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WOMEN'S CAREERS IN LOW INCOME AREAS AS INDICATORS  
OF COUNTRY AND TOWN DYNAMICS

by

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## ABSTRACT

A great deal of research and comments have been made about African urban male migrants who leave the villages because of economic insecurities, which most often include unemployment, underemployment and under productiveness of land. Little is known about the female migrants, except that they are prostitutes. This study is a contribution to the research vacuum that exists with regards to African female migrants: and the efforts have been concentrated on the Namuwongo-Wabigalo area.

An attempt has been made to find out what women do when they come to urban areas. Economic insecurity seems to be a dominant factor behind almost every reason that the women give for leaving the rural areas. It has been observed that women discover that hard-work and self-reliance are useful assets to have in the urban environment as well, where life is based on a money economy.

The material in this study is arranged around the question of how women support themselves. The women that have been studied are largely uneducated and therefore possess hardly any skills to warrant their employment in the industries or in government created jobs; they have no alternative but to be self-employed. They are overlooked by planners and other people, particularly men, competing for formal jobs. This makes the informal sector invisible, and it is not surprising that people operating in this sector are usually labelled lazy and apathetic. Namuwongo-Wabigalo area is one of the so called low income areas of Kampala. This is misleading because it implies that the residents are poor or unemployed. Yet the area is categorized so because the migrants who are in formal jobs receive a salary of not more than 500/-. The data suggests that residents of the so called low income areas are not necessarily at the bottom of the income scale.

It has been observed that women are playing an important role in nation building or economic development, by for example feeding the workers and building lodging houses. Women are striving to be socially and economically independent of men; and the findings indicate that they are very much concerned about their individuality as persons and not extensions of the men.

## INTRODUCTION

The data for this paper was collected from two urban parishes (miluka), Muyenga and Kisugu. The area is part of greater Kampala and is administered by the City Council. Each Muluka has a Muluka Chief who is assisted by four Batongole Chiefs; they are responsible for collecting tax, enforcing laws, and resolving minor conflicts. The miluka shown on the map have high income areas with well built modern houses for the elite: diplomats, executives and businessmen; and low income areas which from residence for rural migrants. The research was conducted in the latter section. The low income area of Muyenga is called Namuwonge,<sup>1</sup> and that of Kisugu Wabigalo.<sup>2</sup> Namuwonge were chosen because of the close interaction between the two areas. For example the shops, markets and distilleries were shared regardless of administrative boundaries. These areas have been classified as low income because the residents involved in formal employment earn less than 500/- a month.<sup>3</sup>

In 1968 the area came under the jurisdiction and responsibility of the City Council. In the same year the City Engineer and Surveyor of Kampala noted in his annual report that "Namuwonge - Wabigalo presents a scene of completely unregulated development without any assemblance of visual order. A wide variety of types of building, ranging from rows in mud and wattle and tin roofs to permanent structures. There is no drainage system. What serve as roads are only deeply eroded and winding tracks, impassible in wet weather and water is obtained from natural springs. The same conditions are to be found in other slum areas, such as Katwe - Kiziba, Kikubamutwe, Makerere-Kivulu and Mulago."<sup>4</sup>

So that was the situation in most high density-low income area<sup>5</sup> in 1968 when the government of Uganda decreed the amalgamation of the city of Kampala and the Townships Mengo, Nakawa, and Kawempe. This ended the division of responsibilities between four local authorities. Kampala's size increased from 8½ square miles to 75 square miles. The city council undertook to provide urban public services, something which had been hitherto badly done because the 4 local authorities had uneven public revenues. The lower chiefs in the Buganda government areas that were incorporated into the Kampala municipality, became known as City Council agents. But the people in the area still refer to these agents as Chiefs because there was no change in their duties. In this study, city council agents are the Law Enforcement officers who come into the area to arrest tax defaulters or marijuana smokers; and the local agents are referred to as chiefs.

Namuwonge-Wabigalo area is situated two miles direct as the crow flies. But the area suffers from physical and psychological isolation. The winding road that goes to the area covers at least 5 miles besides being badly corrugated during the rainy season and extremely dusty in the dry weather. This has meant that agents responsible for providing public services, for example the road menders or the dumpers or mosquito and vermin controllers, are reluctant to come to the area. But the chiefs are hardworking. Not only do they write letters of complaints but they constantly visit the city Council Headquarters to have verbal discussions with the appropriate officers. Now, thanks to their hard work and persistence there is light on the main street, there are 10 water taps in the area, and the refuse is cleared at least every two days but no one is ever surprised when it takes two months.

Other forms of isolation, however, remain. The elite living on Tank Hill and Kisugu Estate attempt to deal with the problem by pretending not to know the existence of the shameful area next to theirs, even when they own houses there, or employ houseboys and porters from the area. The Residents, too, are ashamed of the area. Clerks, medical assistants, secretaries and students from Namuwongo-Wabigalo when asked where they reside by friends and colleagues, they will say Tank Hill (Muyenga) or Makindye (a place 5 miles away). Women when they go to Mulago Hospital, they say they are from Kiwuliriza.<sup>5</sup>

It is also difficult to get newspapers although there is a large number literate people. The only newspapers that find their way in the area are the old copies that can be used for wrapping things customers buy from shops or markets.

However the area attracts many categories of people, the first category includes brewers, students, school leavers and Civil Servants who stay in the area because it is good for saving. For example, food is very cheap and plentiful, and rooms for 15/= or 20/- are available if one is prepared to endure the leaking grass or debe roofs<sup>6</sup> and crumpling mud walls. But if one wants to live in a relatively decent room, one must be prepared to pay more. The City Centre (Shop and Offices) and the industrial area are within walking distance from Namuwongo-Wabigalo which means that people save at least 35/- a month on transportation. This contrasts with workers from other residential areas, for example Kamwokya, Mulago, Kireka, Makindye, Bwayise, Kawempe, Naguru, Kiswa etc. who are faced with the choice of walking long distances or spending at least 2/- daily on buses and taxis.

The second group attracted to the area are people in the self-employment businesses. In most cases the activities carried out are illicit. To be found (to mention only a few) are vendors of second-hand clothes (some of which look so expensive and new that they are most likely to have been picked from someone's drying line); brewers and distillers of enguli,<sup>7</sup> cooked food sellers and petty thieves.

Owning houses is one of the most profitable businesses in the area. The city council authorities have long given up trying to control building sites and house plans. Houses mushroom during public holidays and at weekends. Once the house is up, it is difficult to find out who owns it. The law is weak in that it does not give Law Enforcement Officers enough power to deal with this problem. The law requires that the owner of an unauthorized building be brought to court if he is found actually putting up a building. It is futile to arrest workers who sometimes do not know the owner of the building they are working on.<sup>8</sup> But my informants claimed that with a "small" fee the chiefs could be persuaded to close their eyes to an illegal building.

The phenomenon of absentee house owners makes attempts to control housing in the area impossible. Absenteeism is used here to mean, not only homeowners who live outside the area, but also those who live in the area but have agents who collect the rent so that the tenants never know in whose house they are staying. Many houses are not fit for human habitation: the roofs, although of corrugated iron, leak; sewage flows through them if it rains; and there are no provisions for kitchens or latrines. The rent is liable to be raised any time and a tenant who complains is told to quit the room which because of the great demand for housing cannot remain unoccupied for 24 hours.



The small rooms are 6 to 8 square metres in size, while the large ones are 10 to 15 square metres.

Many Nubi<sup>10</sup> who were retired from the King's African Rifles in the late 1950s bought a lot of land in the area with the generous gratuity they received. The majority of the Nubi have no other source of income except houses - each having some large rooms for which 70/- is charged and small ones for which are for 50/-. Baganda and a few Nyarwanda and Luo, particularly the women, are also in the housing business.

It is difficult to state the precise number of people living in Namuwongo-Wabigalo area from the 1969 census figures. The census forms for Kisugu, Muyenga, Kibuli, Bukasa Kisugu and Nsambya were somehow mixed up.<sup>11</sup> Thus a population figure 29,545 was given, for the area shown on the map. But even if the 1969 census figures had been accurate, they would have been outdated by now because there has been a lot of population movement in the area since 1969. In an attempt to solve the unemployment problem and curb the currency drainage from the country, the government in 1970 ordered unskilled foreign workers to leave Uganda. Many of those affected were Luos the majority of whom lived at Namuwongo-Wabigalo. (When they left, many Banyarwanda moved into the area to take over the businesses left by the Luo.) The Luo had settled in the area as early as 1940. They came to work as labourers, on the rail line, and as porters at the late steamers, loading coffee and cotton, and unloading manufactured articles such as cloth, bicycles, household utensil plus garden implements - hoes and knives. Before long the Luo dominated offices as clerks or cleaners or guards; they later joined the domestic scene as cooks, houseboys and shamba boys. The Luo established themselves as hardworking, reliable and loyal. People from other ethnic groups who were thought by Europeans and Asian employers to be lazy found it difficult to compete with the Luo.<sup>12</sup> It is not surprising then that after the change of government in 1971 many employers recalled the Luo who had been expelled in 1970. Recently, when the non-citizen Asians were asked to leave Uganda, there was an exodus of Luo as well. As many of them lost their jobs, they figured it was better to return home, rather than stay unemployed which might bring about temptations, like stealing. But the Luo who stayed in the area are positive that those who will return because unemployment is more acute in Kenya, (Nyanza Province) than it is in Kampala.

The Nubi and Nyarwanda started setting in the area in the late 1950s. Other ethnic groups seem to have migrated in the area in the 1960s. There are a few Kiganda "host"<sup>13</sup> families who claim that they were invaded by migrants. Many Kiganda families, however, sold their land and moved out of the area or moved on to the slopes of Muyenga (Tank Hill) or Kisugu Hill.

A heterogeneous population from all parts of East Africa resides in the area. There are Kikuyu, Akamba, Luo and Luyia from Kenya, Chagga, Nyamwesi, Sukuma and Masai from Tanzania; Baganda, Acholi, Lango, Toro, Nyoro, Soga, Nyankole, Kiga and Alur, Kakwa, Lugbara, Gisu and Teso from Uganda. Nyarwanda and Rundi from Rwanda and Urundi and Nubi and Sudanese from Sudan.

The methods were used in data collection: Formal interviewing of a random sample and participant observation. A structured interview schedule was used on a small random sample which was obtained by selecting the first room on every tenth house. Some houses had two rooms, others four or ten. But it was estimated that the area covered had approximately a thousand rooms each accommodating an average of 4 persons.

Altogether two hundred women were interviewed but because of the high rate of physical mobility in the area, only one hundred and sixty-four respondents completed the interviews. The others had moved to other residential places.

Although the formal interviews were administered to women only, the researcher had many informal discussions with the men and children so as to get a balanced picture.

By participant observation I was able to do two things: firstly, to check on the answers respondents gave particularly an employment and income, 55% of the respondents gave as their first answer "unemployed"; Secondly, respondents did not want to reveal their incomes and it became necessary to talk to them without the questionnaire and in the absence of their husbands.

In a few cases the incomes were exaggerated but this was not intentional, and in some instances respondents were unaware of their total incomes because they had not calculated their net profits from the businesses.

In the sample some ethnic groups, or some important characteristics of economic activity were under-represented or not represented at all. Thus for example there were only 4 Nubi in the sample although the Nubi community is quite large. I encountered important features which I thought were common enough to merit discussion but which seemed insignificant from the sample.

I was faced with several problems: building mushroom up all the time and the use put to the rooms differs from month to month. It has already been pointed out that there is a lot of movement within and from the area. If people changed their residence before the interviews were completed a lot of time was usually spent on tracing their whereabouts. Also because of the varied choices in economic activities, there was no guarantee that the same person would be carrying out the same activity, after say a month. Whether or not a person was grouped as carrying out an economic activity was arbitrary since many women, particularly the Baganda were involved in more than one occupation; and there were instances where woman made the same amount of profit from three different activities. A woman was counted as a prostitute if that was her only source of income. Even if a woman made more money by prostitution than by working in a bar, she was counted as a bar-maid.

In East African towns today one finds an increasing number of "unattached" women" (educated and uneducated) capable of supporting themselves and contributing financially to the support of their children. For this type of woman, marriage may seem a hinderance rather than as a necessary way of life. Thus Peter Marris talks of "the dutiful wife" found most likely in the rural areas, and "the emancipated city woman who takes no husband but bears her children by a series of liaisons". (Marris 1966: 8)

The concern of this study is to find out what women are doing in a seemingly man's world. In the towns, women are in general far behind the men in education and every type of participation. The process of development is seen as a male project in which women are given only token participation. The urban woman is regarded as a direct result of urbanization and also a sign of moral and social disorganization. It is taken for granted that women in the low income areas are a social problem since they are not employed by the government or in the industrial sector. It therefore follows that the problems usually associated with rapid social changes illegitimacy, prostitution and casual unions -- are attributed to the fact that women are moving to urban areas. Urban unemployment is one of the biggest problems facing developing countries. If it is difficult for men from rural areas to obtain employment, so the argument goes, it must be impossible for women to do so. Therefore women should be "returned to the land". This type of argument does not tell us much about why women come to towns and how they support themselves when they stay.

"Women are often overlooked in the process of change. They are ill prepared for full involvement in the modern sector, lacking education, training and experience, and facing negative attitudes towards this involvement".  
(M. Mbilinyi 1972: 28)<sup>14</sup>

That women have always formed the backbone of the rural agricultural economy, cannot be disputed; but could it be that women are supporting the urban economies as well?

"They see work not so much as a means of expanding their individuality as a person but rather as a means of carrying out the extensions of their traditional female tasks in the expanded occupational structure of the city while regaining a productive function in the family."  
(Byangwa, 1967: 38).



How important is the informal sector of employment in a situation where cities attract too many people from the countryside looking for work that does not exist? The cities' immature industrial and commercial bases cannot provide enough - jobs for the rapidly swelling population even where requisite skills are available. Uganda is predominantly an agricultural country but for the last ten years or so the prices of cotton and coffee have been very low. Both are Uganda's major exports and therefore important foreign exchange earners. Rural people therefore move to urban areas with the hope of being employed in the Industries and consequently earning high incomes. Unlike Jinja where heavy industries are located, Kampala is characterised by light industries. This becomes evident when the list of the heaviest employers is examined: Lake Victoria Bottling Company Ltd; the British-American Tobacco Company's redrying factory; Coffee Marketing Board processing plant; Uganda Blanket Manufacturers Ltd; Batteries Uganda Ltd; Car and General Uganda Ltd; are according to the Kampala, Official Handbook the largest employers in the City. They employ between 2,200 and 2,500 people. There are other smaller enterprises for example glass making, welding and shirt tailoring (Uganda Garments Ltd.). But these are hardly enough to absorb 77% of the 330,000 population of Kampala. It is therefore not surprising that small scale economic activities are a common feature in Kampala. Even in the 1950s before the present "Urban explosion" it was found out in Kisenyi that a large percentage of the working population was involved in informal occupation. (Southall 1957: 51)



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When people move from a less to a more developed environment, 'something new' which transforms old values while re-shaping old skills must be learned.

This 'Something new' is nothing less than how to live productively in a new, strange and changing environment. When people move from familiar routines of the village life where each person's role and status is known to all, to the unrelated set of 'contracts' imposed by urban living, their style of life abruptly undergoes a transformation. To cope with the consequences of their physical mobility they must also acquire "psychic mobility" (Lerner, 1967: 26). Basically this means that people have to be able to continually adapt themselves to their new social conditions.

Town life offers to many people unlimited opportunities and alternatives for choice and freedoms which the cultivator in the village has no chance to experience. It is therefore my argument that since urban life has many potentials, female migrants to the city should be treated and regarded as economic assets rather than economic and social liabilities, just because they are in most cases illiterate and consequently do not possess the necessary skills to be absorbed into government created jobs. Self reliance and hard-work represents women's main assets.

It is always problematic defining the economic contribution of people involved in the informal sector, be they men or women. Because this sector is invisible, the contributions it makes to the national economy are easily overlooked and the people involved in it regarded as lazy and apathetic. However,

"And in towns of high unemployment, we find that many of the unemployed are not miserable immigrants from over-crowded villages, but literate persons from not so poor families who prefer to be unemployed for a time supported by relatives and friends rather than accept work usually done by illiterates only". (Boserup, 1970: 197).

The most outstanding feature of East African towns and townships is the "unattached woman". Her accommodation consists of one or two rented rooms. She has no legal or regular husband because she sees marriage as a hindrance rather than as a necessary way of life. She is involved in some money making activity and thus is capable of supporting herself and contributing financially to the support of her children if she has any. This type of woman is foreign as a conceptual category to nearly all ethnic groups. But the Kiganda word Nakyeyombekedde can be translated to mean unattached woman; who is a common phenomenon in rural Buganda. As early as 1940 L.P. Mair observed that Baganda women could establish their own independence through cotton growing. And more recently Parkin has noted that

"Daughters may inherit, increasingly so these days, while it is common practice for women to own property in their own right and to transmit or dispose of it as they please. The concept of corporate, land-owning lineages and clans has relatively little relevance for property and land rights, which are frequently recognized as accruing to an individual. De facto freehold land tenure is wide spread, especially among the Ganda. (Parkin 1969: 92).

The Nakyeyombekedde exists in a rural situation; she is in her late 30s and over; she has been married and divorced or separated; and she owns land and a house. The urban unattached woman can be aged anything from 15 years to 50 years.

There are other types of unattached woman besides, Nakyeyombekedde in the rural areas of Buganda. A man may have five wives, with two residing in one Kibanja and the rest living on 3 separate Bibanja, most likely in different counties or subcounties. He may visit them every fortnight, monthly, or after every six months depending on how high they are in his favour at any given time. By virtue of the fact that the woman lives alone and the husband visits for a short time; this woman is unattached. On the other hand an urban woman may have a lover who visits her everyday. But if both women are questioned about their marital status, the former would say she is not unattached whereas the latter would say she is. Despite the above the unattached woman is conceptually just as anomalous in the rural areas as she is in urban areas. However, in the towns, she is so conspicuous that her existence cannot be ignored.

Concern over the unattached woman issue has been expressed by many categories of people. The problems (such as marital instability, premarital sex, pregnancy, illegitimacy and prostitution) usually associated with urbanization and social change are attributed to the fact that women are leaving the country side. However, the unattached woman is not a new phenomenon in Uganda. She has become more noticeable because of the rapid population agglomeration in urban areas during the 1960s. (80% of the respondent said they come to Namuwongo during this period).

Lucy Mair stipulated three causes and agencies of social change as: The introduction of money; the establishment of modern systems of transport and communications; and the opportunity of employment outside the tribe.

Thus any meaningful discussion of the unattached woman must take into consideration the above factors but particularly the introduction of cash crops; namely coffee and cotton.

Out of 53 Baganda women respondents, twenty indicated that the unattached women existed in the rural areas as well. This tends to discredit the popular belief that female emancipation has developed solely as a result of recent urbanization.

Economic security is a fundamental basis of marriage. So once women start experiencing marriage insecurity, they cease to regard it as the universal and automatically achieved profession of all women. They realize that with money they can travel far from home and in fact make a lot of money in urban areas.

The case study below has been selected because it is typical in its broad outline although not in details.



Nalubowa a Muganda aged forty-five, run away from her husband in 1956. She had been married for six years. She alleges that after one year of marriage her husband stopped employing a Mupakasi (Agricultural labourer) and buying her meat and clothes. She says she was content to be a "good" wife and devoted all her energy to growing plantains (for food and beer) - and coffee of about 1,000/- shillings a year.<sup>16</sup> She then discovered that her husband was having an affair with a woman four miles away. "I decided to sell a quarter of the coffee harvested every month<sup>17</sup> and to keep the money in a secret place. I did not want my husband to find out." She separated (kunoba) from her husband partly because "I was tired of slaving for him", and partly because "by this time I had built a house (with an iron roof and mud walls plastered with sand) upon a Kibanja I had bought for 300/- Shillings at Sii (Kyaggwe County).<sup>18</sup>

By 1958 she felt like changing her way of life (kukyusako). She invited her younger brother together with his family to come and stay on her land while she moved to Buikwe township. She rented an old house and started selling mwenge (Kiganda beer made from bananas and sorghum). She had found it impossible to make any profit from beer while she was still in the village because friends and neighbours "used to drop in for a sip to see if the brew was good."

"One day a Lugbara man died after drinking at my house and I was accused of poisoning him. There were many foreigners (Banamawanga) at Buikwe and they resented the fact that I was making a lot of money. (200/- Shillings a month)!" In 1961 she moved at Kikira (Busoga) where she cohabited with an Alur, a sugar-cane cutters for the Madhivani Sugar Works. She continued to sell mwenge. By 1964, she had had enough of him because he was extremely jealous and suspected her of sleeping around with Busoga men. "Banamawanga men do not trust us". It is significant that 15 Baganda women had cohabited with people from other ethnic areas before they moved to Namuwongo-Wabigalo.

She moved to Namuwongo in 1964 and started cooking food; an activity which forty-one respondents' busied themselves with on arrival at the area. Unmarried labourers would come to her room to eat at lunch time and in the evenings. She next brew and sold Munanansi (beer made from pineapples). Finally, she started a now successful enguli distilling and selling business. "In bad months I make 500/- Shillings and in good ones 700/- Shillings."

She has bought a plot (one quarter of an acre) and built a modern house (brick walled) for herself and five houses with 6 rooms each for lodgers. This represents the most common type of investment and is a sign that she "has arrived"; something which women at Namuwongo-Wabigalo aspire to achieve some day. She is content with life because "I eat and sleep well". She maintains an unemployed nineteen year old youth, because "although men as husbands are a nuisance, no normal woman can do without them".



Fifteen women cohabited with men younger than they were. This is an important relationship. The youngmen have financial interests taken care of, while the women have their sexual needs satisfied without being subjected to social and economic dependence on men.

Having followed Nalubowa's economic participation in the rural areas as well as in the urban areas; it is important to examine the employment of female migrants. The first table shows the different economic activities that women are involved in, and the second one shows the monthly profits realized by the different categories of women.

A comment or two must be made on the economic activities. The food sellers provide an invaluable service by enabling labourers to obtain food at reasonable prices. This has cut down on the number of workers who used to return from the lunch hour break, either weak with hunger or drunk. Besides the women who deliver food at different business premises or street pavements, there are hotelis (open air restaurants)<sup>19</sup> which are just as popular.

Selling cooked food is one of the activities popular with new arrivals. Since it does not require a lot of investment, it means that a rural migrant who has fifty shillings or who is able to borrow from a friend, can launch into business right away.

By twelve thirty food reaches every establishment in the industrial area and other parts of city. This is the time workers start their thirty minutes or one and a half hours lunch break. The customers are required to have the money handy. One woman said,

"When I had just started work the men would beg me to let them eat on credit for a week or a month, but when time for payment came only five out of twenty would pay me. I was almost driven out of business. So now I tell them to eat only if they can afford to pay there and then."

One way of making sure that every one pays is to bring fewer plates. For example if there are forty labourers, the food seller would bring ten plates. As soon as one person finishes eating, the plate is washed and another one is served. They use iron plates coated with enamel or aluminium plates, (or old faded and cracked china plates), which cost 1/50 and 1/- respectively. Thus, it is not lack of money which makes these women bring few plates (as most of these women could afford to buy at least 8 plates a month) but the fact that they want to have control over the situation. Town people are known to be shrewd, so if a woman serves 40 men all at once, she might have difficulty in watching over them successfully.

Customers eat in shifts and they do not mind waiting as long as they have assurances that the food will be warm and enough. This does not make the food business sound very competitive. But customers can be repelled by lack of cleanliness, or if the sauce does not change from day to day or if the amount of food served is very little.

Table showing the different economic activities that women engage in.

Ethnic groups	Total	Enguli	Munanansi	Malwa	Kwete	Cooker food seller	Market trading	Shop- keeper	Bar- maid	Prostitute	Firewood	Mwenge
Baganda	53	17	2	1	-	7	5	2	2	9	-	2
Luo	47	10	-	5	1	-	6	4	3	-	-	-
Nyaruanda	25	2	1	1	1	2	2	2	-	6	-	3
Luyia	10	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	-
Gisu	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	3	-	-
Nubi	4	1	-	1	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-
Nyankole	3	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
Acholi	3	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	-
Itesot	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Tanzanian	3	-	-	-	2	1	-	-	-	1	-	-
Kikuyu	2	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	-
Lango	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Kakwa	2	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Nyole	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Kamba	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Samia	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Soga	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Toro	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>164</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>

Below are the approximate monthly profits that women make in different activities.

ACTIVITY	MONTHLY PROFIT
COOKED FOOD SELLERS and Open air restaurants (hotels)	150/= — 300/=
Market Traders	80/= — 150/=
Firewood sellers	50/= — 90/=
Shopkeepers	200/= — 300/=
BARS	
i) Chibuku bar owners	150/= — 200/=
ii) Malwa	150/= — 250/=
iii) Kwete	150/= — 200/=
iv) Munanasi	30/= — 50/=
v) Enguli	500/= — 700/=
vi) Mwenge	100/= — 200/=
vii) Barmaids	20/= — 50/=
viii) Prostitution	difficult to estimate

Market trading in Kampala was an activity dominated by the Luo until about 1968. Fifty percent of all market women at Namuwongo-Wabigalo are Luo. Previously, a man would own stall in the market and his wife would act as his assistant selling any of the following: fish, cassava, potatoes and meat. Nowadays, however, many Luo women own stalls in their own rights. Only one out of eight served with her husband. In cases where husband and wife work at the market, the tendency is to have separate businesses. There are three markets in the area but at almost every third house, something is being sold. The items include matooke, cassava, tomatoes, and fish. But most residents prefer to buy their food at the market where they get "a fair price". Food is very cheap in Namuwongo and Wabigalo compared to other parts of the City. For example, ten tomatoes would cost one shilling at Nakesero or Wandegaya whereas at Namuwongo-Wabigalo they cost sixty cents. I have been unable to find out the reason for the cheapness since the rent in all Kampala markets is 50 cents a day and Namuwongo-Wabigalo are no exception.<sup>20</sup>

A plausible reason for the low prices seems to be that Namuwongo-Wabigalo is not a transit area, the markets serve only the local residents and lack external clients. The sellers are forced to sell cheaply or have their products go bad. But the most important factor seems to be that people have aversion towards spending. Hence there are homes where the monotony of eating beans and ugali is endured daily because other foods considered luxuries.

But it should be mentioned that the markets serve as an important meeting place for local residents particularly the Luo. There is a saying in the area that there are no secrets among the Luo because they have an efficient system of communication-gossip. Thus Luo women from Wabigalo will go to Namuwongo market, two miles away, to hear what is happening among the Luo. Just as Luo men gossip at bars, Luo women gossip at markets, (and also when drawing water.

Firewood is not important for cooking, but the enguli business depends on it. Although in the sample only one person is engaged in the activity, many Acholi women and a few Luo teenage girls sell firewood to distillers.

There is a nearby forest reserve (see map at beginning) where they collect or chop firewood. Forest-rangers have never actually arrested any woman, but they are always threatening to do so. However, in the rainy season the forest is impenetrable, and so women are forced to look far for the firewood. Their favourite place is another forest reserve at Namanve, a place eight miles away on Jinja road.

They look for fallen trees which they chop into large pieces. Chopping a log might take a week, but it is worth it since enguli distillers are not interested in twigs which burn out quickly, they need large pieces that burn out slowly and yet give a strong fire. Some of the faggots weigh as much as four hundred pounds, but the average weight is two hundred pounds. Thus it is common to see a woman carrying one of these faggots on her head, and a sleeping baby on her back. This has earned these firewood women the reputation of being tough. Often and again it was pointed out to me that collecting firewood is equal to digging because it makes people grow old prematurely by "breaking the back".

The great demand for firewood in the area can hardly be satisfied by the Acholi and Luo women engaged in the Activity. Firewood is delivered by about ten lorries to different agents,



once a week. Each lorry load consists of about one hundred large faggots. The price varies from two to four shillings depending on the size of the faggot.

In forest reserves, the trees are pruned every six months and at this time trees are sold to interested people. Builders usually take the largest share which means that firewood sellers have to resort to poaching, in order to satisfy the great demand for firewood.

Although only eight shopkeepers were represented in the sample, shopkeeping is a wide spread economic activity in the area. Altogether there were twenty women shopkeepers in the area. Shops are scattered all over the place and almost every fourth room is a shop. I am sure economists would say that this is bad business, but each shopkeeper at Namuwongo-Wabigalo is satisfied that he is doing well. The single most important items which every shop has are maize flour and sugar. There are shops dealing in those two items only. Other priority items include wheat flour (for making chapatis, samosas and bread) paraffin, cooking oil, different types of beans and charcoal stoves. There are also miscellaneous items such as washing and bathing soap, saucepans, basins, mugs, dried coffee beans and tobacco, buns, bread, pancakes and milk.

The importance of maize flour cannot be over emphasised. It is the main food for Namuwongo-Wabigalo residents. It takes only fifteen minutes to prepare, so that even single men find no difficulty in preparing the thick porridge ugali. Maize flour is cheap and lasting compared to other food stuffs. For example one debe of ugali can feed a family of four for a week whereas one debe of potatoes would last only 2 days. The second reason why maize flour sales are high is because it is an important ingredient in Enguli distilling, Namuwongo is one of the most important areas for enguli production.

There are two types of maize flour; a yellowish low grade type costing sixty cents a Kilo and a white fine grade costing one shilling a Kilo.

The second most important shop commodity is sugar, also important in enguli production.

Luo couples usually help each other in the running of shops, a phenomenon that was not observed in other groups. Hence the four Luo women shopkeepers in the sample were actually shop-assistants. When Luo women were interviewed, they would say "our" shop whereas other women would answer either "mine" or "my husband's" shop. Luo men would therefore own a shop and at the same time have another business, either in wage employment, or in self employment, in another part of Kampala. For example one Luo with two wives had shops in Namuwongo, Kikubamutwe and Kisenyi. On the other hand men from other ethnic groups had to be fulltime shopkeepers. They never trusted women in their shops. If they went away, as soon as they returned they would check carefully on the articles sold and the money. Alternatively, the shops closed when the men went to fetch fresh stock. Men's suspicious seems justified as the two case studies below indicate.

Maria Nanfuka arrived at Wabigalo from Kyotera (Buddu County) at the beginning of 1972. She said, she had run away from a polygamous marriage. Immediately she arrived she rented a room, and set up a shop. The residents expressed amazement at this and in reply she said,

"My husband had a shop, and the only reason I married him in 1958, was that by the time I left him I would be ready to retire".

It had taken her fourteen years to accumulate money because it was rural situation. In urban areas it takes between six months or one year for the woman to take all the money she wants from the shop.

The two Baganda women in the sample obtained their shops by: one was left a rich widow; and another one has a rich boyfriend. Out of the ten Baganda shopkeepers not in the sample three had pinched money in the above Nanfuka fashion; three previously had successful enguli businesses and the shops were the result of their savings; three had influential lovers who gave them financial backing; one had been accused of witchcraft and her husband sent her away with all the things in his shop.

Rooms meant for shops usually have double doors, and consist of 2 portions (rooms) one for the shop and the other one for sleeping. Some shopkeepers, however, sometimes rent out the second portion and use one room as a shop and a bedroom. The beddings are spread out every night and folded in the morning. The standard rent for shop rooms is 140/=. To start with the shop may be stocked with two small size bags of maize flour and sugar both costing 100/-, and the shopkeeper might decide to bring in one debe of paraffin and cooking oil. Thus it is possible to open a shop with a capital of 250/- only.

Yerenima Namusisi was born at (Katikamu County) she came to Namuwongo five years ago after her husband sent her away with a "letter"<sup>21</sup> saying that he had been tricked into marrying a Nyaruanda thinking that she was a Muganda. At the time of research she had been cohabiting for over ten months with a Kikuyu shopkeeper and a bar owner, John Manthi.

One night a most revealing quarrel broke out between them. Manthi accused Namusisi of stealing all his money and property. She had bought a plot of land at Wabigalo and built herself a house. She took sugar and maize flour for her enguli business. Namusisi retorted that she knew all along that their relationship was temporary and that is why she had decided to have something to show at the end of it all.

The forty men I had detailed discussions with said that whenever a shop failed, the cause was most likely to be a woman. In the group there were ten men who had been or were shopkeepers. Six men had been victims of "the greedy town women" and as a result their shops had collapsed; four had never allowed women "to mix themselves in my shop business".

In connection with 'greedy women' other major causes for the high casualty rate in the shopkeeping business are the social connections based on ethnicity. Thus a Luo residing at Wabigalo walks two miles to buy ugali, fish and beans from a fellow Luo at Namuwongo. Also a Nyaruanda living at Namuwongo might wish to buy things from Wabigalo, if there are no shops in the vicinity belonging to a Nyaruanda. Thus people buy little things like tomatoes or milk from any shop, but when it came to things they think are expensive, they prefer not to give money to an outsider.

In fact whenever kondos break into a shop, the owner is most likely to accuse people from other ethnic groups of having hired the kondos. This happened seven times during a six months period.

Fifty percent of female shop owners were women in their late thirties or early forties. In the area, a shop is a sign 'arrival' that is, the women have saved enough money to open up a prestigious enterprise. The methods of obtaining money have already been described. It is significant to note that all female owned shops are usually poorly stocked. The shops are, for example, stocked twice a week. These shops may actually be selling as much as those that stock once a month because the turn over from the low stocks may be high; but the crucial thing is that these women want to give the impression that they are not selling much. During the time of research kondos never broke into these 'poor' shops; instead they visited the prosperous looking ones which were usually male owned. The female owned shops had no resident male except in one case, so it would seem that the appearances of shops, and not the presence of a male in the shop, attracts or repels kondos.

These 'poor' women make an average of two hundred to three hundred shillings a month compared to the well stocked ones whose incomes varies from six hundred to one thousand shillings a month.

But it should also be mentioned that it is not only men who are distrustful with their money. If a man cohabits with a female shop owner he is not allowed to serve in the shop. This was true of one case in the sample, and eight others which were observed. A woman fears that if a man comes to know the amount of money she makes or has, "he will ask her for it or steal it".

Finally, the success of Namuwongo-Wabigalo shops owes much to the fact that many people from outside come to buy things, particularly maize flour and sugar. When Uganda experienced sugar shortage in the first months of 1972, Namuwongo-Wabigalo had plentiful stock. People from all walks of life daily converged into the area to obtain sugar, which was sold to them on condition that they bought other commodities like soap, salt, cooking oil, milk, bread etc.

Also the Luo from other parts of Kampala, for example Kisenyi, Kibuli, Kireka, Nakawa, Kiswa, Port Bell, Banda, constantly come to buy maize flour from the area. They always claimed that the flour was better quality and that it was not as expensive as in the areas they live.

The difference in prices never exceeds fifty cents. The main reason for their shopping in the area seems to be the fact that most of them have relatives and friends at Namuwongo-Wabigalo. Since Namuwongo is dominated by Kenya migrants, particularly the Luo (Hirst 1972:3), the frequent visits seem to have been motivated by the desire to hear the latest news from home and to exchange the latest gossip within their community.

Drinking is the commonest recreational activity. At the time of this research there were nineteen bars in the area. Most sleeping rooms are drinking cubicles. There are seven bars selling bottled drinks mainly beer, Waragi and Guinness Stout.<sup>22</sup> Two of them sell Black Label Whisky and Cinzano. These were popular with the rich outside customers who frequent the area with their girl friends. The rich executives, and business tycoons like to remain 'anonymous' and so these bars serve as a good hiding place. In Kampala there have been many scandals regarding men who frequent respectable hotels such as the Grand, the Speke and the International with their girl friends. The wives come to hear of it through friends and then proceed to challenge the lovers. Incidents of wives who beat other women in public places are not unknown.



It is interesting to note that the girl friends or mistresses usually call their rich boyfriends by pseudo or Christian names. Also the women knew about the 1964 Affiliation Act<sup>23</sup> which requires that a man accepts responsibility for the children he fathers. Women will threaten to take the man to court if they refuse to support the children; and the courts rarely accept a man's claims that he is not responsible. Thus rather than have their illicit behaviour exposed, the men agree to whatever demands the women make. In fact some women can get men to find them jobs or build them houses, so that the relationships remains secret from the wives. A situation develops in which the man feels that since he is supporting the woman, he has monopoly over her sexual services. But when he finds another man and threatens to stop the financial support, the above blackmail tactics are exercised on him.

There are six Chibuku bars in the area, and two of them are owned by women. The beer and Chibuku bars have juke boxes (bought second hand from Asians) in them, and employ thirty-four barmaids altogether. Twenty-two are employed in the beer bars and twelve in the Chibuku bars. In the sample ten out of the hundred and sixty-four women, were bar-maids. This job is similar to selling cooked food in that women engage in them for only a short-time until they find jobs with more money. While in the bars, the bar-maids meet friends, men and women who may offer lodging or try to fix them up in good jobs. Most marriages that take place here have their beginnings in some bar. Bar-maids earn between twenty and fifty shillings a month. This makes them the obvious prostitutes because they need to supplement their salaries. Because of this, they are regarded as 'husband snatchers' (by the women) or 'money pinchers' (by the men).

The 1964 Liquor Act requires bar-owners selling non-spiritous liquor to have a 300/- licence. The Chibuku bars have this type of licence. The beer bars in addition to the above licence must get a nine hundred licence which allows them to sell spiritous liquor. These two types of bars are frequented mainly at the beginning, middle and end of the month. The maximum spending peaks represent the times when workers are paid. Since drinks are expensive and people are always changing their residences, bar-owners discourage drinking on credit. But as I have mentioned, there are outsiders - businessmen, civil servants etc. who frequent the beer bars all the time.

Another group of bars are those selling native liquor - Kwate, malwa, and munanansi, a brewer requires a licence for 100/-, and another for 160/-, if he wants to sell her beer in a bar. Most land-lords build malwa bars for their tenants. The bar consists of an iron roofed, cemented floor building structure with no walls. Thus a tenant pays an extra 10/- or 25/- a month for the use of the bar; but other people wishing to sell their beer in the same place are charged 40/- a month. Women find it expedient to brew and sell in groups of four or five. One woman hires the bar and the others claim they are working for her.

In these bars, drinking takes place in groups indicating that local beer drinking is just as a social occasion in the city as it is in the country. For example, a group of Luo and Acholi or a group of Securicor guards off night duty, may constantly drink from particular woman. Thus the six malwa bars in the area, have each regular customers.

At the beginning of 1972 a rich Luo started a "Malwa Drinkers Association." He bought a forty shillings licence which is usually given to clubs. The Association consists of twenty Luo malwa brewers. They pay a monthly thirty shillings subscription fee and this entitles them to brew and sell their malwa at this bar.



At one time City Council Officials raided the place but the bar owner explained smartly that it was not a bar, and that the people present were members of the club for which he had a licence. The customers in this bar are mainly men, while the brewers are women. The brewers in this club used to make 150/- a month but now they realize a profit of 250/- a month. A group of five men can pool money and drink five times a week. So a man has four evenings for which he does not have to worry over where the beer money is coming from. One gets the impression that unlike other bars where people go to really drink, malwa drinkers suck the long straws (with netted bottoms to strain the residues) and then talk for fifteen minutes before they suck again. At times of money scarcity, malwa for one shilling and fifty cents is enough for five men an evening. It seems a reasonable assumption to say that the malwa bars are just as important meeting places for men as the markets are for women.

Another common beer is Munanansi which is made from pineapples. Two pineapples are chopped and boiled in an eight gallons water saucepan. After one hour, two kilos of sugar and a small packet of tea leaves are added. The contents are then strained through a piece of cloth. The brew is left to ferment for a day or two. The Munanansi drink has become very unpopular. People complain that it gives them peptic ulcers.<sup>24</sup> A medical health officer at Kiswa dispensary thinks that some strong chemical with a high acid content is being added to the drink. I found out that, the cause was due to chemical called D.C.L., a kind of active dry yeast, which brewers use to speed up the fermentation process.

On average a munanasi seller makes thirty to fifty shillings a month. Half of the fifty-three Baganda respondents said they had brewed munanasi when they first came to the area. Instead of renting a malwa bar, most barmaids who are also munanasi brewers, sneak their brew into beer bars or chibuku bars. However, if the bar-owner finds out about this irregular activity (usually through a disgruntled customer or jealous barmaid), the culprit is liable to lose her job.

Kwete is beer made from roasted maize flour or cassava flour. It is mixed with water and left to stand for two or three days, the contents are strained and the final product has a creamy appearance similar to that of chibuku. As in the case of munanasi, barmaids sneak kwete in chibuku bars. Kwete is as popular as malwa, although not quite as common. The brewers make fifty to two hundred shillings a month; depending on how hard they work.

Mwenge is Kiganda beer made by mashing ripe beer bananas (mbidde) with banana leaves or a type of grass called Lusenke. When the mwenge has been filtered, roasted and coarsely ground sorghum is added to it. One debe of sorghum is added to two debes of mwenge. It is then left to stand for two days.

But beer bananas are very scarce these days even in rural areas. In urban areas the few brewers rely mainly on matooke peels which they go around collecting from cooked matooke sellers. One debe of peels costs fifty cents.

The mwenge sellers, claim that they rarely make more than fifty shillings profit in a month. But it was found, during the course of research that mwenge was in great demand for use in the everyday Kiganda religious activities in parts of Kampala and other peri-urban areas.<sup>25</sup> A calabash containing twelve gallons of mwenge normally costs thirty-five shillings but some people have been known to buy it for sixty-five shillings. A medium sized calabash containing three gallons of mwenge costs ten shillings or twenty-five shillings depending on how prosperous or how ignorant the customer appears. A debe of mwenge costs between fifteen and twenty shillings; and a half pint of glass of mwenge costs sixty cents. The mwenge sellers make a great deal of profit. They buy beer bananas or mwenge itself, from the villages at lower prices and sell them here for three times as much.

Another drink made here is enguli but it has no special bars; it is usually smuggled in the beer or chibuku bars. Distilling enguli is illegal unless one has a licence to sell it to the East African Distilleries, who purify and sell it as Uganda Waragi. According to the liquor licencing officer, only two licences were issued for Namuwongo-Wabigalo area in 1971. It should be noted that enguli can be distilled from any of the beers described above or anything that ferments.

However, the enguli that is distilled here is known throughout Kampala as the "Kisumu brand" or "Namuwongo brand".<sup>26</sup> Although it is strong, it produces no hangover afterwards. Thus there is a great demand for it locally, and in other suburb areas like: Kisenyi, Mulago, Kamwokya, Kireka and Kibuli. The Kisumu brand is expensive compared to other brands. A small glass of Kisumu enguli costs one shilling, while other brands cost sixty cents.

It has already been mentioned how shops that want to make good business stock maize flour and sugar. Both are basic ingredients of the Kisumu brand.<sup>27</sup> When the sugar shortage hit Uganda in the early months of 1972, enguli distillers were not interrupted in their business because the supply of sugar remained normal. The fact that the place is near the godowns means that people are able to buy products before they reach the shops. In the case of sugar, sacks used to be fetched on bicycles or wheelbarrows at night.

Being successful or unsuccessful in enguli business depends on the size of ones market, the number of times one distills, and the type of ingredients one uses. A successful business requires distilling every day. Each day at least ten debes are distilled. A young man is usually employed to help with the work particularly fetching firewood, making sure the fire does not burn out, and changing collecting containers as they get filled. The monthly net profit for a successful distiller is seven hundred shillings or more. But those who distil three times a week make a profit of one hundred to two hundred shillings a month.

Namuwongo is much more important than Wabigalo for enguli distilling. As the map at the beginning shows, Wabigalo is on the slopes of Kisugu hill while Namuwongo is in a mainly swampy valley. Namuwongo became such an important distillery because of the presence of swamps, the poor state of the roads and the attitude of chiefs.

The old method which is used by some people at Wabigalo where there are no swamps requires the following apparatus: a pipa filled with twelve gallons of brew; a saucepan with the bottom removed is placed over the mouth of the pipa, a small saucepan for collecting the vapour, is placed inside the first one; a basin is placed over the mouth of the bin and the sides are sealed with maize or millet dough paste. This apparatus is considered to be inadequate for large quantity distilling. It becomes tiresome to change the cooling water every ten or thirty minutes. The swamps are ideal because they provide a ready made condenser. Long (seven to twelve feet) pipes are connected at one end to the pipa, the middle parts are placed in ditches or swamps, and the other end is connected to containers that collect the vapour as it condenses. In the swamps papyrus and sugar-cane<sup>28</sup> grow very tall and this usually prevents the smoke from being visible far away. But authorities can always spot illegal distillers by the betrayal of a smoke spiral.



For a long time the area was inaccessible because the roads were badly corrugated. Recently, however, the roads have been levelled out and Police and City Council patrols in the area are frequent. But even if they do come, some distillers can be over-looked. All they have to do is to give the chief twenty-five shillings every month. But the situation can become complicated when all four Batongole chiefs want to be paid.<sup>29</sup> The two people, I mentioned previously, who have been issued with licences to distil in the area, are women from Makindye and Kibuye (situated five and six miles away respectively). They come every morning to distil and in the evening they take with them the enguli they have not been able to sell.

It is obvious from the above that most people are distilling illegally. In the sample thirty-four respondents were distillers and none of them hand a licence. This exposes distillers to all types of exploitation. Residents are suspicious of strangers because anyone can approach a distiller, claim to be a city council official, and then demand a certain amount of money. The amount usually varies between two hundred and five hundred shillings. If it is "a bad month" for the distiller, she may be approached every day or every week by different people. One woman lost eight hundred shillings, which represents three months savings, in two days. The practice of unauthorised persons as City Council staff had become so bad that in March 1972 the acting town clerk found it necessary to issue a series of notices in the news papers and radio, warning the public in Kampala to be aware of bogus City Council officials. People were advised that when approached by someone imposing requirements and claiming to be a City Council employee, they should demand to be shown an identity card, bearing the owners photograph and the city council seal.<sup>30</sup>

Another group that bothers the illegal enguli distillers are the Uganda Amalgamated Brewers and Distillers Ltd. These are the licenced enguli distillers. They are constantly requesting the Government to crack down on enguli sales. A number of deaths has resulted from enguli, so they claim, because of its high cruduity and acidity.<sup>31</sup> But licenced distillers are known to produce twice the authorized amount. The excess enguli is sold illegally and hence they resent and constantly condemn the unlicenced distillers who are not protected by the law, but who are creating a threat by taking over their illegal market.

At this point it is appropriate to mention something that goes with enguli and that is pork. Pigs are numerous in the area, particularly in the Kasavu section of Namuwongo, where most Nyaruanda live. It has poor latrine facilities and so the pigs act as scavengers. However, although residents detest pigs, enguli drinkers claim that roasted pork meat cools their throats.



CONCLUSION :

This research was intrigued by concern over the uneducated, unarticulate members of Uganda Society who make up 93% of the female population. This uneducated isolated sector is predominantly rural but has started moving to urban areas and it is causing grave concern in many quarters. The problem was formulated round the often discussed slogan, "The woman's place is no longer in the kitchen". Is it valid? And if so what are its implications?

The Namuwongo-Wabigalo female residents were illiterate and semi-illiterate<sup>32</sup> new arrivals<sup>33</sup>. It was found that these women are involved in important economic activities, contrary to popular belief that they are adding to an overwhelming unemployment problem in urban areas. As Boserup observed,

"Many spokesmen for female emancipation in developing countries seem to accept the idea that women's work is a threat to economic development. For instance, Romila Tharpar, writing about the history of female emancipation in Southern Asia states that 'one belief held widely in Asia is that if women are educated they will want employment and this will merely raise the present high rate of unemployment'" (Boserup 1970:195).

Even planners specializing in developing countries take it for granted that male labour is more valuable than female labour. This leads to the belief that the threat of unemployment posed to the men when women compete for the same jobs, is unwarranted. In fact in urban areas women have difficulty participating in normal (as opposed to illicit) economic activities. However, the women in this study do not compete with men on the labour market, but are involved in the informal sector in which occupations are invisible.<sup>34</sup> They are part of a developing class of money making, yet "unemployed" persons.<sup>35</sup> It can, therefore, be concluded that,

"The Women of today are in a fair way to dethrone the myth of femininity; they are beginning to affirm their independence in concrete ways; they do not easily succeed in living completely the life of a human being. Reared by women within a feminine world, their normal destiny is marriage, which still means practically subordination to man; for masculine prestige is far from extinction, resting still upon solid economic and social foundations".

(Simone De Beauvoir - 1970: introduction).

Urban women derive their independence from economic factors. Women, even when they are married prefer to be self-employed. This gives them a great deal of influence, (particularly over how income should be spent) which they exercise over the men, unlike their rural or upper class counterparts. Because the informal sector of employment is invisible, men do not feel threatened by female competition for wages. Thus the informal sector has to some extent liberated women from the types of male discrimination prevalent in the formal employment sector. But there have been minor changes in the roles of low income women. Although women have escaped the unpaid strenuous agricultural labour in the rural

areas; they are still mothers and food providers. In fact, the economic activities they are involved in, for example cooking food, brewing and distilling, and collecting firewood are just an extension of activities they have always performed in the rural areas. The difference is that in the urban areas their labour is rewarded with money. This contrasts with the elite women who teach, nurse, administer and own business. Because they have been to school, and therefore possess skills and some degree of sophistication, they are able to secure government created jobs.

I suspect that although there is this visible difference between elite and low income women, they have a lot in common. For example, illegitimacy, pre-marital sex and pregnancy; unattached women household heads; the need for economic independence and marriage security; are some of the widespread problems in the Ugandan society. What needs to be found out are the ways and degree to which social change affects different categories of women. For example, it would seem that investment patterns differ according to social status created by job classes. The elite women buy land in the rural areas and have their relatives or hired labourers work for them. If they invest in a business in town, they are most likely to get some relative to assist. In contrast the low income women invest their money in the expansion of their business particularly enguli and houses. And when they think they are ready to retire they buy land and build houses in the country or in better residential areas in town. In this case, money is circulating mostly in the urban areas and therefore rural kinsmen are unimportant in the economic sphere. In fact they are regarded as parasites. As one woman put it,

'I live like a dog because I have to make money. But it is for me, not for making someone fat'.

It is obvious from the study that feminine emancipation has not developed solely as a result of recent urbanization but has been in the making for a long time. It can be traced back to land ownership and the introduction of cash crops. Perlman notes that,

Toro women have always had important rights in property. Their husbands could not dispose of this property without their permission, and it was returnable on divorce. Their property rights in property have been enforced by the courts. In more recent years, Toro women have gained greater economic independence, and have set themselves up as independent householders. Although most prefer marriage, these opportunities put women in a relatively strong position vis-a-vis men should they decide to remain unmarried or divorced or should the man decide he wants to take a second wife.

Even if a woman remains unmarried she does not have to give up the *raison d'etre* of her being - children (Perlman 1966: 589-590).

In other words the city has only opened new avenues of self-expression to the African woman. It is gratifying to note that when the commercial sector was Ugandanized, after the departure of non-citizen Asians among the four people from Namuwongo-Wabigalo who received businesses, two of them were women. It seems to me that planners interested in economic development should regard women as potential entrepreneurs. At Namuwongo-Wabigalo, is definitely a collection of money making individuals who should not be overlooked in any economic development programme.



FOOTNOTES.

- <sup>1</sup>Named after Namuwongo river that flows through the area. It is an important river in the history of the area because Ssekabaka Daudi Chwa used to attend Kuwonga(sacrifice ceremonies) for the river spirit.
- <sup>2</sup>Originally was an abusive name for a market where migrants used to handle meat with filthy hands.
- <sup>3</sup>As defined in the Kampala Master Plan Survey.
- <sup>4</sup>Annual Report of the City Engineer and Surveyor of Kampala, 1968:66.
- <sup>5</sup>What people call Kiwuliriza is technically non-existent for administrative purposes today. In the past it was a name for the miluka of Mutuba V and Sabawali, Makindye.
- <sup>6</sup>A word for the 4 gallon Kerosine tin. The debe can be flattened out to form roofing sheets.
- <sup>7</sup>The name of an illegal spirit from which the National drink, Uganda Waragi, is distilled. It can be obtained from anything that ferments.
- <sup>8</sup>Personal communication with the City Council Law Enforcement Officer, Mr. Kinene.
- <sup>9</sup>This comes close to the range in the 1970 Kampala Master Plan Study (the rooms were found to be on average eight to fifteen square metres) of conditions of the low income areas of Kamwokya, Rubaga, Naguru.
- <sup>10</sup>The Nubi (known as Nubians to most people) originally belonged to Southern Sudanese ethnic groups, for example, Bari, Dinka, Mondu, Muru, Kuku, Shilluk and Makaraka (Wanji 1971:21). They left Sudan as a result of the Mahdist Rebellion against Egyptian administration, and are usually referred to as the descendants of Emin Pasha's soldiers left behind at the end of the 19th Century. They originally settled at Bombo but later spread to other parts of East Africa. They have intermarried with Ugandan ethnic groups and always speak the local languages but they remain distinct in their Islamic culture and language, and also in their dress. Being accepted as a Nubi involves being converted to Islam and speaking the Nubi language, which is a form of Arabic.
- <sup>11</sup>Personal communication with officer in-charge of the Statistics Division, Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development.
- <sup>12</sup>Ugandans are convinced that the Luo are strong because they eat Ugali (otherwise known as posho) thick hard porridge made from maize flour; potatoes and matooke eaters are supposed to be weak because their diet is watery.
- <sup>13</sup>The distinction between "host" and "migrants" was made by D. Parkin (1969:92-95).
- <sup>14</sup>Male prejudices against women participating in any sphere of economic activity is most exposed by the case of a successful female diviner who lived near Entebbe. She died in November 1972. She was an expert on a special type of speaking horns, Mayembe agakifalu, which "can be sent to kill, maim and destroy" (Rigby and Lule 1972:12). She trained and sold the mayembe to potential diviners. The men resented her success and they named her Mwambalampale, which means one who wears trousers.

- 15 1970 Kampala Master Plan estimation of 1969 Census figures.
- 16 There was a forward surge of prices in 1950, although 1953, 1954, and 1955 had poor seasons. (C.C. Wrigley 1970:74).
- 17 When coffee trees are still young, harvest takes place all the year round.
- 18 Residents of Kyagwe County regard Sii as the most backward village.
- 19 Eating house licences cost twenty shillings per annum. And the City Council official thought that although cooked food selling was not recognized officially, the women could purchase the 30/= per annum licence granted to food hawkers.
- 20 Personal communication with the Medical Officer of health, Kampala City Council.
- 21 When a man sends away his wife, he sends a letter to her father, guardian or brother to show that he is no longer responsible for her. A woman who is not given this letter can always expect trouble from her ex-husband, because of his claim on her. There were fifteen cases of women who were prosecuted by their ex-husbands for eloping.
- 22 In this study, this group of bars will be referred to as beer-bars.
- 23 It is stated in the Children and Young Persons Bill 1968, which became the Affiliation Act, that: Any unmarried woman who may be with a child or who may be delivered of a child may, make application, by complaint on Oath to a Magistrate with jurisdiction in the place where she resides, for summons to be served on the man alleged by her to be the father of the child.  

The man is required to pay the sum of not more than 100/= a month for the maintenance and education of the child. The fine however, depends on the defendant's employment and whether or not he is a public figure; also on the magistrate.
- 24 The medical forms confirmed their statements.
- 25 Baganda diviners always demand mwenge (and sometimes dried coffee beans) from clients.
- 26 The Luo were the first people to distil this brand. It is called Kisumu brand, a reference perhaps to Kisumu, the largest town in the Nyanza Province of Kenya, where the Luo come from.
- 27 All the other brands of enguli use jaggery (unrefined sugar) as a basic ingredient. It is cheaper than refined sugar and is responsible for the high alcoholic content in the enguli.
- 28 Planted by Acholi boys who sell it to workers in the industrial area, or at the market because there is great demand for sugar-cane at Namuwongo-Wabigalo itself.

- 29 Batongole chiefs do a lot of work: They settle disputes, arrest thieves, appear in courts, collect taxes and generally see that Municipal regulations are observed. Bribes obtained from illegal enguli distillers and illegal builders provide their main source of income. The government has decided that the chiefs should be paid so as to stop corruption and encourage efficiency (Presidential speech 24/1/73).
- 30 Uganda Argus February 7, 1972; March 7, 1972.
- 31 The People February 26, 1972.
- 32 As shown by the fact that only six respondents had attended school for more than six years (see table III. in appendix).
- 33 Thirty-seven respondents had no previous urban experiences and had been at Namuwongo-Wabigalo for less than a year.
- 34 It must be pointed out that there are many men in the informal sector of employment, but this study is concerned only with women.
- 35 Mr. Philip Helpenny has discussed this phenomenon (as evidenced in another low suburb Kisenyi) "Getting rich by being unemployed" in a paper (No. 31) he presented at the Universities Social Sciences Conference in Nairobi, December, 1972.



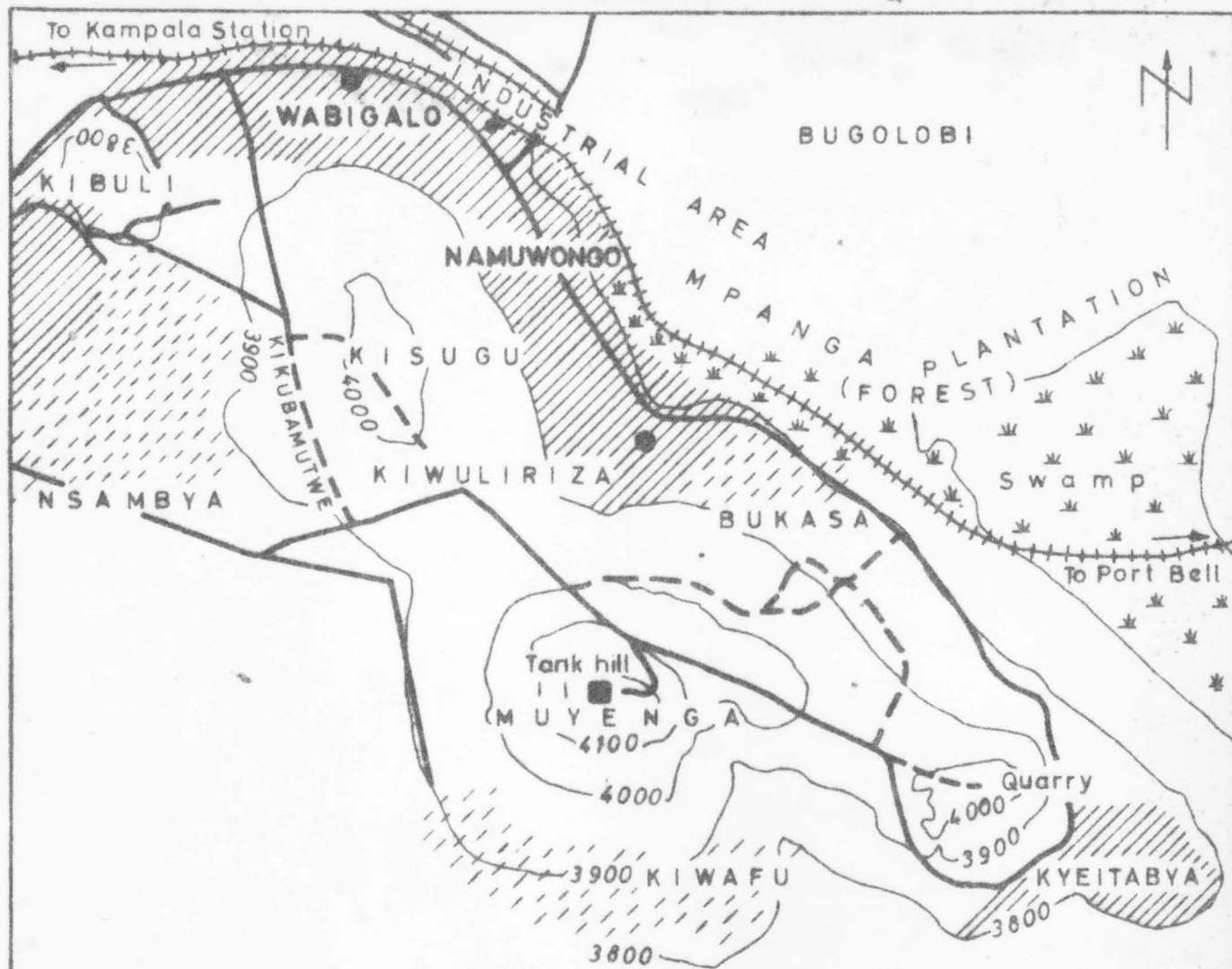
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MAP OF WABIGALO AND NAMUWONGO AREAS

- |   |            |   |                 |
|---|------------|---|-----------------|
|  | Main road  |  | High population |
|  | Minor road |  | Low population  |
|  | Railway    |   |                 |
|  | Market     |   |                 |
|  | Contour    |   |                 |





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