

Annex II - Great Lakes Region

COMMUNITY DYNAMICS: COMPARATIVE SURVEY RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

13. Demographics

The following is a capture of the community member sample for this comparative study. The demographics presented here are not representative of the overall community member populations of each of the five GLR countries of study, but instead reflect a range of purposive sampling biases. For more information about the specific sampling methods and decisions in each of the GLR countries please see the individual survey studies in each of the five GLR countries.¹⁸⁶ For a brief introduction to the reintegration programming context in each of the GLR countries see section 5.1.

The total unweighted sample of community members from across the five GLR countries amounts to 3,380 respondents which, when combined with the ex-combatant sample of 6,475 respondents, represents 34.3% of the total GLR sample. The total unweighted community member sample contributions from each of the five GLR countries are as follows: Burundi comprises 15.1% (n=510) of the total Community Member Sample, DRC 21.4% (n=722), RoC 43.1% (n=1456), Rwanda 15.1% (n=510), and Uganda 5.4% (n=182). However, in an effort to create valid cross-country analysis of community members across the GLR, and especially for comparison to the ex-combatant sample, which contains proportionally different sample contributions from the five GLR countries, the raw sample contributions from each country have been weighted evenly. Further, for reasons explained below the valid sample used for analysis in this study are often notably lower than the total sample of 3,380 community members.

Though Burundi does contribute 510 respondents to the total GLR Community Member sample no age, gender or disability details were collected for respondents as a part of the Third Beneficiary Assessment in 2011 – thus a systematic analysis of the Burundi portion of the total GLR community member sample along demographic lines is not possible. In addition, little data was collected in Burundi that is directly comparable to the rest of the GLR data anyways. In effect, with the exception of some short sections, data from Burundi will be absent from the analysis here thus leaving the unweighted valid sample of community members at n=2870. Unless explicitly stated otherwise, all cross country statistics from here forward refer to the valid sample excluding Burundi.

In addition, as discussed in more detail in Annex I, integration of the full range of data from the Rwanda Survey has proved challenging in this study. The evolving format for the individual GLR country surveys has been a continual process of learning and iterative refinement. The Rwanda survey format is the starting point from which surveys evolved in RoC, Burundi, Uganda, and DRC. So, while data content in the Rwanda surveys is very much in line with the rest of the GLR countries, much of the specific question formatting is often different enough that a direct comparison of data is not feasible. Such instances are explained in footnotes.

Data along health and disability demographics also presents challenges in the total GLR community member sample. Health and disability data for community members were only collected in Rwanda and Uganda – absent from Burundi, DRC and RoC. However, even the data from Rwanda and Uganda is limited as only n=58 disabled community members were sampled (n=49 from Rwanda and n=9 from Uganda). Thus, drawing valid comparisons between these two samples of 49 and 9 disabled community members is judged as infeasible – furthermore, com-

186 For Burundi see (2011) *Troisième Enquête des Bénéficiaires du PDRT*; for DRC see (2011) *Rapport d'Évaluation des Bénéficiaires du PNDDR Réintégration des hommes soldats et ex-combattants démobilisés*; for RoC see (2011) *Réintégration Socio-Economique des ex-Combattants Région du Pool, République du Congo*; for Rwanda see (2012) *Comparative report: Ex-combatant and community study on the socio-economic reintegration*; and for Uganda see (2011) *Reporter Re-integration and Community Dynamics Survey Report Reporter Re-integration and Community Dynamics Survey Report*.

Table 31: Community Members - GLR Country Demographics

| | Country | | | | |
|--------------------|---------|-------------------|--------|--------|-----------|
| | DRC | Republic of Congo | Rwanda | Uganda | GLR Total |
| Male | 52.2% | 54.8% | 68.8% | 68.7% | 61.2% |
| Female | 47.8% | 45.2% | 31.2% | 31.3% | 38.8% |
| Subtotal | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% |
| Age 18-30 | 34.2% | 20.3% | 57.0% | 46.7% | 40.0% |
| Age 31-40 | 26.7% | 22.4% | 25.9% | 22.2% | 24.3% |
| Age Over 40 | 39.1% | 57.3% | 17.1% | 31.1% | 35.7% |
| Subtotal | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% |

paring these 58 disabled community members to the 454 disabled ex-combatants in Annex I of this study presents further issues for validity. For these reasons analysis of community members along the lines of disability will be absent from this section of the study.

Collectively the data restrictions present in this study of community members across the GLR countries mean that the task of this study is to present a mosaic of findings. Up close, the pieces of the picture are not always complete and data is not always congruent. However, there are clear data trends, nonetheless, that represent a distinct narrative of community dynamics across the GLR countries.

Across the GLR countries, 61.2% of community members were male while 38.8% were female. In DRC and RoC there was a fairly close split between male and female community members within the sample, while Rwanda and Uganda were closer to the cross-country average split in gender. Table 31 above presents a cross-tabulated breakdown of age and gender demographics for the community member sample of each of the GLR countries.

Of the total sample of community members, 40% were between the ages of 18 and 30, 24.3% were between that ages of 31 and 40, and 35.7% were over the age of 40.¹⁸⁷ The within-country age splits of each of the GLR countries do not necessarily follow cross-country trend. As is visible in Table 31 above, Rwanda and Uganda community members between the ages of 18 and 30 are most dominantly represented while in RoC those over 40 are most represented and DRC falls closer to the cross-country split.

The dimensions of the lives of community members explored in the following sections are key indicators of community dynamics and furthermore relate to the basic units and processes in society: the family unit, and the process of marriage, in the community. The value of this section of the study is not just as a control group for which ex-combatant progress can be studied, but also as a key measure of the overall levels of social and economic stability of the core units of reintegration across society in the Great Lakes Region.

13.1 Marriage and Household

Marriage dynamics are an important indicator of community members' basic social standing. Indeed, marriage dynamics can tell us much about community members' ability to leverage familial, economic, and social networks towards the attainment of marriage and in turn their ability redouble their engagement in these social structures through marriage – all indicators of a strong footing in the community.

¹⁸⁷ Across the total sample of community members from the GLR countries there were 26 respondents under the age of 18. For purposes of consistency in sample delimitation and comparative validity these 26 (3 from DRC and 23 from RoC) have been omitted from the sample for analysis here.

Table 32: Community Member Marital Status

| | Marital Status at Sampling | | | | |
|--------------------|----------------------------|-----------------|-----------------------|---------|----------------------|
| | Married | Living together | Divorced or Separated | Widowed | Single/Never married |
| Male | 55.40% | 16.20% | 2.70% | 2.00% | 23.70% |
| Female | 38.10% | 18.00% | 11.10% | 12.80% | 20.10% |
| Age 18-30 | 35.80% | 13.50% | 2.60% | 0.30% | 47.70% |
| Age 31-40 | 60.40% | 19.10% | 6.00% | 3.30% | 11.20% |
| Age Over 40 | 57.30% | 17.10% | 9.60% | 14.40% | 1.60% |
| DRC | 66.10% | 7.10% | 7.30% | 7.10% | 12.50% |
| RoC | 18.50% | 53.50% | 12.30% | 10.90% | 4.90% |
| Rwanda | 46.90% | 4.90% | 0.40% | 2.60% | 45.30% |
| Uganda | 62.60% | 2.70% | 3.80% | 4.40% | 26.40% |
| GLR Average | 48.60% | 16.90% | 5.90% | 6.20% | 22.30% |

Across the GLR countries the most common groupings for marital status of community members are as follows: 48.6% are married, 16.9% are living with a partner but are not married, 22.3% are single and have never been married, 5.9% are separated or divorced, and the remaining 6.2% are widowed. These figures are very much an average as within each of the GLR countries community members displayed a more unique distribution of marital statuses (summarized in Table 32 below). In DRC and Uganda “married” is the most common marital status for community members – at over 60% in both countries. While in Rwanda “married” is still the most common marital status, it is almost evenly split with “single / never married”. The country that differs most from the general trend is RoC, in which “living together” but not married is the most common marital status.

Across the GLR countries female community members were less likely to be married than male community members (38.1% vs. 55.4%). In DRC and Uganda this trend was exaggerated and the gap between male and female community members with the marital status “married” was as much as 38 percentage points (in Uganda). At a cross-country level the lower representation of married female community members was effectively absorbed into the categories of separated or divorced and widowed (11.1% and 12.8% respectively) which were much less common among male community members (2.7% and 2.0% respectively). These findings should flag divorce, separation, and widowhood as key dimensions to female community members’ absolute disadvantage in marriage rates across the GLR countries compared to male community members.

There was a visible positive relationship between age and likelihood of being separated, divorced, or widowed. Of community members 18-30 years of age, 2.6% were separated or divorced and 0.3% were widowed, compared to 6% and 3.3% (respectively) of those aged 31-40, and 9.6% and 14.4% (respectively) of those aged over 40.

Drawing exclusively from Rwanda and Uganda we can observe that only 5.8% of community members had a spouse (married or unmarried) that was an ex-combatant, the remaining 94.2% having civilian spouses – though this does not necessarily imply that their spouse was a combatant / ex-combatant at the time of marriage.¹⁸⁸ On average female community members were more likely to have an ex-combatant or combatant spouse (11.1%) compared to male community members (3.9%). This could serve as at least a partial explanation for female community members’ higher levels of widowed marital status – while anecdotally this makes sense further study would be needed to confirm this relationship

188 Rwanda and Uganda were the only GLR countries where surveys included questions on community members’ spousal ex-combatant status.

Across the GLR countries 74.7% of community members report that they would not consider marrying an ex-combatant, with the remaining 25.2% saying that they would consider marrying an ex-combatant. This trend was generally reflected within the individual GLR countries with the exception of Uganda, where 56.8% of community members said that they would consider marrying an ex-combatant and 43.2% would not.¹⁸⁹ Across demographic lines age showed a positive relationship with unwillingness to consider marrying an ex-combatant. Of those over 40 years of age, 85% were not willing to marry an ex-combatant, compared to 74% of those aged 31-40, and 66.7% of those aged 18-30. The most common explanations for why community members were unwilling to marry an ex-combatant revolved around various forms of stigma or fear.

Drawing exclusively from DRC and RoC, we can see that when community members observed other marriages in the community in which one member is an ex-combatant, 44.9% of community members perceived these marriages as having a harder time than those without an ex-combatant.¹⁹⁰ When asked to explain further as to why they thought these marriages were more difficult the most common explanations were as follows: (i) 35% of community members cited misunderstandings; (ii) 22% cited brutality and fighting; and (iii) 8.5% cited bad habits of ex-combatants acquired during combat (including drug use).

Across the GLR countries 43.6% of community members see themselves alone as responsible for the financial and food need of the family, 16.8% see their spouse or partner as responsible, and 25.5% see food and financial needs as the shared responsibility of both themselves and their spouse or partner. The remaining 14.1% indicated that household food and finance responsibility were dispersed among various other family members.¹⁹¹ Male community members were significantly more likely to see household finance and food provision as solely their responsibility (56.6%) compared to female community members (21.8%). Inversely, female community members were dramatically more likely to see household finance and food provision as the sole responsibility of their spouse or partner (36.8%) compared to male community members (4.7%). This gendered trend was especially exaggerated in DRC (61.3 vs. 16.7% and 48.7 vs. 6.7 respectively).

As age increases community members are more likely to see themselves as solely responsible for household finance and food provision (32.7% of those age 18-30, 44.4% of those 31-40, and 51.5% of those over 40) and less likely to see their spouse or partner as solely responsible (22.7% of those age 18-30, 18.8% of those 31-40, and 10.3% of those over 40). It appears that this age-based trend may be primarily descriptive of female community members. When looking at age trends in community members' perceptions of household finance and food provision further subdivided by gender there are distinct trends. Male community members see themselves as primarily responsible for their household finance and food provision at even levels across all age categories (55.3% of those 18-30, 59.4% of those 31-40, and 55.8% of those over 40). In contrast, as age increases for females so too does the likelihood of seeing oneself as solely responsible for household finance and food (9.2% of those 18-30, 20.1% of those 31-40, and 40.2% of those over 40). As discussed above, as age increase so too does the likelihood of being separated, divorced, or widowed. As such, those female community members who are separated, divorced, or widowed are highly likely to see household finance and food provision as solely their responsibility (62.1% of those who are widowed and 70.1% of those who are separated or divorced). These findings should flag female-headed households as exposed to particular economic instability.¹⁹²

189 It is possible that the greater openness in Uganda is related to the nature of mobilization and return in which many ex-combatants were abducted or forcibly recruited into conflict – upon return being simultaneously understood as victims and perpetrators. This dynamic plus the widespread employment of traditional reconciliation ceremonies in Northern Uganda (though not necessarily as a part of reintegration programming) may hold some explanatory weight.

190 DRC and RoC were the only countries where community members were asked about their perception of marriages in which one person was an ex-combatant.

191 Rwanda is excluded from findings on household finance and food responsibility due to lack of directly comparable data.

192 A slightly exaggerated version of this age trend in female community members existed for female ex-combatants as well.

13.2 Literacy, Education, and Vocational Training

Levels of literacy, educational achievement, and vocational training are important indicators of community members' basic ability to engage with educational and vocational structures, to the extent they exist in the different GLR country contexts, and further to leverage the dividends of this engagement towards further economic and social opportunities – in the end solidifying their footing in the community.

Literacy was generally high among community members across the GLR countries, and it was slightly higher than for ex-combatants; 74.3% of community members could both read and write, 4.6% could only read, and the remaining 21.1% were illiterate (compared to 71.6%, 8.3% and 20.1% respectively in ex-combatants).¹⁹³ Notably, RoC had the lowest literacy levels across the GLR countries. Female community members are notably less likely to be able to read and write (62.4%) compared to male community members (83%), and more likely to be illiterate (32.4%

| | Marital Status at Sampling | | |
|--------------------|----------------------------|-----------|----------------|
| | Neither Read nor Write | Read only | Read and write |
| Male | 12.90% | 4.10% | 83.00% |
| Female | 32.40% | 5.20% | 62.40% |
| Age 18-30 | 13.50% | 3.50% | 83.10% |
| Age 31-40 | 17.60% | 5.50% | 76.90% |
| Age Over 40 | 28.80% | 4.30% | 66.80% |
| DRC | 16.30% | 4.30% | 79.40% |
| RoC | 27.70% | 7.30% | 65.00% |
| Uganda | 19.30% | 2.20% | 78.50% |
| GLR Average | 21.10% | 4.60% | 74.30% |
| GLR Average | 48.60% | 16.90% | 5.90% |

vs. 12.9%). After female community members, those aged over 40 are the second most likely group to be illiterate (28.8%). These trends are displayed in Table 33.

In regards to educational achievement, community members most commonly had either some secondary education (31%) or had completed secondary education (18.2%); followed by some primary education (17.1%), completed primary education (11.2%), and no education (11.1%).¹⁹⁴ As is visible in Table 34, in Uganda education levels were skewed lower overall. Across demographic lines there are a few interesting trends to extract. Female community members are the most likely group to have no education (18.3% vs. 6.1% of male community members) followed by those aged over 40 (17.3% vs. 8.4% of those aged 31-40 and 5.6% of those aged 18-30). Further, both female community members and those over 40 had educational achievement levels skewed lower overall.

Across the GLR, overall levels of educational achievement for community members were skewed higher than for ex-combatants – with higher levels of partial secondary education (31% vs. 23.4%), full secondary completion (18.2% vs. 5.2%), and partial or full higher education (8.5% vs. 2%). It is worth noting however that in DRC and RoC ex-combatants displayed much higher levels of professional educational achievement than community members (34.3% and 20.3% vs. 2.4% and 1.8% respectively).

Most community members reflected an understanding of the educational achievement gap between community members and ex-combatants – (58.4%) of community members reported that they believe that ex-combatants have

193 Rwanda is excluded from findings on literacy due to lack of directly comparable data.

194 Rwanda is excluded from findings on education achievement levels due to lack of directly comparable data

Table 34: Community Member Educational Achievement Levels

| | Education Level at Sampling | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|--------------|-------------------|----------------|---------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|--------------|
| | None | Islamic or religious | Some primary | Completed primary | Some secondary | Completed secondary | Some higher education | Completed higher education | Professional |
| Male | 6.10% | 1.60% | 16.00% | 11.20% | 33.90% | 18.10% | 4.40% | 6.90% | 1.70% |
| Female | 18.30% | 1.50% | 18.70% | 11.20% | 26.90% | 18.00% | 1.80% | 2.80% | 0.90% |
| Age 18-30 | 5.60% | 0.00% | 17.50% | 10.30% | 39.20% | 17.90% | 3.30% | 5.10% | 1.10% |
| Age 31-40 | 8.40% | 2.40% | 15.30% | 8.60% | 32.90% | 19.80% | 4.70% | 6.90% | 0.90% |
| Age Over 40 | 17.30% | 2.20% | 18.00% | 13.30% | 22.80% | 17.00% | 2.70% | 4.80% | 1.90% |
| DRC | 11.80% | 0.40% | 13.00% | 8.00% | 30.30% | 22.60% | 4.70% | 6.80% | 2.40% |
| RoC | 14.60% | 0.70% | 12.90% | 17.10% | 20.00% | 28.00% | 3.00% | 1.90% | 1.80% |
| Uganda | 7.30% | 3.40% | 25.10% | 8.90% | 41.90% | 4.50% | 2.20% | 6.70% | 0.00% |
| GLR Average | 11.10% | 1.50% | 17.10% | 11.20% | 31.00% | 18.20% | 3.30% | 5.20% | 1.40% |

lower levels of education than other people in the area in which they live.¹⁹⁵ Of the remaining community members, 40.3% believe that ex-combatants and civilians have the same level of education and only 1.3% perceives that ex-combatants have higher levels of education. In addition, 76.9% of community members said that the perceived difference in levels of education between community members and ex-combatants was a problem. When asked to explain further in Uganda community members most commonly pointed out that (i) ex-combatants wouldn't be able to gain employment and thus look after their families (33.9%) and that (ii) low literacy was a problem. In DRC and RoC the most common responses from community members as to why ex-combatants' lower education levels were a problem were: (i) Irresponsible behavior (36.9%) and (ii) misunderstandings that lead to arguments (31.4%).

Across the GLR countries, 20.8% of community members received vocational training in the last years.¹⁹⁶ Male community members more frequently (22.9%) received vocational training compared to female community members (17.6%). Age also showed a clear relationship to vocational training – the higher the age of community members the less likely they were to have received vocational training (26.2% of those aged 18-30, 24.7% of those aged 31-40, and 14.6% of those over the age of 40).

Of those 20.8% of community members who had received vocational training, 78.3% said that they were currently using the vocational skills that they had been trained in.¹⁹⁷ When the 21.7% of community members who were not using their vocational training were asked to explain further the most common reasons cited were: (i) lack of tools or work facilities (27%); (ii) still completing training; and (iii) no opportunity. Interestingly, while ex-combatants have

¹⁹⁵ Rwanda is excluded from findings on community members' relative perceptions of ex-combatants' education levels.

¹⁹⁶ In Uganda this question referred to in the last five years, while in DRC and RoC it referred to only the last year. It makes some sense then that Uganda displays the highest rate of community member vocational training across the GLR countries (29.6%). Rwanda is excluded from findings on vocational training due to lack of data.

¹⁹⁷ Regardless of having received vocational training or not, 38.8% of community members across the GLR countries reported that they were currently working in their "field of skills". Male community members were slightly more likely to be working in their field (40.1%) when compared to female community members (35.7%).

received vocational training on average at twice the rate that community members do, in DRC as much four times the rate and in Uganda at a quite similar rate, they are still less likely to be utilizing that vocational training than community members (62.7% vs. 78.3%). This could be an indication that while ex-combatants display a positive trajectory in terms of closing education and skills gaps with community members, there may be additional barriers they face to reaching parity that, at least in part, may revolve around access to social and economic networks or possibly problems in reintegration programming design.¹⁹⁸

13.3 Summary

The analysis of community member demographics and core indicators presented in this section are useful not only as a backdrop against which to contextualize ex-combatant reintegration in the Great Lakes Region, but more generally as a baseline by which to understand the overall levels of societal stability and functionality of communities across the Great Lakes Region in the wake of violent conflict.

Across the indicators explored in this section, community members consistently perform better than ex-combatants. Community members are more likely to be married than ex-combatants – a fact that may help explain why community members are less likely than ex-combatants to see themselves alone as responsible for the food and finances of their household.

Community members are married to ex-combatants at half the rate that ex-combatants are and attitudinally remain largely closed to the idea – citing stigma as core reason.¹⁹⁹ Indeed, when community members observe marriages in which one member is an ex-combatant they commonly describe these marriages as problematic. These findings have two core implications: (i) stigma is a core barrier to community member / ex-combatant intermarriage across the GLR countries and (ii) beyond actual marriage rates the pool of partners who are attitudinally open to marriage with ex-combatants is largest among other ex-combatants. If stigma shapes a portion of ex-combatants marriage pathway as to one with only other ex-combatants this could have consequences for these familial units' ability to interact with the community – in a sense possibly facing compounded stigma barriers. The evolving nature of community member and ex-combatant intermarriage should be flagged as a key issue for future studies in the GLR.

Community members across the GLR have education levels skewed significantly higher than ex-combatants – likely a result of ex-combatants' time lost while mobilized in conflict. Yet, community members are far less likely than ex-combatants to receive vocational training as a part of reintegration related programming. Despite this, however, community members are actually more likely to be currently utilizing their vocational training – suggesting that there may be additional barriers to utilizing vocational training for ex-combatants including programming flaws. Developing a stronger understanding of this dynamic should be flagged for future studies in the region.

13.3.1 Vulnerable Subgroups

In the demographics analyses of the community member sample for this study the most vulnerable sub-group that emerges, as with the ex-combatant sample, is that of females. Generally speaking, female community members have a similar range of disadvantages to male community members as female ex-combatants do to male ex-combatants. However, the general gap between community member and ex-combatant samples is such that female community members (and male community members for that matter) are almost always significantly better off than their ex-

198 Example of problems with vocational training components of reintegration programming design can include, for example, that vocational training paths offered are not based on market analysis, in turn creating an oversupply of a particular set of skills in one area. This phenomenon is well documented in a number of DDR programming contexts. See for example: Jennings, K. M. (2007). The struggle to satisfy: DDR through the eyes of ex-combatants in Liberia. *International Peacekeeping*, 14(2), 204-218.

199 It is important to note that these findings do not differentiate between those community members who married combatants or ex-combatants and those who married a civilians who later became combatants / ex-combatants.

combatant counterparts.

Female community members are less likely to be married than male community members (who are themselves similarly likely to be married as male ex-combatants), though they are slightly more likely to be married than their female ex-combatant counterparts. Female community members are three times more likely than male community members to be separated or divorced and six times more likely to be widowed – though it is unknown whether the male or female initiated the divorce or separation. Regarding marriage to ex-combatants, female community members are three times more likely than their male counterparts to be married to an ex-combatant – though it is unknown whether these marriages pre-exist the combatant / ex-combatant status of their spouse. However, female ex-combatants are four times more likely than female community members to be married to an ex-combatant.

Similar to the ex-combatant sample, female community members had significantly lower literacy levels than male community members. Both male and female community members displayed slightly higher levels of literacy than ex-combatants – in accord, community members education levels were skewed higher overall than ex-combatants. However, female community members' educational achievement was skewed below that of male community members.

13.3.2 Unique Country Trends

There are several important marriage-related trends that stand out in individual GLR countries that merit further examination. Rwanda stands out as the only country where community members marry less frequently than ex-combatants. However, we can add considerable contextual detail here. In Rwanda males are required to have access to adequate housing in order to get married. However, the formal regulations for what qualifies as adequate housing in Rwanda are somewhat narrowly defined under the policy of imidugudu - a large scale body of housing policy aimed at consolidating dispersed housing in an overall effort toward villagization. The result has been inflation in adequate housing prices and in turn a severe crisis in the availability of adequate housing overall that in effect is locking many Rwandans out of official marriage – though they may cohabit without formalized marital status.²⁰⁰

In contrast to community members, most ex-combatants are returning to Rwanda from Eastern DRC where they have been away for an average of nine years. In this time some ex-combatants have married and when returning to Rwanda bring their spouse with them. The legal status of these marriages in Rwanda is unclear, however it is possible that some ex-combatants unwittingly navigate past the formal barriers to marriage that community members face – in turn accounting for their slightly higher marriage rates. While it is likely that the interaction of housing policy, marriage, and dynamics of return are key in understanding why ex-combatants marry more than community members in Rwanda this exact narrative must be treated as conjecture. These topics should be flagged for future analysis on reintegration processes in Rwanda.

Republic of Congo also stands out with unique marriage trends. In RoC marriage rates among community members, and ex-combatants, are a fraction of those in other GLR countries. Instead, cohabitation with a spouse without formal marriage is the primary marital status – even when disaggregated across age and gender groups. These findings are confounding and go without clear explanation in this study. It is possible that: (i) there has been an unbeknownst error in data capture and coding that produces these findings or (ii) that there is an unknown regional dynamic affecting marriage for community members and ex-combatants alike in RoC. Future study on reintegration processes in RoC should flag marriage as an area of special interest to further triangulate or refute these findings.

Lastly, in Uganda community members are more than twice as likely as the GLR average to report willingness to

²⁰⁰ This narrative of the interrelated nature of housing policy and marriage in Rwanda is well documented in Sommers (2012) *Stuck: Rwandan Young and the Struggle for Adulthood*.

marrying an ex-combatant in the future. Though there is no direct explanation it is possible that the specific dynamics of combatant mobilization in Uganda may play a role in this trend. In Uganda abduction was a well-known tactic of mobilization, especially by the LRA. Though abductees may have committed violent acts against their communities, often forcibly, there is evidence that ex-combatants are simultaneously understood as victims (due to abduction and forced recruiting) and perpetrators (due to the violence committed as soldiers) by community members – a factor that has reportedly contributed to a general willingness to accept returning ex-combatants back into communities.²⁰¹ This dynamic may contribute to community members in Uganda’s openness to marriage with ex-combatants. Futures studies could flag this conjecture for further analysis.

201 See for example: Finnegan, A. C. (2010), Forging Forgiveness: Collective Efforts Amidst War in Northern Uganda. *Sociological Inquiry*, 80: 424–447

14. Housing, Land, Livestock and Food Security

The context of communities in the Great Lakes Region is overwhelmingly one of severe development challenges where small-scale agriculture is instrumental to individual and familial well-being in terms of both economic security and food security. As such, understanding the pathways to land access among community members is a key contextual element for understanding the overall economic situation for community members in the Great Lakes Region and their capacity to absorb returning ex-combatants. The following is an examination of (i) the household characteristics of community members including issues of dwelling ownership and tenure; and (ii) the food security of community members including their levels of access to land for cultivation.

Across the GLR countries community members are most likely to live with: (i) the same family as before conflict (38.3%); (ii) with a family but different to that from before conflict (27.3%), or (iii) with a spouse or partner (21.5%). These three categories were the most common across all GLR countries, but varied some in their distribution from country to country. Uganda, where 51.7% of community members live with the same family; 25% live with a different family; and 22.2% live with a spouse or partner, displays the most exaggerated version of this cross-country trend. As is visible in Table 35 below, Rwanda stands out as the only GLR country with a notable portion (15%) of community members who live with friends.²⁰²

Female community members were slightly more likely to be living with a different family than the one before conflict (29.8%) and slightly more likely to live alone (7.3%) than their male counterparts (24.3% and 5.6% respectively). In addition, female community members were less likely to be living with a spouse or partner than male community members (18.1% vs. 23.6%).

In regards to housing, across the GLR countries community members were most commonly living in a house (42.3%), followed by a hut or tent (25.9%). This trend is generally reflected across

Table 35: Community Member Household Membership

| | Who Do You Live With? | | | | | | |
|--------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|---|--|--------------|-----------------------|-------|
| | Alone | With spouse / partner | With same family as before the conflict | With family but different to that from before the conflict | With friends | Family (unidentified) | Other |
| Male | 5.60% | 23.60% | 38.50% | 25.70% | 5.20% | 0.20% | 1.10% |
| Female | 7.30% | 18.10% | 38.20% | 29.80% | 3.30% | 0.90% | 2.40% |
| Age 18-30 | 6.70% | 18.40% | 37.30% | 27.90% | 8.60% | 0.30% | 0.80% |
| Age 31-40 | 3.60% | 23.60% | 34.80% | 32.90% | 3.20% | 0.40% | 1.60% |
| Age Over 40 | 7.20% | 23.00% | 43.10% | 22.90% | 1.10% | 0.60% | 2.10% |
| DRC | 7.50% | 29.40% | 43.80% | 17.50% | 1.90% | 0.00% | 0.00% |
| RoC | 10.00% | 33.80% | 20.80% | 26.60% | 0.60% | 1.80% | 6.40% |
| Rwanda | 7.10% | XXX | 37.00% | 40.70% | 15.00% | 0.00% | 0.20% |
| Uganda | 0.60% | 22.20% | 51.70% | 25.00% | 0.60% | 0.00% | 0.00% |
| GLR Average | 6.30% | 21.50% | 38.30% | 27.30% | 4.50% | 0.50% | 1.70% |

The use of XXX indicates that respondents in Rwanda were not given the option to respond that they live with a partner or spouse - the responses that would have been in the field are likely absorbed into the categories of those who live with a family either the same or different from the one before conflict.

202 This trend in Rwanda is possibly related to housing shortages as a product of Imidigudu and overall urban migration.

Table 36: Community Member Housing Ownership

| | Who Owns The Housing In Which You Currently Live? | | | | | | | |
|--------------------|---|-----------------|--------------|---|-------------------|-----------|----------------------|--------|
| | I own it | Spouse, partner | Joint owners | Family I live with such as son, mother, parents | Non-family member | My friend | My relatives, family | Other |
| Male | 54.50% | 2.00% | 4.30% | 9.50% | 0.00% | 1.00% | 8.40% | 20.30% |
| Female | 25.10% | 20.90% | 5.50% | 11.80% | 0.00% | 1.10% | 12.40% | 23.00% |
| Age 18-30 | 23.20% | 7.80% | 2.90% | 21.70% | 0.00% | 1.20% | 12.70% | 30.50% |
| Age 31-40 | 44.70% | 10.30% | 6.10% | 4.10% | 0.00% | 0.50% | 10.70% | 23.60% |
| Age Over 40 | 64.60% | 10.20% | 5.90% | 2.60% | 0.00% | 1.10% | 5.70% | 9.90% |
| DRC | 37.50% | 11.10% | 7.60% | 7.20% | 0.00% | 0.80% | 12.60% | 23.10% |
| RoC | 38.20% | 14.40% | 6.90% | 2.00% | 0.00% | 1.80% | 19.20% | 17.50% |
| Rwanda | 35.30% | 4.10% | 0.00% | 14.50% | 0.00% | 1.60% | 4.10% | 40.40% |
| Uganda | 61.70% | 7.80% | 4.40% | 17.80% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 4.40% | 3.90% |
| GLR Average | 43.20% | 9.30% | 4.70% | 10.40% | 0.00% | 1.00% | 10.10% | 21.30% |

the GLR countries with the clear exception of Uganda, where 67% live in a hut or tent, 18.1% live in a daub or wattle, and 14.3% live in a house.²⁰³ Rwanda also stands out in that 68% of community members live in a house and only 1.8% live in a hut or tent. Across the GLR (including Uganda) female community members are more likely to live in a house (50.2%) than male community members (37.2%). Marital status does not show a directly discernable relationship to housing type. Age also shows a clear positive relationship to living in a house – 27.7% of those community members aged 18-30 live in a house, 45.1% of those aged 31-40, and 55.1% of those over the age of 40.²⁰⁴

Turning to patterns of ownership for housing among community members we can observe that most community members either: (i) own the property they live on (43.2%); (ii) their relatives or parents own the property they live on (20.5%); or (iii) their spouse / partner owns the property that they live on (9.3%). This trend was remarkably durable across the GLR countries, though in Uganda there were much higher levels of self-ownership (61.7%) and in Rwanda renting was on par with self-ownership (36.9%).²⁰⁵ Despite the differences in housing ownership among community members in Uganda and Rwanda there are very clear trends across gender and age demographics. As visible in Table 36 Female community members are less than half as likely to own the property they live on compared to male community members (25.1% vs. 54.5%), and dramatically more likely to have their spouse / partner own the property they live on (20.9% vs. 2%).

In regards to age demographics, as the age of community members increases the likelihood that relatives or family own their housing decreases (34.4% of those community members aged 18-30, 14.8% of those aged 31-40, and 8.3% of those over the age of 40) and the likelihood of self-ownership increases (23.2% of those aged 18-30, 44.7% of those aged 31-40, and 64.4% of those over the age of 40).

203 It is possible that the dominance of semi-permanent housing in Uganda is an indication of the overall development level in Northern Uganda. It is also possible that there is merely a reflection of traditional housing style preferences.

204 This age demographic trend is not reflected in Uganda – where hut / tent was the most common housing type across all demographics. For a more in depth discussion of community member housing types see the Uganda Reporter Re-integration and Community Dynamics Survey Report (2011).

205 The higher rate of ownership in Uganda is likely a result of the lower barriers to owning the dominant housing type in Uganda: a hut or tent. Inversely, in Rwanda housing shortages as a product of Imidugudu have increased the barriers to housing ownership.

Community members across the GLR countries generally see themselves as equally as well off as their neighbors (57.3%), though 21.2% see themselves as worse off and 21.3% see themselves as better off. All of the GLR countries reflect this trend of the bulk of community members seeing themselves as on equal footing to their neighbors. In most countries the distribution is skewed towards seeing themselves as slightly better off, though RoC is the only country where this skewing goes the other direction. Female community members were more likely to see themselves as worse off than their neighbors compared to male community members (25.2% vs. 18.6%).

In DRC and RoC, community members were asked how they perceived their living situation relative to two years prior. The majority of community members (65.9%) see their situation as the same, while 18.5% see it as better and 13.8% see it as worse. In Uganda the same question was asked, but instead of being asked about their current situation relative to two years ago, community members were asked to rate their current living situation relative to five years ago.²⁰⁶ In the case of Uganda, 62.6% of community members saw their current living situation as better than five years prior, 16.8% saw it as the same, and 20.7% saw it as worse.²⁰⁷

14.1 Land Access and Food Security

Access to land for cultivation among community members across the GLR countries is generally high – 89.8% report that they have access to land.²⁰⁸ This figure is characteristic of all the GLR countries except for RoC in which access to land among community members was considerably lower (55.9%) in addition to being the only GLR country where land access among community members was lower than for ex-combatants (94.2%) – though the reason behind these findings are unclear. Female community members were slightly less likely to have access to land for cultivation than male community members (87.3% vs. 91.3%).

When those community members who did not have access to land for cultivation were asked to explain why in DRC and RoC the most common replies were: (i) all land was occupied (29.5%); (ii) fear for the return of conflict (19.7%); and (iii) bad memories associated with their land and they did not want to return (14.2%).²⁰⁹ Female community members were less likely to cite land occupation as the reason for their lack of access to land for cultivation than male community members (21.5% vs. 37.6%), and more likely to cite fear of conflict (25% vs. 14.3%) and lack of capital (12.5% vs. 5.3%).

When community members who did have access to land for cultivation across the GLR countries were asked whether they had more than two years prior, 44.5% said that they did have more access. This level of increased access to land for cultivation is very much an averaged figure. There is a sharp split between DRC and RoC where increased land access was high (69.1% and 71.6% respectively), and Uganda in which only 15% reported increased access.²¹⁰ However, a closer inspection of community members in Uganda with a more finely grained scaled shows that while only 15% had increased access to land for cultivation, 49.4% had the same level of access as two years prior and 36.5% had less access.

Of those community members who had less access to land than two years prior across the GLR countries there were a range of explanations given. In Uganda the most common explanations were that there had been regulated

206 This question about community members' perception of their current living situation relative to a previous point in time was not asked in Rwanda.

207 These findings are particularly subject to periodization issues and should be treated cautiously.

208 Rwanda is absent from findings related to land access, change in land access, and reasons for positive and negative changes in land access due to lack of directly comparable data.

209 This question about why community members did not have access to land for cultivation was only asked in DRC and RoC.

210 One possible explanation that has been put forth, anecdotally, for the relatively high increases in access to land in DRC and RoC is that access to land for cultivation in these countries has been so low to start with, due to displacement as a part of prolonged conflict and insecurity, that the consolidation of a relative peace in DRC and RoC has exposed a larger proportion of the population to the possibility of increases (effectively having started with no land access) than in other GLR countries where some land ownership may have persisted through conflict.

Table 37: Community Member Explanations for Lack of Livestock

| Explain the reason that your household does not have any livestock - excluding poultry | Country Country | | | |
|--|-----------------|-------------------|--------|----------|
| | DRC | Republic of Congo | Uganda | Subtotal |
| Insecurity due to conflict | 12.0% | 34.7% | 3.6% | 19.4% |
| Lack of access to suitable land | 23.0% | 26.6% | 29.1% | 25.4% |
| Ill health | 16.6% | 4.6% | 5.5% | 10.1% |
| No male adult to look after livestock | 0.0% | 0.0% | 1.8% | .3% |
| Experiences of crime (livestock stolen, etc.) | 9.7% | 31.8% | 18.2% | 19.7% |
| Other | 0.0% | 0.0% | 3.6% | .6% |
| Used for dowry | 0.0% | 0.0% | 3.6% | .6% |
| Poverty (insufficient resources, etc.) | 28.8% | 1.2% | 32.7% | 18.8% |
| Poor management | 0.0% | 0.0% | 1.8% | .3% |
| Not interested / Not a Breeder | 7.8% | 1.1% | 0.0% | 3.9% |
| Sale of livestock | .4% | 0.0% | 0.0% | .2% |
| Moves and migration | 1.8% | 0.0% | 0.0% | .8% |

division of land by their family (47.6%), followed by unregulated division of land such as grabbing, etc. (23.8%). In DRC and RoC lack of resources (25.8%), land infertility (20.8%), and land sale (20.8%) were the most common explanations.

Across the GLR countries when community members were asked to explain why they had more access to arable land for cultivation than two years prior there was a range of explanations. In Uganda the most common explanation was that a household member had purchased more land for investment (40%) – this answer was especially prominent for female community members (50%) compared to male community members (38.1%). In DRC and RoC, inheritance was also an important pathway to increased access to land for cultivation (29.1%), especially for female community members (33.4%) compared to males (26.7%).

Across the GLR countries livestock ownership, excluding poultry, is generally low among community members (35.5%), with the exception of Uganda where livestock ownership is significantly higher (66.3%).²¹¹ Despite these differences female community members were the least likely demographic group to own livestock (25.4%), especially when compared to male community members (42.7%).

When those who had no livestock were asked to explain further the four most common answers from community members across the GLR countries were as follows: (i) 25.4% cited lack of access to suitable land; (ii) 19.7% cited crime; (iii) 19.4% cited insecurity due to conflict (39.1% crime and insecurity collectively); and (iv) 18.8% cited poverty. While instructive of general trends, these cross-country figures do not fully depict the intricacies of the range of explanations given in each GLR country. For example, in DRC poverty was the most common explanation (28.8%) and livestock theft was less frequently cited (9.7%), while in RoC poverty was infrequently cited (1.9%) and livestock theft was much more frequent (31.8%). A summary of the range of explanations for lack of livestock among community members can be found above in Table 37.

211 Rwanda is absent from findings on livestock ownership, change in livestock ownership over time, and reasons for positive and negative changes in livestock ownership over time due to lack of directly comparable data.

Looking to overall change in the quantity of livestock in the last two years, 54.2% of community members across the GLR countries had seen an increase in their overall quantity of livestock – 8.5% stayed the same and 37.3% saw a decrease in livestock. Female community members were less likely in general to see an increase in their livestock (46.3%) and more likely to see a decrease (42.9%) than their male community member counterparts (57.5% and 35% respectively).

The pervasive development challenges that characterize the GLR countries mean that food security is a key issue. As such, understanding the relationship between access to land for cultivation, in addition to livestock ownership and household hunger and nutrition, as core indicators of food security for community members, is important for understanding the overall development context of GLR countries.

Table 38: Community Member Household Hunger

| | How Frequently Do People in Your Household Go Hungry? | | | |
|--------------------|---|-------|--------|-------|
| | Always | Often | Seldom | Never |
| Male | 12.0% | 34.7% | 3.6% | 19.4% |
| Female | 23.0% | 26.6% | 29.1% | 25.4% |
| Age 18-30 | 16.6% | 4.6% | 5.5% | 10.1% |
| Age 31-40 | 0.0% | 0.0% | 1.8% | .3% |
| Age Over 40 | 9.7% | 31.8% | 18.2% | 19.7% |
| DRC | 0.0% | 0.0% | 3.6% | .6% |
| RoC | 0.0% | 0.0% | 3.6% | .6% |
| Uganda | 28.8% | 1.2% | 32.7% | 18.8% |
| GLR Average | 0.0% | 0.0% | 1.8% | .3% |

The pervasive development challenges that characterize the GLR countries mean that food security is a key issue. As such, understanding the relationship between access to land for cultivation, in addition to livestock ownership and household hunger and nutrition, as core indicators of food security for community members, is important for understanding the overall development context of GLR countries.

Across the GLR countries, 27.5% of community members reported that people in their household never went hungry, 35.4% seldom, 28.8% often, and 8.3% always.²¹² Uganda stood out from these dominant trends – the entire distribution of community members being shifted towards less household hunger (35.9% never, 51.4% seldom, 11.6% often, and 11.1% always). Female community members across the GLR countries were slightly less likely to never go hungry than males (24.9% vs. 29.3%). Age showed a distinct relationship to household hunger - as age increases the likelihood of belonging to households where people always or often go hungry increases. In accordance, as age increases the likelihood of coming from a household that seldom or never goes hungry decreases (as visible in Table 38).

Household nutrition and nourishment has largely been unchanged (41.9%) for community members over the last two years. Of those who have seen a change in household nutrition, 32.5% have seen improvements and 25.6% have seen deterioration. Again, Uganda stood out from this trend with higher levels of nutritional improvement (55.2%), and less unchanged nutrition (19.9%) as well as deterioration of nutrition (24.9%). Across GLR countries female community members were slightly less likely to see improved nutrition and more likely to see worsening nutrition (28.8% and 28.3% respectively) when compared to male community members (35.2% and 23.6% respectively). Age showed a negative relationship to improved nutrition (38.6% of those 18-30 years of age, 37.9% of those 31-40 years of age, and 24.8% of those over 40 years of age) and, in accord, a positive relationship to worsening nutrition (20% of those 18-30 years of age, 20.5% of those 31-40 years of age, and 32.8% of those over 40 years of age).

14.2 Summary

Community members across the GLR countries display a range of unique trends in regards to their patterns of housing, property ownership, land access and livestock. Indeed, focused analysis reveals that there is much further variation along regional and factional lines within each individual GLR country. However, despite this variation there is a core set of trends that emerge. Community members are most likely to be living in some form of family structure – whether it is the same family that they lived with before conflict or a different one. Community members

212 Rwanda is absent from findings on household hunger and nutritional change due to lack of directly comparable data.

are most likely to be living in a house that they or someone in their family owns. This is a very similar picture to that of ex-combatants across the GLR countries.

Access to land for cultivation is generally very high for community members as is the stability of this access – i.e. while there is variation from country to country as to increases in land access, there are relatively few community members who have seen decreases in land access since the years before sampling. Those who do see increased access to land do so most commonly through household land purchase with capital from high agricultural yields or through inheritance. In contrast to ex-combatants, few community members cited marriage as a key pathway to increased land access.

Livestock ownership across the GLR countries is generally low – though slightly higher than among ex-combatants. Community members cite lack of access to resources such as capital or suitable grazing land as a key reason for low livestock ownership in addition to overarching concerns about crime and general insecurity.

Food security remains an important concern for community members across the GLR countries. While community members generally face a significantly lower level of food insecurity compared to ex-combatants across the GLR countries, there is still a sizable portion that often or always experience household hunger. Collectively, country to country variation in levels of access to land for cultivation and livestock among community members appears to show little relationship to core indicators of food security – which may be as much related to the overall economic situation in each of the GLR countries (e.g. through inflated prices of food stocks) than to land access and livestock ownership outright.

14.2.1 Vulnerable Subgroups

Female community members across the GLR countries display a range of differences in terms of the housing, land access, and food security that collectively may not necessarily entail a disadvantage, but do at least indicate a slightly altered narrative. Females are more likely to live with a different family than before conflict – possibly in part because of their high rate of being widowed compared to male community members. Female community members are more likely to live in a house, but dramatically less likely to own their house – instead commonly citing spousal or familial ownership. Female community members have slightly less access to land for cultivation than male community members in addition to being less likely to own livestock. However, female community members fare better overall in indicators of food security across the GLR countries.

Female community members overall perform slightly better than female ex-combatants across the GLR countries in terms of housing, land, livestock, and food security. The core difference in the narrative that female community members and female ex-combatants experience across the GLR countries is that female community members are generally more likely to be integrated into a familial unit and reap the benefits this extended support network.

14.2.2 Unique Country Trends

As outlined above, land access among community members in RoC is considerably lower than on average across the rest of the GLR countries. It is possible that this trend is a product of the sample from RoC being captured exclusively in the Pool region of the country. Pool was the region of RoC in which the low level insurgency prevailed in the early 2000s and persisted longer than in other parts of the country. Due to displacement, insecurity and laggard recovery, land access has become a prevalent issue. Indeed, while community members in RoC have seen the greatest increases in their levels of land access of the GLR countries this is likely because community members in RoC started with very low land access at the end of conflict in the first place – and despite large improvements continue to have the least access to land across the GLR countries. Land access in RoC is also likely tied to the lowest levels of livestock ownership across the GLR countries.

15. Economic Issues

The following is an analysis of the economic status of community members and their relationship to that of ex-combatants across the GLR countries. The analysis proceeds in five main parts: (i) an examination of community members' employment statuses and general outlooks on employment; (ii) an examination of the barriers that non-economically active community members face to gaining a stable economic status; (iii) an examination of female community members' specific economic issues; (iv) an examination of community members' levels of income, savings, and access to credit as indicators of their general economic stability and ability to leverage economic opportunities; and (v) an examination of community members' level of engagement with economic associations as an extended support / opportunity network.

The structured analysis here follows in close parity with that of the ex-combatant sample, serving as a comparison for charting the degree to which ex-combatants achieve economic reintegration and economic stability – the two not necessarily being the same thing. Indeed, conventional wisdom is that economic reintegration is essential for the process of building peace and security – however the economic context across the Great Lakes Region is often one of severe development challenges posed to both community members and ex-combatants alike. One way to view this is that ex-combatants reaching parity with community members along economic lines may end up meaning reaching a state of economic instability equal to community members.

15.1 Economic Status and History

Employment status was very consistent across the GLR countries for community members through time (prior to conflict, at the end of conflict, and at the time of sampling).²¹³ As can be seen in Table 39 the most common employment status for community members across the GLR countries was self-employed in agriculture (36.9% prior to conflict, 42.5% at demobilization, and 38.3% at sampling). It appears that the slight spike in those community members self-employed in agriculture at the end in conflict coincides with drops in the number of unemployed and, more notably, drops in the number of community members studying or training compared to before conflict (19% prior to conflict, 11.8% at the end of conflict, and 7.9% at sampling). Uganda displays an exaggerated version of this trend, as prior to conflict most community members in Uganda were studying or training (43.3%) followed by self-employed in agriculture (33.9%), however by the time of sampling the employment statuses of community members in Uganda fell very much in line with the cross-country average.

Female community members were slightly more likely to be unemployed, self-employed in retail, or a housewife working in the home at all time periods when compared to male community members (*see Table 39*). Over time female community members have seen a slight drop in the rate of being self-employed in agriculture accompanied by slight increases in public and private sector employment as well as unemployment.

When those community members across the GLR countries who were not employed at the time of sampling were asked to explain why they were not working, there were several dominant responses: (i) 43% said they were not working due to lack of opportunity; (ii) 16.8% cited financial problems (including lack of access to credit); (iii)

213 Due to the state of continued conflict in DRC, employment status was surveyed in reference to 5 years ago, 3 years ago, and today. Data on community member employment status in Rwanda is only available for the time of sampling.

Table 39: Community Member Economic Status at Three Time Points²¹⁵

| | Who Owns The Housing In Which You Currently Live? | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|--|---|--|---------------------------|------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------|--|---|----------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| | Unemployed | Employed working for employer, agriculture | Employed working for employer, private sector | Employed working for employer, public sector | Self-employed agriculture | Self-employed services | Self-employed retail | Self-employed manufacturing | Hustle or involved in or reliant on the informal economy | Supplementing income through subsistence activities | Studying or Training | Housewife or Working in the home | Retired, but not economically active |
| Employment Status Prior to Conflict | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Male | 12.90% | 0.70% | 6.90% | 9.20% | 37.00% | 6.00% | 2.80% | 0.80% | 0.70% | 0.00% | 20.10% | 0.20% | 2.50% |
| Female | 18.20% | 0.30% | 2.80% | 3.90% | 36.40% | 5.10% | 6.20% | 1.30% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 17.60% | 8.10% | 0.10% |
| Age 18-30 | 18.90% | 0.80% | 4.50% | 2.60% | 18.40% | 4.10% | 3.00% | 0.60% | 0.60% | 0.00% | 42.60% | 3.80% | 0.00% |
| Age 31-40 | 14.20% | 0.60% | 6.30% | 6.10% | 34.70% | 8.20% | 6.20% | 0.90% | 0.80% | 0.00% | 17.90% | 4.00% | 0.10% |
| Age Over 40 | 12.70% | 0.30% | 5.40% | 11.30% | 51.10% | 5.30% | 4.30% | 0.90% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 2.00% | 3.20% | 3.60% |
| DRC | 19.90% | 1.10% | 9.00% | 13.30% | 18.10% | 8.90% | 8.10% | 1.30% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 11.40% | 8.20% | 0.80% |
| RoC | 15.60% | 0.60% | 2.90% | 3.30% | 59.60% | 4.80% | 2.60% | 1.70% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 2.90% | 2.00% | 3.90% |
| Uganda | 9.40% | 0.00% | 3.50% | 4.10% | 33.90% | 2.90% | 1.80% | 0.00% | 1.20% | 0.00% | 43.30% | 0.00% | 0.00% |
| GLR Average | 15.00% | 0.60% | 5.20% | 7.00% | 36.90% | 5.60% | 4.20% | 1.00% | 0.40% | 0.00% | 19.00% | 3.50% | 1.60% |
| Employment Status at the End of Conflict | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Male | 11.70% | 1.00% | 7.00% | 7.70% | 44.50% | 6.60% | 3.70% | 0.80% | 0.30% | 0.60% | 13.00% | 0.60% | 2.30% |
| Female | 14.70% | 0.50% | 3.70% | 4.80% | 39.50% | 5.50% | 7.40% | 1.20% | 1.80% | 0.90% | 10.10% | 9.80% | 0.20% |
| Age 18-30 | 14.00% | 0.70% | 6.90% | 3.10% | 28.40% | 5.30% | 4.30% | 0.60% | 2.30% | 1.20% | 28.10% | 5.30% | 0.00% |
| Age 31-40 | 12.70% | 1.50% | 6.60% | 7.10% | 39.00% | 8.70% | 8.20% | 0.80% | 0.00% | 0.80% | 9.10% | 5.40% | 0.10% |
| Age Over 40 | 12.10% | 0.30% | 4.40% | 9.30% | 54.90% | 5.50% | 4.40% | 0.90% | 0.50% | 0.50% | 0.50% | 3.20% | 3.40% |
| DRC | 17.50% | 1.10% | 8.50% | 12.80% | 20.40% | 9.40% | 8.90% | 1.40% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 8.80% | 10.30% | 1.00% |
| RoC | 15.10% | 0.60% | 2.00% | 3.10% | 62.00% | 5.00% | 3.10% | 1.50% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 1.50% | 2.60% | 3.60% |
| Uganda | 6.20% | 0.60% | 6.20% | 3.40% | 46.30% | 4.00% | 3.40% | 0.00% | 2.80% | 2.30% | 24.90% | 0.00% | 0.00% |
| GLR Average | 12.90% | 0.80% | 5.60% | 6.50% | 42.50% | 6.20% | 5.20% | 0.90% | 0.90% | 0.80% | 11.80% | 4.40% | 1.50% |
| Employment Status at Sampling | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Male | 16.30% | 1.80% | 6.80% | 8.40% | 38.30% | 8.60% | 4.10% | 1.10% | 0.80% | 1.50% | 9.30% | 0.60% | 2.50% |
| Female | 18.20% | 0.80% | 4.30% | 5.70% | 37.90% | 5.30% | 7.90% | 1.50% | 2.30% | 1.10% | 5.70% | 8.90% | 0.30% |
| Age 18-30 | 20.20% | 1.30% | 8.40% | 5.30% | 25.00% | 7.70% | 5.30% | 0.80% | 2.10% | 2.50% | 17.70% | 3.80% | 0.00% |
| Age 31-40 | 15.60% | 1.70% | 5.90% | 9.60% | 39.20% | 8.20% | 6.30% | 1.80% | 1.40% | 0.60% | 4.00% | 5.20% | 0.30% |
| Age Over 40 | 14.70% | 1.40% | 3.20% | 8.50% | 50.90% | 6.40% | 5.40% | 1.20% | 0.30% | 0.50% | 0.00% | 2.90% | 4.60% |
| DRC | 19.50% | 1.00% | 6.80% | 12.20% | 20.50% | 9.40% | 9.70% | 2.20% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 6.80% | 10.20% | 1.70% |
| RoC | 14.40% | 0.40% | 1.70% | 2.60% | 64.70% | 5.10% | 2.60% | 1.50% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.90% | 1.90% | 4.10% |
| Rwanda | 28.80% | 3.60% | 8.90% | 8.10% | 13.70% | 6.20% | 5.20% | 1.20% | 1.60% | 3.60% | 16.50% | 2.20% | 0.60% |
| Uganda | 5.10% | 0.60% | 5.60% | 6.20% | 55.40% | 8.50% | 4.50% | 0.00% | 4.00% | 1.70% | 7.30% | 0.60% | 0.60% |
| GLR Average | 17.00% | 1.40% | 5.80% | 7.30% | 38.30% | 7.30% | 5.50% | 1.20% | 1.40% | 1.30% | 7.90% | 3.80% | 1.70% |

The use of the phrase "at three time points" indicates that respondents were surveyed at one time point with questions regarding three different time points. Because of the inclusion of Rwanda, cross-country community member employment status at the time of sampling is biased compared to data for before conflict and at the time of demobilization programming. For example, the cross-country GLR figure for unemployment at the time of sampling without Rwanda in the sample is only 13% - compared to 17%. These cross-country figures should be approached cautiously and with an eye for detail.

11.1% cited lack of sponsor; and (iv) 11.8% pointed to lack of marketable skills.²¹⁴ Uganda stood out from this general trend in reasons for not working – instead the majority (44.4%) said they were not working because they were a student (matching the findings on Uganda’s higher rate of studying and training above).

Female community members across the GLR countries were less likely to cite lack of opportunity and lack of sponsor as the reason for their unemployment (37.6% and 8.6%, respectively) than male community members (48.2% and 13.1%, respectively). Inversely, female community members were more likely to cite a lack of marketable skills and financial problems including lack of credit (18.6% and 19.4%, respectively) compared to their male community member counterparts (5.8% and 14.1%, respectively). Along age demographic categories, those community members aged over 40 were less likely to cite lack of opportunity as a reason for their unemployment (36.5% vs. 51.9% of those 31-40 and 45.4% of those 18-30) and more likely to cite financial problems including lack of credit (23.3% vs. 13.9% of those 31-40 and 8.5% of those 18-30).

Across the GLR countries 31.9% of community members reported having more than one job / income earning activity.²¹⁵ When asked to explain further in Uganda there were several key responses: (i) 31.1% cited income supplementation for general survival as the reason for having more than one income earning activity; (ii) 19.7% explained that they subsistence farmed in addition to having a small business; and (iii) 19.7% said they worked more than one income generating activity for the general betterment of their economic situation. Females in Uganda were less likely to subsistence farm on the side of another job (14.3%) and more likely to work more than one job to meet basic needs (35.7%) than male community members (21.3% and 29.8%, respectively). In DRC and RoC the range of explanations was similar though differently distributed, 40.7% farmed on the side of another income generating activity and 19.1% worked more than one job to meet basic needs.

Of community members across the GLR countries, 57.3% would be willing to consider moving to another part of their country for better job opportunities.²¹⁶ This figure reflects the trends in DRC and RoC well, however in Uganda the proportion of community members willing to consider moving for improved job opportunities was tipped the opposite direction (66.9% reporting that they would not consider moving). Across the GLR countries female community members were slightly less willing to consider moving for better job prospects compared to male community members (53% vs. 60.3%). Also, community members over the age of 40 were less likely to be willing to consider moving (49.2% vs. 64.5% of those 31-40 and 61.7% of those 18-30) – sacrificing their overall stronger social footing in the community.

When community members who were willing to consider moving for improved job prospects in Uganda were asked to explain further the most common responses were: (i) to improve their standard of living (33.9% total – 46.7% of females vs. 29.3% of males) and (ii) to seek out new opportunities and experiences (21.4% total – 6.7% of females vs. 26.8% of males).²¹⁷ Again in Uganda, when those community members who were not willing to consider moving to another part of the country for improved job prospects were asked to explain further the most common responses were: (i) lack of education / still being a student prevents work (31.9% total – 42.5% of females vs. 26% of males) and (ii) family responsibilities (30.1% total – 35% of females vs. 27.4% of males).

Drawing from Uganda only, 59.4% of community members reported that they believe that it is harder for ex-combatants than others to find a job (compared to 78.7% of ex-combatants in Uganda and 64.6% of ex-combatants

214 Rwanda is absent from findings on explanations for unemployment among community members due to lack of directly comparable data. The term “sponsor” here refers to the apprentice / master relationship. Community members are saying that they do not have anyone to apprentice under.

215 Rwanda is absent from findings on number of community members who participate in more than one economic activity and the reason why due to lack of directly comparable data.

216 Rwanda is absent from findings on community member willingness to migrate for better economic opportunities due to lack of directly comparable data.

217 Questions regarding community members’ explanations for willingness to migrate for economic opportunities were only asked in Uganda.

overall).²¹⁸ Female community members in Uganda were slightly more likely to perceive that ex-combatants had a harder time finding jobs than others when compared to male community members (64.2% vs. 57.4%). In addition, age showed a negative relationship to the perception that ex-combatants have a harder time finding a job (67.5% of those 18-30, 57.9% of those 31-40, and 48.1% of those over 40).

Collectively community members' economic trajectory and understanding of the dynamics surrounding this trajectory come together in community members' overall outlook on their future. The vast majority of community members (77.9%) see their economic situation improving in the future. Both male and female community members across the GLR displayed a very similar positive outlook (79.3% vs. 76.8% respectively). Age displayed a negative relationship to the frequency of reporting a positive outlook on one's economic future with a steep threshold for those aged over 40 (83.2% of those 18-30, 81.7% of those 31-40, and 65.3% of those over 40) which, as outlined below, is especially tied to health related issues.

The range of explanations given from community members for a positive outlook on economic prospects in the future were diverse across the GLR countries, making a meaningful cross-country comparison difficult, however a certain range of responses were more common: (i) improved agricultural performance was seen as key in Uganda (23.3%) however less important in DRC and RoC (11.6% and 8.6% respectively); (ii) gaining employment was important in all countries (15.8% in Uganda, 16.8% in DRC, and 12.9% in RoC); (iii) personal effort or hard work was especially important in RoC but much less so in Uganda and DRC (35.8% in RoC, 13% in Uganda, and 17% in DRC); (iv) religious faith / grace of god was central in DRC and RoC (25% and 20.5% respectively) and completely absent (0%) in Uganda.²¹⁹

Of those community members who had a negative outlook on their economic prospects in the future there were also a range of common answers: (i) ill health was a common response in Uganda and DRC (34% and 22.2%, respectively) – this was an especially prevalent response among community members over the age of 40; (ii) poor agricultural yield was a common explanation in Uganda and RoC (21.3% and 23.2%, respectively); and (iii) general economic decline / lack of opportunities was a frequent explanation as well (14.9% in Uganda, 24.2% in DRC, and 34.3% in RoC).

As a final point, looking only to DRC and RoC we can observe that 56.1% of community members work for pay 12 months of the year, the remainder working for paid labor closer to the average 9.47 months a year. This makes sense, as 72.3% of all community members work 1-3 months for unpaid labor in addition to their paid labor. Female community members worked slightly longer on average for both paid and unpaid labor compared to male community members (9.59 months paid labor vs. 9.36 months, and 3.23 months unpaid labor vs. 3.05 months). Community members over the age of 40 had the largest average period of the year spent in paid labor (9.78 months) and the lowest average period spent in unpaid labor (3.07 months).

It appears as though in DRC and RoC, community members most commonly fall into one of three categories: (i) working 12 months a year for paid labor; (ii) working 12 months a year for paid labor and for 1-3 months of the year (farming season) working for unpaid labor; and (iii) working for around nine months of the year for paid labor and spending the remaining three months (farming season) in unpaid labor.

218 Again, Uganda is discussed exclusively here because questions on the perception of relative difficulty that ex-combatants have finding jobs were only asked to community members in Uganda, whereas in ex-combatant surveys the same question was asked across all GLR countries excluding Rwanda.

219 These findings should not play down the role of religion in Northern Ugandan culture. For example, the Acholi people have a rich tradition of belief blending indigenous and Christian religious customs. Rwanda is excluded from findings on reasons for community members' positive and negative outlooks on their overall economic situation due to lack of directly comparable data.

15.2 Non-Economically Active Community Members on Employment Issues

Those community members across the GLR countries who were not economically active explained a range of coping mechanisms to get by financially without an income. Most commonly, community members reported that they relied on cash contributions from family (28%), borrowed money from unspecified sources (19.3%), used past savings (15.8%), or got help from public sources such as the community or a church (14.1%).²²⁰ Female community members were less likely to use savings (11.7%) compared to male community members (19.5%) and more likely to rely on cash contributions from family than male community members (33.9% vs. 23%), supporting the idea that females (ex-combatants and community members alike) are especially reliant on the family and have fewer economic support networks overall. Age showed a positive relationship to the likelihood of using savings to get by (8% of those 18-30, 17.8% of those 31-40, and 19.8% of those over 40).

Looking specifically to Uganda, a large proportion of non-economically active community members (77.8%) believe that they have a harder time finding a job than other people.²²¹ Further, 100% of non-economically active female community members thought they had a harder time finding a job compared to 66.7% of their male counterparts. When asked to explain why they thought they had a harder time, non-economically active community members in Uganda most commonly cited incomplete studies / still a student (28.6%), low or no education (28.6%), and disability (28.6%). Female community members cited lack of education or qualifications at a higher rate (50%). This reinforces the evidence that community members, at least in Uganda, see education as a key pathway to gaining employment.

Across the GLR countries, non-economically active community members generally held quite polarized outlooks on their prospects of gaining employment in the near future. Of those community members, 48.9% reported that they think they have a good chance of getting a job in the near future, 1.4% that they have neither a good or bad chance, and 49.7% that they have a poor chance. This clear polarization was characteristic most clearly in DRC, however in RoC a larger proportion has positive outlooks (66.6%) and in Rwanda a lower proportion had positive outlooks (33.1%). These trends are visible in Table 40. Age showed a clear positive relationship to the likelihood of having a poor outlook on gaining employment in the future (44.1% of those 18-30, 47.4% of those 31-40, and 61.4% of those over 40).

| | What are your chances of getting a job in the near future? | |
|--------------------------|--|--------|
| | Good | Poor |
| Male | 50.13% | 49.23% |
| Female | 48.70% | 51.30% |
| Age 18-30 | 54.15% | 45.85% |
| Age 31-40 | 52.60% | 47.40% |
| Age Over 40 | 38.60% | 61.40% |
| DRC | 47.60% | 52.40% |
| Republic of Congo | 66.60% | 33.40% |
| Rwanda | 33.10% | 66.90% |
| Uganda | 50.00% | 50.00% |
| GLR Average | 49.60% | 50.40% |

In Uganda non-economically active community members were questioned further as to the reasons behind their

220 Rwanda is absent from findings on non-economically active community members' coping strategies due to lack of directly comparable data.

221 This question on whether non-economically active community members perceive having a harder time finding a job than others was only asked to community members in Uganda, while for ex-combatants it was asked in DRC, RoC, Uganda, and Burundi.

answers.²²² Those who had a positive outlook explained their optimism with one of three answers: (i) that they hold qualifications and have papers (50%), (ii) that they are currently pursuing studies, and (iii) that they are bright, capable, hard working and motivated. Of non-economically active female community members in Uganda with a positive outlook on gaining employment in the near future, 100% explained their optimism as tied to their current studying.

Of those non-economically active community members in Uganda who had a negative outlook on gaining employment in the near future there were also three common explanations: (i) that they were disabled (50%); (ii) that they had low or no qualifications (25%); or (iii) that corrupt officials made gaining employment unlikely (25%). We can take away that, at least in Uganda, non-economically active community members perceive the attainment of education as among the key pathways to gaining employment in the near future – and inversely the lack thereof as a key barrier.

15.3 Female Community Members on Employment Issues

Non-economically active female community members across the GLR countries generally did not feel discriminated against as a female (83.2% did not feel discrimination and 16.8% did). Uganda was the only GLR country that stood out from this trend – where 50% of non-economically active female community members felt discriminated against on the basis of being female. In Uganda, 100% of those non-economically active female community members identified male bosses or employers as the ones discriminating against them on the basis of gender.²²³

When economically active female community members across the GLR countries were asked whether they perceived being discriminated against on the basis of being a female the proportion which felt discriminated against as a female was similar, but slightly lower (14.6%) than with non-economically active females. In Rwanda discrimination was perceived on the lowest level (4.8%) across the GLR countries, while it was highest in Uganda (23.3%). Still looking at Uganda, of those economically active female community members who did feel discriminated against on the basis of gender 57.2% identified that discrimination as coming from co-workers (50% of those specified male co-workers, 25% female co-workers, and 25% all co-workers).

When economically active female community members across DRC and RoC were asked whether they perceived female ex-combatants as having a harder time, 36% responded yes (the other 64% replying no). When those 36% that did think that female ex-combatants had a harder time than others were asked to explain, the most common explanations were the brutality and misconduct of ex-combatants (34.6%), the poor reputation of ex-combatants (32.1%), and distrust of ex-combatants (12.6%).

15.4 Income, Savings and Access to Credit

In the context of the severe development challenges that characterize most of the Great Lakes Region, levels of community member economic activity are a good starting point for understanding basic individual and household economic stability. However, it is through more closely examining community members' income, savings and access to credit that we can begin to reveal some about their ability, or in some cases lack thereof, to move beyond mere subsistence by leveraging economic opportunities and in turn exhibiting economic mobility.

Across the GLR countries, 49.7% of community members reported that they were the sole breadwinner in their household, the remaining 50.3% reporting that others assist them. Despite this cross-country average, community members within the individual GLR countries responded in different proportions as to whether they were the

222 Questions on the reasons behind non-economically active community members' economic outlooks were only asked in Uganda.

223 Questions on both non-economically active and economically active female community members' perceived sources of discrimination were only asked in Uganda.

sole breadwinners of their household – these findings are presented in Table 41. Concerning demographic categories, age shows a positive relationship to the likelihood of being a sole breadwinner (42.9% of those 18-30, 54.2% of those 31-40, and 55.7% of those over 40. In addition, across the GLR countries female community members were less likely to be the sole breadwinner of their household compared to male community members (32.8% vs. 57.5%) – contributing to the idea that female community members generally have fewer economic networks than males.

Of those community members across the GLR countries who are the sole breadwinners of their household only 29.3% report that they break-even in meeting their household expenses each month while the remaining 42% usually have to borrow money, 21% rely on money transfers from family, and 4.5% use past savings.²²⁴ Only 3.2% of community members usually have money left over after meeting their monthly expenses. Within each of the GLR countries the variation across these responses is displayed in Table 42. Female community members were less likely to break even in their monthly expenses than males (22.9% vs. 32.5%) and more likely to rely on family money transfers (24.4% vs. 19.3%) and borrowing in general (49.8% vs. 38.2%).

Regarding age demographics, those 31-40 are the most likely age group to break even on their monthly expenses (38.70%) and the least likely to rely on family money transfers (10.7%) – whereas those 18-30 and over 40 were less likely to break even (25.1% and 29.5%, respectively) and more likely to rely on family money transfers (24.9% and 23.7%, respectively). However, in terms of borrowing more generally those aged 31-40 were on par with other

| | Are you the sole, or only, breadwinner or do others in your household also earn an income? | |
|--------------------------|--|---------------|
| | Sole | Others assist |
| Male | 57.50% | 42.50% |
| Female | 32.80% | 67.20% |
| Age 18-30 | 42.90% | 57.10% |
| Age 31-40 | 54.20% | 45.80% |
| Age Over 40 | 55.70% | 44.30% |
| DRC | 80.00% | 20.00% |
| Republic of Congo | 36.00% | 64.00% |
| Rwanda | 61.30% | 38.70% |
| Uganda | 44.80% | 55.20% |
| GLR Average | 49.70% | 50.30% |

| | At the end of each month, do you meet your household expenses? | | | | |
|--------------------|--|--------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------|
| | Usually have money left over | Usually break-even | Usually have to use past savings | Rely on family money transfers | Usually have to borrow |
| Male | 4.50% | 32.50% | 5.50% | 19.30% | 38.20% |
| Female | 0.40% | 22.90% | 2.40% | 24.40% | 49.80% |
| Age 18-30 | 4.40% | 25.10% | 3.10% | 24.90% | 42.50% |
| Age 31-40 | 0.30% | 38.70% | 7.90% | 10.70% | 42.50% |
| Age Over 40 | 3.60% | 29.50% | 4.00% | 23.70% | 39.20% |
| DRC | 0.00% | 40.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 60.00% |
| RoC | 9.10% | 34.10% | 13.60% | 18.20% | 25.00% |
| Uganda | 3.00% | 29.10% | 4.20% | 21.20% | 42.40% |
| GLR Average | 3.20% | 29.30% | 4.50% | 21.00% | 42.00% |

224 Rwanda is absent from findings on community member sole breadwinners' meeting monthly expenses, surplus percentages, and deficit percentages due to lack of directly comparable data.

age demographics. These trends could suggest that those aged 31-40 are in a period where they are financially independent from the familial unit in which they were raised, though not yet having established their own familial unit to such a level that it can serve as an extended support network – though to confirm this speculation would require triangulation in future studies.

Of those 65.4% community members across the GLR countries who are sole breadwinners and have a shortage of income for meeting their monthly expenses, they are on average short by 46% of their required income. Of those 4.2% of community members across the GLR who have a surplus of income after meeting monthly expenses, they have on average a surplus of 32% of their income. Within-country averages for monthly income deficit and surplus are displayed in Table 43. Female community members on average have larger income shortages (mean 53%) and slightly smaller surpluses (mean 30%) than male community members (mean 41% and 34% respectively). Age showed a negative relationship to the average income shortage among community members (mean 51% of those 18-30, 42% of those 31-40, and 40% of those over 40). However in terms of average income surplus those 31-40 have the smallest average surplus (22%) while those 18-30 and over 40 have somewhat larger surpluses (28% and 38% respectively).

Those community members across the GLR countries who are not sole breadwinners contribute 40% on average of their total household income. The variation in average income contribution within each of the GLR countries is displayed in Table 44. On average non-sole breadwinner female community members contribute less than males (mean 37% vs. 43%). Those aged 31-40 contribute the largest proportion of household income on average compared to other age demographic groups (mean 52% vs. 33% of those 18-30 and 44% of those over 40).

In the two years prior to sampling 31.7% of community members across the GLR countries have had to borrow money to help meet their day to day needs, the remaining 68.3% not having needed to borrow, though there is a split between DRC and RoC where 23.1% and 20.3% (respectively) had to borrow, and Uganda where 52.3% had to borrow.²²⁵ In DRC and RoC the most common expenses that borrowed money was used for were: (i) to assist family (26.7%); (ii) as a means of subsistence (21.6%); and (iii) for a business investment (18.5%). In addition in DRC and RoC the most common borrowing source was friends (53%) followed by family (20%).

Across the GLR countries, only 13.3% of community members had ever applied for micro-credit from a

Table 43: Community Member Sole Breadwinner Average Monthly Income Shortages and Surpluses.

| | Average Monthly Income Shortage | Average Monthly Income Surplus |
|-------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Male | 41% | 34% |
| Female | 53% | 30% |
| Age 18-30 | 51% | 28% |
| Age 31-40 | 42% | 22% |
| Age Over 40 | 40% | 38% |
| DRC | 30% | 13% |
| RoC | 42% | 35% |
| Uganda | 46% | 31% |
| GLR Average | 46% | 32% |

Table 44: Community Member Average Non-Sole Breadwinner Household Income Contribution

| | Average Non-Sole Breadwinner Household Income Contribution Percentage |
|-------------|---|
| Male | 43% |
| Female | 37% |
| Age 18-30 | 33% |
| Age 31-40 | 52% |
| Age Over 40 | 44% |
| DRC | 42% |
| RoC | 51% |
| Rwanda | 31% |
| Uganda | 43% |
| GLR Average | 40% |

225 Rwanda is absent from all findings on borrowing to meet monthly expenses due to lack of directly comparable data. Further, questions regarding the sources and uses of borrowed money were only asked to community members in DRC and RoC.

financial institution, the remaining 86.7% never having applied (possibly due to lack of access). This cross-country figure is very much an average in that there was a clear split between DRC and RoC, on the one hand, where micro-credit application rates were very low (5.3% in DRC and 3.4% in RoC), against Rwanda and Uganda, on the other hand, where higher proportions of community members had applied for micro-credit (24.6% and 26.4% respectively). This division may be a product of the overall levels of development in the sampled areas of DRC and RoC (especially eastern DRC) – financial institutions as such being nearly non-existent. Generally speaking female community members were just as likely to have applied for micro-credit across the GLR countries when compared to male community members (13.1% vs. 13.4%). In Uganda there was a gendered trend visible in which 37.1% of female community members versus 19.6% of male community members had applied for micro-credit.

Of those community members who had applied for micro-credit most had successful applications (90.4%). At a cross-country level female community members reported slightly lower success rates in micro-credit applications (84.4% vs. 94.5%) – at a within-country level there is further nuance to examine. In Uganda, male community members were 100% successful in their micro-credit applications compared to 69.2% of female community members. Inversely, in RoC 85% of female community members had successful applications compared to 60% of male community members. The explanatory factor behind these opposing gender trends in micro-credit application rates is challenging to identify, but could prove a useful direction of inquiry in future studies.

15.5 Economic Associations

Across the GLR countries, just over half of community members (53.7%) are currently involved in micro-economic activities – though in DRC this was a notably lower proportion (34.2%).

Across the GLR countries 21.8% of community members were currently a member of an economic association, 7.6% were previously a member but were no longer, and 70.6% had never been a member of an economic association. However, in Rwanda and Uganda there were notably higher proportions of community members who were currently members of economic associations (25.2% and 42.9% respectively) – these trends are displayed in Table 45. Across the GLR countries, female community members were slightly less likely to currently be a member of an economic association when compared to male community members (19.7% vs. 23.3%). However, Uganda stands out from this otherwise durable trend – female community members were actually more likely to currently be in an economic association than their male counterparts (54.5% vs. 37.5%).

Looking only at Rwanda and Uganda, we can see that the most common form of economic association for community members is local savings and credit cooperatives, in which 40.3% of those who were currently a member of an

Table 45: Community Member Economic Association Membership

| | In the past two years have you ever been a member of an Economic Association | | |
|--------------------------|--|--------------------------------|---|
| | Yes, have been a member previously - but not now | Yes, am currently a member now | No, have never been a member of an economic association |
| Male | 7.50% | 23.30% | 69.20% |
| Female | 7.70% | 19.70% | 72.60% |
| Age 18-30 | 7.00% | 21.00% | 72.00% |
| Age 31-40 | 7.10% | 27.10% | 65.80% |
| Age Over 40 | 8.10% | 20.10% | 71.80% |
| DRC | 4.80% | 9.80% | 85.30% |
| Republic of Congo | 4.40% | 9.40% | 86.20% |
| Rwanda | 10.30% | 25.20% | 64.40% |
| Uganda | 10.90% | 42.90% | 46.30% |
| GLR Average | 7.60% | 21.80% | 70.60% |

Table 46: Community Member Economic Association Members Breakdown

| | Who are the members that comprise this Economic Association? | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------|--|------------------------------|---|------------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------|----------|--|-------|
| | Only Ex-Combatants | Mix but mostly Ex-Combatants | Mixed with both reporters and non-Ex-Combatants | Mixed but mostly non-Ex-Combatants | Civilians, no Ex-Combatants | Mainly disabled people | Military | Specified professionals such as teachers | Other |
| DRC | 1.6% | 1.6% | 0.0% | 58.7% | 30.2% | 0.0% | 1.6% | 0.0% | 6.3% |
| RoC | 1.9% | 5.7% | 43.4% | 46.2% | 2.8% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% |
| Rwanda | 0.0% | 9.2% | 6.4% | 84.4% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% |
| Uganda | 0.0% | 36.4% | 49.4% | 0.0% | 11.7% | 1.3% | 0.0% | 1.3% | 0.0% |
| GLR Average | .3% | 22.5% | 31.9% | 33.3% | 9.8% | .7% | .2% | .7% | .7% |

economic association in Uganda belonged to and 61.1% of those in Rwanda belonged to.²²⁶ The next most common form of economic association among community members was farmers associations (8.3%) – of which female community members were less likely to be a member of when compared to males (3.3% vs. 11.9%).

When asked about the primary benefits they gain from membership to their economic association there were diverse trends across the GLR countries. In Rwanda and Uganda, community members most commonly identify financial support as a key benefit of their membership to an economic association (38.9% and 69.2% respectively). However, for community members in DRC and RoC, social networking (30.2% in DRC and 23.9% in RoC) and economic networking (39.7% in DRC and 46.9% in RoC), and moral support (27% in DRC and 19.5% in RoC) were the key benefits to membership in an economic association. Though not the most common reply, social and economic networking were also perceived as benefits to economic associations in Rwanda (14.2% and 20.4%) but not in as much so in Uganda (3.1% and 4.6%).

Age appears to play a role in the value of economic associations in at least two ways. First, as age increases, community members are less likely to see financial support as the main benefit of being in an economic association (52.3% of those 18-30, 46.9% of those 31-40, and 37.5% of those over 40) – most relevant in Rwanda and Uganda. Second, as age increases, community members are more likely to see economic networking as the chief benefit (14% of those 18-30, 19.1% of those 31-40, and 20% of those over 40) – especially relevant in DRC and RoC.²²⁷

Across the GLR countries when community members were asked about the membership of their economic associations there was considerable variation across countries. The variation within each GLR country for community members' perception of the membership of their economic association is presented in Table 46. Community members in DRC and Rwanda, and to a lesser extent RoC, were most heavily involved in economic associations without ex-combatant members, while community members in Uganda were more commonly members of economic association that also had ex-combatant members. It unclear this is a reflection of programmatic design or the result of social forces such as stigma.

²²⁶ Questions regarding the type of economic associations to which community members belonged were only asked in Rwanda and Uganda. In Rwanda these local savings and credit cooperatives commonly existed under the name VSLA – Village Savings and Loan Association.

²²⁷ However, this age related trend in DRC and RoC may be a product of the sampling biases in these countries towards community members over the age of 40.

15.6 Summary

Community members across the GLR countries show a relatively stable trajectory of economic status over time – the average unemployment rate varying as little as 2%. The majority of community members are self-employed in small-scale agriculture. Indeed, through time this remains the most important economic activity for community members across the GLR. Though the proportion of community members self-employed in small-scale agriculture peaks at the end of conflict and then drops some at the time of sampling, these drops, along with a continuous drop in the number of community members studying, are absorbed most notably into employment in public and private sector as well as self-employment in non-agricultural service and retail – indicative of the initial onset of improved stability and security in the wake of peace. Though, in DRC these is a nearly static state of employment among community members through time – likely a result of the continuing state of conflict in Eastern DRC.

Like ex-combatants, community members see their primary barrier to gaining a stable economic status as the lack of opportunities available to them but are also more likely to cite economic problems (such as access to credit) and lack of marketable skills as barriers than ex-combatants. In further contrast to ex-combatants, few community members were willing to migrate for better economic opportunities, likely an indicator of their stronger social and economic footing in the community. Non-economically active community members relied heavily on borrowing from family and friends to get by. However, overall community members had a positive outlook on their economic prospects in the future.

Community members across the GLR displayed a near even split between household sole breadwinner and non-sole breadwinner status. While on average non-sole breadwinners contributed less than half of their total monthly household income this was supplemented against the support of the rest of their household members' income contributions, placing them at a clear advantage to sole breadwinners. Over half of sole breadwinners had to borrow money from family or friends to meet their household expenses on a monthly basis. Sole breadwinners between the ages of 31 and 40 were the most likely to meet their monthly expenses without borrowing, and when they did borrow they were much more likely to do so from friends instead of family. Further, those non-sole breadwinners aged 31-40 also contributed the most to their total household income on average. These elements combined suggest that community members aged 31-40 are at their economic prime and among the most capable at meeting their household economic responsibilities.

The number of community members who have access to micro-credit is low across the GLR countries, and few were members of economic associations – though some community members came into economic associations with ex-combatants as a part of reintegration programming in some countries (e.g. DRC and RoC). The primary value that community members identified to economic associations (most commonly local credit and savings), was largely reflective of programmatic dimensions in each country – e.g. in DRC and RoC social and economic networking were the primary value of economic associations that community members identified.

15.6.1 Vulnerable Subgroups

As consistent with the analysis presented throughout this survey of community dynamics in the Great Lakes Region, female community members exhibit a distinct range of characteristics that collectively paint a picture of a weaker platform of economic stability. Female community members are more likely than males to be unemployed through time, and vastly more likely to work taking care of the household – to an extent this can be expected as a result of traditional gender roles in the GLR countries. Female community members are less likely to cite lack of opportunity as the primary barrier to gaining productive economic status, though still the primary, and more likely to cite lack of education or skills than male community members.

Across the GLR, household sole breadwinner status was generally an indicator of economic instability. In this sense females are at an advantage to males, being less likely to be a sole breadwinner. However, those female community

members who were non-sole breadwinners contributed less to the household on average than males. Further, those female community members who were sole breadwinners were less likely to meet their expenses and more likely to borrow from family or friends to meet household expenses on a monthly basis than male community members – their income shortages were larger and their surpluses were smaller. So while female community members are less likely to be exposed to the economic vulnerability of sole breadwinner status, when they are, this vulnerability is more accentuated than for male community members. These findings flag female headed households as particularly vulnerable.

At first glance young community members (18-30) also appear to have some disadvantages to other age demographic groups. Young community members are the most likely to be unemployed at any time point, are less likely to meet monthly expenses, and have larger income shortages than their older peers. However, young community members are also the least likely age group to identify themselves as a household head and receive the support of their familial/household unit – in a sense insulating them from the weight of their employment and income disadvantages. It may be that the disadvantages that young community members face are simply an indication of their life stage in establishing an income source and building economic networks.

15.6.2 Unique Country Trends

In the analysis of economic issues presented in this section of the study, community members in DRC stand out subtly. First, across the GLR countries, self-employment in agriculture is the dominant economic status at all time points. While this is still the case in DRC, the overall proportion of community members self-employed in agriculture at all time points (before conflict, at start of demobilization programming, at the time of sampling) is considerably lower than the cross-country average. The difference is explained in part by the community members in DRC's higher levels of unemployment (highest at all time points across the GLR), employment in the public sector, and self-employment in services or retail. Overall this could suggest that community members in DRC have a harder time gaining employment, specifically self-employment in agriculture, than in other GLR countries and as a result participate more deeply in a range of alternative income activities.

In addition, community members in DRC are the most likely across the GLR to be sole breadwinners – and thus subject to greater household economic instability. Indeed, while sole breadwinners in DRC are the most likely across the GLR countries to meet their monthly expenses, less than half do so – instead relying on borrowing from friends and family on a regular basis. Though sole breadwinners in DRC have smaller monthly income shortages than those in other GLR countries, they also have smaller surpluses. Essentially, while sole breadwinner community members in DRC are slightly better off than those in other GLR countries, community members in DRC are also more likely to be a sole breadwinner – still an indicator of greater exposure to economic instability.

Collectively these two points, community members in DRC as the most likely to be unemployed and the most likely to be a sole breadwinner, cement the economic conditions for community members in DRC as the weakest in the GLR countries.

16. Social Capital

The following section provides a discussion and analysis of the many facets of social capital in the community member sample. The concept of social capital essentially revolves around the idea that social networks have value, both tangible and intangible, for individuals and communities and are a key indicator of the overall social health of communities – in turn, their ability to leverage this social capital towards social and economic outcomes. As such the analysis of social capital for community members across the Great Lakes Region presented here is comprised of five core components: (i) an examination of the size of community members’ social networks and their levels of sociability; (ii) an examination of individual community members’ levels of trust and solidarity with others in their community; (iii) an examination of community members levels of social cohesion and inclusion in the community; (iv) in turn, an examination of how these factors come together in community members’ overall sense of empowerment; and (v) their perception of social change over time. Beyond serving as a key backdrop for understanding ex-combatants’ position relative to community members, the analysis here represents a look into the core social dynamics present in communities across the GLR countries.

16.1 Networks and Sociability

Across the GLR countries, community members are unlikely to be in many social groups – though they are still in more social groups than ex-combatants on average. Community members across the GLR countries are in an average of 0.63 social groups. This average is reflected across the GLR countries with the exception of Uganda, where community members had more (0.93) social groups on average. Female community members had slightly fewer social groups than male community members on average (0.56 vs. 0.67).

In terms of change in number of social groups, 40.7% of community members across the GLR countries reported that the number of social groups that they belonged to at the time of sampling was more than that of one year prior, 45.8% the same number as one year prior, and 13.5% reported their current number of social groups was less than one year prior.²²⁸ However, there is a sharp division between DRC and RoC on the one hand and Uganda on the other. In DRC and RoC, 77.9% of community members had seen an improvement in their number of social groups. Uganda stood in contrast from DRC and RoC as only 9.8% of community members were currently in more social groups than one year ago, 73.6% were in the same number, and 16.6% were in fewer groups. So while in Uganda community members had more social groups than in DRC and Roc in absolute terms, those community members in DRC and RoC had seen considerably more improvement.²²⁹

Across the GLR countries, female community members were more likely to be in more social groups than one year ago compared to male community members (46.4% vs. 36.9%). In addition age displayed a positive relationship to the likelihood of being in more social groups than one year ago (31.3% of those 18-30, 45.5% of those 31-40, and 46.1% of those over 40).

Only 39.6% of community members across the GLR countries were on a management or organizational committee

228 Rwanda is absent from findings on change in number of social groups due to lack of directly comparable data.

229 It is possible that this gap between DRC/RoC and Uganda could be an indicator of the health of the overall social fabric in these countries, however it is also possible that it could be a product of periodization issues – e.g. a longer amount of time passed between the start of DDR programing and the time of sampling in Uganda than DRC in which time the overall security situation has improved considerably.

Table 47: Community Member Frequency of Familial Contact

| | Frequency of contact between community member and immediate family these days | | | | | | |
|--------------------|---|--------|---------|-------------|-------------|--------------|-------|
| | Daily | Weekly | Monthly | Half yearly | Once a year | Occasionally | Never |
| Male | 69.40% | 11.90% | 8.20% | 1.60% | 0.60% | 7.90% | 0.20% |
| Female | 55.10% | 11.30% | 14.60% | 1.30% | 1.50% | 15.90% | 0.40% |
| Age 18-30 | 78.00% | 9.30% | 5.20% | 1.10% | 0.60% | 5.70% | 0.10% |
| Age 31-40 | 63.50% | 13.40% | 11.50% | 1.60% | 1.40% | 8.50% | 0.20% |
| Age Over 40 | 52.90% | 12.70% | 14.40% | 1.50% | 0.90% | 16.80% | 0.80% |
| DRC | 33.70% | 17.40% | 17.90% | 0.50% | 2.20% | 28.30% | 0.00% |
| RoC | 23.30% | 22.40% | 25.00% | 3.80% | 2.20% | 22.00% | 0.90% |
| Uganda | 93.20% | 4.50% | 1.10% | 0.60% | 0.00% | 0.60% | 0.00% |
| GLR Average | 63.90% | 11.70% | 10.60% | 1.50% | 1.00% | 10.90% | 0.30% |

for a local group or organization – another indicator of social interaction and overall engagement in the community.²³⁰ Female community members were less likely to be on a committee than male community members (30.4% vs. 45.7%). Those between the ages of 31-40 were the age segment that most commonly was on a committee (45.7%), compared to those 18-30 (33.1%), and those over 40 (41.5%).

The majority of community members (73%) across the GLR countries have contact with their immediate family.²³¹ However this cross-country figure masks some nuance in the trends within each GLR country. For example in RoC the proportion of community members who had contact with their families was absolute (100%) and in Uganda nearly so (97.3%). However, in DRC only 31% of community members had contact with their immediate family – likely a product of the extreme difficulty of travel and overall dynamics of displacement in eastern DRC. Female community members across the GLR were slightly less likely than male community members to have contact with their immediate family (68.2% vs. 76.2%).

Of those community members across the GLR countries who did have contact with their immediate family, they most frequently had daily contact (63.9%), though in Uganda this proportion was much larger (93.2%). A cross-country summary of community members' frequency of familial contact is displayed in Table 47. Age showed a negative relationship to the frequency which community members reported having daily contact with their immediate family (53.1% of those 18-30, 40.1% of those 31-40, and 25.9% of those over 40).

When community members across the GLR countries who did have contact with immediate family were asked whether the current level of their contact was the maximum they would desire, 49.3% responded yes – the remaining 50.7% responding no. Again, there is some nuance to be added here. In Uganda where daily contact was much higher, 87% responded that their current level of familial contact was the maximum they would desire. In contrast, in DRC, where the number of those who had contact with their family at all was much lower, only 11.9% felt they currently had the maximum level of contact with their families that they would desire – these trends are displayed in Table 48.

230 Rwanda is absent from findings on membership to management or organizational committees due to lack of directly comparable data.

231 Rwanda is absent from findings on familial contact, frequency of familial contact, reasons for levels of familial contact, and desired levels of familial contact due to lack of directly comparable data.

When in DRC and RoC community members were asked to explain why they do not see their families more often, the most common responses were: (i) distance of travel (37.1%), (ii) not enough time (15.5%), and (iii) the cost of travel (19.2%) – largely corroborating the assertion above that familial contact, especially in eastern DRC, is a product of the difficulty of travel due to weak road infrastructure, mountainous terrain, strong seasonal rains, and continuing regional insecurity.²³² It is also likely that regional dynamics of forced displacement and migration may further damage social capital in DRC, RoC, and the GRL more broadly.

Across the GLR countries, when community members were asked to describe the number of friends they had the majority reported that they have lots of friends (48.5%), followed by a few good friends (30.9%), and not many friends (20.6%). Uganda stands out from this trend with 74.3% of community members reporting having lots of friends. Female community members across the GLR countries were less likely to describe having lots of friends and more likely to describe having not many friends compared to male community members (39% vs. 54.3% and 17.8% vs. 16.1%, respectively).

Across the GLR countries, when community members were asked to think about the age, gender, and educational background of their friends,²³³ the majority of community members reported that their friends mostly shared the same age (57.7%) and gender (62.1%), while few (25.7%) shared the same educational background. These trends are durable across the GLR countries and are displayed in Table 49. In terms of demographic groups it is worth noting that female community members were slightly less likely than male community members to have most of their friends of the same age (54.4% vs. 60.1%) or educational background (24.9% vs. 26.3%), but slightly more likely to have them of the same gender (64.5% vs. 60.4%). Across age demographics, those over 40 were consistently the least likely to have most of their friends in the same age, gender, or education background group (only marginally less than those 31-40, see Table 49) – an indicator of older community members slightly more diverse social groups and overall stronger social footing.

When community members across the GLR countries were asked to whom they would turn to for help if they were to encounter an economic problem the most common responses were (i) family (39.9%) and (ii) friends (33.4%) – the remaining 26.7% said they would turn to no one (10.3%), to formal institutions such as local saving and credit associations (7.5%) or a range of other sources including the church (8.9%). Female community members were less likely to turn to friends and more likely to turn to family compared to male community members (27.2% vs. 37.2% and 44.9 vs. 36.8%, respectively). Age showed a negative relationship to the frequency at which community members reported that they would turn to family for economic support (50.4% of those 18-30, 35.8% of those 31-40, and 31.8% of those over 40). In addition, age showed a positive relationship to the frequency which community members reported turning to no one (6.3% of those 18-30, 9.2% of those 31-40, and 15.4% of those over 40).

Table 48: Community Member Desired Level of Familial Contact

| | Is the current level of contact the maximum you wish or could it be more frequent? | |
|--------------------------|--|------------------------|
| | Maximum | Could be more frequent |
| Male | 54.20% | 45.80% |
| Female | 42.30% | 57.70% |
| Age 18-30 | 54.60% | 45.40% |
| Age 31-40 | 45.20% | 54.80% |
| Age Over 40 | 47.10% | 52.90% |
| DRC | 11.90% | 88.10% |
| Republic of Congo | 35.10% | 64.90% |
| Uganda | 87.80% | 12.20% |
| GLR Average | 49.30% | 50.70% |

232 Questions regarding the reasons for less familial contact than desired were only asked in DRC and RoC.

233 Rwanda is absent from findings of the demographic background of community members' friends due to lack of directly comparable data.

Table 49: Community Member Friend Group Demographics

| | Thinking about your friends, are most of them of the same age? | | | |
|-------------------|--|--------|--------|--------|
| | Most | Some | Few | None |
| Male | 60.10% | 26.70% | 10.20% | 3.00% |
| Female | 54.40% | 27.50% | 12.70% | 5.50% |
| Age 18-30 | 62.30% | 22.50% | 12.50% | 2.70% |
| Age 31-40 | 55.60% | 32.10% | 8.70% | 3.60% |
| Age Over 40 | 55.20% | 27.90% | 11.70% | 5.20% |
| DRC | 60.20% | 24.60% | 8.80% | 6.50% |
| Republic of Congo | 54.20% | 29.40% | 10.60% | 5.80% |
| Uganda | 58.20% | 27.50% | 14.30% | 0.00% |
| GLR Average | 57.70% | 27.10% | 11.30% | 4.00% |
| | Thinking about your friends, are most of them of the same gender? | | | |
| | Most | Some | Few | None |
| Male | 60.40% | 27.20% | 10.20% | 2.20% |
| Female | 64.50% | 24.70% | 7.30% | 3.50% |
| Age 18-30 | 64.20% | 24.10% | 9.10% | 2.60% |
| Age 31-40 | 62.60% | 26.30% | 8.40% | 2.70% |
| Age Over 40 | 59.60% | 27.80% | 9.50% | 3.10% |
| DRC | 60.20% | 25.10% | 9.30% | 5.40% |
| Republic of Congo | 62.50% | 26.30% | 8.30% | 2.90% |
| Uganda | 63.50% | 27.10% | 9.40% | 0.00% |
| GLR Average | 62.10% | 26.20% | 9.00% | 2.70% |
| | Thinking about your friends, are most of them of the same educational background or level? | | | |
| | Most | Some | Few | None |
| Male | 26.30% | 32.90% | 31.30% | 9.50% |
| Female | 24.90% | 28.00% | 29.80% | 17.30% |
| Age 18-30 | 32.30% | 30.40% | 26.60% | 10.70% |
| Age 31-40 | 22.90% | 30.50% | 32.60% | 13.90% |
| Age Over 40 | 22.40% | 31.30% | 32.90% | 13.40% |
| DRC | 21.40% | 35.40% | 23.90% | 19.30% |
| Republic of Congo | 21.50% | 26.10% | 35.10% | 17.20% |
| Uganda | 33.50% | 30.80% | 33.50% | 2.20% |
| GLR Average | 25.70% | 30.90% | 30.70% | 12.70% |

Generally speaking, across the GLR countries community members did not socialize often in public – meeting with people in a public place either to talk or have food or drinks. On average community members across the GLR countries met in public to socialize 1.33 times a week – though females met less often than males (0.95 vs. 1.57 times a week). An interesting note is that in DRC and RoC when community members were asked how often they met to discuss community issues with others over food or drinks, as opposed to just for socialization, the response rates were notably higher (mean = 2.12 times a week). With this, the majority of community members (57.4%) in DRC and RoC think that community issues have created the space by which they can more generally meet people and socialize.

Community members across the GLR countries indicate that their level of public socialization is most commonly the same as two years ago (50.4%), followed by more often (28.1%), and less often (21.5%). Female community members were notably less likely to see improvements in their level of public socialization in the two years prior to sampling than male community members (23.3% vs. 31.5%).

16.2 Trust and Solidarity

Drawing from Rwanda and Uganda, we can observe that trust among community members towards others in their community is generally high.²³⁴ The majority of community members (63.3%) believe that people in their community can be trusted to a great extent, followed by to neither a great nor small extent (22.8%), and lastly to a small extent (13.9%). Female community members on average were less trusting of others in the community than their male counterparts – 58% of female community members had high trust compared to 65.7% of male community members and 18.8% of female community members had low trust compared to 11.7% of male community members.

As a further indication of this general level of trust, across the GLR countries 18.8% of community members felt that if they were to disagree with something that everyone else in their community agreed on they would not at all feel free to speak out, 63.5% reported they would definitely feel free to speak out, and 17.7% that they would feel free to speak out but only on certain matters.²³⁵ Female community members were slightly more likely to feel they could not speak out at all and less likely to feel they could definitely speak out when compared to male community members (22.8% vs. 15.9% and 57.6% vs. 67.8%, respectively). It is possible that local gender based social norms play a role in these findings.

When asked whether or not they felt that the level of trust had improved in the last year / two years in the community, 43.4% of community members across the GLR countries felt that it had improved, 47.9% that it was the same, and only 8.7% that trust had deteriorated.²³⁶ This cross-country figure however is very much an average as within the individual GLR countries there were distinct trends – for example, in Uganda a clear majority (63.3%) felt that trust had improved while in DRC an even larger majority (73.6%) felt that trust had stayed the same. These within-country trends are displayed in Table 50. A consistent

Table 50: Community Member Perceptions of Change in Trust

| | In the past year / two years, has the level of trust in your area got better, worse, or stayed about the same? | | |
|--------------------------|--|--------|--------|
| | Better | Same | Worse |
| Male | 45.90% | 45.50% | 8.50% |
| Female | 39.40% | 51.70% | 9.00% |
| Age 18-30 | 41.60% | 47.30% | 11.10% |
| Age 31-40 | 41.30% | 51.90% | 6.80% |
| Age Over 40 | 45.30% | 46.90% | 7.80% |
| DRC | 15.30% | 73.60% | 11.10% |
| Republic of Congo | 56.10% | 39.50% | 4.40% |
| Rwanda | 39.30% | 49.40% | 11.30% |
| Uganda | 63.30% | 28.90% | 7.80% |
| GLR Average | 43.40% | 47.90% | 8.70% |

234 This specific question about general trust levels in the community was only asked in Uganda and Rwanda.

235 Rwanda is absent from findings on comfort of speaking out in disagreement with their community due to lack of directly comparable data.

236 In Uganda and Rwanda this question was asked with reference to the last year, where as in DRC and RoC it was asked in reference to the last two years. This creates some issues with periodization and comparability. These figures should be treated with caution. Interestingly, though the question refers to a longer period of time in DRC and RoC, this does not appear to translate to greater perceptions of improved trust among community members. In the case of DRC this may be the product of continuing insecurity.

trend along gender demographic lines does, however, exist. Across and within the GLR countries, female community members are consistently less likely than male community members to see trust as improved (39.4% vs. 45.9% at a cross-country level) and more likely to see it as the same (51.7% vs. 45.5% at a cross-country level).

When those community members across the GLR countries who thought that trust had improved in the last two years were asked to explain further, the majority (42.2%) cited improved safety and security as the main reason for improved trust – this answer was particularly prevalent among female community members (56.6% vs. 34.7% of male community members). A notable portion of community members (44.5%) also expressed a range of explanations that related to improved collaboration, cooperation and understanding due to communal living – a key component of the confrontational process of social reintegration.

Looking the other direction, when those community members across the GLR countries who thought that trust had deteriorated in the last two years were asked to explain further, responses were diverse – however, the most common were as follows: (i) dishonesty in general (23.4%), (ii) dishonest authorities (19.6%), and (iii) insecurity (11.9%)

16.3 Social Cohesion and Inclusion

When reflecting on the level of diversity among the people they live around, 36.7% of community members described their community as diverse (characterized by lots of differences between people), 25.9% as neither particularly diverse or homogenous (neither a great nor small extent of differences between people), and the remaining 37.4% described their community as fairly homogenous (characterized by few differences between people). This relatively even distribution across the GLR countries can be nuanced with a closer look within each of the countries – for example, in Uganda and DRC, community homogeneity (low diversity) was perceived as considerably higher (57.5% and 56.7%, respectively) while in Rwanda, community members’ perceived high levels of diversity (62.1%). These specific within-country trends are displayed in Table 51.

At a cross-country level, age showed a distinct relationship to the perception of community diversity among community members. As age increased the likelihood of perceiving high diversity decreased (42.4% of those 18-30, 36.9% of those 31-40, and 30.7% of those over 40) and accordingly the likelihood of perceiving low diversity increased (33.5% of those 18-30, 34.5% of those 31-40, and 42.9% of those over 40).

When community members across the GLR countries were asked whether differences between people in their community caused problems such as disagreement, arguments or disputes the majority (68.5%) replied no (31.5% responding yes). Only Uganda breaks significantly from this trend – 69.1% of community members did think that differences caused problems in their community. Congruent to the age demographic trend above in regards to the perception of diversity, as age increases among community members across the GLR countries they are less likely to see differences between people

| | To what extent do differences between people characterize your community? | | |
|--------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|---|
| | To a great extent, i.e. lots of differences between people | Neither great nor small extent | To a small extent, i.e. few differences between people |
| Male | 37.50% | 24.70% | 37.80% |
| Female | 35.50% | 27.80% | 36.70% |
| Age 18-30 | 42.40% | 24.00% | 33.50% |
| Age 31-40 | 36.90% | 28.70% | 34.50% |
| Age Over 40 | 30.70% | 26.40% | 42.90% |
| DRC | 34.50% | 47.00% | 18.40% |
| Republic of Congo | 25.10% | 18.20% | 56.70% |
| Rwanda | 62.10% | 20.40% | 17.60% |
| Uganda | 24.90% | 17.70% | 57.50% |
| GLR Average | 36.70% | 25.90% | 37.40% |

as a source of problems (43.9% of those 18-30, 29.5% of those 31-40, and 24.3% of those over 40) and more likely to not see them as a source of problems (56.1% of those 18-30, 70.5% of those 31-40, and 75.7% of those over 40). To recap, older community members are both less likely to see differences between people, and less likely to see these differences as a source of problems. Though female community members identified levels of diversity in their communities on a level similar to male community members, they were less likely to think that diversity was a source of problems (28.7% vs. 33.5%).

Looking specifically at DRC and RoC, community members were asked to further explain the nature of the kinds of problems they encounter. Community members most commonly described the problems as revolving around (i) envy, slander or taunts (29.8%); (ii) misunderstanding (20.5%); or (iii) unspecified accusations made towards ex-combatants (12.7%).

Despite varying levels of perceived diversity and their association with problems in the community, across the GLR countries the majority of community members (75.3%) report that they feel a high level of togetherness and closeness with their community (19.6% feel neither distant nor close and 5.1% feel distant). Across demographic lines, this level is very even as well. However, DRC stands out from the trend as the country with the lowest proportion of community members who feel a high level of closeness and togetherness (61.4%). In addition, while in other GLR countries there is little variation along demographic lines, in DRC female community members are less likely to feel close to their community (57.4% vs. 65.1%) and more likely to feel neither distant nor close (32.2% vs. 27.5%) or distant (10.4% vs. 7.5%) compared to male community members.

In alignment with overall feelings of togetherness with the community, across the GLR countries 69.5% of community members had in the last year worked with others in the area they live to do something for the benefit of their community (the remaining 30.5% not having done so). Despite this cross-country figure there is a clear polarization between DRC and RoC, on the one hand, where the rate of participation was lower (53.2% and 54.9%, respectively) and Rwanda and Uganda, on the other, where participation was higher (92.9% and 76.9%, respectively).

There is a dispersed range of information regarding the perceived importance of community participation from community members. For example, in Uganda 25.3% of community members cite lack of participation in community activities as the cause of marginalization in the area that they live. In DRC and RoC an average of 53.3% of community members reported that there were penalties, both formal (such as a ticket or fee) or informal (such as social resentment or exclusion), for those who didn't participate in community activities – though within each country the figures were almost perfectly inverse (In DRC, 39.7% said that there were penalties and 60.3% said there were not, while in RoC the distributions were 57.6% and 42.4%, respectively).

16.4 Empowerment

Empowerment is an important indicator of overall levels of social capital and is understood as a result of individuals' levels of social connection and their ability to leverage the benefits of these connections and the community and the larger context of society. Collectively, the extent of these benefits and in turn the functions that they fulfill for individuals play a role in the psychosocial concept of empowerment – the individual or collective ability to affect change in one's life.

When asked to reflect on their general level of happiness, 71.8% described themselves as happy, 17.4% described themselves as neither happy nor unhappy, and 10.8% reported that they were unhappy. Community members in DRC were the least likely to report being happy (65.2%), while community members in Uganda were the most likely to report so (80.8%). Across the GLR countries, female community members were slightly less likely to be happy and more likely to be unhappy than male community members (67% vs. 70.6% and 15% vs. 11.4%, respectively).

When asked to what extent they felt they had the power to make important decisions that affect the course of their

Table 52: GLR Community Member Empowerment (Power, Ability, and Control)

| | Do you feel that you have the power to make important decisions that can change the course of your life? | | | |
|--------------------|--|------------------------------------|-----------------------|--------|
| | Large extent | Medium extent | Small extent | None |
| Male | 67.0% | 24.7% | 8.3% | 3.00% |
| Female | 35.6% | 40.3% | 24.1% | 5.50% |
| Age 18-30 | 46.5% | 34.4% | 19.1% | 2.70% |
| Age 31-40 | 55.6% | 31.6% | 12.8% | 3.60% |
| Age Over 40 | 55.1% | 30.6% | 14.2% | 5.20% |
| GLR Average | 51.3% | 33.3% | 15.4% | 6.50% |
| | Do you feel that you have the ability to make important decisions that can change the course of your life? | | | |
| | Able to change life | Neither able nor unable | Unable to change life | None |
| Male | 86.0% | 10.1% | 3.9% | 2.20% |
| Female | 67.9% | 22.7% | 9.3% | 3.50% |
| Age 18-30 | 75.0% | 18.1% | 6.9% | 2.60% |
| Age 31-40 | 80.7% | 13.7% | 5.5% | 2.70% |
| Age Over 40 | 78.0% | 15.6% | 6.3% | 3.10% |
| GLR Average | 78.8% | 14.9% | 6.7% | 5.40% |
| | How much control do you feel you have over decisions that affect your everyday activities? | | | |
| | Lots of Control | Neither a lot nor a little control | Little Control | None |
| Male | 71.6 % | 21.6% | 6.8% | 9.50% |
| Female | 53.1 % | 31.9% | 15.1% | 17.30% |
| Age 18-30 | 61.1 % | 26.7% | 12.2% | 10.70% |
| Age 31-40 | 68.3 % | 26.3% | 5.4% | 13.90% |
| Age Over 40 | 65.7 % | 23.5% | 10.8% | 13.40% |
| GLR Average | 64.4 % | 25.6% | 10.0% | 19.30% |

lives, community members across the GLR countries most commonly reported that they felt that they had such power to a large extent (51.3%), followed with decreasing frequency by to a medium extent (33.3%) and to a small extent (15.4%).²³⁷ These overall perceptions of power were remarkably durable within each of the GLR countries – however there are distinct demographic trends in regard to gender. Female community members across the GLR countries were nearly half as likely as their male counterparts to report having a large extent of power to make decisions in their lives (35.6% vs. 62.3%) while more likely to perceive power to a medium extent (41.8% vs. 27.3%) and more than twice as likely to have it to a small extent (22.6% vs. 10.4%).

Interestingly, when community members were asked a very similar question as to what extent they felt they had the ability (as opposed to power) to make important decisions that affect the course of their lives, perceptions of empowerment were considerably higher – 78.8% reporting that they were able to make changes, 14.9% that they neither were able or unable to make changes, and 6.7% that they were unable to make changes in their life.²³⁸ Very

237 Rwanda is absent from findings on sense of empowerment in terms of power to make important decisions and ability to make important decisions due to lack of directly comparable data.

238 The analytical distinction between senses of empowerment in terms of power versus ability is not clear. Interpreting any meaning to the disparity in levels of power and ability is therefore problematic and these data should be treated as a broad indicator of a positive sense of empowerment rather than as exact measures of different components of empowerment.

similar to the question above on power to make change, females also considerably less frequently reported having the ability to make changes and more frequently neither being able nor unable as well as just unable (as is displayed in Table 52).

When asked yet another question about perceived levels of empowerment, but this time scaled in reference to the extent that community members feel control over decisions that have an effect of their everyday activities, the trends are remarkably similar to the previous two questions above.²³⁹ Of community members questioned across the

GLR, 64.4% perceive that they control most decisions that affect their everyday lives, 25.6% perceive that they control some decisions, and 10.1% few decisions. A very similar gender-based demographic trend was exhibited here as well – as is visible in Table 52.

When community members across the GLR countries were asked about whether or not they had a positive impact on the community they live in, there was a clear polarization between DRC and RoC on the one hand, and Rwanda and Uganda on the other. As is visible in Table 53 in DRC and RoC there were relatively even distributions of community members' responses to having a positive impact, neither a positive nor negative impact, and a negative impact. In Rwanda and Uganda, by contrast, the frequency of community members having the perception of having a positive impact on their community was high – in the case of Rwanda, almost absolute.

In regards to gender, in DRC and RoC female community members much less frequently than male community members reported having a positive impact on their community (27.9% vs. 46.1%), while in Rwanda the extent of the gap between female and male community members is approximately half of that in DRC and RoC (87.9% vs. 96.3%). In Uganda, female community members even have a slightly higher likelihood of perceiving a positive impact than males (82.5% vs. 80.8%).

Turning to age demographics, in DRC and RoC age showed a positive relationship to the likelihood of the perception of having a positive impact on the community (26.3% of those 18-30, 39.1% of those 31-40, and 43.6% of those over 40). While there was no linear trend in regards to age visible in Rwanda; in Uganda, age showed a slight negative relationship to the likelihood of the perception of having a positive impact on the community (85.7% of those 18-30, 82.5% of those 31-40, and 73.2% of those over 40).

Certain parts of this trend of polarity between DRC/RoC and Uganda/Rwanda continue when community members are asked to what extent they feel valued by others in the area they live. On average across the GLR countries, 70.3% of community members felt valued by others in their community. However DRC showed smaller proportions of

Table 53: Community Member Perception of Individual Impact on Community

| | Do you personally have a positive or negative impact on the place you live? | | |
|--------------------------|---|--------------------------------------|-----------------|
| | Positive impact | Neither positive nor negative impact | Negative impact |
| Male | 70.10% | 20.70% | 9.20% |
| Female | 51.00% | 28.80% | 20.20% |
| Age 18-30 | 68.30% | 19.50% | 12.20% |
| Age 31-40 | 64.30% | 23.70% | 12.10% |
| Age Over 40 | 57.20% | 28.00% | 14.80% |
| DRC | 35.80% | 37.30% | 26.90% |
| Republic of Congo | 39.20% | 36.80% | 23.90% |
| Rwanda | 93.70% | 4.90% | 1.40% |
| Uganda | 81.30% | 16.50% | 2.20% |
| GLR Average | 62.60% | 23.90% | 13.60% |

²³⁹ This question regarding community members' levels of control over everyday decisions has been re-coded from a five point scale to a three point scale for increased comparability to the other two measures of empowerment (power and ability) presented here.

Table 54: Community Member Frequency of Public Gathering to Express Concerns

| | In the past year, how often have you joined other people to express concerns to officials or local leaders on issues benefiting the community? | | | |
|--------------------------|--|--------|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| | Never | Once | A few times, five or less | Many times, more than five |
| Male | 34.60% | 13.40% | 24.10% | 27.90% |
| Female | 60.70% | 8.70% | 16.30% | 14.30% |
| Age 18-30 | 43.30% | 9.90% | 20.20% | 26.50% |
| Age 31-40 | 39.40% | 11.60% | 23.20% | 25.90% |
| Age Over 40 | 49.30% | 12.80% | 21.00% | 17.00% |
| DRC | 69.60% | 11.00% | 13.60% | 5.80% |
| Republic of Congo | 70.40% | 13.70% | 14.40% | 1.50% |
| Rwanda | 5.90% | 5.90% | 25.70% | 62.40% |
| Uganda | 34.10% | 15.90% | 30.20% | 19.80% |
| GLR Average | 44.70% | 11.60% | 21.10% | 22.60% |

community members who felt valued (64.4%), while in Uganda almost all (98.3%) community members felt valued. Female community members were notably less likely to feel valued by their community compared to male community members (66.5% vs. 72.9%).

When asked how often in the past year they had joined with other people to express concerns to the government or local leaders for the benefit of the community, 44.7% of community members across the GLR countries had never done so, 11.6% had once done so, 21.1% had done so a few times (five or less), and 22.6% had done so many times (five or more). This cross-country trend in which the large majority of community members have never gathered to express community concerns is characteristic of DRC, RoC and Uganda. However, in Rwanda the frequency of gathering was most commonly many times (62.4%) – as is displayed in Table 54.²⁴⁰

Female community members were more likely to have never participated in voicing community issues when compared to male community members (60.7% vs. 34.6%) and less likely than males to have participated once (8.7% vs. 13.4%), a few times (16.3% vs. 24.1%), or many times (14.3% vs. 27.9%). Age shows a slight negative relationship to the likelihood of gathering many times for political participation in the last year (26.5% of those 18-30, 25.9% of those 31-40, and 17% of those over 40).²⁴¹

When questioned further as to the extent that they thought that local government and leaders take into account those concerns voiced by the community when they make important decisions that affect the community, 17.4% of community members across the GLR countries felt that leaders took their concerns into account a lot, 41.7% a little, and 40.9% not at all.²⁴² Female community members were less likely than male community members to feel that leaders took their concerns into account either a lot or a little (15.8% and 37.5% vs. 17.6% and 44.7%, respectively) and more likely to feel that leaders did not take their concerns into account at all (46.7% vs. 36.8%).

When questioned further as to the extent that they thought that local government and leaders take into account those concerns voiced by the community when they make important decisions that affect the community, 17.4% of community members across the GLR countries felt that leaders took their concerns into account a lot, 41.7% a little, and 40.9% not at all.²⁴² Female community members were less likely than male community members to feel that leaders took their concerns into account either a lot or a little (15.8% and 37.5% vs. 17.6% and 44.7%, respectively) and more likely to feel that leaders did not take their concerns into account at all (46.7% vs. 36.8%).

16.5 Social Change

Similar to trends in the ex-combatant sample, across the GLR countries community members generally were polarized in their outlook on the likelihood of their overall situation improving in the future between those that thought

²⁴⁰ This high rate of public gathering to express concerns in Rwanda is likely another effect of Umuganda. While the main purpose of Umuganda is community work it also serves as a platform for leaders to communicate important news on a national and local level as well as for individuals and communities to express concerns and plan for future Umuganda.

²⁴¹ This age related trend in the likelihood of public gathering may in part be related to the heavy sampling bias in RoC, the country where community public gathering was lowest, towards community members over 40.

²⁴² Rwanda is absent from findings on the extent to which community members feel leaders take their concerns into account due to lack of directly comparable data.

Table 55: Community Member Cross-Category Social Change ²⁴⁵

| Consider a 9-step ladder where on the bottom (the first step) stand the poorest people, and on the ninth step stand the richest - On which step were you one year ago in relation to: | FOOD? | HOUSING? | CLOTHING? | FINANCES? | SCHOOL FEES? | HEALTH? | LEISURE? |
|---|-------|----------|-----------|-----------|--------------|---------|----------|
| Male | 3.49 | 3.39 | 3.53 | 2.93 | 3.97 | 3.71 | 3.69 |
| Female | 3.57 | 3.60 | 3.62 | 3.20 | 4.04 | 3.77 | 3.66 |
| Age 18-30 | 3.44 | 3.35 | 3.51 | 2.95 | 4.30 | 3.69 | 3.94 |
| Age 31-40 | 3.68 | 3.59 | 3.67 | 3.15 | 4.00 | 3.86 | 3.83 |
| Age Over 40 | 3.50 | 3.52 | 3.54 | 3.04 | 3.82 | 3.69 | 3.45 |
| Burundi | 3.39 | 3.18 | 3.57 | 2.91 | 2.77 | 3.30 | XXX |
| DRC | 4.06 | 4.19 | 4.23 | 3.49 | 4.37 | 3.89 | 4.40 |
| RoC | 3.58 | 3.46 | 3.47 | 3.17 | 3.60 | 3.59 | 2.92 |
| Uganda | 2.94 | 2.77 | 2.99 | 2.46 | XXX | XXX | XXX |
| GLR Average | 3.49 | 3.40 | 3.57 | 3.01 | 3.58 | 3.59 | 3.67 |
| Consider a 9-step ladder where on the bottom (the first step) stand the poorest people, and on the ninth step stand the richest - On which step are you today in relation to: | FOOD? | HOUSING? | CLOTHING? | FINANCES? | SCHOOL FEES? | HEALTH? | LEISURE? |
| Male | 3.73 | 3.60 | 3.89 | 3.16 | 4.06 | 3.81 | 3.80 |
| Female | 3.75 | 3.78 | 3.85 | 3.31 | 4.19 | 3.84 | 3.77 |
| Age 18-30 | 3.85 | 3.65 | 3.98 | 3.28 | 4.35 | 3.88 | 4.07 |
| Age 31-40 | 3.91 | 3.85 | 3.96 | 3.41 | 4.18 | 3.97 | 3.96 |
| Age Over 40 | 3.54 | 3.61 | 3.73 | 3.07 | 3.94 | 3.69 | 3.54 |
| Burundi | 3.61 | 3.45 | 3.72 | 2.94 | 3.03 | 3.44 | XXX |
| DRC | 3.96 | 4.17 | 4.18 | 3.41 | 4.31 | 3.81 | 4.36 |
| Roc | 3.93 | 3.70 | 3.94 | 3.42 | 3.91 | 3.84 | 3.18 |
| Uganda | 3.34 | 3.16 | 3.48 | 2.84 | XXX | XXX | XXX |
| GLR Average | 3.70 | 3.62 | 3.83 | 3.15 | 3.74 | 3.69 | 3.78 |

The use of XXX signifies a field where no data is available.

that it would improve in a few years and those that thought that their situation would deteriorate in the future. Overall, only 1.5% of community members thought that their situation would improve in a few weeks, 4.9% thought it would improve in the coming months, 50% that it would improve in a few years, 6.4% that it would remain the same, and 37.3% reporting that they foresee their overall situation deteriorating in the future.²⁴³ As in the ex-combatant sample, only Uganda stood apart from this trend – 79.3% of community members reporting that they thought their overall situation would improve in a few years. These findings may suggest that while in general communi-

²⁴³ Rwanda is absent from findings on community members' overall outlook on their situation for the future and their overall level of satisfaction with their life up until sampling due to lack of directly comparable data.

ty members have a polarized outlook for their future, those who do have a positive outlook understand the time horizons of social change – occurring in the scale of years rather than days, weeks, or even months.

Female community members across the GLR were less likely to report that their situation would improve in the next few years compared to male community member (43% vs. 54.9%) and more likely to think that their overall situation would deteriorate in the future (44.7% vs. 32%). Age as well held a clear relationship to polarized response between these two outcomes. As age increased community members were less likely to see their overall situation improving in a few years (61.4% of those 18-30, 54.4% of those 31-40, and 40.3% of those over 40) and more likely to see it deteriorating (24.8% of those 18-30, 37% of those 31-40, and 46.9% of those over 40).

When questioned whether they are satisfied with the way that their life has been to date, across the GLR countries 32.5% of community members reported that they were satisfied, 8.2% that they were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, and the remaining 59.3% that they were dissatisfied. However, this cross-country figure fails to depict the nuance between GLR countries as there was a clear split between Uganda on the one hand, and DRC / RoC on the other. In Uganda 43.3% of community members being satisfied, 24.4% neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, and 32.2% being dissatisfied. In contrast, in DRC and RoC 73% of community members were dissatisfied with their life to date and only 27.1% were satisfied.²⁴⁴ Female community members were slightly more likely to be dissatisfied with their life to date than male community members (62.9% vs. 55.9%).

Community members were questioned about their perceptions of their own position in society across a range of fields at the time of sampling and a year prior using a nine-step ladder response prompt.²⁴⁵ Their responses are tabulated below in Table 55 by mean score. The lower the mean score is the closer the community member is to the bottom rung of the ladder – where the poorest people tend to be. Generally speaking, across and within the GLR countries community members, as with ex-combatants, consistently identify themselves in the poorest half of society – between steps two and four. However community members rank themselves slightly better than ex-combatants on average across all categories.

Looking at the GLR countries as a whole there is a slight increase in the mean scores for community members across all categories. This trend is reflected within each country with the exception of DRC – where on average, scores were higher across all categories, but had declined across all categories from a year prior (with the exception of leisure). A closer look at DRC reveals that the only demographic group that saw average improvements across any categories was those aged 18-30 (who improved across all categories with the exceptions of finance and school fees). At a cross-country level, all gender and age demographic categories see improvements across all categories (with the exception of the health category for those over 40 which stays the same over time). Interestingly, despite the range of economic and social disadvantages that females hold, they perceive themselves as slightly better off than males across all categories except for clothing and leisure at the time of sampling and one year prior.

16.6 Summary

Overall, community members across the GLR countries show positive levels of social capital and a general trajectory of improvement. Community members have a growing number of social groups and high levels of contact with their families, forming a broad social platform that can serve as a fallback position in times of hardship or a springboard in moments of opportunity. While community members have diverse friend groups who they can often turn to for support, the family unit is still the core of their social support network.

244 It should be noted that in DRC and RoC, community members were not given the option of replying that they were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with their life up to the time of sampling – this scaling issue may have inadvertently inflated the number of community members who expressed being dissatisfied with their life.

245 Rwanda is absent from these social change findings due to lack of directly comparable data, however this is the only section in the community dynamics annex of this study where Burundi is included.

With these generally strong social networks, community members in turn display a high level of trust in the community and show a continued positive trajectory in this field – also aided by increased stability and security in the end of conflict. These factors have set the context in which community members feel a strong sense of togetherness and meet to work together for the betterment of their communities. Further, community members report being generally happy and describe a broadly positive sense of empowerment in their lives (though they are simultaneously dissatisfied with their lives to date in general). While community members rank themselves consistently in the poorest half of society across a range of categories, they also display a shallow trajectory of improvement over time. Indeed, while community members are polarized in their general outlooks for the future, those with a positive outlook express that they understand that social change does not occur over night, but rather in the scale of years.

Very generally speaking, it appears that the social dynamics of communities across the GLR countries (with the exception of DRC) and provide a context for which ex-combatants can return to communities and strive towards reintegration into an already stable community setting in terms of social capital. However, this general ability of the communities in the GLR absorb ex-combatants and serve as a setting which they can reintegrate into should not mask the realities of the post-conflict social landscape. Families, communities and broader networks in the GLR countries have been affected severe violence and displacement - to the great detriment of trust, solidarity, and social cohesion across the broader social fabric of society. In this sense to long-term project of rebuilding society is one that ex-combatants and community members face together.

16.6.1 Vulnerable Subgroups

As consistent with the analysis presented throughout this report, female community members fare worse off than male community members in terms of most indicators of social capital and are thus further solidified as a vulnerable group. Female community members have weaker social networks and less family contact that subtracts overall from their ability to leverage the value of these social connections – leaving female community members in a position of relative social isolation.

Though there is some variation from country to country, female community members feel less trust with the community, less togetherness with the community, are less happy personally, are less likely to feel they have a positive impact on the community, and feel less empowered to affect change in their lives. However, despite this broad range of disadvantages in terms of social capital female community members consistently perceive themselves as slightly better off relative to the rest of society than male community members across a broad range of categories including food, housing, finances, and health.

Many of the social disadvantages that female community members display may be the result of traditional gender structures and their resulting gender-based inequalities. Understanding these disadvantages is important in the examination of community dynamics themselves, but also carries weight for the return of female ex-combatants. What this means for female ex-combatants is that social reintegration (in terms of reaching parity with community members) may inadvertently mean reintegrating back into basic gender inequalities – possibly with the added dimension of stigma as an amplifying force to these disadvantages. With this in mind it is important to recognize the importance of reintegration programming that not only addresses the specific disadvantages that female ex-combatants face, but to fit in as part of and effort towards affecting a larger collective shift towards gender equality in post-conflict and development settings.

16.6.2 Unique Country Trends

Overall, community members in DRC rank lower than community members in the rest of the GLR countries across a broad range of social capital indicators. Collectively, the core weaknesses of community members in DRC in terms of social capital can be characterized along three dimensions: (i) weak family connections; (ii) weak community connections; and (iii) weak personal self-worth and empowerment.

Access to family networks is an important inroad for building further social and economic networks and in turn leveraging the tangible and intangible value of these networks. In terms of family, community members in DRC have the lowest levels of contact with their families, those who do have contact with their families have it the least frequently, and in line with this community members in DRC are the least likely to be satisfied with their level of familial contact. The weak state of familial networks that are characteristic of community members in the DRC are likely a product of the social geography of eastern DRC. Many community members have been displaced or migrated and continuing instability coupled with the mountainous landscape, near non-existent road infrastructure, and heavy seasonal rains keep family networks effectively fractured – isolated by social and physical barriers.

The weakness in family connections in DRC corresponds to a distinct weakness in community connections among community members as well. Community members in DRC have a low number of social groups on average, reported weakest levels of improvement in trust in the community, the lowest sense of togetherness, and were the least likely to work with others for the betterment of their community compared to community members in other GLR countries. These indicators of weak social capital for community members in terms of family connections and community networks correspond to the overall weaker economic situation of community members highlighted in section 15.6.2 of this annex.

Further, these broad weaknesses in community members in DRC's familial and community networks correspond to their low senses of self-worth and empowerment. Community members in DRC are the least likely to feel they have a positive impact on the community, the least likely to feel valued by others in the community, and the most likely to be dissatisfied with their life compared to community members in other GLR countries. In addition while community members in DRC perceive themselves as slightly better off compared to the rest of society across a range of categories than community members in other GLR countries, they are the only group who see a decrease in their perceived standing over time – possibly a result of continuing instability in the region.

Violent conflict has damaged the social fabric of individuals and communities across the GLR. However, it appears that the continued insecurity in eastern DRC coupled with the intense geographic landscape in the region has contributed to a fragmented social geography in which familial and communal networks are fractured and cannot be leveraged for their value by community members – leaving them particularly exposed to social and economic isolation. Future studies on social capital in the region could flag the interaction of social capital and social geography as a field for further analysis.

17. Reintegration Experiences

The following is an analysis of community member experiences of the reinsertion and reintegration of ex-combatants. Most importantly, the analysis here highlights the changes in community perspectives towards ex-combatants since the reintegration process began. For the greatest analytical value this chapter should be read in conjunction with section 11 on ex-combatants' DDR experiences. Owing to data constraints, this section of the study draws exclusively from DRC, RoC, and Uganda.

17.1 Community Sensitization and Preparedness

Across the GLR countries, community members most commonly received information, though not necessarily official information, about ex-combatants coming to the area they live in to reintegrate through: (i) word of mouth (41.2%); (ii) radio (27.3%); or (iii) a community meeting (11.1%). In Uganda, though the three most common mediums by which community members received information about returning ex-combatants were the same, radio was the most common medium (30.2%), followed by word of mouth (22.5%), and community meetings (14.8%). Across the GLR countries, female community members were more likely to get information about ex-combatants from word of mouth than male community members (49% vs. 35.9%) and less likely to get it from radio (23.8% vs. 29.8%). Those aged 18-30 were particularly likely to have received information through radio compared to other age demographic groups (35.2% of those 18-30, 27.1% of those 31-40, and 22.1% of those over 40).

The vast majority of community members across the GLR countries (70.5%) reported that they were given no help in understanding how reintegration was going to take place, the remainder reporting receiving some help (20%) or reporting receiving lots of help (9.5%).²⁴⁶ Uganda stands out from the cross-country trend with a less unipolar distribution (47.2% no help, 34.8% some help, 18% lots of help). In regards to gender, female community members were more likely to report receiving no help compared to male community members (77.3% vs. 65.8%). While this gendered trend continued in Uganda there was an additional dimension – female community members were also more likely to have received lots of help on understanding how reintegration would take place compared to male community members (23.2% vs. 15.6%).

When asked further whether they thought they should have been informed or given more help before ex-combatants were reintegrated into their community, there was a near even split across the GLR countries in community members responses – 52.1% reporting that yes they should have been given info and help and 47.9% replying no. A closer look at each of the individual countries shows that in RoC and Uganda there was an approximate 60/40 split between those who responded yes and no. Interestingly, in DRC this split in responses was reversed 40/60. This is interesting because DRC was the country where community members most frequently (87.6%) reported receiving no help on understanding how reintegration would take place.

When asked by what medium they would have liked to have received information about the reintegration process the three most common replies are the same as the three most common mediums by which community members actually did receive information – though with distinctly different distributions between these responses – 44.1% of community members wanted to receive information about reintegration in community meetings, 29.3% preferred

246 At least in eastern DRC, the geographic challenges of face-to-face sensitization can play a role in these figures.

Table 56: Community Member Information Sources on Reintegration²⁵⁰

| | How were you informed about Ex-Combatants coming to reintegrate into the area you live? | How should you have been informed? |
|---|---|------------------------------------|
| Community meeting | 11.1% | 44.1% |
| Word of mouth | 41.2% | 9.4% |
| Radio | 27.3% | 29.3% |
| Church or mosque | 1.5% | 4.7% |
| NGOs or charities | 1.4% | 2.2% |
| Government ministries | 1.9% | 6.5% |
| Newspaper | .8% | 2.3% |
| Phone call/ Megaphone/ Public Announcement | .0% | .2% |
| National Commission | 0.0% | .1% |
| Letter | .2% | .1% |
| Door-to-door announcement | .1% | .1% |
| Other | 3.6% | .3% |
| Was not informed | 11.0% | XXX |
| All Means | XXX | .8% |
| Subtotal | 100.0% | 100.0% |
| <i>The use of XXX signifies a field with no available data.</i> | | |

radio, and 9.4% by word of mouth.²⁴⁷ As displayed in Table 56 though the most common medium by which community members across the GLR countries received information about reintegration was word of mouth the most preferred was clearly community meeting. Female community members were slightly less likely to prefer radio as an information medium compared to male community members (26.5% vs. 30.7%) and more likely to prefer word of mouth (16.5% vs. 5.6%).

17.2 Community Perspectives on Ex-Combatant Reintegration and Fear

Across the GLR countries, community members had only a moderate level of personal interaction with returning ex-combatants – 35% had lots of direct contact, 21.2% had a little direct contact, and 43.9% had no contact. However, this cross-country figure masks the diversity in levels of community member contact within the GLR countries – In DRC, the levels of contact were drastically lower than average (10.1% lots of contact, 11.1% some contact, and 78.8% no

contact) while in Uganda, contact levels were generally higher than average (63.7% lots of contact, 23.1% some contact, and 13.2% no contact).²⁴⁸ RoC fell closest to the cross-country average with 30.1% lots of contact, 31.2% some contact, and 38.8% no contact.

In DRC and RoC, where community member contact with returning ex-combatants was lower, female community members were less likely to respond that they had lots of direct contact than male community members (7.8% vs. 12.2% in DRC and 23.4% vs. 35.9% in RoC) and more likely to respond that they had no contact (82.6% vs. 75.3% in DRC and 43.4% vs. 34.8%) while in Uganda, where contact levels were generally higher, the trends were reversed – female community members were more likely than male community members to respond that they had lots of direct contact than male community members (73.7% vs. 59.2%) and less likely to respond that they had no contact (8.8% vs. 15.2%).²⁴⁹ Across the GLR countries, age showed a negative relationship to the likelihood of reporting having lots of contact with returning ex-combatants (44.2% of those 18-30, 31.9% of those 31-40, and 28.7% of those over 40) and, inversely, a positive relationship to the likelihood of having a little contact (13.7% of those 18-30,

²⁴⁷ Unfortunately there is no data available regarding community members' perspectives on the content of the information and sensitization they did receive.

²⁴⁸ In DRC, especially eastern DRC, these lower levels of community member contact with returning ex-combatants may be a product of the difficulty of travel and continued insecurity as a part of the dynamics of return.

²⁴⁹ This gendered trend is likely a product of the fact that female community members who had a spouse were more than twice as likely as male community members to have a spouse who was an ex-combatant.

23.5% of those 31-40, and 25.9% of those over 40).

Drawing specifically from DRC and RoC, the majority of community members (64.3%) described their contact with ex-combatants as positive, while 25% described their contact as neither positive nor negative, and the remaining 10.7% as negative.²⁵⁰ Female community members were slightly less likely than male community members to describe their contact with ex-combatants as positive (60.5% vs. 66.7%) and more likely to describe it as neither positive nor negative

(26.7% vs. 23.9%) or just negative (12.9% vs. 9.4%). Community members over the age of 40 were the least likely demographic subgroup to describe their interactions as positive (60.1%) and the most likely to see interactions as neither negative nor positive (27.1). Interestingly, the two demographic subgroups with the highest frequencies of describing their contact with ex-combatants as either negative or neither positive nor negative, females and those over 40, were also those that reported the lowest levels of direct contact with ex-combatants as described above.²⁵¹

When asked to reflect on when ex-combatants first came to live in their community, just over half of community members (51.5%) reported that they had fears about their presence – the remaining 48.5% reporting that they had no fears. This near even split is fairly durable across the GLR countries. Female community members are slightly more likely than male community members to report having fears about ex-combatant presence in the community (53.5% vs. 50%).

When asked about which specific groups of ex-combatants they feared, community members across the GLR countries gave a consistent message: community members reported fearing male ex-combatants to a very high level (91.1%) and female, child and disabled ex-combatants to a considerably lower level (47.4%, 46.8% and 42.2%, respectively). As is visible in Table 57, across all categories Uganda showed lower levels of overall fear – especially in regards to female, child, and disabled ex-combatants.²⁵² In regards to community member demographic trends, female community members were slightly more likely to report fearing ex-combatants across all categories and age showed a positive relationship to the likelihood of fearing ex-combatants across all categories.

In Uganda, community members were asked to outline what kinds of specific fears they held about different kinds of ex-combatants. As is visible in Table 58, the most common fear that community members held in regards to the

Table 57: Community Member Fear of Ex-Combatants

| When ex-combatants first came to live in your community, did you fear the listed reporter group: | | Country | | | |
|--|-------------------------|---------|-------------------|--------|----------|
| | | DRC | Republic of Congo | Uganda | Subtotal |
| Male Ex-Combatants | Yes, I feared them | 97.1% | 95.6% | 83.3% | 91.1% |
| | No, I did not fear them | 2.9% | 4.4% | 16.7% | 8.9% |
| Female Ex-Combatants | Yes, I feared them | 60.4% | 62.2% | 29.4% | 47.4% |
| | No, I did not fear them | 39.6% | 37.8% | 70.6% | 52.6% |
| Child Ex-Combatants | Yes, I feared them | 63.6% | 63.9% | 25.5% | 46.8% |
| | No, I did not fear them | 36.4% | 36.1% | 74.5% | 53.2% |
| Disabled Ex-Combatants | Yes, I feared them | 63.0% | 57.0% | 19.6% | 42.2% |
| | No, I did not fear them | 37.0% | 43.0% | 80.4% | 57.8% |

²⁵⁰ Questions regarding the positive or negative nature of contact with returning ex-combatants were only asked in DRC and RoC.

²⁵¹ It is difficult to decipher the relationship between levels of community member contact with returning ex-combatants and perceptions about the positive or negative character of those interactions – if there is one at all. One could postulate that lower levels of contact with returning ex-combatants provides a limited base on which for community members to break down stereotypes and stigma. Or, one could just as well propose that precisely because of negative experiences with returning ex-combatants community members have minimized contact.

²⁵² One explanation for the lower levels of fear of child ex-combatants in Uganda could be related to the dynamics of mobilization and return. Abduction is a known recruitment tactic of the LRA in northern Uganda. In terms of dynamics of return this has created a sentiment among community members in which they view child ex-combatants simultaneously as victims and perpetrators and have displayed accepting attitudes of their return. It is also possible that the long period of time between informal and formal demobilizations and the overall trickle-in model of demobilization in Uganda may play some role in the slightly lower overall levels of fear surrounding the return of ex-combatants.

Table 58: Community Member Specific Fears of Ex-Combatants in Uganda

| When ex-combatants first came to live in your community, describe what fears you had of the listed reporter group: | Male Ex-Combatants | Female Ex-Combatants | Child Ex-Combatants | Disabled Ex-Combatants |
|---|--------------------|----------------------|---------------------|------------------------|
| Possibility of ex-combatants being a perpetrator of violent activity or crime such as murder, rape | 38.6% | 28.6% | 38.5% | 31.6% |
| Fear due to ex-combatants carrying firearms and weapons | 14.5% | 7.1% | 11.5% | 10.5% |
| Lack of trust in ex-combatants or fear of ex-combatants | 7.2% | 3.6% | 0.0% | 0.0% |
| Fear due to possibility of resumption of rebel activity by ex-combatants, or retaliation, or resurgence of rebel activities | 4.8% | 3.6% | 3.8% | 15.8% |
| Intelligence gathering, spying | 1.2% | 10.7% | 11.5% | 10.5% |
| Inability to stay or coexist with community | 1.2% | 0.0% | 3.8% | 0.0% |
| Interruption of the community, cause problems in the community, cause insecurity in the community | 3.6% | 7.1% | 7.7% | 10.5% |
| Uncontrollable, badly behaved, drinking, unsociable habits | 13.3% | 10.7% | 7.7% | 5.3% |
| No mercy or sympathy or empathy shown, bad character of ex-combatants | 1.2% | 14.3% | 7.7% | 5.3% |
| Ex-combatants' appearance | 1.2% | 3.6% | 3.8% | 5.3% |
| Interpersonal conflicts with other people | 1.2% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% |
| Ex-combatants being bitter and unforgiving | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 5.3% |
| Psychological problems, such as they quickly change moods and become hostile | 12.0% | 10.7% | 3.8% | 0.0% |

return of all types of ex-combatants was the possibility of ex-combatants being a perpetrator of violent crime such as murder or rape.

Interestingly when community members are asked about the fears they have about the presence of ex-combatants in their community today now that ex-combatants have been there for some period of time, 93.1% report that they have no fears – the remaining 6.9% still holding some fears. This denotes a dramatic improvement in the community's ability to absorb ex-combatants since their initial return and a key hint for understanding the process of social reintegration in the GLR countries.

Across the GLR countries, 31.3% of community members believe that ex-combatants should have behaved differently since coming to the community (the remaining 68.7% responding that ex-combatants should not have behaved differently), a figure that is very consistent within the individual GLR countries and across demographic subgroups. Similarly, when community members were asked whether they thought the community should have behaved differently since the arrival of ex-combatants, 27.5% thought that the community should have behaved differently. When asked about whether or not there was any resentment in the community about the support that ex-combatants received, 27.9% thought that there was resentment, though it is unclear how this resentment is related to the ways in which community members think returning ex-combatants and community members should have behaved differently.

17.3 Positive and Negative Perceptions of Ex-Combatants

Across the GLR countries, 29.8% of community members believe that there are negative dimensions to having ex-combatants in the community – the remaining 70.2% responding that there are no negative dimensions. However Uganda stood apart from this trend, instead community members less frequently identified ex-combatant presence

as having negative dimensions (18.1% yes negative factors, 81.9% no negative factors). When asked to outline the types of negative dimensions related to having ex-combatants in the community the most notable responses were: (i) that having ex-combatants in the community increased the risk for violent crime (54.4%); (ii) that ex-combatants have generally bad or brutal behavior (18.3%); or (iii) that ex-combatants can bully, intimidate, or threaten others (10.7%).

When asked whether there were positive aspects to having ex-combatants in the community, across the GLR countries, 67.7% of community members responded that there are distinct positive dimensions to having ex-combatants in the community – a higher proportion than identified negative aspects. Again, Uganda stands apart with 95% of community members identifying that there are distinct positive dimensions to having ex-combatants in the community. When asked to outline the main positive dimensions to having ex-combatants in the community, notable responses from community members were: (i) that ex-combatants give sound advice to other people and serve as good role models (23.9%); (ii) that ex-combatants make positive contributions to the economic fabric of the community (23.7%); and (iii) that ex-combatants handle all village security issues (7.8%).

17.4 Summary

There are several key findings to take away from this section. In terms of information and sensitization: (i) across the GLR countries community members most commonly received information and sensitization about the return and reintegration of ex-combatants through word of mouth; (ii) community members across the GLR countries would most dominantly have preferred to receive information and sensitization about the return and reintegration of ex-combatants in a community meeting forum.

Turning to community members' levels of fear surrounding returning ex-combatants there are also several key points: (i) community members across the GLR countries had generally high levels of fear, particularly in regards to violent crime, associated with the return of ex-combatants – especially male ex-combatants before their return; (ii) after ex-combatants have returned to communities the level of fear that community members hold towards ex-combatants dropped drastically – though some resentment remained; and (iii) after ex-combatants have returned to communities, community members more commonly identify a range of positive aspects to having ex-combatants than negative.

Collectively this narrative of high community member fear, exposure to ex-combatants, followed by low fear with a mostly positive perception of ex-combatants is a positive indication of communities' ability to absorb returning ex-combatants. Further, this narrative gives support to the idea that much of the social dimension of reintegration is constituted by a process of confrontation and atonement – eroding distrust and stigma. While it appears as though initial trust barriers may fall quickly the longer road to reaching social and economic parity for ex-combatants remains.

18. Conclusions

Conflict across the Great Lakes Region has carried enormous weight in affecting the lives of ex-combatants and community members alike. Though conflict-affected countries in the GLR are generally characterized by severe economic development challenges and a deteriorated social fabric, this study has revealed that in the wake of peace, communities across the GLR have reached a level of relative social and economic stability. It is this stability that constitutes communities' capacity to play a positive role in accepting and absorbing returning ex-combatants into their social and economic fabric. Indeed, without a relatively stable social and economic base in the community the idea of the "reintegration" of ex-combatants would lose much meaning – as ex-combatants would reintegrate into economic instability and social marginalization. Thus, understanding the state of communities and their social and economic dynamics is an essential backdrop for understanding ex-combatants' position and trajectory on the path to reintegration – gaining social and economic parity with community members.

18.1 The Community and Economic Reintegration

The analyses of the community member sample presented in this study have shown that community members across the GLR display a stable economic trajectory over time. The majority of community members are engaged in self-employment in small-scale agriculture and as such land access for cultivation and grazing is a key issue. In addition, community members show some diversification into self-employment in service or retail related activities. Overall community members' employment statuses are stable over time and unemployment varies little on average.

Like ex-combatants, community members see the primary barrier to improving their economic situation as revolving around lack of opportunities. Beyond this, community members cite lack of access to capital and credit as among the additional barriers to leveraging what opportunities do come towards their economic betterment – and indeed their access to capital and credit in terms of the reception of micro-loans or membership in economic associations such as local savings and credit organizations is low.

In the context of the severe development challenges that characterize the GLR countries, community members' core strength lies in their relative economic stability. The vast majority of community members meet their monthly household expenses alone, or with the help of others in their household. Only a minority is locked into patterns of borrowing from family and friend networks to meet their basic needs. It is this economic context of relative stability that provides the context in which ex-combatants can return to communities and strive towards parity in a meaningful sense – the longer term process of upward economic mobility occurring outside the bounds of reintegration.

18.2 The Community and Social Reintegration

The analysis presented in the community member sample presented in this study shows that across the GLR countries community members have a generally positive level of social capital, and further a positive trajectory over time – as the social fabric of communities is mended in the wake of improved peace and security. The core of social capital revolve around social networks, be they familial, communal, interpersonal friendships, or strictly economic. Networks have value both in the sense that they serve as a platform for social and economic support within communities, but also can be leveraged to create new social and economic opportunities. Community members across the GLR countries show that they have connection to those around them in terms of social groups, diverse friends, and economic networks. In this sense older community members (over 40) have perhaps the highest social capital and a

solid footing in the community – often rank highest on core indicators. However the core of community members’ social capital, and gateway to accessing broader social networks, is their solid grounding in the family unit accessed through marriage.

Indeed, marriage rates are a powerful indicator of overall community social capital – correlating to larger social and economic networks on average. As community members marry they expand their social networks and the overlap of these individual networks grows – in a very literal sense weaving together to constitute the social fabric of communities and societies. Community members’ rates of marriage are entangled with their number of social groups in general and contribute to their overall engagement in the community in terms of trust, solidarity, social cohesion, and inclusion – in turn feeding back into network building. It is this dynamic interaction of community members’ networks and their collective benefits that feed back to the individual as well – cementing their personal sense of empowerment and understanding of their place in society. Understanding the dynamism of social networks, the family core among them, as fabric connecting individuals into communities is core to understanding the contexts which ex-combatants approach in the process of social reintegration. Essentially social reintegration means that ex-combatants must find a way to connect into this social fabric – perhaps most meaningfully through marriage.

The analysis presented in this annex suggests that though issues of stigma and distrust towards returning ex-combatants may exist in many contexts across the GLR, these barriers break down fairly quickly. It is the presence of an underlying social fabric, in terms of individual social capital, that exists throughout communities across the GLR countries, with the notable exception of DRC – discussed below, that can serve as the necessary condition for ex-combatants’ embankment on a path towards social reintegration.

18.3 Female Community Member Sub-Group

Throughout the analysis of community dynamics presented in this annex female community members have consistently displayed a range of disadvantages across nearly all core demographic, economic, and social indicators that collectively paint a narrative of gender inequality across the GLR countries.

Female community members have lower literacy and educational achievement levels than male community members – this, in part, affects their higher likelihood of unemployment through time. Female community members understand this connection between education and unemployment – being more likely to cite lack of education and skills as a barrier to gaining a productive economic status. Furthermore, perhaps not surprisingly, female community members are more likely than males to work in the household fulfilling traditional gender roles. Female community members are less likely to be a sole household breadwinner, an advantage, though when they are they fare considerably worse off than male community members in terms of meeting monthly expenses.

Beyond their weaker overall economic position, female community members also face considerable disadvantages in terms of social capital. Female community members have smaller social networks in terms of levels of familial contact and number of social groups; in turn, they are less integrated into the social fabric of communities – leveraging the value of their networks in terms of support and opportunities. Female community members feel less trust in the community, less togetherness with the community, feel they have less of a positive impact on the community, and are less happy and empowered overall.

Collectively the range of disadvantages that female community members face across the GLR countries is likely a product of traditional gender inequalities. In this sense these disadvantages are both structurally ingrained and culturally reproduced. Acknowledging the social-structural disadvantages that female community members face across the GLR countries is not only an important dimension of understanding community dynamics, but also the prospects that female ex-combatants face as they approach the process of reintegration. If female ex-combatants are to gain parity with female community members, issues of stigma will no doubt serve as a barrier to entering the community, but if female ex-combatants are rather to reach parity with male community members, a much deeper set of

social-structural barriers stand in their way – barriers that they and their female community member counterparts face together. In this sense reintegration programming is poised to serve not only the needs of female ex-combatants, but also represents an opportunity to encourage a larger community-wide transformation.

18.4 DRC - A Splintered Society

While throughout the analysis of community members presented in this annex each of the GLR countries has varied considerably in terms of specific contextual trends, only DRC displays a truly divergent narrative of community dynamics. As outlined in section 16.6.2, community members in DRC stand out from the rest of the GLR countries with the weakest levels of social capital across a broad range of indicators. When female community members across the GLR countries display disadvantages, these disadvantages are often exaggerated in DRC. Though the exact reasons for these trends are unclear, it is likely that this weak social capital at the individual level, and weak social fabric at the community level, are related to ongoing instability in Eastern DRC coupled with the harsh social geography in the region – keeping families, social groups, and networks separated by physical barriers. The analysis presented paints DRC as a splintered society where community members have weak familial and communal networks – missing the opportunity to leverage their value.

This narrative has considerable weight for understanding the community dynamics in DRC itself, but is also essential for understanding the prospects for meaningful ex-combatant reintegration in DRC. If reintegration means reaching parity with community members then ex-combatants appear to have done well in reentering this splintered society with weak social fabric – though this is not to suggest that ex-combatants in DRC do not face significant barriers to reentering communities. However, if social reintegration is understood as going beyond mere parity, to a process of building social networks and in turn leveraging their value then this is a challenge that community members and ex-combatants alike will face in DRC. With this in mind, it may be that in the context of DRC, or perhaps settings of long-lasting or continuing conflict in general, community based approaches to reintegration focused on benefiting the community could prove particularly impactful. However, as always, reintegration programming must be grounded in the context that is meant to affect. In DRC, or elsewhere, meaningful reintegration programming must be anchored in complexities of the local context – a challenging endeavor indeed.