity to earn something through the Centre.

Some youths in the Bugembe group, probably like in other organized groups, suffer exclusion from inclusive sub-groups. The youth are affected by differences in gender, age, literacy, ethnicity, physical ability, and skills within the group. This leads to discrimination and disrespect among some members, which they referred to as 'under-looking' and 'dooling'. There is a need to form cohorts within the group to enable free interaction. This, however, was mentioned as a problem of poor leadership: the youth feel such distinctions would not be affecting the group cohesion if the leaders had appropriate skills.

In answer to questions about the forms and contents of socialization in place to target the youth, they responded by citing the activities of the youth group. Among these were: seminars about spiritual, economic, political and physical life; training on group formation and group dynamics; retreats about discipline, behavioural change with respect to HIV/AIDs; life skills, including computer training; and Music, Dance and Drama (MDD), which involves singing, keyboard, and jazz drumming. The Centre also trains and provides facilities for sports and games, cookery, and art and crafts. With respect to crafts, for example, the youth work together to make items that attract general market in the United States of America. A Christmas card made out of manila paper and banana fibre, would be sold for 500 shillings in Uganda, whereas the same card is sold in the USA for \$2, the equivalent of 4,000 shillings. This helps them in creating jobs and income for themselves.

A few of the youth were self-employed in the transport sector as *boda-boda* riders who use motorcycles to transport people to different destinations for a fee. The rest were involved in retail selling. The youth group also takes part in football and of music, dance and drama competitions, which sometimes win them cash prizes. The youth use the Centre to develop talents to join more prominent football teams such as Kakira Sugar Football Club and Nile Football Club. The youth love this group because it brings them publicity.

Some youth members of the Centre initiated an unofficial credit scheme. Every time they meet at the Centre, each contributes 1,000 shillings (half a US dollar), which is paid into a common pool. They refer to this as a 'Merry-Go-Round'. Later, the money is used to lend to a member of the group who is in need at a small interest rate. However, this arrangement often causes conflict when some members defy the rules of the 'scheme'. The arrangement then is left to individual members who are interested.

Often, the Centre works in conjunction with Youth Alive, a Catholic NGO that contributes to HIV/AIDS prevention by conducting programmes for behaviour change. These include advocacy programmes with school administrators and parents, and programmes to develop life skills, build capacity, and offer guidance and counselling. They target children in schools and youth in communities. The implementation of Youth Alive activities follows the strategies of advocacy

for space and time to support behaviour change programmes in schools; peer education; group and individual counselling; positive formation of peer groups and clubs; talent identification and development through music, dance, drama, and sports galas; family life; and education to improve family health.

The youth in Bugembe Youth Group enjoy the activities of Youth Alive because these activities are fully sponsored. Unlike Bugembe Youth Centre, Youth Alive has sponsorship from several organizations, including Youth Alive Africa, CARE International, USAID, Irish Aid, and CORE Initiative (Communities Responding to the HIV/AIDS Epidemic). With this availability of funds, the Bugembe Youth feel motivated to participate in the programmes with the hope of benefiting from the prizes through participation in festivals and competitions. In this regard, Bugembe Youth Group is proud to have won the national music festival organized by Youth Alive and officiated by President of Uganda in July 2006.

The youth joined the group precisely because of the opportunities it offers. They understood the activities in the youth group as part of socialization, not in the sense of reproduction of African culture, but rather of being social and interacting with others, and also a means through which they develop their talents or potential livelihood skills.

Limitations of the Youth Centre

Although the youth highlighted the activities of the Youth Group as forms of socialization and rated them important in their efforts to negotiate their livelihoods, they also pointed out that there are factors that inhibit their ability to access what the Centre offers. Some of these factors are brought out in the rest of this section.

Church leaders who were in charge of the youth group were sometimes slow in making decisions. The youth felt that they consequently lost out on some opportunities. The bureaucracy among adults negatively affected the youths' progress, especially on issues like releasing money or giving them approval to implement a particular activity.

The youth felt that politicians neglected them and did not give them access to the national cake through participation in government programmes. This affected the activities they got involved in at the Youth Centre. Considering that through national programmes such as the National Agricultural Advisory and Development Services (NAADS), government endeavoured to avail publicity, storage and markets for the products of farmers' groups, youth pointed out that they too at times had products that lacked markets. The youth felt that the government should get involved in the youth affairs and facilitate their products' access to better markets.

The youth felt that the Parish, as the proprietor of Bugembe Youth Centre, should support the group with financial and material resources to develop its activities. Several youths mentioned poverty, lack of capital and lack of materials

and support as problems limited the centre when there was a requirement to give the youth seed money or initial capital to start business.

Lack of skilled personnel to help the youth organize their group and their lives was another factor that affected the youths' responsiveness. Sometimes the youth convened when there were no skilled persons to teach them. This limited their prospects to learn modern skills and opportunities that would accrue from the technical know-how of the facilitators such as writing project proposals, advocacy, networking and lobbying for resources even at national level. Probably the issue of poor leadership would not arise if they had adequate professional support.

The youth cited personality problems as another factor that inhibited their participation in the Centre's activities. The personality problems included some youths being disrespectful; others lacking self-esteem probably due to their financial status and education level; rumour mongering; permissiveness; and peer influence among youth regarding how to react towards good or bad decisions. On the other hand, good relations characterized by cooperation and self-respect were mentioned as good for socialization.

Low motivation from elders was mentioned as one of the factors that affected their responsiveness to the group activities. This took the form of home ties and mistrust from their parents, who were worried that the youth would learn bad manners such as sexual promiscuity, gambling, and being disrespectful of them due to the influence of the youth group. Such mistrust denied the youth opportunities to attain new ideas and life skills. The restrictiveness of the parents at times made the youth, especially students, feel alienated from the group activities. School programmes were also seen as affecting their participation in the centre's activities, as some youth complained of insufficient time to attend the youth group meetings.

Roles of Socialization in Negotiating Livelihoods

The youths' perception of socialization did not differ much from the conventional perception rooted in the acquisition of survival skills and being functional in the society. However, the youth's perception put emphasis on the need for socialization to be dynamic and contextual, and always sensitive to modern demands such as ICT, sports and other skills. The youth upheld the socialization process at the Bugembe Youth Centre as important because it promoted friendship, and imparted skills, including those obtained in business courses such as book-keeping, marketing, bee-keeping, making candles and soap, and information on issues to consider when taking and using loans. The training helped them to start their own businesses. It also enabled some youth to find future careers as footballers and musicians. The centre promoted self-reliance and satisfaction. They avoided begging. They also learnt to live in a cosmopolitan community by respecting each other and acquired techniques of approaching different people.

In spite of the seemingly negative picture that was painted by their voices, the youth still found socialization important to their lives. It helped them to become responsible members of the community. They emphasized the need for discipline and integrity as one of the benefits of socialization and a requirement in negotiating livelihoods. The youth affirmed that social capital was necessary in their negotiation of livelihoods. They also proved correct the assumption in the study's theoretical framework that socialization lay a foundation for social capital. It later opened the youth to other kinds of capital, such as financial and physical resources, which would bring them opportunities. However, they argued that the socialization process should put into consideration the new techniques of forging through and managing life. There was need for professional skills to make them feel accepted and build their esteem in the community.

Youth Opinions about the Need for Socialization in Today's Society

Having explored the contents and uses of socialization, all the respondents confessed that they still needed the socializing activities of the Youth Centre. They said the Centre was necessary because they thought it was a 'get together thing': they found new friends, learnt and got help to overcome stress, boredom and idleness. One lady said:

You know why I think that it is necessary: there are moments when you get a big problem and you find yourself a misfit in the society where you live to the extent that it can even cause you make a scandal. Then you talk to yourself that let me go to the Centre and join others. While you are there, you laugh, sing, and even forget the torturous moments you are undergoing. That is why it is necessary. You also get physically fit.

In addition to the Centre being a stress-releasing place, the youth also say that they obtained funds to support themselves and avoid being thieves. They cultivated popularity in church by becoming active members of the congregation and taking up roles such as reading during mass and singing in the youth choir. Often when there were functions at the church, such as weddings or festivals, the youth group took an active role in offering catering services, decorating the premises, and animating the liturgy. They hailed socialization at the Centre because it helped them develop their talents, earn a living, and plan for the future. To them, the Centre provided an opportunity to socialize as they had previously defined it. A 27-year-old primary teacher, once a very active member of the group, but who was upgrading in a National Teachers College by the time of this research, had this to say:

The youth group is very helpful. They are now an established group: it has taken root. Many people have managed to be somewhere. Many people have been empowered even at national level, e.g., Jose Chameleon [a renowned singer of pop

music]. Even here in Bugembe, like me, am a guild Speaker of Aduk and I will be the leader to of the University. Some people have reformed for example Christine.¹ You knew her, what can I lie about her?

Christine was a secondary school teacher who had earlier dropped out of school to cohabit with her partner. Her change of behaviour and later completion of studies was attributed to the counselling she received from the youth centre.

The youth also confessed ignorance of some issues concerning life. As one remarked, 'There are many things that youth do not know and would like to know them, socialization is needed because the youth need to utilize them.'

Socialization at the Centre was seen as a learning process. It helped them identify their talents, learn skills, change their morals positively, develop their spirituality, and develop their self-esteem. As far as Bugembe Youth Centre was concerned, the youth were appreciative of free training in different activities. However, to the youth, there was need for it to move according to their needs and what they found attractive.

On the other hand, some respondents, especially parents, accepted the need for socialization such as took place at the Centre, but with some reservations. Having noted the way the youth themselves perceived it, the parents complained that some youth and the leaders of the youth group only thought of economic achievements. This was because most attention was paid to income generation through talent development, skills development and project establishment. In the process, some parents argued, the youth became spoiled with money.

While the search for money was imperative to the youth, some of them felt that they were being exploited by the group leaders and the organisers in the course of socialization. For instance, when they joined group activities that involved generating money and sharing it amongst themselves – such as making decorations for parties, offering catering services, and singing at occasions – some thought they were exploited and underpaid. Some commented that such activities of the youth group were a waste of time and they were threatened by the tendency for some youths to succumb to the temptation of coupling up when leaving late in the evenings after, say, football or choir practices.

Discussion of Findings

The voices of the youth revealed perceptions of 'socialization' that were slightly different from the classical sociological concept. The youth also spoke of the challenges they faced during the processes of socialization. Like other youth in general, the youth of Bugembe disclosed their reality as coloured by prejudices from the community, more especially at home, that made them feel that the socialization process was marred by pre-conceived ideas about them. They complained of home ties, restrictions from the parents, and mistrust among the

public, the bureaucracy, and the adults they dealt with. All these served to discourage them from achieving their goals at the Centre.

The tension between the adults and the youth seems to influence the youths' perception of term 'socialization'. For both those in school and out of school, the initial idea of socialization in relation to the youth group always meant 'to socialize', that is taking part in social activities or behaving in a friendly way to others. This perhaps was the core motive for the youth to join the group. Accordingly, they repeatedly recommended that more social activities such as seminars, retreats and parties, be organized at the Centre alongside the training. However, when the academic meaning of 'socialization' was explained, the youth observed that the Centre should train them in skills required for functioning successfully in society. Here they mentioned skills in ICT, cookery, music, dance and drama (MDD), self-help projects in agriculture, arts and crafts, as well as general knowledge and ethical behaviour.

Their responses also revealed that socialization should be integrated with income generation. For instance, they wanted MDD as well as sports for income generation. The youth wanted socialization to be integrated with skills development towards economic empowerment for self-sustenance. In contrast with the traditional understanding of socialization which concentrated on making one functional in the community, the study revealed that monetary income was basic to surviving in the contemporary society. The youth also understood that there were several options for making money besides the traditional modes of employment or trade. They saw that they could use their talents to earn a living. There was need to allow them develop such talents even if they were in school.

The youth underlined their conviction that there was an inseparable connection between successful socialization and supportive adults. However, they pointed out that often the adults were not supportive to the youth in several ways. It was revealed that the concerned adults, particularly parents, sometimes failed to trust the youth and refused to approve their choices of activities: they were critical and did not allow the youth freedom to decide. The youth sometimes feel betrayed by their parents who discouraged them from taking up some activities they might have excelled in.

The youth also felt betrayed by adults who used youth for personal gain. They gave an example of the politicians who used them to look for votes with the promise that they too would be helped to obtain jobs, financial capital, and political positions at lower levels. While the youth participated with enthusiasm, they ended up being used. There was need to uplift the integrity of both sides, such that the blame of indiscipline should not fall on the youth alone but on adults too.

The youth cited bureaucracy as a hindrance to their negotiations. For instance, youth under organized groups like the Bugembe Youth Group, said they used groups as a combined effort or collective voice to have their programmes drawn

and advocate for their needs. However, the adults in the administrative structures placed conditions which were difficult to fulfil. This frustrated the youths' efforts when they spent much of time 'chasing things' they never received because of the bureaucracy. In this regard, the youth claimed that the adults in the agencies ignored them whenever it came to their cause.

Prospects of Successful Socialization in the Contemporary Society

Although there are some challenges in relation to socialization and youth negotiations, there is a need to acknowledge that the situation can improve basing on the fact that both the adults and youth value socialization. The study revealed that socialization is still important to the youth. It lays social foundation, discipline as well as opportunity for the youth to negotiate their livelihood. However, there is a lot of room for improvement required in areas of communication, organizational skills of the youth agency and skilled personnel in working with them.

The voices of the parents revealed that they were not aware of the activities their children were engaged in. Aidah¹, one of the church leaders had this to say:

Issues to do with socialization have changed. The aunts and uncles are no longer playing their roles. For me I train mine [youth] in religious affairs, household chores....I do not associate with the youth, so I do not know about them. I just see them at the Centre and also hear that some involve in promiscuity....However, what I know is that when people work together, they develop spiritually and physically

This response implies that there is an information gap between parents and the youth with regard to the activities they are involved in. The parents demand that the youth agency keeps them abreast of the activities they are involved in. On the other hand, youth sometimes complained that parents were at times non-supportive. The prospect of the activities of the Youth Centre then lies in efficient communication with the parents. It is only then that the parents will be informed and convinced to support their youth in their various activities to enable them succeed in their struggles.

There is also a need to define the way forward of the youth negotiations. This should be directed towards self-sustenance of some sort. Perhaps the proceeds of the youth negotiations do not reflect their efforts and so the parents think it is a waste of time; yet it exposes them to the vulnerability of learning bad manners. The youth need to help to become self-reliant in using the proceeds of their negotiations, or at least share their proceeds with the families. Otherwise, the parents revealed that they could not support their youth when all they brought home were problems and expenditure.

There is also a need for youth agencies to streamline their leadership activities to address the problems of different members of the group. It was revealed that some of the youth, like those who have disabilities who were in school and those

out of school, did not benefit from the activities of the youth group equitably. This indicates that the agencies dealing with the youth need to put into consideration the diversity of problems and interests of those who comprise the youth groups.

Besides inclusiveness as group members, the youth also felt that they are citizens and so ought to benefit from government programmes such as Savings and Credit Cooperative Organisations (SACCOs) and NAADS. However, these organizations do not favour the youth in rural towns. For instance, a group benefits from a SACCO only after it is fully registered, which requires a minimum of 30 members. As soon as a SACCO is certified, its members are trained by the Uganda Cooperatives Savings and Credit Union (UCSCU). Thereafter the group is recommended to borrow money through the Uganda Post Bank. Often it is women's groups that are able to register and benefit from a SACCO. The irregularity of the membership, in addition to most youth lacking regular sources of income, makes it difficult for the youth group to fulfil the requirements and to register the group with a SACCO. Government officers in charge of 'Prosperity For All' programmes should devise strategies to bring the youth on board.

There are financial resources in the government that could benefit the youth, but do not under current management. Consequently, many youth suffer challenges of lack of initial capital and access to markets. Despite constrained resources, the youth are benefiting in various ways from the Bugembe Youth Centre. It would be beneficial for public and private resources to combine, and for the government to extend the implementation of some programmes to private agencies like the Bugembe Youth Centre.

The problem at hand in this context is the failure to link up the youth to the available national resources. This is a weakness of the Uganda National Youth Council (UNYC), which was established by the National Youth Council Statute 1993 with the objectives of organizing the Youth of Uganda into a unified body; engaging them in activities that are of benefit to them and the nation; protecting them against any kind of manipulation; consolidating their role in national development in the economic, social, cultural and educational fields; as well as promoting relations between Youth organizations in Uganda and International Youth organizations and other bodies with similar objects or interests. The limitations mentioned by the youth in Bugembe could potentially be resolved through proper co-ordination with the UNYC. The Council is in position to advocate and lobby for the interests of the youth in areas of micro-finance. Nanyongo and Nsubuga (2004) revealed that the government releases money, including Youth funds, known as Youth Entrepreneur Scheme (YES):

Over the past decade, the Government of Uganda via the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (MGLSD) has implemented and/or supported various micro credit schemes aimed at fighting poverty in the country. Most of

these schemes focused on the provision of revolving funds for micro credit to households at the grass root level. Examples include the Poverty Alleviation Project (PAP), Entandikwa Credit Scheme (ECS), Rural Farmers Scheme, Cooperative Credit Scheme, and the Youth Entrepreneurs Scheme (YES). In addition, the Government has supported credit activities within the framework of other multi-purpose projects, including the Micro projects Programme, Danida Credit scheme.

This indicates that there are provisions for the youth to realize successful negotiations. There are, however, no links between the Youth Centre and the organizations such as YES to enable them access national resources. Furthermore, due to lack of skilled personnel, it is unlikely that the Youth Centre can access the required information and make proper advocacy and lobbying for the resources. Another prospect of the youth Centre therefore lies in availability of trained and technical personnel.

Having learnt that the traditional modes of socialization are no longer appropriate in socializing youth in contemporary cities, the youth suggested some ways forward. They mentioned Straight Talk, which is perceived as a modern form of making the youth informed in a friendly way. This is not, however, a new method of communication. Straight Talk Foundation (STF) originated from Straight Talk newspaper that was first published in 1993 and funded by UNICEF. Today, Straight Talk Foundation (STF) is a health communication NGO that promotes Communication for Social Change through print, radio, and face-to-face interventions for adolescents and important adults, such as teachers and parents, in the lives of adolescents. STF produces 53 radio shows a week in 14 languages and about a dozen publications (some monthly, some termly) and conducts interactive face-to-face work in schools and communities.

Although the respondents still have respect for their traditional/cultural modes of socialization, they realise that the modern forms are very convenient and open them to opportunities. On this note, Straight Talk needs to be concretized as a mode of socialization. This requires that the proprietors of Straight Talk liaise with the grassroots organizations, such as the churches, and with parents and politicians in order to widen the scope of their operation. This can probably enable other agencies and actors in the lives of the youth to disseminate their information through Straight Talk, which is popular to them.

The failure of uncles and aunts to play their roles in socializing the youth implies that the traditional social structure is no longer functional. During socialization and rites of initiation to adulthood in several African communities, the youth used to be incorporated into social support groups called age-sets. In the current context, there is a need for the parents and other adults to realise that the youth still need social support, which can be realised through the youth groups. There is a need for parents to support these new modes of socialization and support for their youth.

Conclusion

The study concluded that the socialization offered by the Bugembe Youth Centre is important for the youth when they are negotiating their livelihoods. Socialization is about psycho-social empowerment and it is dynamic and changes according to developments in society. Regardless of time and space, the youth need to be socialized as a way to enhancing their coping capacity. The study affirms that the youth need support from parents, community, and government and non-government organizations. There is no harm in the adults getting involved in the affairs of the youth as long as there is dialogue and respect for each other. The study also revealed that the youth need to be helped to show tangible results out of the proceeds of negotiation. Otherwise, the adults may continue to mistrust and fail to support the efforts of the youth in their efforts. The youth need to be socialized with updated knowledge; skills and exposure to enable them become functional in the community and live meaningful lives.

Note

1. Informants' names in this chapter are pseudonyms.

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