

International conference  
« **Child Victims, vulnerable children and ‘violent’ youth  
in East Africa (Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda and Uganda):  
Realities, Perceptions, Care and Support**”  
Kampala, 19-21 Nov 2012

**Grandchildren staying with their  
grandparents in Uganda.  
Care, support and vulnerability**

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# Context

- Diversity of care systems and care providers
  - With little support of the state
  - In a context of large rural/urban differences
  - In a context of high adult mortality and mobility
- Gd parents and gd children (mutual support,...)
- Specific issues around the care provided by older adults and the possible limits of the family care system

# Goal

- When are the gd parents (vs other family members or unrelated persons) called upon to care for children?
- What are the conditions of living of the children in their gd parents care?
- What are the differences/similarities bw gd children and other children staying with older adults?

# Methods

QUANTITATIVE (secondary analysis of UDHS 2011)

Limitations of available demographic data

- Relationships
- Samples
- Informativeness on the topic

QUALITATIVE (collection of primary sources)

Household structure and beyond : intergenerational relationships and support

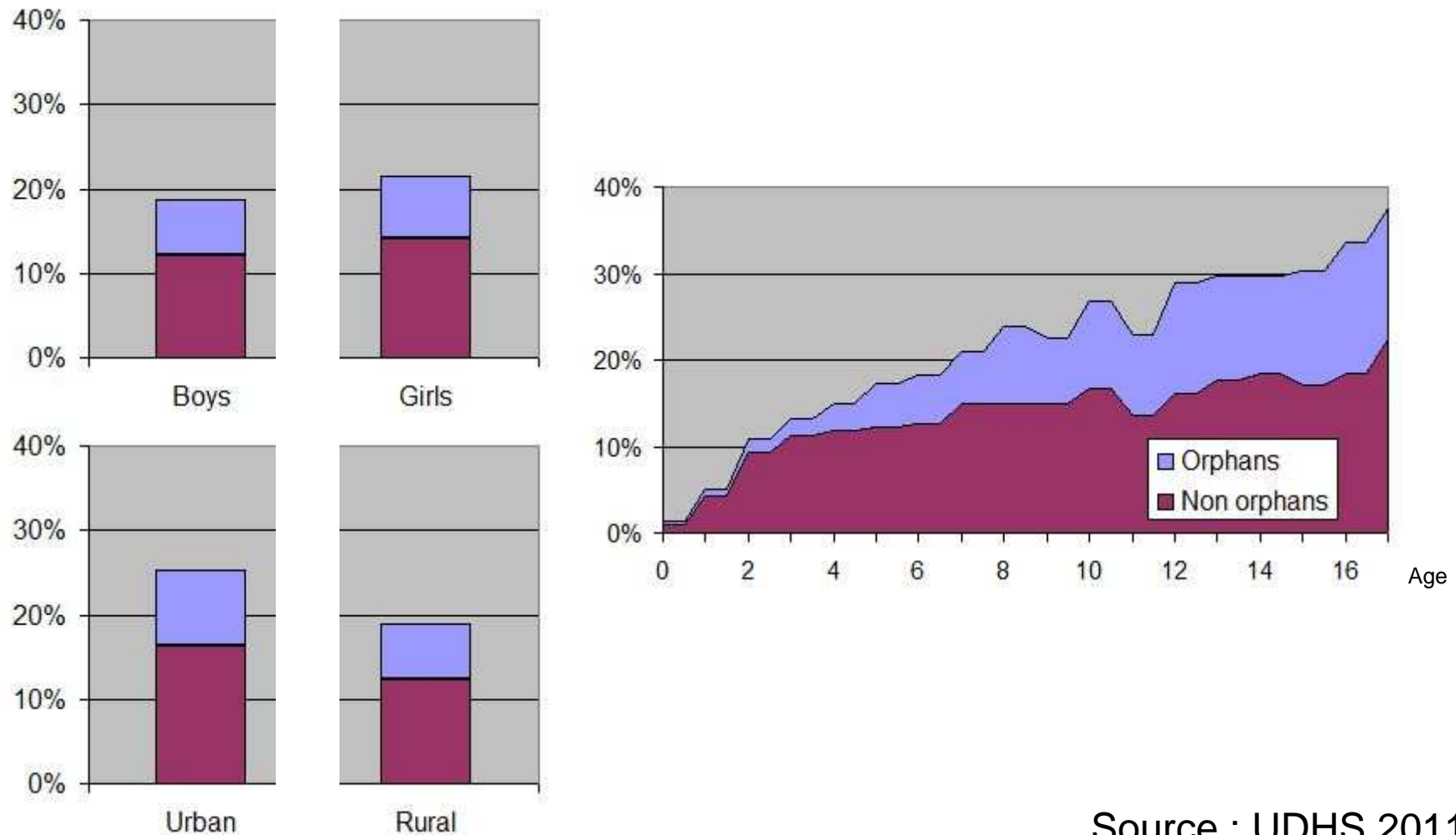
# Primary Sources

In-depth interviews in 6 different places in Uganda

- 2 neighbourhoods in Kampala
- Rural periphery of Kampala
- Rural Busia district (Eastern)
- Hoima town (Western)
- Rural Wakiso district (Central)

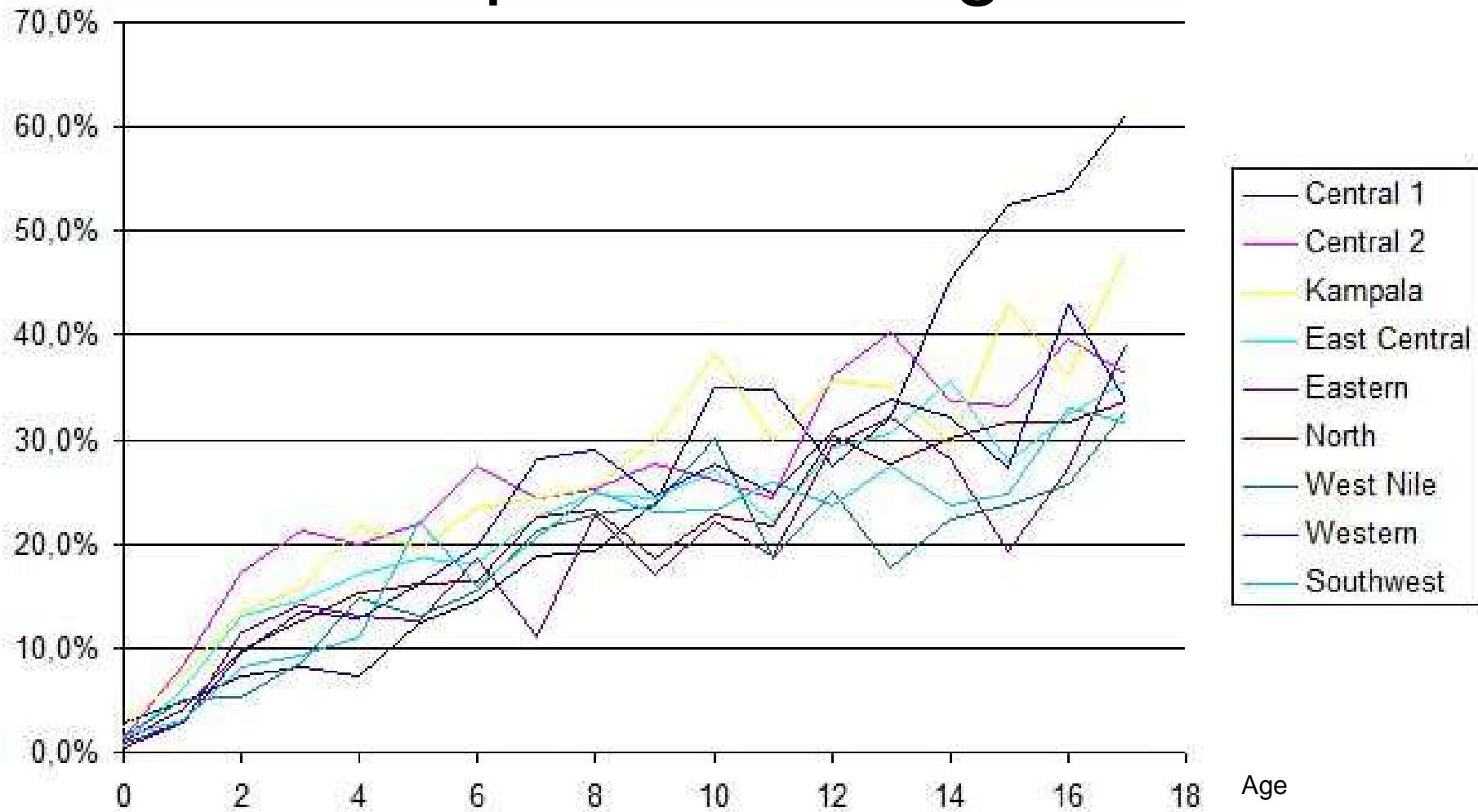
With support from ANR (ANR-09-ENF-001 et ANR-09-FRBR-016) and IRD  
Interviews done with Victoire Chalin (ISTOM), Ernestina Coast (LSE),  
Alexandra Fanghanel (UCL), Claire Médard (IRD), Stephen Ojiambo  
Wandera (CPAS)

# Children who are not staying with their parents in Uganda



Source : UDHS 2011

# Children who are not staying with their parents in Uganda



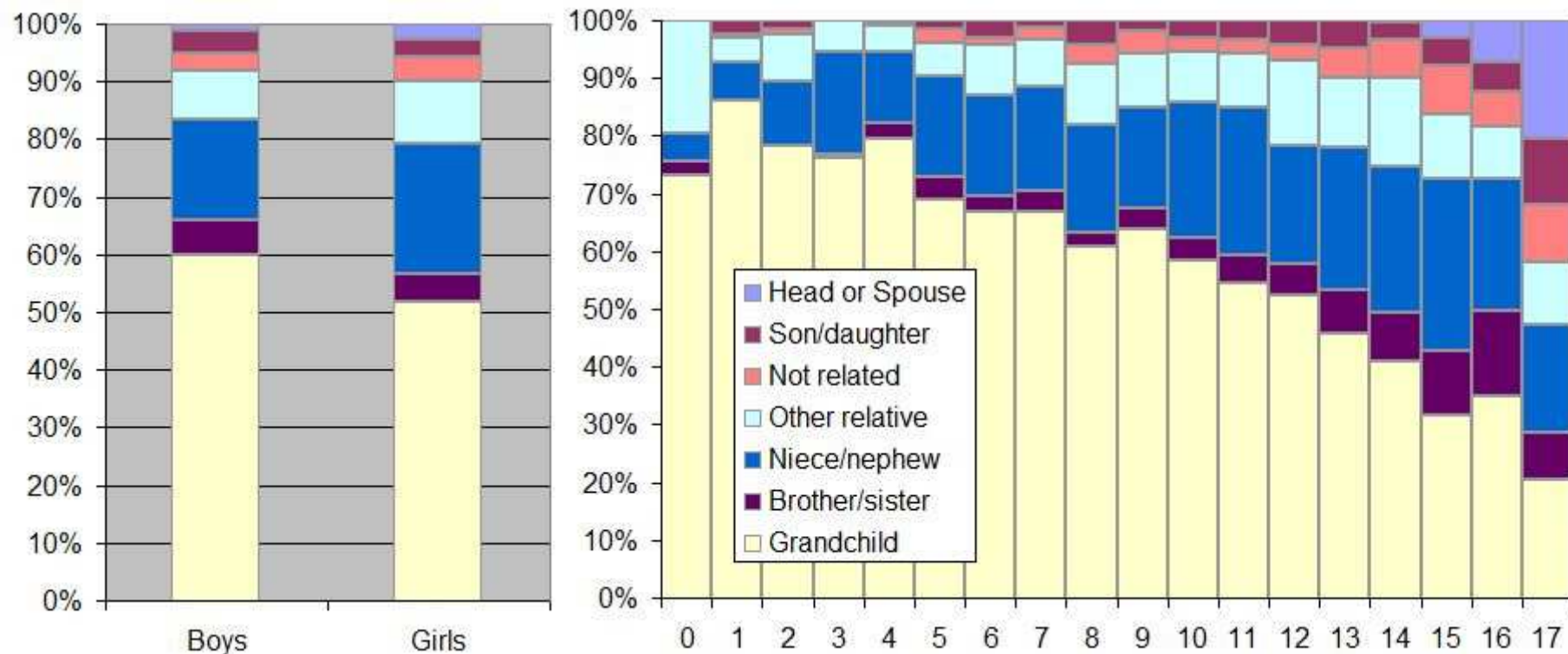
Source : UDHS 2011

1a

Who is caring  
for children  
when the  
parents are  
away?



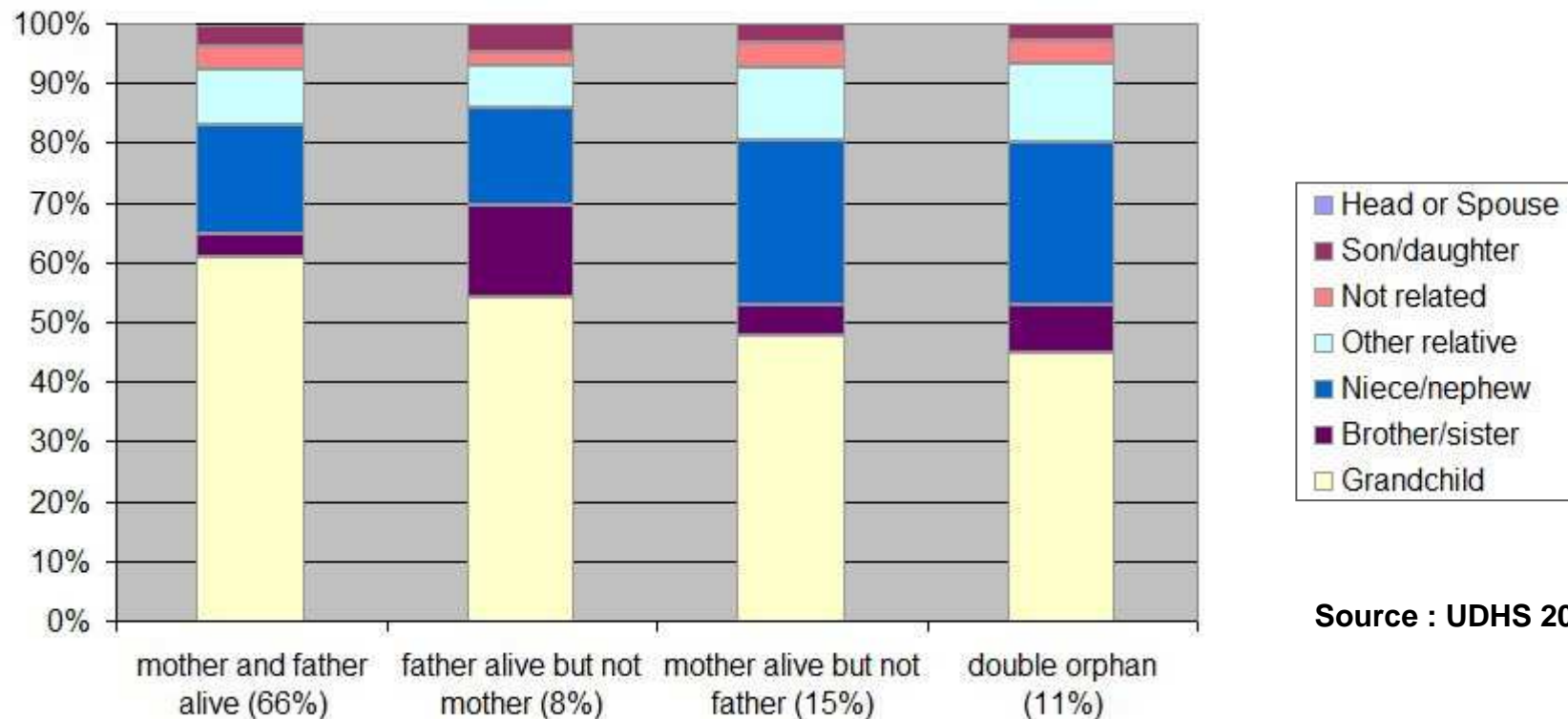
# Relation to the head of household of the children who are neither staying with their mother nor with their father



Source : UDHS 2011

=> More than 50% are staying at their grand parents

# Relation to the head of household of the children who are neither staying with their mother nor with their father



Source : UDHS 2011

=> Orphans are less often in the care of their grand parents, and especially so when they have lost their father

1b

How can we evaluate the situation of children in the care of their grand parents?

# Children staying at their grand parents' without their parents

- Go to school more than other children away from parents

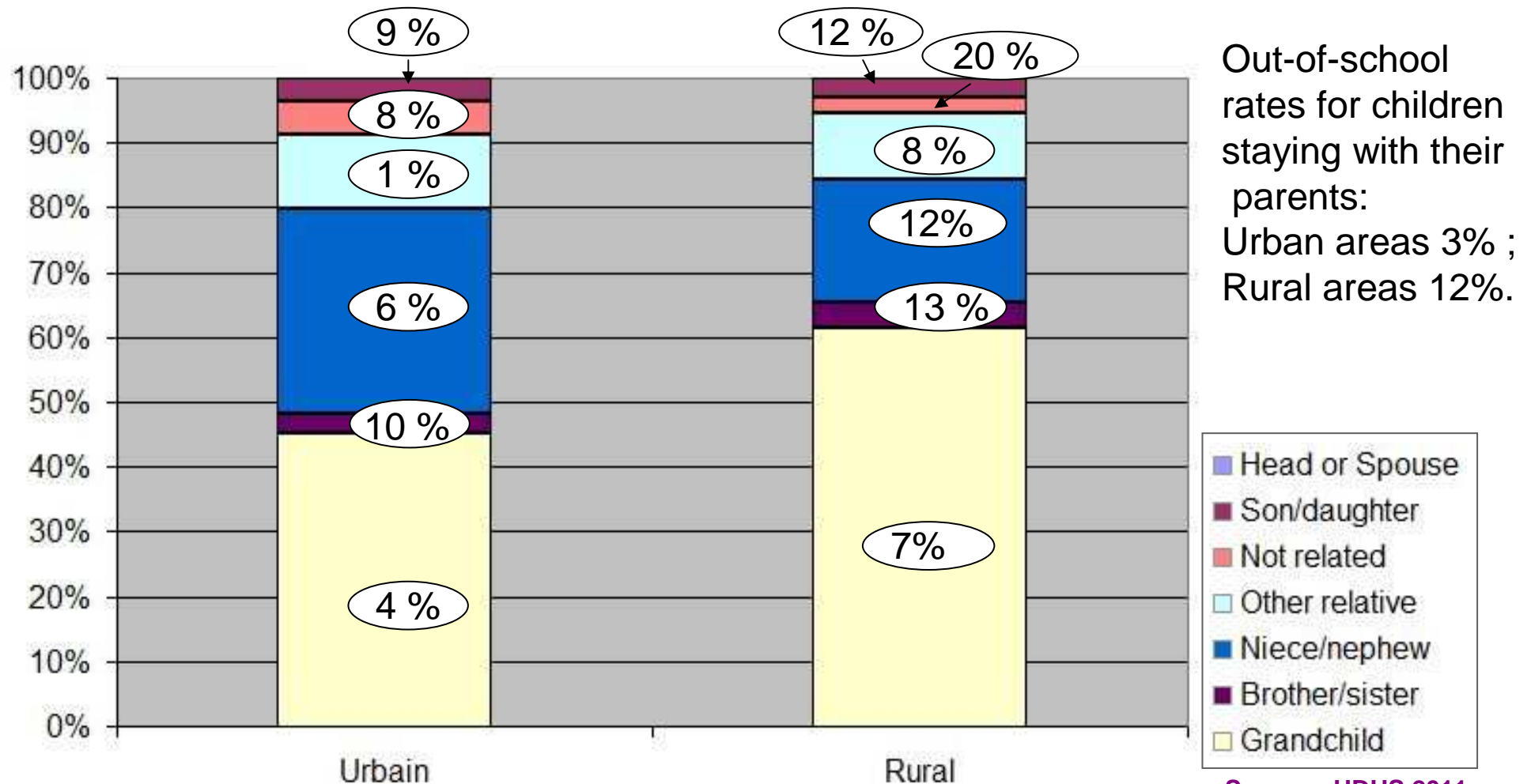
Proportion of children (7-12 y old) currently not schooling

|       | Children living with at least a parent | Children living away from both parents |         |
|-------|--|--|---------|
|       |  | Grand child                            | Others  |
| Boys  | 6,6%                                   | 7,4%                                   | 9,5%    |
| Girls | 7,6%                                   | 6,8%                                   | 11,3%   |
| Total | 6752,9                                 | 1197,788                               | 824,974 |

Source : UDHS 2011

- There is no significant difference between being a boy or a girl, an orphan or not an orphan, staying in an urban or a rural area when you are with a grand parent

# Children staying far from their parents who are not going to school



Source : UDHS 2011

# The family care for children

## Insights from quantitative analysis

- Staying with the grand parents is the most common practice and globally seems like a better alternative than other options
- Orphans are less than other children in the care of gd parents

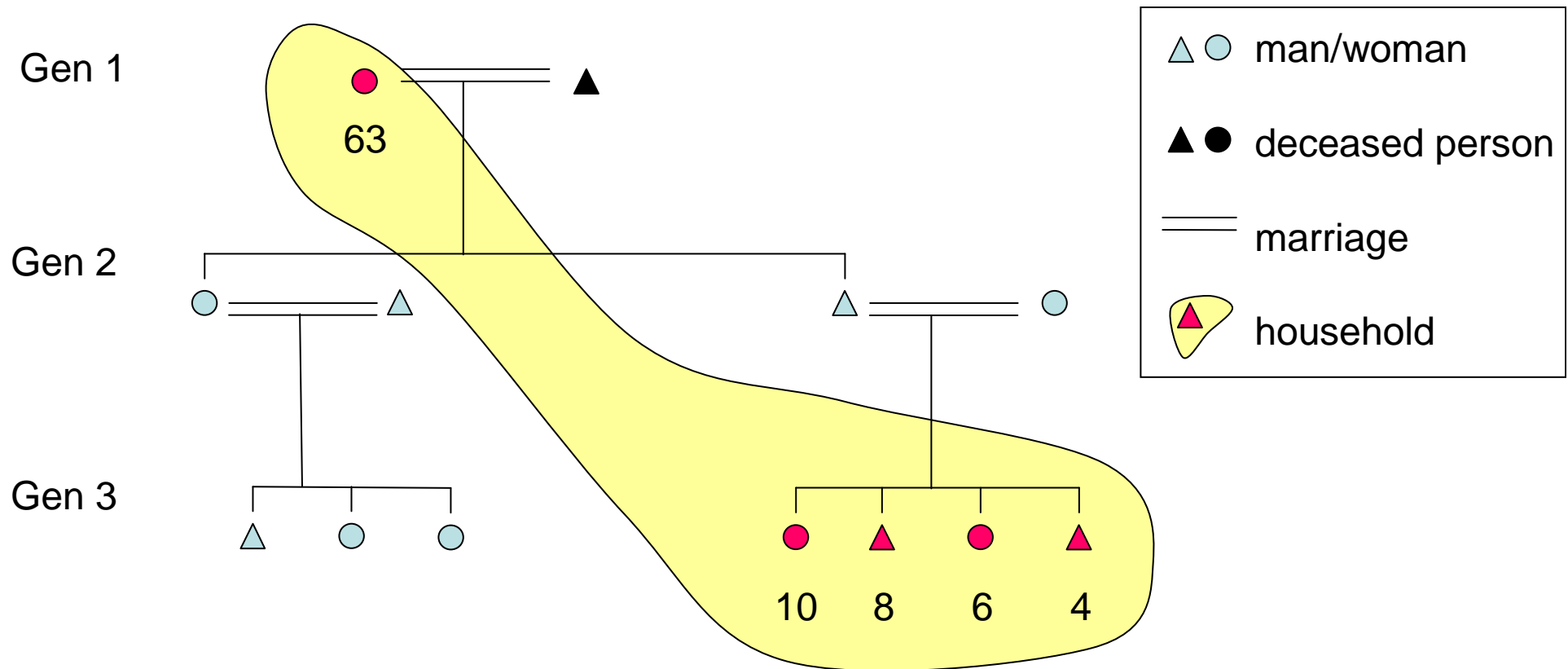
BUT          Rough indicators / Heterogeneous  
categories

=>A lot of questions are left unanswered

2a

Who are the children in their grand  
parents care and how do they live ?

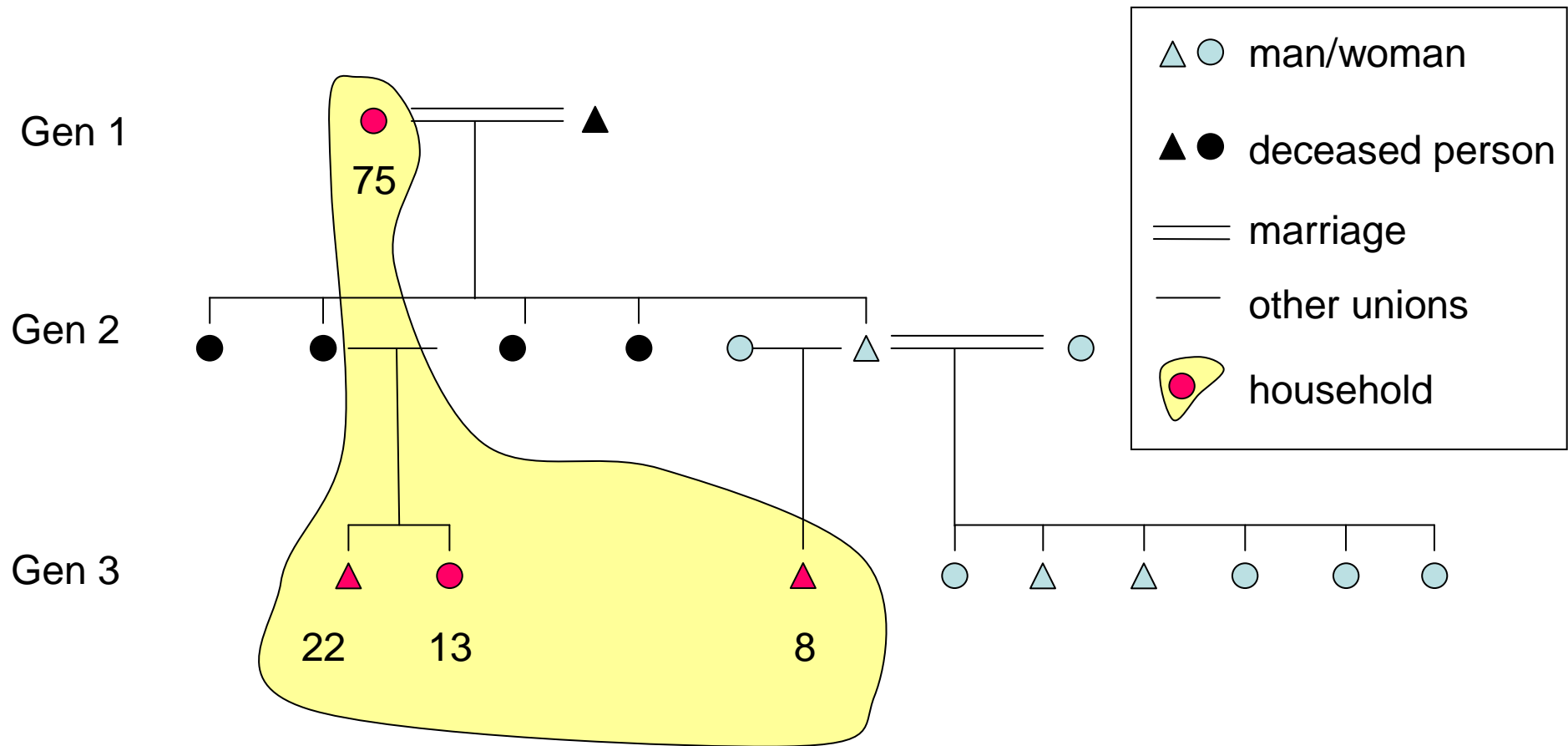
# Grand parents caring for grand children: a solution for the parents



HO12 Hoima town, Aug 2011

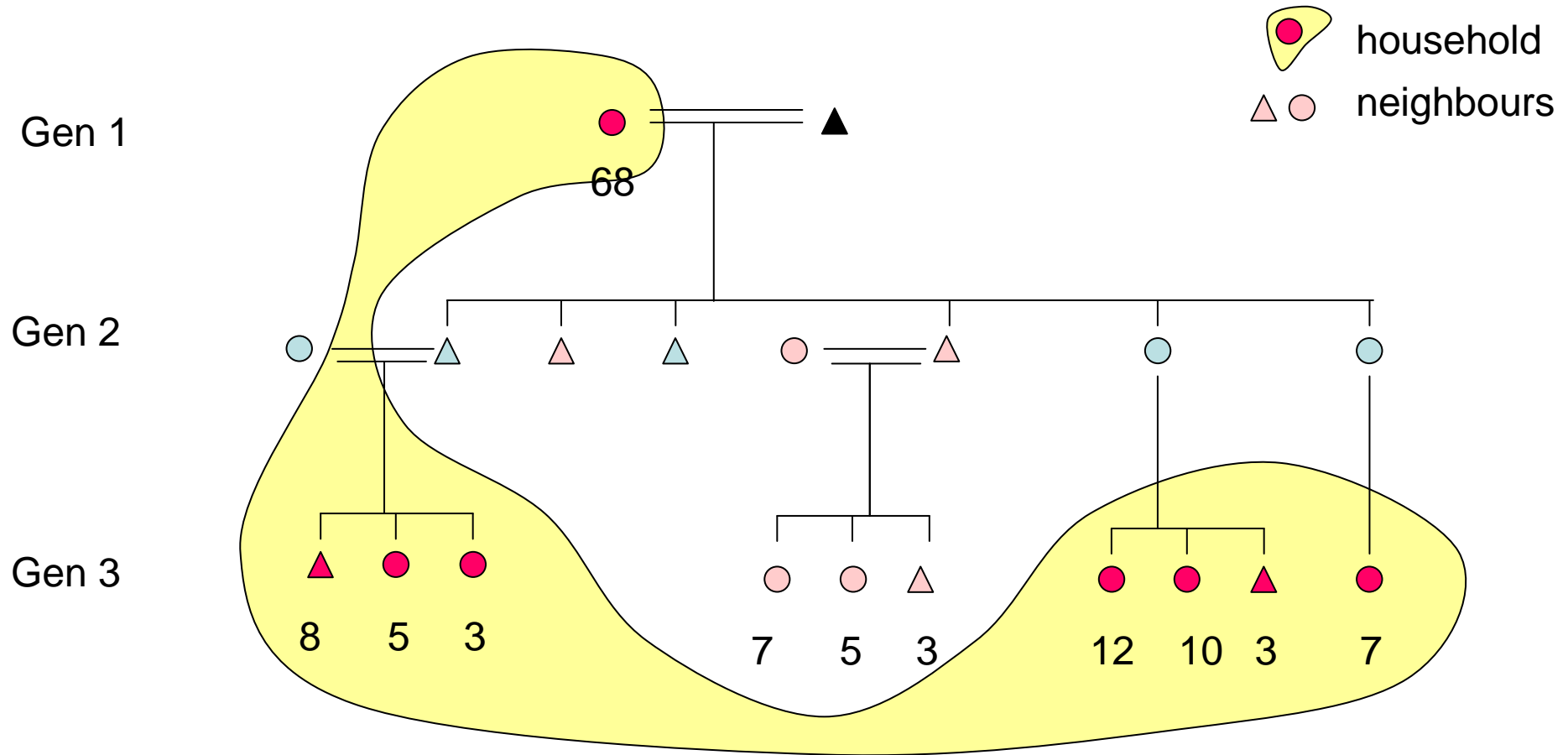


# Grand parents caring for grand children... and conversely



HH8, poor Kampala, Feb.2011

# Grand parents caring for grand children... in different ways



# Grand parents and grand children

- All grand children are not in their grand parents care. 2 tendencies:
  - Children with little other support (orphans, children born out of wedlock for daughters in patrilineal settings)
  - Children with working parents who cannot offer them better conditions
- There are differences in the way children are cared for, even within a household, depending on the support provided by their parents

2b

Grand children vs other children in their  
grand parents' care : same story?

# How do grandchildren compare to other children?

Margaret (rural periphery of Kampala, Nov 2010), brings up a great grand son with the help of her niece

Gertrude (rural Busia, Aug 2011) has a maid, that she has decided to send back to school

Anita (poor Kampala, Feb 2011) has a strong relationship with a nephew, who now looks after her

And others still...

# Family support

- The primacy of the lineage overshadows relationships built over time, in which children play an active role
- No clear cut divide between grand children providing domestic services and maids creating a bond with their employer
- The better off in the family are expected to help other children.

**Conclusion**

# Conclusions

Who can and who has to host children?

Upward versus poverty–led fostering

Support systems within the family are often based on the grand parents

- Sometimes children there have little contact with their parents
- Sometimes they have strong ties



Some children have a weaker position than others, which shows in their education

A continuum of conditions for children, depending on

- the ability / capacity of the grand parents to care for them
- the ties with the parents
- the existence of other support providers in the extended family

Difficult situations... possibly leading to exclusion when little ties and support from outside can be expected

\*\*\* as a result of high adult mortality

\*\*\* and for children marginalised in by their parents matrimonial life

Especially so in a context of poverty

*What happens when the grand parents are not there?*



Thank you