

**Alternative undertaking as a strategy to extenuate prostitution in the  
exploitation of oil and gas in Uganda**

**By**

**KAMUGISHA DERRICK**

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## **Declaration**

I, Kamugisha Derrick declare that this dissertation is an original piece of work that has not been submitted to any other institution for academic purpose or otherwise. It has been done under the supervision of my university supervisor who read my drafts and suggested numerous improvements.

Signature.....

Date.....

## Approval

This Dissertation titled “*Alternative undertaking as a strategy to extenuate prostitution in the exploitation of oil and gas in Uganda*” has been submitted under my supervision and approval.

Signed.....

Date.....

DR. ISAAC CHRISTOPHER LUBOGO

(SUPERVISOR)

## **Dedication**

This dissertation is wholeheartedly dedicated to my beloved parents, particularly my late father who had an immense appreciation for education and who together with mother, did continuously provide their moral, emotional, spiritual and financial support. I will forever remain grateful.

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## **List of Acronyms**

AIDS	Acquired Immuno-Deficiency Syndrome
ARMREF	African Medical and Research Foundation
ASWA	African Sex Worker Alliance
CNOOC	China National Offshore Oil Company
CSA	Child Sexual Abuse
CSO	Civil Society Organisations
CSW	Commercial Sex Workers
EADWA	Empowered at Dusk Women's Association
FPAM	Family Planning Association of Malawi
FSW	Female Sex workers
HIV	Human Immuno -Deficiency Virus
IOC	International Oil Company
ILO	International Labour Organisation
LLO	Life Link Organisation
MLGSD	Ministry of Labour, Gender and Social Development
MOH	Ministry of Health
NFSWAM	National Female Sex Workers Alliance of Malawi
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organization
NPA	National Planning Authority
NOGP	National Oil and Gas Policy
SACCO	Savings and Credit Cooperatives
SES	Social Economic Status
SMEP	Small Micro Enterprise Programme
STI	Sexually Transmitted Infections
UBOS	Uganda Bureau of Statistics
UDHS	Uganda Demographic and Health Survey
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WHO	World Health Organization

## **ABSTRACT**

The development of oil and gas in resource-rich countries has had far reaching effects with one of these being alarming rates of prostitution. As has been the case elsewhere, so is it unless addressed likely to be with the exploitation of the oil resource within the Albertine Graben region in Uganda. The high expectation of employment in the oil sector often leads to a massive movement of people especially the youth to the oil producing areas. Unfortunately, many of these young people do not get the anticipated employment and thus end up engaging in various social vices, say prostitution for their livelihood. The research focusses on the relationship between oil extraction and increase in female prostitution where the latter is a condition imposed on females from low-income backgrounds due to poverty. Given the highly secretive nature of prostitution, secondary sources of information were used in the attempt to demystify the social processes and dynamic relations that bring about the vice. Consequently, effort was made to recommend both theoretical and practical measures to curb prostitution as a social problem that the law in place has hardly solved.

## **Chapter One: General Introduction**

In this segment is an exordium of the current status of the oil and gas industry in Uganda followed by the ideological orientation that actuates the study. A historical perspective is then availed of the social vice of prostitution and of how it came into being from the international, regional and national context. Illustration is thereafter made of the theoretical and conceptual perspective of prostitution. Thereafter is a statement of the problem, purpose, significance and the objectives of the study. Research questions do then follow along with the justification and scope of the study and finally the research framework.

### **1.0 Background to the study**

The discovery of commercially-viable oil deposits in the Albertine graben region on the border between Uganda and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) in 2006 has had and will continue to have major impacts on the livelihoods of people living in the local communities in the region.<sup>1</sup> In 2013, Uganda's oil reserves were estimated to be 3.5 billion barrels, and were expected to yield at least USD \$2 billion per year for 30 years once oil production commences.<sup>2</sup> It is hoped that this income will make Uganda, one of the poorest countries in the world, less dependant on donor aid and also less likely to receive donor support.<sup>3</sup>

It is also considered that if the revenues from oil production are used properly and directed towards appropriate infrastructure and social development, it may be possible for Uganda to achieve its 2040 Vision of a middle-income country with the majority of its citizens living in urban areas, having smaller families and earning income from non-agricultural sectors.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> NAPE, 2016. Women-Led Action Oriented Research on the Negative Impacts of Oil on Women's Rights, Land and Food Sovereignty in Uganda's Oil Region 2015/2016.

<sup>2</sup> Kuteesa, A., 2014. Local Communities and Oil Discoveries: A Study in Uganda's Albertine Graben Region. Brookings Institute, Washington DC.

<sup>3</sup> Republic of Uganda, 2015. Second National Development Plan (NDPII) 2015/16-2019/20.

<sup>4</sup> World Bank, 2016. The Uganda Poverty Assessment Report 2016: Farms, Cities and Good Fortune: Assessing Poverty Reduction in Uganda from 2006 to 2013. Report NO. ACS18391. World Bank, Washington DC.

The discovery of oil resources in Uganda raised the hopes and expectations of the masses and that the enormous revenues expected to accrue would make poverty history.<sup>5</sup>This encouraged many people to migrate to the oil districts in the hope of benefitting from the oil industry.<sup>6</sup> Due to the in-migration (also known as the honey-pot effect), some social evils have been witnessed in the Albertine Graben Region, prominent among them being prostitution, which allegedly was never previously heard of in the villages. However, when oil operations started, prostitutes from DRC across lake Albert flocked into the areas occupying most of the fish landing sites like Kaiso, Sebagoro, Kyehoro and Buhuka.<sup>7</sup>

As was the case with oil discovery in Chad, many people believed the discovery of oil would change their lives and many flocked to the oil producing region only to be disappointed. Many of the youth who didn't get employed ended up engaging in various social vices key among them being prostitution for survival.<sup>8</sup>

The country thus faces some critical policy choices on which the welfare of local communities in the Albertine graben region and Uganda as a whole depend.

Karl Marx, in the Economic and Philosophic Manuscript asserts that all forms of wage labour are a form of prostitution and that prostitution is only a specific expression of the general prostitution of the laborer. He views prostitution as a sort of alienated relationship created by capitalism with money substituting for concrete human characteristics. With regard to capitalism, he particularly declares:

*“What I am and can do is, therefore, not at all determined by my individuality. I am ugly, but can buy the most beautiful woman for myself. Consequently, I am not ugly, for the effect of ugliness, its power to repel is annulled by money.”*<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Bainomugisha, A., Kivengyere H., Tusasirwe, B.,2006. Escaping the oil curse and making poverty history: A Review of the Oil and Gas Policy and Legal Framework for Uganda. ACODE Policy Research Series, No.20

<sup>6</sup> International Alert, 2013. Governance and Livelihoods in Uganda's Oil-rich Albertine Graben. International Alert, London.

<sup>7</sup> NAPE, 2016:9

<sup>8</sup> Aristide, M., Moundigbaye, M.,2017. Oil and regional development in Chad: assessment of the impact of the Doha Oil project on poverty in the host region. Afr. Dev. Rev.29 (SI), 42-55

<sup>9</sup> Marx, K. (2007). Economic and philosophic manuscripts of 1844 (M. Milligan, Trans.). Dover Publications.

Therefore, just as the capability of labor is commoditized under the capitalist mode of production, so also is sexuality, especially that of women. The prostitute like other laborers, has an essential part of them alienated, which has them dehumanized and their value as persons determined by market forces.

Capitalism, it turns out, has inbuilt structures that create unemployment, inequality and hence poverty with consequences such as poverty. Multinational companies such as the IOCs operating within the Albertine region are the engine of the capitalist system and shift their activities from country to country in search of profit. However, with their belief that mass production of standardized products can no longer guarantee long term profit, they end up creating job insecurity and temporary unemployment.

In adopting the political economy approach therefore, it can be argued that prostitution is the alternative between survival and starvation in a capitalist dominated economy. For the females from the exploited class, it is a response to financial insecurity. The women and girls are impelled to become prostitutes to stay alive just as other exploited classes resort to other forms of deviant behavior.

### **Historical Perspective**

Commercial sex activity is hardly new in the human socioeconomic life. It does extend to nearly all ancient and modern cultures and has often been described as the world's oldest profession. Ancient Mesopotamia in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century recognized the need to protect women's property rights and within the Hammurabi Code, were provisions found to address inheritance rights of women, including female prostitutes. In the Ancient Near East along the Tigris and Euphrates rivers were many shrines and temples that embraced sacred prostitution before Emperor Constantine destroyed the goddess temples and replaced them with Christianity in 4<sup>th</sup> century AD.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Bullough, Vern and Bullough, Bonnie (1978). Prostitution: An Illustrated Social History. New York: Crown Publishers

Although forbidden by Jewish law, ancient Israel brooked female prostitution as illustrated by the biblical story of Judah and Tamar in Genesis chapter 38. In the narrative, Tamar, although not a prostitute, disguised herself as one so she could lure her father-in-law who had failed to fulfill his cultural obligations in seeing to it that she bore descendants for her deceased husband. For Judah to freely give in to the indulgence and even go ahead to make good on payment showed a tolerance for the practice in the society of the time.

Another biblical story found in the book of Joshua chapter 2 does present Rahab, a prostitute but Jerichoan who assisted the two Israelite spies sent by Joshua to spy on the promised land. Rahab was of help with her knowledge of the then socioeconomic, cultural and military situation attained from her interaction and popularity with the then high-ranking nobles whom she sexually serviced. In return, the spies promised to save her and her family during the planned military invasion as long as she kept the deal a secret. Indeed, when Israel conquered Canaan, she and her family were spared, she thereafter left prostitution, got converted to Judaism and married an Israelite.

In ancient Greece, women engaged in commercial sex could be independent and influential and often required to wear distinctive dresses as they had to pay taxes for their services. For ancient Rome, commercial sex was legal, public and widespread where Roman men of the highest social status could freely engage prostitutes of either sex without incurring moral ignominy. All they had to do was demonstrate some mild form of self-control and moderation in the frequency and enjoyment of sex.<sup>11</sup>

In the 4<sup>th</sup> century when Rome became Christianized, some brothels were regarded as tourist attractions and prostitutes played a role in a couple of religious observances. Prostitutes were either abandoned children, slaves or former slaves who were lacking in socioeconomic standing that were captured, purchased or raised for prostitution by large-scale “prostitute farmers”.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Mathew and Lynda, 2005

<sup>12</sup> Catherine Edwards, 2007

In Islam, although prostitution is a sin as referenced here: “Allah’s Apostle forbade taking the price of a dog, money earned by prostitution and the earnings of a soothsayer”<sup>13</sup>, sexual slavery was very common during the Arab slave trade throughout the Middle Ages and early modern period, where captured women and girls served as concubines in the Arabian palaces. In some cases, these women were forced into a life of poverty, misery and prostitution.<sup>14</sup>

Whereas in the ancient Roman Catholic Church all forms of sexual activity outside marriage were regarded as sinful, prostitution was tolerated for it helped prevent the greater evils of rape, sodomy and masturbation.<sup>15</sup> Augustine of Hippo went on to mention that: “if you expel prostitution from society, you will unsettle everything on account of lusts” thus, prostitution was tolerated but with many canonists urging prostitutes to reform.

With the decline of organised prostitution in the Roman Empire, a great many prostitutes became slaves, but the religious campaigns against slavery and the growing economy, turned prostitution back into a business and by the high Middle Ages; it was not uncommon to find town governments accepting prostitutes within town halls. In France and Germany, town authorities came to set aside particular streets as areas where prostitution could be tolerated whereas in London the brothels of Southwark were owned by the Bishop of Winchester. Later, it became common in the major towns and cities of Southern Europe to establish civic brothels, while outlawing any prostitution that was taking place outside of these brothels.<sup>16</sup>

Following the end of the Fifteenth (15<sup>th</sup>) century, attitudes towards prostitution changed due to an outbreak of syphilis and other STIs in Naples and across Europe. By early 16th century the association between prostitutes, plague, and contagion emerged, prompting authorities to ban brothels and prostitution.<sup>17</sup> With the 18th century, presumably in Venice a city of merchants, prostitutes began practicing safer sex by using condoms made with catgut or cow bowel. At the time the British East India Company ruled, it was common for British soldiers to engage in inter-

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<sup>13</sup> Sahih al-Bukhari, 3:34:439

<sup>14</sup> Brundage 1989

<sup>15</sup> Mc Call, 1979

<sup>16</sup> Norman, 2006

<sup>17</sup> Otis and Leah

ethnic prostitution, by visiting local Indian dancers. Later though, the inter-ethnic prostitution was abandoned as British females began arriving in large numbers in British India in the mid-19th century despite their brothels being filled with Indians.

During the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, there did develop a network of Chinese and Japanese prostitutes being trafficked across Asia; in addition, European prostitutes were being trafficked to India, Ceylon, Singapore, China and Japan. This came to be known as "White Slave Traffic" and the most common destination for European prostitutes in Asia were the British colonies of India and Ceylon, where hundreds of women and girls serviced British soldiers. During the second world war, Japanese soldiers engaged in forced prostitution in their invasions across Asia and the term "comfort women" was of common use in reference to Korean and Chinese women recruited into prostitution in Japanese military brothels.<sup>18</sup>

The late Twentieth (20<sup>th</sup>) saw the emergence of sex tourism as a controversial aspect of western tourism and globalization and since then, sex tourism has been typically undertaken internationally by tourists from different countries and about 3 of every 4 men, aged between 20 and 50 who have visited Asian or African cities have paid for sex.<sup>19</sup> At about the same time, a new legal approach to prostitution egressed prohibiting the buying, but not the selling, of sexual services and with only the client committing a crime, not the prostitute. Such laws were enacted in Sweden (1999), Norway (2009), Iceland (2009), and are also being considered in other jurisdictions. Since the break up of the Soviet Union, thousands of eastern European women have ended up as prostitutes in China, Western Europe, Israel, and Turkey every year.<sup>20</sup> Studies further indicate that tens of thousands of women from Europe, Asia and Africa are working as prostitutes in Dubai and Arab men from Saudi Arabia and UAE form a large proportion of the customers. In India alone, an estimated three million women are engaged in commercial sex trade with 35% of the girls in India entering the industry before attaining the majority age of eighteen.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Mc Call, 1979

<sup>19</sup> Ringdal, 2004

<sup>20</sup> Margot, 2001

<sup>21</sup> Eral et al, 2003: 39

In Africa, the status of female commercial sex industry varies widely and is partially driven by the widespread poverty in many Sub-Saharan African countries. It is one of the drivers for the prevalence of HIV/AIDS and other STIs. Some African countries do prohibit prostitution although the law is rarely enforced; however, a couple of countries have tolerated and even legalized prostitution such as Senegal and Ivory Coast where brothels are authorized.<sup>22</sup>

Transactional Sexual relationships are common in sub-Saharan Africa and in many cases, the woman may have a regular partner but with multiple sexual partners, which presents an increased risk of acquiring HIV and other sexually transmitted infections.<sup>23</sup>

In Kenya, the penal code does not criminalize sex work but criminalizes third parties who live on the earnings of prostitution. The penal code defines two types of offences with respect to sex work, namely ‘living on the earnings of prostitution’ and ‘soliciting or importuning for immoral purposes.’ The sexual offences Act 2006 does not specifically criminalize sex work but aims at protecting persons who may be forced into sex work or may be exploited for prostitution.<sup>24</sup>

Thousands of young women and girls are involved in full-time prostitution and one of the prominent reasons for the practice is poverty.<sup>25</sup> Since prostitution is such a profitable activity, many families in Kenya allow their children to get into the sex industry at a very young age to gain some income to help support the family for food and other needs. Research shows that, up to 30,000 girls between the ages of 12 and 14 are being lured into the industry after being promised riches and trips abroad in exchange for sex.<sup>26</sup> A similar study by UNICEF found that there is a high level of acceptance of prostitution and commercial sexual abuse in Kenya done by tourists and parents of the girls involved in prostitution. Girls at a young age are recruited into the sex industry in order to survive, thus losing their rights as young children and as they grow older are denied their rights to develop at the natural pace.

In Uganda, commercial sex trade is construed as prostitution and remains an illegal trade but being operated freely almost in all urban centres. The Ugandan law criminalizes prostitution,

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<sup>22</sup> Welthungerhilfe, 2010

<sup>23</sup> Marwa, 2007

<sup>24</sup> Kenya Legal & Ethical Issues Network on HIV and AIDS (KELIN), “Punitive Laws Affecting Sex Worker”, kenlinkenya.org, 2016

<sup>25</sup> UNICEF, 2017

<sup>26</sup> Children’s Rights

with Section 138 of the Penal Code Act defining a prostitute as “*a person who, in public or elsewhere, regularly or habitually holds himself or herself out as available for sexual intercourse or other sexual gratification for monetary or other material gain*”. Nonetheless, the industry continues to grow, attracting thousands of women.

The International Labour Organisation report of 2004 reported that Ugandans engaged in commercial sex for various social and economic reasons, key among them being the need to supplement family income, peer influence and the urge of self-reliance. On the other hand, a nationwide survey carried out by the Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS) in 2014 discovered that majority of young girls and women in rural and slummy areas aged between 15 and 49 lacked financial support from their families and husbands. Thus, faced with the reality of economic pressures, were left with no choice but to turn to prostitution as an option that could earn a living for their respective families.

A study carried out by Uganda Youth Development Link (UYDEL) revealed that young women and girls as young as 14 years of age are recruited into the sex trade from illiterate, semi-illiterate and low-income families, especially in urban settings. They are then transported to city centres for commercial sex activities where some end up recruited into the commercial sex trade, either knowingly or through trickery methods. Literally, the girls are lured by their poor families into commercial sex work as they are viewed as mere commodities to be traded for as long as there is demand from the sex industry.

Concluding the historical background, it's imperative to note that the commercial sex industry is a booming one the world over and it's quickly taking on the African continent despite being pronounced as illegal by most African countries, Uganda inclusive. Commercial sex work is economically beneficial to its' practitioners however, the manner of its' conduct and the lens through which it is viewed has attracted negative connotations, key among them being a driver of HIV/AIDS and STIs, while on the social plane, stigma and disgrace is extended to those known to engage in the trade and yet somewhat ironic, many females still embrace the practice fully aware of the consequences.

### **Theoretical Perspective.**

The study was based on the psychologist and author, Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory which does attempt to explain the certain minimum requirements essential to a decent standard of living. These are primary and also physiological needs which include food, shelter, health, clothing, and education. They are primary in the notion that they ought to be catered for before other needs such as security, sense of belonging, affection, love and finally self-actualization can be pursued. However, in trying to make the ends meet, women try several means of survival including engaging in commercial sex activities faced with challenges of say, acquiring STIs including HIV/AIDS and losing their social respect in families and communities. The study thus attempted to establish whether in meeting of basic needs, alternative employment for commercial sex workers would scale down the indulgence in the practice and consequently reduce the risk of HIV infection.

### **Conceptual Perspective.**

The word "prostitute" came to be of common usage in the late 18<sup>th</sup> Century and defining prostitution in the African context is rather difficult compared to the situation in Europe, as there is a continuum from marriage to prostitution. If prostitutes can be defined as women who sell sex on a regular basis to a number of different clients without any emotional or long-term basis relationships, then such women are identified as commercial sex workers, but in between lies a spectrum of sexual relationships that may involve longer term relationships, children and domestic settings.<sup>27</sup>

While understanding commercial sex or prostitution may prove a complex process, the concept refers to the act of engaging in sexual intercourse or performing other sexual acts in exchange for money, clothing, food, shelter, drugs or other consideration. On the other hand, the commercial sex industry is an assemblage of legal and illegal business that involve a single or multi-party operations that profit from the sexual exploitation of women, children and sometimes men, either through trafficking, prostitution tour agencies, adult entertainment and pornography among others.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Anarfi, 2010

<sup>28</sup> ILO, 2014

The sex industry evidently operates in society and as such, socioeconomic factors are very much of consideration. Socioeconomic Status can be used to describe the differences between groups of people relating to their social class and financial situations. It examines the social and economic factors to help understand how the combination of both influences something or issues facing the community. Socioeconomic Status is thus an aggregate concept defined according to one's level of resources or prestige in relation to others. It can be assessed at the level of the individual, household unit, and neighborhood or community but most commonly through single individual-level indicators, although these may not accurately characterize the status of the family or household.

## **1.1 Statement of the Problem.**

The oil and gas sector in Uganda has transitioned from the exploration to the development phase in preparation for oil production. This has seen an influx of immigrants into the oil rich Albertine region in hope of finding employment for the largely anticipated informal jobs that the production phase is to create. However, with the flooding in of these people is a likelihood of the disintegration of social and cultural cohesion as has been the case in other oil producing jurisdictions such as Ghana. When the migrants fail to find employment, they turn to social vices such as prostitution for a livelihood. This is especially the case among young women, who have limited chances at formal employment for their survival yet tasked with the welfare of their household members.

Despite the clarity of the law and penalty for prostitution in the Penal Code Act, more girls and women are still attracted to the intemperance which increases the risk for HIV/AIDS and STIs. If left unchecked, it could contribute immensely to the depletion of human resources that is a key factor in national development. Particularly for the Albertine region, prostitution could accentuate divorce rates, destroy the institution of family and compromise the labour force that is a major unit of production in the oil and gas industry.

It thus became necessary to conduct a study to explore the feasibility of alternative employment for the already engaged sex workers in extenuating the vice within the Albertine region. Further, to establish whether empowering the sex workers economically could lead to a sustainable livelihood and improved health.

### **1.2 Purpose of the study.**

The purpose of the study was to explore the feasibility of alternative undertaking as a strategy to extenuate prostitution in the exploitation of oil and gas within the Albertine graben region in Uganda.

### **1.3 Significance of the study.**

This study may be useful in a number of ways to the technocrats at the National Planning Authority in developing comprehensive, participatory, inclusive and development plans in line with the country's vision. The Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development will also gain from the research in sustainably exploiting and utilizing the oil resource for social and economic development. The Kikuube district local government will find the research helpful as it is charged with the implementation of workable programs and the administrative functions handed down from the central government. The research findings also deepen the current understanding on prostitution by the authorities where it is mostly held out as a crime and not as a social problem. In this regard, it is established that other alternatives other than the penalty of the law ably address the vice.

Particularly, the study findings provide a body of knowledge on the conduct of commercial sex work that researchers, scholars and academics may find relevant and useful. In that respect, the study is further useful in influencing response strategies among commercial sex workers in an effort to fight HIV/AIDS out of the country by the year 2030 as espoused by the country's top leadership.

### **1.4 Objectives of the study.**

The study strove to achieve the following objectives;

- i) To evaluate the prevalence of prostitution in resource extracting jurisdictions.
- ii) To appraise the linkage between prostitution and resource extraction.
- iii) To assess the feasibility of alternative undertaking in extenuating prostitution in the Albertine.

### **1.5 Research Questions.**

The questions that guided the research were as follows;

1. What is the prevalence of prostitution in resource extracting jurisdictions?
2. What is the linkage between prostitution and resource extraction?
3. How feasible is alternative undertaking in extenuating prostitution in the Albertine?

### **1.6 Justification.**

The research is really necessary mindful of the fact that the oil and gas industry in Uganda is still nascent. However, not everyone who will flock to the Albertine region will find gainful employment within the oil industry. As such, the disappointed migrants particularly the females will resort to prostitution not out of will but out of frustration so as to earn a living. Also, for the males who will fortunately attain employment, there will be the temptation to indulge in the vice as they will have disposable income on them and the market will be readily available to meet the need.

It therefore justifies a study on this aspect to attain a sustainable solution to this inevitable problem if the country is serious about having HIV/AIDS out of the country by the year 2030. Additionally, this will enable the country remain a benchmark, this time in proficient resource extraction as it has been before to other countries in ably dealing with pandemics such as Ebola, Marburg, SARS and the recent covid-19.

### **1.7 Scope of the study.**

The study will be limited to finding alternative forms of occupation for the prostitutes in de-escalating the indulgence in the vice. Geographically, the study pertains to the Albertine region, particularly in Buseruka Sub- County, Hoima District where the country's mini refinery is to be built and where activity will supposedly be high. As to the time scope, consideration will be made of studies and statistics of the last six (6) years relating to the study.

### **1.8 Research Framework.**

Ideally, there are broadly two categories of research frameworks; theoretical and conceptual. The former is a fundamental review of existent theories that serve to guide in the formulation of arguments to be used in the work. It defines the key concepts in the research, suggests relationships between them, discusses the theories that support the research to show that the dissertation topic is relevant and grounded in established ideas. As such, selection, evaluation and comparison are made of the most relevant of the possibly already existing theories on the research topic.

The latter, Conceptual framework represents the relationship expected to be seen between variables or the characteristics or properties intended to be studied. It entails a “cause and effect” relationship of Independent and dependent variables where demonstrably the expected cause in this research would be “**Alternative undertaking**” as the independent variable and the expected effect: “**Decline in prostitution**” would be the dependent variable.

## **Chapter Two: Literature Review**

### **2.0 Introduction.**

This section presents a review of the literature in an attempt to further understand the level of existing knowledge about the study problem stated in chapter one. The literature reviewed ranges from books, to government publications and reports, journal articles, newspaper writings and internet sources. For chronological clarity, it's presented according to the study objectives earlier stated.

### **2.1 Summary of the Literature.**

#### **i) The prevalence of prostitution in resource extracting jurisdictions.**

The World Bank report on “the global HIV epidemics among sex workers, 2013” states that prevalence among sex workers does vary globally but it has its highest at 36.9% in Sub-Saharan Africa.<sup>29</sup> It is understood that HIV/AIDS is largely spread by sexual activity but the World Bank report is not exactly clear as to whether high prevalence rates of HIV/AIDS are a direct reflection of the high prevalence of prostitution.

The global energy demands have driven the international oil companies to renew their interest in expanding oil and gas developments in the resource-rich jurisdictions. However, because many of the locals within the oil and gas jurisdictions are unskilled, limitations arise leaving many unemployed. It is these unemployed persons that are forced into crime such as prostitution for a livelihood so as to sustain themselves and their loved ones. In the city of Sekondi-Takoradi, many of the young women who had migrated to the city since the discovery of oil in 2007 were in commercial sex work.<sup>30</sup> The report however does not establish whether or not those fortunate to attain employment also do engage in prostitution. It makes the presumption that the employed are somewhat insulated from the desire to ever indulge in the vice.

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<sup>29</sup> World Bank. The global HIV epidemics among sex workers. 2013, Washington, WA: International Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

<sup>30</sup> Oil, sex and temporary migration: The case of Vienna City, Sekondi-Takoradi, Ghana, Franklin Obeng-Odoom.

Studies conducted from West African countries showed that oil and gas activities disrupted the cultural practices of nearby communities. For instance, most men in Mali and Ghana did not approve of the sexual relations between the foreigners and their women. Interestingly, the African women from both countries found prostitution lucrative as the company workers gave them a lot of money that their African men could not provide.<sup>31</sup> This study presupposes that more money offered by the company workers drove the women into prostitution and leaves the question of the women wanting more money or the urge to sleep with a foreigner.

From another study, it was found that the oil and gas activities led to destruction of structures that once provided livelihoods for women in oil-producing communities, which put undue burden on women in these communities forcing them to turn to commercial sex work.<sup>32</sup> This study is relatively understandable as the women who are the backbone of their families had no alternative once their means of earning were compromised.

There is a study that gave the example of Ghana as an oil producing country where commercial sex work not a new invention but rather one that exacerbated due to the exploration of oil and gas. Surprisingly, even with the emergency and spread of deadly sexually transmitted infections, the women did not have negotiating power for safe sex practices.<sup>33</sup> In this study, it is not exactly clear as to why the ladies could not negotiate for safer sex practices. Was it a case of ignorance or poverty?

In the United Kingdom, the policy makers in the oil industry promoted the swift expansion of domestic natural gas development. In January 2014, the then UK prime minister David Cameron stressed gas extraction as one aspect of the government's new energy policy. This ideally meant more jobs and opportunities for the people and economic security for the country but unfortunately it came with social consequences of crime including prostitution.<sup>34</sup> While this report repeatedly

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<sup>31</sup> Oviasuyi, P.O., & Uwadiae, J. (2010). The dilemma of Niger-Delta region as oil producing states of Nigeria. *Journal of Peace, Conflict and Development*, 16(1), 10-126

<sup>32</sup> Olaniyi, R.O. (2011). Global sex trade and women trafficking in Nigeria.

<sup>33</sup> Baumuller, H., Donnelly, E., Vines, A., & Weimer, M (2011). The effects of oil companies' activities on the environment, health and development in Sub-Saharan Africa. Directorate-General for External Policies, European Parliament.

<sup>34</sup> Watt, N., (2014, January 13). Fracking in the UK: "We're going all out for shale," admits Cameron. *The Guardian*.

mentions prostitution to be a consequence of the natural gas development, it is not elaborative of how this comes to be, whether due to poverty or an inherent desire to indulge in the vice.

In Nigeria, the discovery of oil and its boom accorded Port Harcourt a cosmopolitan status with serious economic, social, cultural and political consequences. Port Harcourt is the capital of Rivers State, Nigeria. It lies along the Bonny River and is located in the Niger Delta. The people of Niger Delta forced by declining fortune in agriculture, arising from the predominance of oil as the prime economic good coupled with the neglect of by the oil companies migrated to Port Harcourt. However, the preponderance of young men created artificial scarcity of sex and as such the urban men had to source for it with their money which led to the young enterprising ladies to migrate to the place to sell their bodies for the resources it attracted.<sup>35</sup> This study shows that the young men initiated the prostitution and not the activities of the oil industry. In other words, it could have been replicated elsewhere completely divorced from the natural resource extraction jurisdiction.

In the free-market economy such as one that Uganda embraces, supply and demand regulate production and labor with no government intervention. In other words, one gets to freely exchange what they have or have produced in plenty to attain that which they do not have but desire to. On account of this very idea of trade is why many vulnerable women and young girls engage in commercial sex or exchange what they have “their bodies” in order to attain what they crave, be it money, favors or a couple of other desires, which all operates under illegality.

In Uganda, commercial sex trade is construed as prostitution and remains an illegal trade but being operated freely almost in all urban centres. The Ugandan law criminalizes prostitution under Section 139 of the Penal Code Act, with Section 138 defining a prostitute as “*a person who, in public or elsewhere, regularly or habitually holds himself or herself out as available for sexual intercourse or other sexual gratification for monetary or other material gain*”. Nonetheless, the industry continues to grow, attracting thousands of women.

The International Labour Organisation report of 2004 reported that Ugandans engaged in commercial sex for various social and economic reasons, key among them being the need to supplement family income, peer influence and the urge of self-reliance. On the other hand, a

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<sup>35</sup> Oil Economy and Female Prostitution in Port Harcourt, C. Poroma, U.J. David, O.R. Jackson

nationwide survey carried out by the Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS) in 2014 discovered that majority of young girls and women in rural and slummy areas aged between 15 and 49 lacked financial support from their families and husbands. Thus, faced with the reality of economic pressures, were left with no choice but to turn to prostitution as an option that could earn a living for their respective families.

Whereas these two reports provide statistics of the age and number of girls and women pushed into prostitution and the reasons for doing so, they are general and not specific to the resource extracting areas of the country nor to the Albertine region itself.

**ii) The linkage between prostitution and resource extraction.**

To establish the linkage between prostitution and resource extraction, the former ought to be categorised as a crime and as such, reference to criminal activities within oil boom centers is inclusive of prostitution. There is a common belief that oil and gas development can disorganise communities by causing the rapid congregation of people and money.<sup>36</sup>

As communities change with the introduction of development, mechanical solidarity declines and leads to greater variation in community norms that facilitate higher rates of community problems such as suicide and crime.<sup>37</sup>

Despite the general modernization idea that development can lead to reductions in crime over time, most studies of community crime and oil and gas development tend to focus on the short term and negative aspects of development. Research observes that oil and gas development can produce boomtown like conditions that sow the seeds for immediate increases in crime.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> C.D. O'Connor. *Insiders and Outsiders: Social change, deviant others, and sense of community in a boomtown.* *Int. J. Compar. Appl. Crim. Justice*, 39 (3) (2015), pp.219-238

<sup>37</sup> E. Durkheim. *The Division of Labor in Society.* Macmillan, New York (1984)

<sup>38</sup> K.P. Wikinson, J.G. Thompson, R.R. Reynolds Jr., L.M. Ostresh. *Local social disruption and western energy development: a critical review.*

Rapidly changing populations disrupt patterns of relationships within communities and create the kind of social milieu and community conflict that makes it ripe for crime and deviance. Social institutions are less effective within zones of transition because people know a smaller proportion of community residents and therefore have fewer social bonds that prevent crime. However, social isolation increases in areas where oil and gas developments occur because people have less contact with those people they do know, weakening social ties among residents. Thus, fewer bonds and weaker ties create the social conditions for crime.<sup>39</sup>

Sekondi-Takoradi, a twin city in Ghana experienced substantial migration following the discovery, production and exportation of oil. The outcome was not surprising because it was well established that temporary migration invariably accompanied resource extraction, although the rate of migration differed according to the stage (growth, stagnation, decline and collapse) of the industry. It was found that these migrants work in various sectors, including the sex industry in “Vienna” as the city is popularly called by the taxi drivers.<sup>40</sup>

Empirical studies examined the correlation between oil and gas extraction and crime.<sup>41</sup> In this study were the impacts of offshore oil extraction wells in communities surrounding the Gulf of Mexico by looking at the price of oil and the number of wells drilled in Louisiana parishes between 1956 and 1981. It was found that homicide rates were higher in the parishes with the most wells. The correlation between oil development and crime was more intense in those parishes where a greater percentage of residents were employed in the oil industry and therefore receiving higher oil and gas wages.

A 2014 study examined property and violent crime in oil and gas producing counties in Montana and North Dakota where the researchers compared property and violent crime rates in 26 oil producing counties to crime rates in a matched sample of 26 non-producing counties and 2 property and violent crime pre-and post- “gas booms” in all counties. It was discovered that there were no

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<sup>39</sup> W.R. Freudenburg. An ounce of prevention: another approach to mitigating the human problems of boomtowns. *Energy Resource Development: Implications for Women and Minorities in the Intermountain West*, United States Civil Rights Commission, Rocky Mountain Region. Washington, DC: USAGO (1979), pp.55-62.

<sup>40</sup> Obeng-Odoom, 2012, Oil, sex and temporary migration: The case of Vienna City, Sekondi-Takoradi, Ghana

<sup>41</sup> R. Seydlitz, S. Laska, D. Spain, E.W. Triche, K.L. Biship. Development and social problems: the impact of the offshore oil industry on suicide and homicide rates. *Rural Sociol.*, 58(1) (1993), pp. 93-110

statistically significant differences in crime rates when comparing across communities by level of development. There was however, a sharp increase in crime over time in oil producing counties specifically both violent and property crime between the years of 2006 and 2012.<sup>42</sup>

Another 2014 study went on to examine the relationship between the number of oil and gas wells and property and violent crime rates in 210 counties in Pennsylvania Ohio and West Virginia (US). The study found little evidence that increased oil and gas extraction related development led to population growth in a boomtown fashion. There was however, a 17.7% increase in violence and 10.8% increase in property crime in high drilling counties between the years of 2005 and 2012.<sup>43</sup>

In 2015, research was conducted to assess the impact of unconventional gas extraction (oil and gas fracking) in Pennsylvania (US) counties in the Utica and Marcellus shale counties between the years of 2004 and 2012. It was discovered that the number of unconventional wells drilled is positively correlated with crime such as murder, rape, robbery and assault. Also, that high development counties (i.e., those that had more than 75 wells) had violent crime increases that were 30% higher than low fracking counties. Importantly, the number of fracking wells was related to violent crime in both high -and low-fracking counties between the years of 2004 and 2012.<sup>44</sup>

A 2017 study made in the United States examined the relationship between geographical shale formations and crime rates in the US counties between 2000 and 2011. The research revealed a robust correlation between petroleum development and crime. The “booming” play counties had greater increases in crime than the play counties, suggesting that those communities with more rapid levels of development also experienced higher crime rates than those with lower levels of development. It was also discovered that violent crime rates are more likely than property crime rates to surge during the energy booms. The crime increases appear to be independent of social

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<sup>42</sup> R. Ruddell, N.R. Ortiz. Boomtown blues: long-term community perceptions of crime and disorder. *Am. J. Crim. Justice*, 40 (1) (2014), pp. 1-18

<sup>43</sup> Price, M., Herzenberg, S., Polson, D., Ward, S., Wazeter, E., Basurto, L., 2014 The shale tipping point: The relationship of drilling to crime, Traffic fatalities, STDs and Rents in Pennsylvania, West Virginia and Ohio.

<sup>44</sup> T.M. Komarek. Crime and Natural Resource Booms: Evidence from Unconventional Natural Gas Production. (2015)

and economic changes in variables such as gross domestic product, mining employment, population size, percentage male and percentage of the population that is young.<sup>45</sup>

Whereas the aforementioned studies do establish a clear correlation between oil and gas extraction and increased crime rate, it is not equally clear whether the crime rates particularly refer to prostitution despite it being categorized as a crime too. It therefore remains a presumption that prostitution is closely linked to resource extraction.

### **iii) Feasibility of alternative undertaking in extenuating prostitution in the Albertine.**

Prostitution ought to be understood as a consequence of a failure to address social challenges and not an activity that those who indulge in freely take on. As earlier elaborated, prostitution is mainly brought about by poverty in the communities where people have no alternative means of survival. Therefore, to address the issue of poverty would be a step towards extenuating the vice.

A cardinal component of nearly all AIDS control programs is the attempt at modifying risky sexual behavior among CSW through reduction in numbers of sex partners and increased condom use. Whereas such programs often lead to increased awareness about HIV/AIDS and how to prevent HIV infection, along with improved attitudes towards infected persons, evidence pertaining sustained behavioral change is still deficient.<sup>46</sup> Alternative employment would thus be a viable solution in extenuating prostitution as it provides economic empowerment that translates to better decision making.

Although the process of entry into the sex trade is complex, most of the women who sell sex do so because of they are destitute and lack alternative means of sustaining themselves and their children. Therefore, programs to provide alternative economic opportunities for CSW are important since they are likely to have significant impact in reducing the amount of sex work overall, promote

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<sup>45</sup> A. James, B. Smith. There will be blood: crime rates in shale-rich US counties. *J. Environ. Econ. Manage.*, 84 (July) (2017), pp.125-152.

<sup>46</sup> AMICAALL, 2009

economic growth, reduce unemployment, and redress women's disadvantaged position in the labour market.<sup>47</sup>

It was discovered that negotiations with vocational training institutions to design courses for marketable skills training for Commercial Sex Workers were part of the alternatives for means of survival. It was thought that skilling the commercial sex workers would be sustainable in alleviating poverty.<sup>48</sup>

A study in 2011 confirmed that female sex workers had high prevalence of HIV/AIDS. Of those tested, 24-39% were HIV positive and majority of them lacked income generating skills; hence a need to develop initiatives to empower the sex workers with income generating and life skills. This would improve their health knowledge so as to reduce HIV/AIDS morbidity and mortality among vulnerable youth and the female sex workers.<sup>49</sup>

In 2012, Plan International Uganda, a non government organisation further stated that trained sex workers would start earning income from the acquired skills leading to improved economic welfare which would enable them to afford basic necessities without much struggle.<sup>50</sup>

A year later, the NGO reported that behavioural change communication campaigns could be conducted with a message of generating alternative employment which would help the sex workers adopt a more positive outlook towards life.<sup>51</sup> This would be a source of inspiration to other sex workers especially when they opened up personal accounts in SACCOs or any other form of saving scheme.

Whereas efforts were made to skill the sex workers in the hope that they would use the acquired skills to earn income in a different way, the studies do not establish whether the sex workers did indeed leave prostitution or instead used the income to supplement their earnings from the sex trade.

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<sup>47</sup> Ngugi et al, 2015

<sup>48</sup> UYDEL, 2013

<sup>49</sup> AMREF 2011

<sup>50</sup> Plan International Uganda 2012

<sup>51</sup> Plan International Uganda 2013

## **2.2 Conclusion.**

In summary, chapter two reviewed the literature on the topic of study in accordance with the study objectives relating to prevalence of prostitution, linkage between prostitution and resource extraction and alternative employment for sex workers as a strategy to extenuate prostitution. An extensive lot has been written on commercial sex work mainly addressing the risks involved, inconsistency in condom use and its effects, testing and treatment of STIs. The literature on prostitution in oil and gas jurisdictions focusses mainly on its' prevalence and why it is brought about but hardly any solutions to eliminating the vice. There is need therefore to conduct research on how to not only extenuate the vice but offer alternative and sustainable means of earning to the people that practice the trade. With reduced indulgence in sex trade, it could translate to reduced HIV infection rates and hopefully put the country on a trajectory of eliminating HIV/AIDS by the year 2030.

## Chapter Three: Methodology

### 3.0 Introduction.

To answer the research questions established in chapter one, it is imperative that the methods and methodology utilized do stand up to scrutiny. It's problematic to categorize a research effort particularly one on the subject of law under any specific heading as a couple of works of this type involve a hybrid of methods.<sup>52</sup> A distinction is made between "method" and "methodology" with the former referring to the range of techniques that are available to collect evidence about the social world while the latter concerns research strategy as a whole.<sup>53</sup>

The methodology explains how the research was carried out, the logical and systematic trajectory to resolving the research problem, the detailed approach in ensuring that the research is reliable, extraction of authentic results that address the objectives and does encompass what data is obtained and from where, as well as how it's consequently analyzed.

As earlier elaborated in the research framework, the theoretical framework introduces and describes the theory which explains why the research problem under study does exist. The conceptual framework on the other hand represents the relationship expected to be seen between the variables intended to be studied.

The distinction therefore between theoretical and conceptual frameworks is that while a theoretical framework describes the theoretical holdup of the work based on existing research, the conceptual framework allows for the drawing of one's own conclusions, mapping out the variables that may be used in the study and the interplay between them.

In regard to the research at hand, the conceptual framework was chosen as the more suitable as it is specific in establishing the relationship between the variables compared to the theoretical framework that offers a general representation of relationships amongst elements of a phenomenon.

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<sup>52</sup> Michael Salter and Julie Mason, *Writing Law Dissertations: An Introduction and Guide to the Conduct of Legal Research* (Pearson 2007)

<sup>53</sup> Matt Henn, Mark Weinstein and Nick Foard, "A Critical Introduction to Social Research" (2<sup>nd</sup> edn, Sage 2006)

As to the methodology, secondary research was embraced as it entails re-analyzing, interpreting or reviewing past data and specifying how this past data informs the research at hand. Of critical note is the fact that the commercial sex trade is a knit industry, secretive and nearly impenetrable. The female sex workers as a fraternity are wary of anyone with a semblance of an elite stratum. It therefore becomes particularly hard to extract genuine information pertaining their trade as they are not sure whether or not it will land in the hands of authority figures. Therefore, to answer the research questions it was found to be more effective to use secondary data so as to establish a correlation between the independent and dependent variables.

The research involved combining two secondary sets of data with the intention of investigating the relationship between certain variables in two data sets in order to compare the findings from the past studies and establish a correlation between the variables. In carrying out the study, it was hypothesized as follows;

- a) That the anticipation of employment led to a migration of unemployed youth to the Albertine region.
- b) That those who turn out unemployed resort to prostitution for survival.
- c) That a relationship exists between unemployment and increase in prostitution.

Therefore, the unemployed having some other productive occupation would seemingly lead to a decline in prostitution.

The Hypothesis would thus be: *“The more alternative forms of undertaking availed to commercial sex workers, the less urge to indulge in prostitution.”*

### **3.1 Sources of Information.**

The sources of information for the research included government publications and statistical data from government agencies such as Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS), reports from international bodies such as the World Bank, United States Agency for International Development (USAID) reports from Associations such as Alliance of Mayors and Municipal Leaders' Initiative for Community Action on AIDS at the Local Level (AMICAALL) Uganda, books, journal articles, newspaper articles and internet sources.

Pertaining the legal framework, ever since oil exploration and production was officially announced in 2006, several laws and regulations have been enacted by Parliament of Uganda to ensure that the oil resource positively contributes to the country's development.

According to the 2008 National Oil and Gas Policy, the role of Parliament in Uganda's Petroleum sector is to enact petroleum legislation for the management of petroleum revenues and to monitor the performance in the petroleum sector through policy statements and annual budgets. The policy also calls for Uganda's natural resources to contribute to poverty eradication through national participation in the oil and gas activities so as to expand employment opportunities. It however acknowledges the limited opportunities for direct employment but urges the industry to provide significant employment opportunities through chain or multiplier effect.

### **3.2 Methodological Constraints.**

The preferred method did have the following limitations;

- i) Lack of control over the quality of data as there was limited reliability and validity of the data for the research.
- ii) It didn't particularly answer the research questions and this is understandable as the existing data was collected with different research questions in mind.

- iii) It was and remains subjective and therefore limited to the view or narrow scope of the researcher about the entirety of the subject matter where in the same set of circumstances, it's possible that another researcher could arrive at an entirely different outcome.

### **3.3 Conclusion.**

Chapter three did present the methodology applied to the study, particularly to the sources of the information and mindful of the limitations to the methodology so as to find a way to mitigate them and come up with as thorough as possible an analytical and pragmatic research.

## Chapter Four:

## Results and Analysis

### 4.0 Introduction.

The ongoing oil production preparation in the Albertine is an important stage in the development of the country. Oil is a resource that can create lasting development for a nation and its' people. The earlier mentioned study by Bainomugisha suggests that the discovery of oil raised hope and expectations of many Ugandans and that the revenue generated from the oil would make poverty a history. However, although there are employment opportunities, the communities are limited to low skill and low paying jobs and even no employment for the others. The low levels of education mean that the community members have limited skills to compete for the good jobs in the oil and gas industry. What is then likely to happen as was the case in the city of Sekondi-Takoradi in Ghana is for the disappointed migrants to resort to social vices, key among them sex work for survival.

In Uganda, sex work is prohibited and the Penal Code Act does lay down the penalties for those who engage in the practice as well as for those who make a living on the earnings of sex work. This also happens to be at a time when the country is increasingly becoming moralistic and puritan on a ray of social issues such as homosexuality and for this reason, prostitution is no exception.

Sex workers are definitely are among the most vulnerable of communities in Uganda and as such at risk as the HIV prevalence among them is 33% which is about five (5) times the national average of 7.3% and the HIV prevalence happens to be higher among females in comparison to their male counterparts.<sup>54</sup>

Sex workers are also susceptible to a wide variety of human rights abuses which include being victims of violence perpetrated by the police, their clients and by the wider community. They also face sexual violence such as rape, harassment, emotional abuse, humiliation, public insults, stigma and discrimination as well as physical violence in the form of assault and battery.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> Uganda AIDS Commission Aide Memoir for the Joint Annual Aids Review (JAR) 2013

<sup>55</sup> Decker, Michele R et al.; "Human rights violations against sex workers: burden and effect on HIV"; The Lancet, Volume 385, Issue 9963, p. 186-199.

The religious community is at the forefront of condemning prostitution, which discriminates against the sex workers. The police have used this bay to continuously harass and assault the sex workers as they conduct their business with some many getting arrested and detained. This puts their lives at risk especially the already HIV positive who can not take their medication while in custody.

It goes without saying that the effort to criminalise prostitution only increases the risk of HIV and the STIs amongst sex workers and the rest of the community as it ignites stigma towards the sex workers within the healthcare setting and the police brutality and exploitation of the sex workers.

As earlier stated, the supposedly high activity within the Albertine raised hopes of Ugandans in anticipation of attaining employment. The fact that not all persons within the community as well as migrants could attain jobs left no alternative but to engage in crime for survival. A correlation therefore exists between crime and unemployment and because prostitution is a crime, it presupposes that unemployment leads to prostitution.

It therefore raises a query as to whether in addressing the issue of employment, crime particularly prostitution can be extenuated. Whereas the government cannot solve each and every problem arising from unemployment, it was thought that in finding alternative occupations for the already established sex workers and those susceptible, it would make a visible difference. This would include economically empowering the prostitutes so that they would have an alternative source of income and gradually as well as willingly leave the vice.

For the aforementioned reason, secondary research was sought of how other jurisdictions even those that are not oil producing but have the challenge of prostitution have addressed this concern.

## 4.1 Discussion of findings.

The secondary data helped re-analyse, interpret and review the past data. It went on to investigate the relationship between the variables with the independent being “Alternative employment” and the dependent as “Reduction in prostitution”. The data set illustrated good practice examples of sex worker-involvement along with the impact it had on their lives and it is from this past data that the current research was informed and a correlation established.

The research findings were a Rights-based economic empowerment for sex workers. The rights-based approach focused on empowering the sex workers economically so as to enable them make informed choices about their lives inclusive of sexual health.

Economic empowerment revolved around offering alternative sources of income so as to mitigate the vulnerability associated with change of jobs and being mindful to not entice them to stop the sex work when they were just not ready to. Through increasing economic options, sex workers got to achieve greater financial security which eased their ability to make important decisions that ultimately shaped their lives.

The secondary data sets included three case studies of sex worker involved or led economic empowerment programmes, one case study of non-sex worker-led economic programme and three case studies of economic empowerment programmes that negatively impacted the lives of commercial sex workers.

The first case study came from Addis Ababa, Ethiopia where sex work is considered an act of deviant behaviour<sup>56</sup> and immoral but is permitted on the basis that it would be impractical to abolish it instantly. Ethiopian law has created a free environment for sex workers to work but the working conditions are unsafe and because sex work is illegal, it is difficult for sex workers to have their rights respected.

The charitable organisation known as “NIKAT” is a community based local Non-government Organisation (NGO) founded by a group of sex workers in 2010 and even registered under the

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<sup>56</sup> Penal Code of the Empire of Ethiopia (1957) and the 2005 revised Criminal Code of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE).

country's Ministry of Justice Charities and Societies Agency. It started with about 108 sex workers and membership soon grew to 189. It went on to win the "2010 Red Ribbon Award" at the XVII International AIDS Conference, organised by UNAIDS in partnership with Letiner Center, the Global Fund and Irish Aid, held in Vienna, for outstanding community leadership and action on HIV/AIDS.<sup>57</sup> The organisation essentially carries out the following activities;

- Provision of a safe place of rest for the sex workers, access to information about HIV/AIDS and STIs, condoms and peer support and counselling.
- Close working with government entities such as the Ministry of Justice, the Addis Ababa Finance and Economic Bureau, the Police officers, hotel and bar owners.
- Conducts outreach activities during the day and at night to establish formal and informal linkages with sex workers operating in town.
- Training of former as well as current sex workers as Peer educators who in turn train other sex workers and the extended community, which improves their self esteem as they voluntarily do so and are not paid.
- Sensitisation of the public through main stream media such as the weekly radio programmes that explain the lives and work of the sex workers, their rights and the services that the organisation offers.

The Mission of the organisation is to improve the living and working conditions of the sex workers in the country and to fight against sexual abuse as well as mitigate the negative effects of HIV/AIDS, while the Vision is to empower the sex workers in the country through ensuring that their social, political, economic and psychological rights are improved and respected.<sup>58</sup>

NIKAT, in partnership with the "Stepping Up, Stepping Out" (SUSO) project funded by Aids Fonds embarked on an economic empowerment programme to improve the health and wellbeing of sex workers. It had the following as it's objectives;

- a) Improved capability of sex workers to make informed choices related to their own employment and career development.

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<sup>57</sup> <http://www.redribbonaward.org>

<sup>58</sup> <http://www.nikatethiopia.com/>

- b) Sex workers acquiring skills and opportunities that lead to a diversification of income sources or new career opportunities.
- c) Improved social and economic position of the sex workers at the regional, national and eventually global levels.

Initially the project intended for about 1,478 sex workers to benefit from it but interestingly 1,716 sex workers came to benefit from all the benefits of the project during 2013. The organisation conducted a needs assessment for the sex workers in Addis Ababa through outreach projects and hired professional researchers and consultants. It is the results from the needs assessment that were used in planning for the project.

NIKAT provided educational opportunities such as English lessons for five former sex workers and three current sex workers. This, it did through signing an agreement with Hello School of American English to provide private English lessons. The organisation also extended education opportunities to three other sex workers to continue to higher education and enrolled them at three respective colleges on account of their choice of study such as a BA Degree in Accounting at Admas University College, a BSc Degree in Accounting and Finance at Alpha University College and a Level III Nursing at Kea-Med University College in Addis Ababa. For the three sex workers, an allowance for transport and living expenses was also provided.<sup>59</sup>

NIKAT went on to sign an MoU with an International NGO known as Loving Shepherd to provide free healthcare services for sex workers and their children. This it did and a total of 118 sex workers and 47 children of the sex workers under the age of 18 accessed free medical services and free medicine at the sex worker-only clinic each time that they required the healthcare services.<sup>60</sup>

The charity organization NIKAT also provided 16 personal health trainings with about 400 participants at their center to discuss safe sex, condom use demonstrations, HIV/AIDS and STIs, clinical usage, sexual reproductive health, family planning options, customer handling, and risk

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<sup>59</sup> Mazeingia YT, Negesse A ..Intention, barriers and opportunities to exit from commercial sex work among female sex workers in Ethiopia. *Int J Occup Saf Health*. 2020; 10(1):64-72. DOI: 10.3126/ijosh. v10i.29885

<sup>60</sup> Jones N, Presler-Marshall E, Hicks J, et al. *Adolescent health, nutrition and sexual and reproductive health in Ethiopia*. A report on GAGE Ethiopia baseline findings. London: Gender and Adolescence: Global Evidence.;2019a.

avoidance during sex work. There was also advice on how to effectively communicate with other stakeholders say, the police, clients, hotel and bar owners and the community at large.<sup>61</sup>

NIKAT went on to publish necessary information, education and communication materials as well as behaviour change communication materials for the office and also introducing the project to different partners be it on their letter-heads, business and invitation cards, banners, flags and logos with the sole intent of promoting relevant sex work-related messages. NIKAT further purchased training materials required for the hair dressing training center and also selected the targeted beneficiaries by appointing a trainer for the hair training salon, after which the organisation started to provide training for 30 selected beneficiaries.<sup>62</sup>

About 17 sex workers were enrolled at two Food and catering schools, Benvenido Catering and Food preparation school which is privately owned and Lion Ethiopia Catering and Food preparation school, owned by the government. Eight selected sex workers who had finished high school were enrolled at Lion Ethiopia for a Diploma inclusive of a 7 month-long training for a Level I qualification and 9 selected sex workers not done with high school were enrolled at Benvenido Food and catering school for a certificate including a 10 month -long training.

NIKAT also signed an agreement with Addis Credit and Saving, a top financial institution in Ethiopia to manage interest free loans, additional saving and loan training required and monitor but more importantly, manage the revolving fund for the project. The financial institution did provide loans and also organised training for groups taking loans.

There were seven sensitisation workshops conducted by NIKAT for the stakeholders with 156 participants including hotel owners, police officers and government officers. Prior to conducting the training, NIKAT conducted an outreach activity both during the day and at night so as to communicate formally as well as informally with targeted stakeholders.

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<sup>61</sup> Kangude G, Coast E, Fetters T. Adolescent sexual and reproductive health and universal health coverage: a comparative policy and legal analysis of Ethiopia, Malawi and Zambia. *Sex Reprod Health Matt.* 2020; 28:2. DOI 10.1080/26410397.2020.1832291

<sup>62</sup> Devonald M, Jones N, Yadete W. Addressing educational attainment inequities in rural Ethiopia: leave no adolescent behind. *Dev Policy Rev.*2020;39(5):740-756.

The aforementioned initiatives turned out successful and a couple of factors can be attributed to their success such as;

- The initiative being sex worker-led.
- Sex workers not being required to exit sex work while they attained and developed new skills.
- The initiative being based on the needs and demands of the sex workers themselves.
- The sex workers being a part of the planning as well as implementation of the project.
- Monthly review meetings with sex workers on vocational trainings and other economic empowerment activities.
- Sensitisation programmes that created knit relationships with government officials and the relevant stakeholders such as the police officers, hotel and bar owners.
- Sustained funding of the programme that enabled sex workers benefit for a relatively significant time and as such improved the programme's chances of success.

### **Summary;**

NIKAT is of the view that each programme's activity ought to be based on the needs and demands of the sex workers. The sex workers should be part of the planning as well as implementation of the projects at all levels. In carrying out the initiatives, the SUSO project gives NIKAT a quite unique insight into how good practice sex worker involved initiatives ought to be the benchmark for designing economic empowerment programmes. Although the success of this economic empowerment programme does attract sex workers, the capacity to replicate the projects elsewhere is limited. As such, NIKAT opines that funding for the economic empowerment activities be scaled up to match the increasing demand if the sex workers are to be economically empowered.

The second case study was of a community-based organisation called “Survivors” that operates in Busia County in the Western province of Kenya. Sex work in Kenya is prohibited<sup>63</sup> and earnings from undertaking the practice are consequently considered illegal. As such, sex workers are frequently regarded as easy targets for harassment and violence, as well as considered immoral and deserving of punishment according to traditional cultures and the Kenyan constitution.

The organisation started out as “Muungano” a network of sex workers and then later changed its name to Survivors to express the members’ resilience towards challenges before them.<sup>64</sup> The organisation was formed in 2000 by a group from the University of Nairobi and Manitoba due to the high prevalence rates of HIV/AIDS along the Kenya-Uganda border. Along the way, female sex workers took over the organisation’s operations on HIV and human rights issues affecting the sex workers in the country and lately reaching out to over 3,000 of them both male and female. It turns out that the community is appreciative of the organisation’s effort and commends the work in the HIV/AIDS field through condom distribution and demonstration campaigns along with the testing and counselling services.<sup>65</sup>

The organisation is on a mission to support and empower female sex workers to make informed choices regarding their sexuality and envisions a world where all sex workers can enjoy their health and human rights, confidently undertaking their work in a safe environment. To achieve this, Survivors carries out capacity-building training, advocacy, legal aid clinics, networking and dialogue with different stakeholders and economic empowerment initiatives that promote self sufficiency for the sex workers. Survivors also participates in sexual and reproductive health and policy forums where it discusses and advocates for issues that affect its members. It goes on to serve vulnerable women that are sex workers and living with HIV in partnership with the National AIDS Control Council funded by the Open Society Institute, the Aphia Plus and the Liverpool VCT for health and human rights programmes.

Survivors employs a couple of strategies to economically empower sex workers and promote self sufficiency as an alternative source of livelihood such as the “Economic and Livelihoods programme’ which aims at raising the standard of living and thus improve the quality of life for

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<sup>63</sup> The Laws of Kenya, Penal Code Chapter 63, Section 154 and 155

<sup>64</sup> <https://wangukanjafoundation.org>

<sup>65</sup> <https://doi.org/10.3390/soc12010012>

sex workers in Busia through income-generating activities. The economic activities are a sustainability measure intent on not relying too heavily donor support and the pre-conditions that come with aid. The programme's main objective however is to mobilise members into contributing funds to support their peers in specific emergency needs, maintain HIV/AIDS and STI prevention, treatment, care and support activities, as well as to develop mechanisms that ensure sustainability of both the organisation and sex workers.<sup>66</sup>

As of this writing, the organisation has 128 registered sex workers as members and part of the scheme. Within the programme, the organisation runs a Savings and Credit Cooperative (SACCO) where all sex workers do contribute a certain amount of money monthly and then receive shares annually and also operate an emergency support scheme. The emergency scheme intervenes and responds to the need for a health insurance policy tailored to the specific needs and financial capabilities of the sex worker members. It goes on to cover health issues and provides benevolence funds for bereaved members. To help raise funds for this initiative, the organisation runs a catering business which provides catering services during functions and events such as weddings, funerals and parties. It is the money earned from this catering that is then put back into the organisation fund and reinvested in other small businesses to build more financial security.

The Survivors' case is another successful initiative owing mainly to the fact that the sex workers are meaningfully involved in all the aspects of the initiative and that the initiative's planners understood the challenges and needs of sex workers and thus involved them in all the planning stages which made implementation the much easier.

## **Summary;**

The initiatives have benefited the sex workers in Busia County as well as other sex workers in Kenya who have learnt from the best practice demonstrated by Survivors and have as such been motivated to run empowerment projects in their own organisations. Certainly, the initiatives have triggered a positive impact among sex workers which has played a major role in harm reduction. It turns out that involving the sex workers in the initiatives has reduced the urge to earn quick

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<sup>66</sup> Temmerman M, Ogbe E, Manguro G, Khandwalla I, Thiongo M, Mandaliya KN, et al. (2019) The gender-based violence and recovery center at Coast Provincial General Hospital, Mombasa, Kenya: An integrated care model for survivors of sexual violence. *PLoS Med* 16(8): e1002886. Doi: 10.1371/journal.pmed.1002886

money and with the empowerment of the sex workers, fewer of them have tested positive with STIs, demonstrating an improvement in condom negotiation skills.

Interestingly, the Survivors is located in a rural area where the male sex workers were considered more morally reprehensible than their female counterparts. The initiatives motivated them to seek services where they previously hid from for fear of stigma and discrimination from the community.

The involvement therefore, of sex workers in the design and planning of the initiative was instrumental to its' success. The sex workers proposed ideas that they felt ideally beneficial and well suited to their circumstances. Further, the sex workers were more inclined to participate in the programme and recruit others for they felt as though they had a personal stake, which of itself was empowering and thus eased the main goal of economic empowerment.

The third case study on economic empowerment was also Kenyan and was conducted and run by a Nairobi-based male sex workers' collective simply known as HOYMAS. It was formed in 2009 by male sex workers and people living with HIV and registered as a Community Based Organisation under the Ministry of Social Services and Gender. It serves male sex workers, young men and men who have sex with other men with practical knowledge on safe sex, preventive materials distribution, general information and economic empowerment.<sup>67</sup> HOYMAS partners with the National AIDS and STI Control Programme, International bodies such as the American Foundation for Aids Research (AMFAR), University of Manitoba, Global Network of Sex Work Projects (NSWP), Africa Sex Workers Alliance and UNAIDS in rolling out programmes that target male sex workers. Its' activities include among others the following;

- Referrals of male sex workers to service providers such as the Kenyatta National Hospital.
- Training of peer educators and healthcare workers in collaboration with male sex worker groups and organisations.
- Counselling and testing services to male sex workers.
- Offering condoms and lubricants along with prevention commodities to the male sex workers.
- Sensitisation by the healthcare providers and other stakeholders including government, the media and police officers.
- Conducting economic empowerment training and support for vocational training, micro finance training and financial literacy sessions.

HOYMAS has taken a further step into training paralegals who offer help to sex workers when they are arrested, educating them on their human rights, the steps to take in case their rights are violated and the being vocal in protests and organising stakeholder meetings and events solely for the purpose of sensitisation. The sensitisation efforts have positively impacted the many sex workers who endure victimisation because they can now stand up for themselves and have the unrelenting support of the organisation's partners including government.<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> <https://hoymaskenya.or.ke>

<sup>68</sup> <https://aidsfonds.org>

HOYMAS supports the male sex workers in acquiring life skills, education and vocation skills without forcing them to abandon sex work. This gives options to the male sex workers and by obtaining income from other activities, the sex workers gradually reduce their number of sexual partners and negotiate for safer sex practices, which has reduced their HIV/AIDS and other STI risk and vulnerability.<sup>69</sup>

HOYMAS runs an economic empowerment project called “HOYMAS Savings and Credit Cooperative” (SACCO). On the account of legal issues, it’s a challenge to register sex worker groups to enable them acquire financial support or access loan services and as such, many of the sex worker groups use pseudo identities to access such services. Additionally, many male sex workers lack identification in form of National IDs required to open bank accounts. HOYMAS thus provides business and micro-finance skills training to male sex workers in conjunction with the Small Micro-Enterprise Programme, a micro-finance institution that works with grassroots organisations to address poverty and livelihood support systems alongside the Co-operative Bank of Kenya. The result has seen HOYMAS members start group saving and credit schemes where members of the organisation contribute money monthly and access loans and other financial assistance at any time, with agreed-upon conditions. This has tremendously improved the living conditions of the sex workers who before the financial and savings training hardly lived in permanent structures, nor afford essential necessities of food and clothing due to difficulties in managing their earnings from sex work.

The HOYMAS initiative is a success as it was run by sex workers themselves who were open to the ideals and objectives of the project as they received them from their peers making them more appealing. Secondly, successful sensitisation and the reduction of victimisation saw the programmes receive more attention from other sex workers and the community members were involved at all levels of the programme say in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation and thus made the programme more responsive to the community’s needs.<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> <https://www.galck.org>

<sup>70</sup> <https://www.nswp.org>

## **Summary;**

With the training and support from HOYMAS, results demonstrate that 53 male sex workers were able to obtain documentation and identification and went on to open personal bank accounts. Many of them are now fully housed and the credit scheme has continued to offer fair interest rates to the HOYMAS members as and when they do need the funds. The project has directly impacted the lives of sex workers by providing capacity-building and helping them establish economic foundations resulting in their financial independence.

Addressing the economic needs of male sex workers is key to addressing their health needs. HOYMAS aims at strengthening economic activities for the male sex workers for they are important factors in the HIV response. The view is that supporting income-generating activities for male sex workers helps them earn a living and as such sustain a healthy lifestyle and consequently the members gain respect from society and credibility to engage in other activities.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>71</sup> <https://includeplatform.net>

The fourth case study was a unique economic empowerment programme from the previous ones as it is non-sex worker led yet nevertheless had a positive impact on the lives of sex workers. It was conducted in Lagos and Cross River State in Nigeria as part of the regional efforts at developing advocacy tools around rights-based economic empowerment for sex workers.<sup>72</sup> A sample framework was developed that consisted of sex worker-focused organisations in Lagos and Cross River States that had implemented economic empowerment programmes for the female sex worker community.

In Nigeria, sex work is illegal.<sup>73</sup>The offender can be any male or female who is aiding and abetting prostitution. The Criminal Code stipulates two-year imprisonment for those wholly or partly living on proceeds from prostitution. No law restricts a healthcare provider's ability to provide medical care to sex workers, however, due to stigma and discrimination, the female sex workers find it very difficult to disclose their job to the health workers.

The programme was carried out under Life Link Organisation (LLO), a non-sex worker-led, non-governmental, and non-profit making organisation founded in 1994 and registered with corporate affairs commission of Nigeria. Its' sole purpose is providing health services in the community, focusing on the most at-risk populations, the prison community and uniformed personnel. It operates a well-defined organisation structure with a Board of Directors consisting of five directors that oversee the organisation's policy and management.<sup>74</sup>

The organisation's mission is to provide health and psycho-social services through dissemination of information, education and counselling to members of the community particularly the female sex workers using well-trained personnel. The vision is to enhance health, psycho-social and economic wellbeing. It is institutionalised with funding support from the domestic resources such as Lagos State AIDS Control Agency, Civil Society for HIV/AIDS in Nigeria and the international donors to include; Family Health International Nigeria, Futures Group International and the International Family Health/Femope Foundation and the African Sex Workers Alliance (ASWA).

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<sup>72</sup> <https://lifelinkorg.ng>

<sup>73</sup> The Nigerian Criminal Code Section 225A

<sup>74</sup> <https://www.fundsforngos.org>

The project was supported by Family Health International with the goal of reducing the prevalence of HIV and STI infections among most-at-risk women and the objectives were as follows;

- To build the capacity of female sex workers to enable them implement quality condom use and other prevention activities in Lagos State.
- To build the capacity of female sex workers and enable them access HIV and STI treatment, care, and support services.
- To strengthen the capacity of female sex workers who desire to leave sex work through skill acquisition training for 20 sex workers in 5 local administrative units in Lagos State.

With the objectives in mind, the activities that ensued were as follows;

- i) Monthly meetings of the project team- the project Advisory Committee (PAC) that included the female sex workers, project officers and the police.
- ii) Capacity-building on HIV/AIDS, condom use and negotiation skills for safe sex, including the training of sex workers as peer educators to reach out to the others in the various brothels.
- iii) Dialogue for action activities, condom education and risk reduction counselling.
- iv) Skills acquisition for the female sex workers in cake making, hair dressing, hat making manicuring and pedicuring, the duration of which was between a fortnight and six months.

The initiative, despite not being sex worker-led was successful as it adopted a rights-based approach to economic empowerment and it didn't focus on the sex workers exiting the sex work but rather on skilling them and enabling them to make the right choices for themselves such as negotiating for safe sex practices with clients.

Also, the programme addressed sex workers' sexual and reproductive needs and economic empowerment support. As to the full empowerment, the sex workers were offered seed grants for start up their businesses which played a huge role in helping them put their newly acquired knowledge skills into practice. The organised financial management programmes linked sex workers with the existing banks enabling them to open savings accounts rather than keep their

money with the local thrift and credit facility and with the savings, they were able to rent their own apartments and make informed choices for their lives.

### **Summary;**

The initiative saw female sex workers start their own businesses and for those interested in returning to school, the project did support them and one of them joined law enforcement and became a Nigerian Police officer. It turns out that economic empowerment programmes can be very effective when they take into account the particular needs of sex workers as articulated by sex workers themselves. As a result, sex workers get to acquire skills, earn income from alternative sources which enables them to negotiate for safer sex and without forcing them to leave the trade, they themselves begin to withdraw as they have more economic options which ultimately leads to better choices for their lives.

The Fifth case study was an economic empowerment programme that didn't exactly turn out as successful as the aforementioned programmes did. It was conducted in Uganda in 2014 where informant interviews were held with a sex worker-led organisation known as "Empowered at Dusk Women's Association" (EADWA).<sup>75</sup> Besides the Penal Code Act that prohibits prostitution, other laws in the country exist that penalise activities related to sex work such as the HIV Prevention and Control Act 2014, the Anti Pornography Act 2013 and the Public Order Management Act 2013.

Organisational visits were conducted to gather credible information as to the effectiveness of the economic empowerment results with the review centered around the background of HIV and sex workers' violations.

Whereas the study was conducted in 2014, EADWA itself was founded in 2011 with the intent of advocating for health rights and the sex workers' human rights. It is located in Kampala suburbs, particularly in Kawempe Division and it is even registered as a Community Based Organisation. It is also a member of Uganda Harmonised Rights Alliance at national level and a member of the African Sex Workers Alliance (ASWA) as well as the Global Network of Sex Work Projects (NSWP). Its' membership gradually grew to 55 sex workers and provides information and education to the members so as to empower them with knowledge on human rights, legal procedures and HIV/AIDS.<sup>76</sup>

The Organisation's mission is to promote awareness of human rights, economic issues, health and the sex workers' social development while the vision is to ensure that the rights of all persons particularly the marginalised and sex workers are central to social, health and economic development. EADWA further values equal opportunity, justice, fairness and teamwork and has the following objectives;

- To promote interest in human rights through presentations and the sharing of experiences among sex workers.
- To promote empowerment schemes among the sex workers that can improve their standards of living.

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<sup>75</sup> <https://timesnews2.info>

<sup>76</sup> <https://map.eannaso.org>

- To promote a non-violent culture in the community through networking, dialogue with policy-makers and the media.
- To undertake sensitisation workshops on HIV/AIDS, alcoholism, drug and substance abuse as well as awareness and prevention.
- To offer psychosocial support to stigmatised and other marginalised groups, HIV/AIDS clients through counselling and referrals.
- To offer basic education to females, young people and orphans especially those affected by HIV/AIDS and promote self-esteem, self respect and the value of human life.

In the attempt to economically empower the sex workers, EADWA embraced an intervention scheme of providing entrepreneurship skills in hairdressing, salon management training, arts and crafts training and along the way, regular breaks were taken to discuss other issues that affected the members.<sup>77</sup> A total of 27 members were intended to benefit from the project which aimed at helping sex workers look after their health and avoid violence especially from clients demanding unprotected sex, rape and also police arrest. The organisation also had it in mind that with the project, members could be good role models to others as well as having an alternative source of income to ably support their families.<sup>78</sup>

The project however, didn't turn out successful and a couple of reasons could explain the failure such as;

- i) A gap in economic empowerment policy-making as there was no consultation between the project officers and the members (sex workers) on what exactly they wanted to carry out.
- ii) There was no training for sex workers in the trades that they were encouraged to take up as part of the economic empowerment programme.
- iii) The programme's organisers had stigmatising attitudes towards the sex workers especially in regard to the objectives of the programme where they intended for the sex workers to be good role models, implying that the sex workers were in essence bad people.

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<sup>77</sup> <https://www.rhu.or.ug>

<sup>78</sup> <https://aswaalliance.org>

- iv) There was also hardly any sensitisation training with the community which would assist in reducing sex workers being targets of stigma and discrimination.

### **Summary;**

The community's negative attitudes towards sex workers saw members who worked in the salon earn very little money. Stigma and discrimination with its' associated risks had the sex workers feel as though they were better off continuing with their work in the brothels. This placed the sex workers who participated in the programme in a very vulnerable position which consequently limited their ability to earn an additional income. The case study showed that discrimination of the sex workers leaves them no choice but to continue generating income in sex work, something that places the lives on the community at risk as safe sex practices are compromised.

Therefore, meaningful engagement and consultations with sex workers during the planning stages of the economic empowerment programmes is critical and an analysis of the services for which there is demand ought to be carried out so that the programme staff can match the sex workers to the tailored vocational trainings and acquisition of the skills needed within the community.

The Sixth case study on economic empowerment for sex workers was conducted in Malawi in 2012 as part of the regional efforts at developing advocacy tools centered around rights based economic empowerment. Prostitution in Malawi is legal and prevalent around hotels and bars in urban and tourist areas. However, living off the proceeds of prostitution is illegal.<sup>79</sup> In Malawi it is estimated that there are more than 20,000 sex workers, most of whom remain hidden and marginalised because of social stigma associated with sex work. The HIV prevalence rate among the female sex workers is estimated to be at 73% with very high STI cases.<sup>80</sup> Unfortunately, the Prevention of Mother-to-Child Transmission (PMTCT) of HIV programme in Malawi, considered to be among the best in the world does not take into consideration the needs of the sex workers. It demands that every pregnant woman attends her first antenatal visit with her spouse which is challenging as the pregnant female sex workers cannot bring their sexual partners.

The conduit organisation was the National Female Sex Workers Alliance of Malawi (NFSWAM) formed in 2012 with the aim of advocating sex workers' rights, encouraging health awareness through practices such as HIV testing and counselling among sex workers.<sup>81</sup>

It was established that adherence to the Anti-Retroviral Treatment (ARV) was very low among HIV-positive sex workers due to the nature of their jobs. They were highly mobile and often missed taking their ARVs if they had been arrested and put in jail.<sup>82</sup> In places where sex work was criminalised and highly stigmatised, sex workers were more likely to be stopped, harassed and detained by police when they were working outdoors as a result.

The Alliance leadership constituted 10 sex workers from different parts of the country and went on to apply for membership to both the African Sex Workers Alliance (ASWA) and the Global Network of Sex Work Projects (NSWP) and proceeded to implement the following activities;

- i) Peer education training for sex workers.
- ii) Peer discussion sessions on HIV prevention and STI management.

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<sup>79</sup> Section 146 of the Malawi Penal Code

<sup>80</sup> The Malawi 2010 Demographic and Health Surveillance Survey (DHS)

<sup>81</sup> <https://www.nswp.org>

<sup>82</sup> Focus Group Discussion with female sex workers in Malawi.

- iii) Working with hotel and bar owners to protect underage children from entering the premises.
- iv) Dealing with violence perpetrated by clients of sex workers.
- v) Stakeholder meetings with the police to address human rights abuses committed against sex workers.
- vi) Stakeholder meetings with health workers to promote accessible and friendly services for female sex workers.
- vii) Condom distribution in hotspots and among female sex workers.
- viii) Economic empowerment programmes through village savings and loans.
- ix) Psychological support among sex workers.

The Family Planning Association of Malawi (FPAM) embarked on an economic empowerment programme for sex workers with the aim of rehabilitating the sex workers through training 40 sex workers. There were ten (10) in each of the four trainings of tailoring, salon management, restaurant management and mushroom production so as to provide alternatives to sex work. After the training, a group of 10 was given MK45,000, the equivalent of \$ 100 (USD) to start a group business. All the groups started the group business programme but unfortunately within three (3) months, everything had collapsed and the sex workers simply continued with sex work as hardly anyone benefitted from the economic empowerment initiative.<sup>83</sup>

### **Summary;**

The economic empowerment programme was not a success as there was no meaningful engagement with the sex workers in designing the initiative. The managers of the programme wanted to rehabilitate the sex workers and drive them away from sex work and yet the sex workers did not share this view as they were not consulted nor listened to and so they simply joined the programme but developed no passion for it. Also, the programme was not sustainable and the grants offered were too insufficient to sustain small businesses for long enough to turn over a profit and added to this was the challenge of stigma and discrimination from the community.

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<sup>83</sup> <https://aswaalliance.org>

The last case study on economic empowerment was from Kivu Region in the Democratic Republic of Congo. The Congolese legislation criminalises procuring<sup>84</sup> in the attempt to take advantage of the sex work of others. Surprisingly, the authorities are not well versed with the law and this lack of information subjects the sex workers to arbitrary arrests and violence. While sex work is considered to be anti-social in the DRC, it is also perceived to be immoral by the general community.

Nevertheless, the organisation aimed at rehabilitating sex workers and have them exit sex work under the Management of Young for Rural Development Center (CEJEDER) a non-sex worker-led organisation in the DRC. It has a Board of Trustees and runs health, protection, education, human rights and agro-breeding activities, with a vision of promoting a society that promotes the right to health, human rights and the right to self-determination for women in general and for female sex workers in particular.<sup>85</sup>

The organisation is affiliated to the Africa French-speaking network of sex work organisations and its' resources are funded by grants from external partners, membership fees and contributions of non-partisan individual and legal entities. The organisation's objectives are;

- To ensure the rights of access to equipment, goods and services without discrimination, in particular for sex workers and marginalised groups.
- To fight against HIV/AIDS and STIs as well as rape and sexual violence against women.
- To support the creation and development of micro and small enterprise for women with low income.
- To ensure access to minimum food sufficiency and agro pastoral production to combat hunger and ensure food security for the local community.

The economic programme rotated around the idea of selling second-hand clothing and have the generated sales alleviate poverty of 200 female se workers in the town of Bukavu, South Kivu. The projection was that 70% of female sex workers would be able to support their families through the sale of the second-hand clothing and that 90% of the female sex workers would be reintegrated

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<sup>84</sup> Congolese Penal Code, Section 174b sub-section 3

<sup>85</sup> <https://www.girlsnotbrides.org>

into society. Also, that the initiative would benefit 200 female workers directly and 350 sex workers indirectly and with the funder's restriction, the requirement was to ultimately have sex workers exit sex work. Out of funding pressure, the organisation decided to implement the initiative even though the conditions contradicted with the organisation's mission and beliefs.<sup>86</sup>

The initiative was a failure as it was based on discrimination and stigmatisation of the sex workers, aimed at rehabilitating them rather than considering their concerns. It was also not needed by the sex workers but was simply imposed by the projects' staff with no focus on the selling skills of the sex workers nor premarket study to identify the practicality of the initiative.

### **Summary;**

The initiative did not achieve the expected outcome as the majority of the sex workers had no savings and could not make profit because they were unable to determine the right selling prices, something ignored during the implementation of the project. Nearly all the female sex workers ended up using some of the second-hand clothes themselves instead of selling them which affected earnings and consequently the sex workers returned to sex work so as to earn more and support their families. The failure of the programme is thus a demonstration of the need to involve sex workers in the whole process, from problem identification, conception to implementation. In consideration of the rights-based approach, the economic empowerment programme must involve sex workers in the monitoring of the initiative if it is to succeed.

## **4.2 Conclusion.**

From the aforementioned case studies, it is evident that a great majority of sex workers join the trade because of poverty and so economic empowerment in the fight against prostitution becomes a key strategy as it increases the economic options of sex workers. This enables them achieve greater financial security as well as the ability to make important decisions that get to shape their lives including their choice of work, capacity to save and plan for the future both for themselves and their dependents.

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<sup>86</sup> <https://www.advocacynet.org>

As seen from the afore findings, the economic empowerment programmes that involved the sex workers at all levels of the initiative to identify their needs and demands turned out successful. This largely because they adopted a rights-based approach that focussed on empowering the sex workers to make informed choices about their lives and sexual health.

As to the programmes that aimed at rehabilitation through alternative employment or income generation, they did not succeed for they wrongly assumed that sex workers wanted to be rehabilitated and leave sex work immediately. Thus, with increased inclusive economic empowerment programmes and willful participation of the sex workers, comes increased economic options that lead to informed choices which later translate to reduced risk and vulnerability, ultimately leading to reduced HIV infection rates and a safer community, something that strict adherence to the law and criminalisation may not effectively achieve.

It is therefore proven that offering alternative sources to sex workers indeed reduces the urge to indulge in the vice for the prostitutes do have alternative ways of making a living. However, the alternative programmes designed should involve the sex workers right from the onset as it thus gives them a sense of ownership in the participation.

In regard to the oil and gas industry and particularly the Albertine region in the country, the government should put in place economic empowerment programmes for the already established prostitutes and the unemployed youth susceptible to joining the trade. This will go a long way in safe guarding the country's labour force from being compromised, reduce the HIV/AIDS infection rates and achieve efficiency when the oil production eventually kicks off.

## **Chapter Five: Conclusion and Recommendations**

### **5.0 Introduction.**

This chapter addresses the lessons that can be extracted from the findings of the studies that were conducted to establish how similar situations in Uganda particularly the Albertine region can be handled in the near future. It is without doubt that the oil rich region will be faced with the problem of sex workers for activity is sure to be high given the influx of migrant workers into the region. Sex work is heavily stigmatised and lots of people have negative perceptions about the practice and so, to ignore the issue or take a puritan stand may exacerbate the situation as the trade will continue in great secrecy and end up putting the larger community at risk at frustrate the efforts at eliminating HIV/AIDS out of the country by the year 2030.

### **5.1 A Discussion on the Conclusions.**

The economic empowerment programmes for the sex workers ought to adopt a rights-based approach which essentially focuses on empowering the sex workers to make informed choices about their lives and sexual health. The initiatives should not necessarily have the sex workers exit sex work but rather aim at providing alternative sources of income so as to reduce their vulnerability and not entice them to stop sex work when they are just not ready to do so.

It turns out that the economic empowerment programmes informed by a thorough needs assessment for sex workers are best placed to identify the appropriate strategies for implementing economic empowerment programmes. It is also the case that the initiatives run by sex workers have higher success rates than those that do not meaningfully engage the sex workers. It is programmes in which the sex workers reported a strong sense of belonging and ownership of their destiny such as the one that NIKAT runs that success was a very big possibility.

The one-to-one contact with peers and the employment of sensitive, empathetic and understanding staff also reported positive impact on the sex workers that did participate in a particular initiative.

Meaningful interaction with peers in similar situations proved beneficial as it reduced the sense of isolation common among many sex workers and with a sense of consistency and continuity, the sex workers are more likely to participate in the project.

For the projects that adopt a rights-based approach to economic empowerment such as the HOYMAS and NIKAT, it turns out that the sex workers' skills and productivity was enhanced. This enables and also empowers sex workers to make the right choices for themselves and the project is more likely to succeed when a more integrated approach addresses the sex workers' sexual and reproductive health needs.

The studies showed that improved healthcare access as a component of the economic empowerment programme had many benefits key among them being effective negotiation of condom use with clients. The benefits are also derived from improved HIV prevention, treatment, care and support services for the sex workers and so, the better informed the sex workers are, the more empowered they are to embrace safe sex practices.

In the economic empowerment programmes, the opportunity for further education contributes immensely to project success especially with sufficient funding. There's an ease of the overall financial burden that studying places upon sex workers as they hardly have time to engage in sex work for the sake of earning extra income and further, with educating the mind comes new perspectives and better appreciation of issues. In the end, specific training and skilling improves the sex workers' self esteem where they gradually leave sex work out of personal will, raising personal standards for themselves and making better choices moving forward.

As for the unsuccessful economic empowerment programmes, the failure to meaningfully engage the sex workers in establishing the programme's goals and objectives is to surely have the initiative fail. The attempt at having sex workers immediately abandon the trade was something that was met with resentment as it stripped the sex workers of an identity and there were other negative factors that impacted the sex workers such as;

- Initiatives based on discrimination and stigmatisation of sex workers and aimed at rehabilitating sex workers to stop sex work.

- Initiatives that are not based on the needs of the sex workers but are rather imposed on them.
- Programmes that do not have a capacity-building component that enhances the skills of sex workers.
- Failure to conduct market research to identify suitable business areas where there is demand for a particular good or service to be provided.
- Lack of experience of management to implement successful programmes based on the needs identified through meaningful engagement with sex workers.
- Programmes being compulsory and not taking into consideration the jobs or skills that the sex workers themselves are interested in undertaking.
- Programmes being more interested in the number of sex workers reached and rehabilitated rather than ensuring that the intervention and training provided is of sufficient quality.
- Poorly funded economic empowerment programmes that are not able to sustain activities for longer than the initial pilot period.
- Lack of good monitoring and evaluation frameworks to enable learning and improvement for future programmes.
- Sex workers are not appropriately engaged in programmes as their participation is a requirement and is often regarded as something they must do for their own good, which is actually stigmatising and undermines the agency and autonomy of the sex workers.

It can be established therefore that the secondary data found and studied answered our research questions where in regard to the first one, it can confidently be stated that prostitution is prevalent in resource extracting jurisdictions such as Nigeria and Chad. This implies that Uganda which is yet to be an oil producing can equally be faced with the same challenge. Fortunately, the country has an opportunity to extenuate the vice learning from other jurisdictions that have ably handled the issue.

As to the second research question, the case studies did establish the linkage between prostitution and poverty with the latter drawing many to the vice for survival. Returning to the oil and gas sector, for the industry to raise the hopes of many and consequently disappoint them leaves the unfortunate with no choice but to sell their bodies to earn a living.

For the third research question, the secondary data findings show that there is a correlation between the variables that is, the independent variable of “Alternative employment” and the dependent variable of “Reduction in prostitution”. It thus turns out that the more alternatives in the form of economic options that the sex workers have, the less urge to engage in prostitution. Consequently, the sex workers are more empowered to make better and more informed choices about their health such as embracing of safe sex practices which reduces the risk of HIV/AIDS and STIs infection and hence the broader target of having an HIV/AIDS free generation by the year 2030.

This therefore ably addresses our problem of sex workers within the Albertine region, which if addressed in parallel to the case studies mentioned, will have the country mitigate the side effects of prostitution and preserve the social cohesion and have the focus placed on maximising the country’s labor force and the trajectory towards a middle-income status.

## **5.2 Recommendations.**

In light of the afore conclusions derived from the findings of the studies conducted, the following are thus recommended;

- I) That organisations that work with sex workers adopt rights-based approaches to sex worker programming that centers upon the needs of the sex workers as articulated by the sex workers themselves.
- II) Building and strengthening the capacity of sex worker-led organisations to facilitate economic empowerment programmes for sex workers and that funding for the organisations be sustained for a reasonable time to maximise the benefits for participants of the projects and the capacity of sex worker-led organisations in general.
- III) Identification of appropriate strategies for meaningful engagement of sex workers at the earliest opportunity so that the sex workers' needs are established for objective planning and proper management of expectations once the programmes are in place.
- IV) Post-training support for the participants in form of regular follow-up visits in the neighborhood so that the sex workers' progress is recorded and the establishment of support networks to enable participants share their experiences with others in the programme.
- V) Communication and collaboration with financial institutions for financial inclusion of sex workers into the monetary system with the elimination of discrimination against them and development of initiatives that promote financial literacy of participants so that sex workers can increasingly access financial services and attain economic empowerment.
- VI) Economic empowerment programmes should incorporate into their initiatives, sensitization training elements to help facilitate the wider community's acceptance of sex workers both as current and former sex workers.

- VII) The economic empowerment programmes should have an appropriate monitoring and evaluation framework to measure the impact of the economic empowerment intervention. This would help the organisations learn from the design and implementation phases of the programmes, so as to improve and build upon successful strategies and avoid less successful approaches in the future.
- VIII) As for the agencies that fund the economic empowerment programmes, they should support the sex worker-led organisations and work with them to establish vocation skills centers. And in ensuring a holistic approach to addressing the needs of sex workers, vocational skills programmes should also be integrated into reproductive health education and services as part of economic empowerment programmes.

## **Conclusion.**

Uganda is preparing to move to the oil production phase and while lots of effort have been placed on having the crude oil pipeline as well as the refinery in place, certain social challenges exist that could compromise optimum utilisation of the natural resource. Among these challenges is prostitution which is highly condemned in our society and yet studies show that its' prevalence is on the continued rise. Unfortunately, criminalisation of the vice has not helped matters but instead fueled its' continued practice as the cause is not immorality but increased levels of poverty among the citizens.

Therefore, addressing the livelihoods of the masses through strengthening of institutions charged with service delivery could help alleviate poverty from our society. In doing so, multitudes will gradually leave crime as a source of earning and embrace more authentic practices as means of production would largely be affordable.

In relation to the oil and gas sector, for those disappointed in attaining jobs within the industry, consolation may quickly be sought in the alternative poverty alleviation programmes. Consequently, morality will slowly restore itself to our society as an engaged mind hardly has time for diversion and the strong-arm of the law will catch fewer and fewer people.

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