



**Decentralization and implementation of  
climate change policy in Uganda**

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## **PREFACE**

This working paper is the first of two working papers that present findings from the Climate Change and Rural Institutions (CCRI) research program on how meso-level institutions in Uganda are responding to climate change and extreme climate events. This working paper analyses national policies that support climate change mitigation and adaptation and their implementation modalities. The second working paper focuses on the meso-level institutional dynamics of how climate change action inside as well as outside the framework of climate change policies. For more information about CCRI, see <http://subweb.diis.dk/sw113176.asp>

The CCRI research program undertakes empirical fieldwork in Soroti, Amuria and Katakwi districts located in the Teso region, Eastern Uganda. The research examines how extreme climate events such as the 2007 floods and subsequent severe floods and droughts, as well as the gradual change in weather patterns, are affecting meso-level institutions.

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CAADP	Comprehensive Africa Agricultural Development
CAO	Chief Administrative Officer
CCD	Climate Change Department
CCRI	Climate Change and Rural Institutions
CCU	Climate Change Unit
CIF	Climate Investment Fund
DANIDA	Danish Agency for International Development
DDP	District Development Plan
DFID	Department for International Development
DNA	Designated National Authority
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
DSIP	Development Strategy and Investment Plan
EAC	East African Community
EC	Electoral Commission
EU	European Community
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation
GoU	Government of Uganda
GTZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit
ICEDA	Integrated Community Education and Development Association
IGG	Inspectorate of Government
INC	Initial National Communication
IPPC	International Panel
KIDDP	Karamoja Integrated Disarmament and Development Programme
LGDP	Local Government Development Plan
LGs	Local Government
LRDP	Luwero – Rwenzori Development Plan
MAAIF	Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries
MDAs	Ministries, Departments and Agencies
MEA	Multilateral Environmental Agreements
MoH	Ministry of Health
MOLG	Ministry of Local Government

MoWE	Ministry of Water and Environment
NAPA	National Adaptation Plan of Action
NCCAC	National Climate Change Advisory Committee
NCCF	National Climate Change Focal point
NCCP	National Climate Change Policy
NCCPC	National Climate Change Policy Committee
NDP	National Development Plan
NEPAD	New Partnership for African Development
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
NUREP	Northern Uganda Rehabilitation Programme
NUSAF	Northern Uganda Social Action Fund
OPM	Prime Minister's Office
PRDP	Peace Recovery and Development Plan
SLM	sustainable land management
UHRC	Uganda Human Rights Commission
UN	United Nations
UNCBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
UNCCD	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environmental Programme
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USD	US \$
WB	World Bank
WFP	World Food Program

## I. INTRODUCTION

### I.1 Setting the scene

The focus of climate change policies and action in Africa south of the Sahara differs from the global agenda. While most debate within the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change relates to assessing physical climate change and mechanisms for mitigation, the main concern of most African countries is how to adapt to the effects of climate change. A growing number of projects addressing climate change adaptation and government are formulating new policies that seek to provide a framework to guide these activities. Yet, discussion of the content of and driving forces behind climate change adaptation in national policies has been limited. Even less is known about how such national climate change policies have been implemented and their institutional setting within the country. This working paper explores the driving forces behind the formulation of climate change policies in Uganda and assesses its content and implementation modalities. The working paper explores the extent to which there is a gap between policy and practice at the district and local levels.

Climate change in Uganda is very real factor in people's lives. Smallholder farming families with little or no mechanization, irrigation or use of seasonal chemical inputs are particularly affected. While extreme climate change events, such as floods and droughts, are not a new phenomenon in Uganda, they have become more frequent during the past decade. Meanwhile the long established weather patterns around which farming systems have evolved have gradually become more uncertain. In combination, these expressions of climate change are causing already vulnerable rural people to become even more vulnerable. While small-scale farmers have long ex-

perience in adapting to unpredictable weather patterns, the type of uncertainty that is associated with climate change is beyond the scope of rural people's capacity to cope with. They need help from outside the local community to adapt.

Such assistance has been guided by three sets of policies that fall under the heading of climate change. The policy that has been around the longest is the policy of emergency assistance, reflecting the fact that natural hazards have existed for far longer than the climate change agenda. Emergency assistance policy is anchored in OPM. NAPA, which came into force in 2008, was the first policy that directly addressed the challenges posed by climate change and for the first time set priorities for supporting adaptation efforts. NAPA is institutionally anchored across a number of central ministries. The most recent is the NCCP, which addresses climate change in a comprehensive manner. The NCCP is in the process of being accepted by government and is led by a secretariate located within the Ministry of Water and Environment.

Local government in Uganda is the governance institution that is best suited to assist farmers in adapting to climate change. Uganda undertook a comprehensive decentralization reform in 1993 and has since built up government units at district and sub-county level with elected councillors and technical and administrative staff. In the decade following decentralization reform the responsibility for providing a wide range of services was devolved from central ministries to the district level, including education, health, roads and agriculture. At the turn of the century a second wave of reform took place aimed at 'deepening democracy' and leading to the establishment of new local institutions that linked users at the primary service units to local government institutions with the aim

of enhancing social accountability. However, during the past decade the momentum of reform has run out of steam and the national political agenda has shifted towards recentralization and a return to neo-patrimonial governance.

In spite of the fact that decentralised governance structures would be the obvious choice as an implementation mechanism for creating an enabling environment supporting rural people to adapt to climate change, until now climate change policies have been implemented through central ministries and NGOs using project-based parallel structures.

## 1.2 Study focus

The working paper seeks to understand why climate change policies have remained centralized till now by analysing the nature of the state and government of Uganda. In particular, the paper examines the extent to which climate change policies are being implemented through decentralized political and administrative structures in Uganda and how. Questions asked in the two working papers include the following:

- Are Uganda's climate change policies consistent with the Decentralization Act?
- Who is driving the formulation of climate change policies, and how is this affecting their implementation modalities?
- To what extent can the changing nature of the Ugandan state explain a gap between policy and practice?
- What is the implication of decoupling climate change policies and local government?

## 1.3 Methodology

Analysis of national decentralization and climate change policies is based on a literature

review combined with interviews of key informants at the Climate Change Unit and OPM. The geographical description and analysis of national trends in precipitation and temperature are based on a literature review of scientific reports and policy documents.

The analysis of climate change action at the local government level is based on primary fieldwork in Soroti, Amuria and Katakwi districts, Teso region. The working paper draws on information in unpublished reports from three CCRI workshops with local government politicians and technical staff held in 2012 and 2013. Two workshops, held in Soroti and Amuria districts, involved 25-30 participants representing politicians (district councillors), chief administrative officers (CAO) and technical staff from most relevant departments. The third workshop involved participants from nine districts in Teso and Karamoja regions, including CAU, the chairman of the district council (LC5 chair), district NAADS coordinators (DNC) and district environmental officers (DEO). In addition the section draws on thirty in-depth interviews with key informants from Soroti, Amuria and Katakwi districts.

Available studies from Teso compliment the CCRI fieldwork, including two recent climate change adaptation studies carried out by students from Makerere University (Kizauzi et al. 2012) and LIFE (Epilo, 2011).

## 2. GENESIS OF CLIMATE CHANGE IN UGANDA

### 2.1 Geography of Uganda

Uganda lies across the equator and occupies 241,038 square kilometres, of which open water and swamps constitute 43,941 square kilometres or 18.2% of the total area. Most



Figure 1. Map of Uganda



parts of the country are at an average height of 1,200 metres above sea level. The lowest altitude is 620m (on the Albert Nile) and the highest altitude (Mt Ruwenzori Peak) is 5,110m above sea level. The climate is equatorial, with moderate, humid and hot climatic conditions throughout the year.

Uganda experiences a wet climate with two distinct rainy seasons in a year in the southern parts of the country, which merge into one rainy season further north of the equator. The rainy period between October to December is described as the long period, and

the short period is between March and May (McSweeney et al., 2008:1). The areas around Lake Victoria are wetter than other areas of the country and receive more than 2,100 millimetres of rain annually, whereas the arid and semi-arid north receives 500 millimetres per year, thinning out to as low as 200 millimetres in the north-eastern corner (*Encyclopaedia of Earth*). Average temperatures in the cooler regions of the southwest are below 20°C, and reach 25°C in the northernmost parts of the country, also considered the warmest (McSweeney et al, 2008:1).

## 2.2 Characteristics of climate change in East Africa

Climate change in East Africa manifests itself as two phenomena: (i) gradual change of mean temperature, mean precipitation and variation in precipitation; and (ii) increases in the intensity and frequency of extreme climate events, such as droughts, floods, heat waves and lightning (GoU NAPA, 2007:xiv; GoU Climate Policy Paper, 2012:5). An analysis of data from the International Emergency Disaster Database by Shongwe et al. revealed that there has also been an increase in the number of reported hydro-meteorological disasters in the East Africa region, from an average of less than three events per year in

the 1980s, to over seven events per year in the 1990s, and almost ten events per year from 2000 to 2006, with a particular increase in floods, from average of less than one event per year in the 1980s to seven events per year between 2000 and 2006 (Shongwe et al. 2010:3719).

Uganda has experienced an increase in the frequency of droughts, with seven droughts reported between 1991 and 2000. Also the frequency of anomalously strong rainfall causing floods has increased (Shongwe et al, 2010:3719). A total of 4.11 million people in Uganda have been affected by climate-related disasters of different kinds, such as floods, disease outbreaks and droughts, since 1979

Table I. Recent major climate hazards in Uganda

<i>Type of Disaster</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Number of People Affected</i>
Drought	April-August 2013	>500,000
Landslide (Mass movement)	March 2010	338
Drought	July 2008	1,100,000
Flood	August 2007	718,045
Drought	March 2005	600,000
Drought	June 2002	655,000
Drought	August 1999	700,000
Drought	January 1998	126,000
Epidemic	November 1997	100,000
Flood	November 1997	153,500
Drought	December 1987	600,000
Drought	1979	500,000

*Source:* Climate Policy Paper, 2012 and Climate Change Update 2013.

(Heinrich Böller Foundation, 2010:22). In the past, up to 34 per cent of crop damage in Uganda has been caused by climate-induced stimuli such as a lack of rainfall, crop diseases and insect damage (Hisali et al., 2011:1245). Hepworth and Goulden (2008) state that floods in Uganda during 1961/62, 1997/98 and 2007 caused widespread infrastructural damage, displacement and the destruction of livelihood assets. Droughts have taken a significant toll with, for example, 1.8 million people affected through increased malnutrition, poverty, illness, asset loss and migration in the 1993/94 event (Hepworth and Goulden, 2008:10).

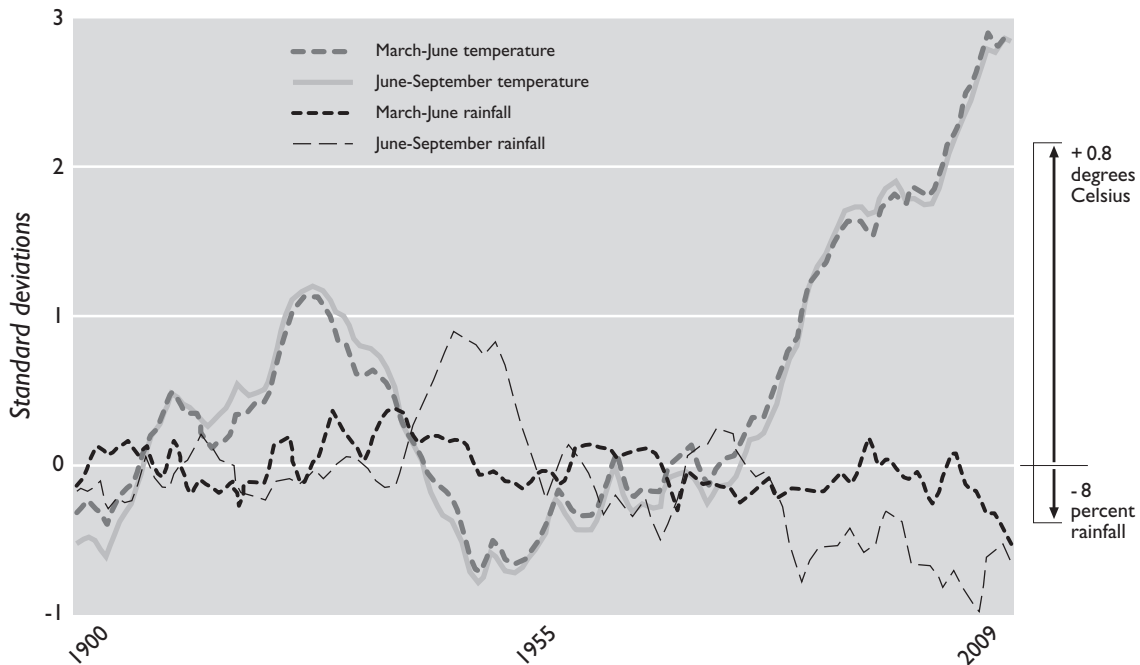
### 2.3 Gradual change in weather patterns in Uganda

The availability and accessibility of climate data are major challenges in Uganda. Most

of the climate data produced in the country does not meet the required standards due to the irregular monitoring of collection equipment, the few stations and poor station distribution. There is also a significant lack of historical meteorological data in Uganda. For these reasons, as well as the limited modelling work that has been done and the complex interactions that exist between land cover, oceanographic changes and climate, Uganda's climate projections are thus still very unreliable (GoU Climate Policy Paper, 2012:14-15).

Figure 2 show time series of rainfall (ten-year running mean) from 1900 to 2009. The table indicates that “2000–2009 rainfall has been, on average, about 8 per cent lower (-0.65 standard deviation) than rainfall between 1920 and 1969. Although the June–September rainfall appears to have been declining for a longer period, the March–June decline has only occurred recently.” (USGS 2012:2)

Figure 2. Trends in rainfall and temperature in Uganda\*



\* Smoothed 1900-2009 March-June and June-September rainfall and air temperature time series for crop-growing regions

Lyon and DeWitt conclude that since 1999 the East Africa region has experienced a decline in precipitation during the long rainy season, which has continued since (Lyon and DeWitt, 2012:4). Funk et al. (2008) state that East Africa has seen precipitation decline since 1979 (Funk et al., 2008:11082). Furthermore, overall future climate projections for East Africa show scientific disagreement over total rainfall. Funk et al. (2008) suggest that East Africa will expect a decline in total rainfall, at least until 2030. The authors use climate relationship data as opposed to raw simulations (Funk et al., 2008:11083, 11085). Conversely, the IPCC report *Region Climate Projections* suggests that there is likely to be an increase in annual mean rainfall in the future (Christensen, 2007:850). There are, however, disagreements among scientists. According to McSweeney et al. (2008) observations of rainfall over Uganda do show statistically significant decreasing trends in annual and March to May rainfall (McSweeney et al. 2008:2).

According to a Climate Policy Paper (2012), prepared by the Climate Change Unit within the Ministry of Water and Environment in Uganda, changes have been observed in rainfall patterns in Uganda. Rainfall has become lower, more unreliable and unevenly distributed, and where rain does fall, it is heavier and more violent. In general, wetter areas are tending to become wetter and droughts more frequent. The main concern is not the total amount of rain, but instead its distribution, seasonality and intensity, the policy paper concludes (GoU Climate Policy Paper, 2012:5).

Trends in the variation in precipitation based on daily rainfall data are, however, mixed. McSweeney writes that there is no significant trend towards heavier and more extreme rainfall events (McSweeney et al.

2008:2). Others report that rainfall in Uganda has become more unreliable and unevenly distributed (IGAD, 2010). An increase in the intensities and frequency of heavy rains, floods and landslides in highland areas, as well as outbreaks of associated waterborne diseases associated with the floods, were also observed and confirmed by a Participatory Rural Appraisal (NEMA, 2008). Recent years have seen erratic onsets and ends to the rainy seasons, and rainfall has been heavier and more violent (GoU, 2007; MWE, 2010). These are being followed by long droughts, which are becoming more and more frequent. El Nino Southern Oscillation (ENSO) events have also been observed to be shorter and more irregular (IGAD, 2010).

Shongwe et al. 2011 carried out a study of possible changes in the intensity of mean and extreme precipitation rates in East Africa. They state that 'Evidence in support of a future positive shift in the rainfall distribution under global warming has been presented for most models, with only a single model simulating a trend to less rain'. They also conclude that 'It is physically reasonable, therefore, to conclude from this ocean-atmosphere coupling pattern that global warming could enhance the likelihood of anomalously strong short rains' (Shongwe et al, 2010:3728f).

Since 2000, extreme rainfall conditions have been regularly experienced in eastern Uganda, where there has been an increase of approximately 1500 mm in precipitation in the December to January rainy season (NEMA, 2008). Teso region has particularly been affected by these trends. According to the Uganda Department of Meteorology, rainfall seasons have become more variable as depicted by the analysis of cumulative average ten-day totals. Although western, central and northern Uganda experienced good rainfall,

the eastern region experienced droughts in 1997, showing the complexity of these variations.

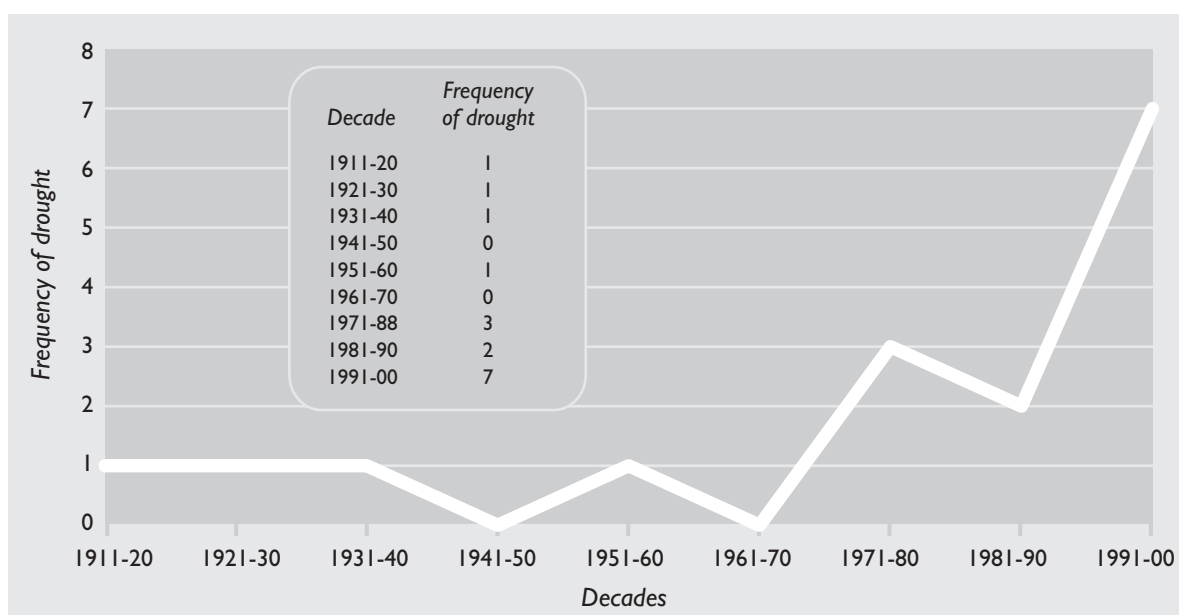
### 2.4 Extreme climate events in Uganda

*Recent droughts in Uganda.* The western, northern, and north-eastern regions have been experiencing more frequent and longer-lasting droughts than seen historically (GoU, 2007). Between 1991 and 2000 there were seven droughts in the Karamoja region, and the years 2001, 2002, 2005 and 2008 also saw major droughts (GoU, 2002; GoU, 2007; EM-DAT, 2011). While there have always been droughts in Uganda, evidence suggests they are becoming more frequent and more severe (IGAD, 2010). An example of such a severe drought was the 2000 widespread drought in the eastern and northern regions, with Arua district being worst affected, although the western region experienced good seasons.

The increased frequency and duration of droughts is the most significant climate-related change being experienced in Uganda (GoU, 2007; MWE, 2010). See Figure 3.

*Recent floods in Uganda.* Uganda experienced above normal rainfall in 1998 (an El Niño year), resulting in floods that had serious negative impacts on several sectors, particularly health and transport. The flooding of 1998 was followed by a severe drought in western region, with Mbarara district being most affected. From 2007 to date, the Teso sub-region in the north-eastern part of the country has experienced major floods in November that have continued to be intermittently followed by long droughts and floods during traditional planting seasons. This has virtually derailed the planting strategies in the sub-region. These analyses show that the impact of climate variability and climate change has not been consistent across the whole country, thereby posing serious implications for the efficiency of the national-level response. In

Figure 3. Drought occurrences in Uganda 1911-2000



Source: GoU 2007

September 2010, further flood disasters hit the Teso region, leading to rotting cassava, sweet potato tubers and groundnuts (GoU Climate Policy Paper, 2012:13).

### **3. RECENT ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND POLITICAL CHANGE IN UGANDA**

#### **3.1 Economic development**

Uganda's economy performed remarkably well from independence to 1970, when the country experienced relative political stability. Inflation was maintained at an average of 3 per cent per annum, real GDP grew by 5.2 per cent per annum, and fiscal deficits rarely exceeded 2.5 per cent of GDP. Real interest rates were positive for most of the period, the current account balance was in surplus, and domestic savings averaged 15 per cent of GDP. In the same period, the growth in exports averaged 5 per cent per annum while that of imports was 6.2 per cent.

From 1971 to 1979, Uganda's economy was seriously damaged by economic mismanagement and civil conflicts that negatively impacted on the gains made during the previous periods. The rate of inflation averaged 30 per cent per annum between 1970 and 1980, as the government financed public expenditure through bank borrowing. During the same period, GDP declined at 1.6 per cent per annum, exports by 8.5 per cent and imports by 9.8 per cent. This led to a decline in export revenue, which subsequently impacted negatively on the balance of payments and external debt positions.

Growth in GDP was temporally restored between 1981 and 1983, when an average annual growth rate of 5.6 per cent was registered. Inflation declined from 111 per cent

to 25 per cent. Overall budget deficits were reduced from 2.8 per cent of GDP in 1981 to 0.6 per cent in 1983 but rose to 11.9 per cent of GDP in 1984. Thereafter, the civil strife and political instability that ensued, especially in the central part of the country, negated the achievements made. As a result, negative GDP growth rates were recorded during the period between 1984 and 1986.

In 1987, the government launched a minimum Economic Recovery Programme (ERP) followed by a series of other reforms aimed at restoring macroeconomic stability to provide a favourable environment for economic growth and private-sector development. The key reforms included a currency reform, changes in tax and fiscal policy geared towards improving revenues and restraining expansion in Government expenditures, while maintaining a strong focus on economic recovery and growth. Between 1987 and 1996, GDP grew at an average annual rate of 6.5 per cent, translating into 3.4 per cent growth in per capita terms. The decline in monetary growth led to a substantial reduction in inflation.

Over the period 1997/1998 to 2000/2001, GDP growth averaged 7.2 per cent per annum. Between 2000/01 and 2003/04 it averaged 6.8 per cent and between 2004/05 and 2007/08, it was 8 per cent. As a result of the global recession, which reduced the demand for Uganda's exports to Europe and America, GDP growth declined slightly in 2008/09 to 6.2 per cent at basic prices but recovered in 2011/12. The fiscal deficit stood at 10.2 per cent and 7.9 per cent of GDP on average during 2000/01 to 2003/04 and 2004/05 to 2007/2008 respectively. Inflation was kept in single digits for most of these periods, foreign reserves covered at least five months of imports, and exchange rates were competitive.

There has been a significant increase in both foreign and local investment flows into the economy. As a percentage of GDP, private investment rose from 12.2 per cent in 2000/2001 to 20.6 per cent in 2006/2007. Public investment averaged 5.1 per cent of GDP over the same period but has been more or less stagnant over the last decade. Furthermore, the investment pattern of recent years shows rising private construction, especially of residential buildings, modestly increasing investment in machinery and equipment, and low levels of public construction. This indicates issues with low capital investment in industries, services and labour productivity.

The global downturn has to some extent negatively influenced investments through reduced private remittances, foreign direct investment and loans, although recent global economic trends, coupled with the resilience of Uganda's economy, have subdued the initially perceived risks. Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) dropped from 5.3 per cent of GDP in 2007/2008 to 4.6 per cent GDP in 2008/09 and was projected to remain slow in 2009/2010. However, the anticipated negative effects on aid were marginal, as most development partners continued to meet their obligations.

Uganda's trade deficit has been widening despite improvements in the composition and value of exports. The trade deficit as a percentage of GDP declined from an annual average of 12.9 per cent for the period 2000/01 to 2003/2004 to 13.5 per cent for the period 2004/2005 to 2007/2008. The balance of payments has also been unfavourable, with a deteriorating trend in recent years. These results could partly be due to lower demand for Uganda's exports in advanced economies, although this is partly being compensated for by increased regional exports.

### 3.2 Institutional change

Uganda has established a number of institutions to enable effective public-sector management. These institutions are responsible for policy formulation and implementation and public service delivery. However, there are opportunities to improve the structure of the public sector, in particular with regard to the allocation of roles and responsibilities in service delivery. Most of the public institutions were formed in the early 1960s, before the liberalization policies of the 1990s. The organization of some public institutions is not suitable and impedes the delivery of policy, regulation and public services. Other issues include overlaps and duplication of mandates, weak oversight of institutions, poor corporate governance and weak regulatory frameworks. The civil servants are still poorly remunerated, and this limits their productivity. Furthermore, the coordination of public-sector institutions is still a challenge.

The progress made in both public administration and public-sector management is being hampered by corruption at various levels of government. Government recognizes the devastating socio-economic effects of corruption and is committed to taking corrective and deterrent measures in order to fully realize the potential for improving social and economic conditions. Uganda ranks 130<sup>th</sup> out of 180 countries on Transparency International's 2009 Corruption Perception Index, while many African countries rank better (Tanzania 126, Zambia 99, Swaziland 79, South Africa 56, and Botswana 37).

In order to enhance accountability in government, the accountability sector was established in 2007 with the goal of promoting, supervising and implementing accountability systems. The sector comprises the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, the Inspectorate of Government,

the Office of the Auditor General, the Directorate of Ethics and Integrity, the Ministry of Public Service – Inspection, the Ministry of Local Government, the Public Procurement and Disposal of Public Assets Authority, the Uganda Bureau of Statistics, the Uganda Revenue Authority and development partners. There is also a Stakeholders Forum in which civil-society views are presented and addressed. Civil society includes private business, media, anti-corruption NGOs and community groups, all of which play a vital role in representing the views and experiences of public service beneficiaries and holding public officials to account.

The legal, policy and regulatory framework that guides the accountability sector includes the Budget Act 2001, the Public Finance and Accountability Act 2003, the National Audit Act 2008, the Leadership Code Act 2002, the National Records and Archives Act 2001, the Public Procurement and Disposal of Public Assets Act 2003, and the Access to Information Act 2005. Other laws pending legislation include the Anti-Money Laundering Bill, the Anti-Corruption Bill 2008, and the Whistle Blowers' Bill. A special court has also been established to try corruption cases.

### **3.3 Role of external actors/donors in development and climate change**

The government of Uganda is still unable to balance its budget and continues to depend on external budget support, although the level of support is declining. Budget support in the form of grants and concessionary loans is projected to be US\$ 281.3 million, equivalent to Shs 734.1 billion, during FY 2012/13. Budget support is projected to decrease marginally in US dollar terms in FY 2013/14 to US\$ 247.7 million or Shs 685 billion before declining further over the remaining period

to about US \$ 182.1 million or Sh 493.3 billion by 2012/17. The largest support received under this mode of external financing comes from the World Bank Poverty Support Credit (PRSC) of USD 100 million, followed by UK and EU general budget support equivalent to USD 30 million and USD 20 million respectively.

At the same time, next year project support disbursements are projected at US\$ 745.7 million, equivalent to Shs 1,945.8 billion, which will further rise to US\$ 794.2 million or Shs 2,196.9 billion during 2013/14. Project support is projected to decline the following three years and to be US\$ 402.9 million, or Shs 1,091 billion during the last year of the Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF). The major benefitting sectors are works and transport, education, public management and health.

Meanwhile, amortization of external debt is projected at US\$ 96 million, equivalent to Shs 250.4 billion in 2012/13. The level of external debt repayments is projected to remain almost the same in US dollar terms over the medium term. Net external debt repayments are higher than the amortization schedules set out above due to payments of arrears. Amortization on domestic debt is projected at Shs 9.7 billion in each of the next five years.

### **3.4 Evolution of the political character of the Ugandan state**

A number of democratic institutions have been put in place in line with the 1995 constitution. The three arms of government, namely the legislature, the executive and the judiciary, are now in place and functioning, albeit with varying degrees of respect for each other's constitutional mandates. Parliament continues to exercise its constitutional mandate and has strengthened a number of insti-



tutions for promoting democracy and good governance including the Electoral Commission (EC), the Inspectorate of Government (IGG), the Auditor General (with enhanced powers) and the Uganda Human Rights Commission (UHRC), among others.

However, the country's culture of constitutionalism is not improving fast, and many of the institutions established in the legislative, executive and judicial branches of government are struggling to fully embrace the ideals, principles and practices of democracy. The media has been liberalized and is relatively free, with both the print and electronic media providing citizens with ample opportunities to express their views on a wide range of issues that affect their lives. At the same time, Uganda has seen the dramatic emergence of non-governmental and civil-society organizations willing and able to engage the arms of government in policy debates and advocacy of democracy and good political governance, albeit with challenges in the policy and regulatory framework. However, in general the citizen body is not yet empowered enough to engage effectively in demanding their rights and to insist that these institutions meet their obligations.

The Ugandan state supported a series of economic and governance reforms during the 1990s carried out in close collaboration with international aid agencies led by the World Bank. A high level of commitment by the president and the wider Ugandan political establishment, combined with donor support, was crucial for the initial success of these governance reforms. This combination enabled the strengthening of 'technocratic or bureaucratic elites with some degree of insulation from political and societal interests through the creation of specialised, semi-autonomous agencies responsible for reform implementation' (Robinson, 2006:13).

At the turn of the century, the reform process in Uganda was viewed by World Bank and international observers as one of the most successful in Africa. However, over the past decade the initial success in decentralizing and reforming the public sector has been gradually undermined, leading to a reversal of development and reform outcomes. While national political commitment was an essential prerequisite for initiating reform, the absence of such political commitment became a source of vulnerability for the reform in a political culture with a powerful legacy of authoritarianism and personal rule.

'The principal explanation for stalled reform or reversals lies in the imperative of preserving the institutional foundations of neo-patrimonial politics' (Robinson, 2006:13).

Over the past decade the politics of regime maintenance in Uganda has prevailed over development objectives and the strengthening of local government structures. As the success of the reforms was increasingly attributed to the semi-autonomous institutions responsible for implementing governance reforms (e.g. the NAADS secretariat) and to local government structures, they became susceptible to political manipulation from central government. Over the past decade the politics of regime maintenance has increasingly become associated with neo-patrimonial rule and re-centralization, challenging the sustainability of successful decentralization reforms.

The reversal of the decentralization reform in Uganda has been explained by its reliance on the personal commitment of President Museveni over an extended time period and the absence of a broader political constituency to ensure its sustainability (Robinson, 2006). A contributing factor to the erosion of the commitment to the decentralized implementation of policy reform may be the shift

to multi-party elections in 2005. Increased competition in multiparty elections in 2007 and 2011 has increased the importance of attributing success for development outcomes. This may 'deepen rather than erode patrimonial politics as newly mobilised constituencies seek to access the benefits that were formerly the exclusive preserve of politicians and officials associated with the NRM Movement' (Robinson, 2006:12).

The political base of the NRM movement has narrowed over the past decade, with strong personal concentration power in the hands of the President and a disproportionate share of top political positions and civil service appointments going to Ugandans with strong kinship roots in the west of the country (Robinson, 2006). Over the past decade Uganda has thus transformed itself from one of countries in Africa that was most closely associated with the type of structural reforms supported by World Bank and international development agencies to a country based on the type of neo-patrimonial politics commonly found in many other African states (Hickey 2003).

## **4. DECENTRALIZATION AS UNIQUE FEATURE OF UGANDA**

### **4.1 Evolution of local government**

In 1993 in Uganda the Decentralization Act was passed through parliament as an instrument to deliver sub-national development and to bring services closer to the people. Decentralization envisioned good governance, democratic participation and control of decision-making by local communities. Under this policy, the following functions were devolved to local government: planning, budgets, administration, fiscal management and

control, and administration of justice in local council courts.

Local government functions through a unified system of elected authorities at various levels, ranging from the village to the city or district. The responsibility for local planning, budgeting and implementation lies primarily with the district/municipality and sub-county/town council. The number of districts with approved three-year development plans increased from three in 1997 to all the 80 districts that existed in 2009. This is an indication that local government capacity increased during this period. In connection with national elections in 2011, the number of districts was increased to 112. While creating new districts is popular among the people living in the district and result in more votes for the government, most technical observers argue that it has resulted in increased expenditure on public administration (UNCDF).

### **4.2 Local government capacity to deliver services**

There has been progress in institutional and human resource capacities in local government. Under the LGDP, the government designed and implemented a capacity-building programme for local government, which has led to improvements in service delivery. However, there are still gaps in staffing levels (at 65 per cent), which affects service delivery. The most affected sectors include health, agriculture and engineering, which have failed to attract, deploy or retain skilled personnel.

In spite of the introduction of equalization grants to bring disadvantaged local government to the level of service delivery comparable to the rest of the country, regional imbalances still exist. This is demonstrated simply by disparities in poverty levels and social development indicators. While nationally

the proportion of the population below the poverty line is 31 per cent, the incidence of poverty is highest in the Northern region at 66 per cent, followed by the Eastern at 46.8 per cent, Western at 34.4 per cent and Central at 27.2 per cent. The high incidence of poverty in the north is attributed to the insurgency, which disrupted economic activities in the northern and eastern parts of the country.

Gender inequalities are more pronounced in the post-conflict areas of the north than in the rest of the country. Displacement and resettlement have left many women without any access to land. Conflict has brought about a breakdown in traditional household roles whereby women have had to become primary breadwinners, although they lack the necessary skills. Many women and children have been severely traumatized by the effects of conflict. Disruption of social services has led to worse social outcomes, lower than national averages, in literacy, malnutrition, maternal mortality and fertility, among others.

Local government bodies (LGs) are funded through central government grant transfers, local revenue and borrowing. In addition, many LGs access donations from development partners. The Constitution of the Republic of Uganda provides for three categories of grants, namely unconditional, conditional and equalization. The Constitution also gives powers to local government to collect some tax and non-tax revenues. All these sources are operations, although at different levels of contribution to LG budgets. LGs have powers to collect property taxes, but few collect it effectively, and it is significant only in urban areas. Various local fees, licenses and other minor revenues are collected.

The unconditional grants are at the discretion of LGs, but the largest percentage is used to pay salaries. The conditional grants are earmarked for specific development and

recurrent activities of national importance, whereas the equalization grants are extended to new LGs and those that are disadvantaged.

The multiplicity of fund transfer mechanisms is a growing concern of local government. Many of these mechanisms were not well adapted to the decentralized framework, which resulted in management and reporting challenges. In addition, there were concerns over the different designs and conditionalities of the different grants.

To address these challenges, the government introduced the Fiscal Decentralization Strategy (FDS), which allows LGs some flexibility and/or discretion to reallocate resources between and within sectors during planning and budgetary processes. While a lot has been achieved since the FDS was introduced, it has not been fully embraced. Most LG budgets still comprise of more than 80 per cent of conditional grants.

To address regional and district imbalances, a number of affirmative action plans have been implemented at sub-national levels with some degree of success, including the Northern Uganda Rehabilitation Programmes (NUREP) I & II and the Northern Uganda Social Action Fund (NUSAF), the Karamoja Integrated Disarmament and Development Programme (KIDDP) and extensions of equalization grants to address the imbalances between districts. The government has developed and is implementing the Peace Recovery and Development Plan (PRDP) for northern and eastern Uganda. The Luwero–Rwenzori Development Plan (LRDP) is also being developed.

The PRDP will consolidate the achievements of previous affirmative action programmes in the region and enable the systematic rehabilitation and long-term recovery of the post-conflict north of the country. This will reopen the area to meaningful produc-

tion, as well as reinstating democratic governance in the area.

Available evidence (Bashaasha et al. 2010) so far suggests that devolution of responsibility contributes to greater compliance with some natural resource management (NRM) requirements. In particular, the involvement of locally accountable and representative authorities in enacting and enforcing NRM requirements appears critical for the legitimacy and success of such regulation. With regard to forest conservation, comparison of centralized and decentralized forms of forest management reveals ambiguous results. There is evidence that forest conditions in some areas have declined following decentralization. The Bashaasha et al. estimates of the cost of natural resource degradation in Uganda are as high as 17 per cent of gross national income (GNI) per year, of which 6 per cent consists of forest degradation and 11 per cent soil degradation.

## **5. NATIONAL CLIMATE CHANGE POLICIES AND THEIR IMPLEMENTATION MODALITIES**

### **5.1 Emergency assistance policy OPM**

Disasters or emergencies refer to a series of events that give rise to casualties, damage or a loss of property, infrastructure, essential services or means of livelihood on a scale that is beyond the normal capacity of the communities affected to cope with unaided. According to the NDP, the most frequent disasters in Uganda include displacement of persons, famine, earthquakes, epidemics, livestock and crop diseases, floods and landslides, and technological accidents, among others. Many on the list can clearly be traced

back to climate change as either a direct or indirect cause.

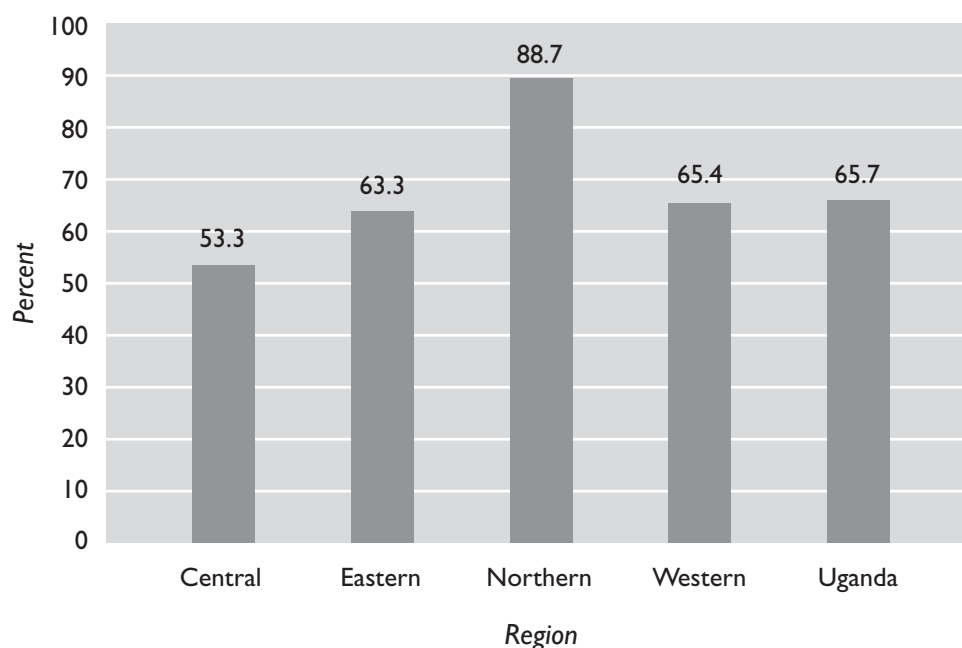
Disasters affect many people in Uganda, and emergency assistance is therefore naturally a highly sensitive political issue. The NDP also reports that between 2000 and 2005, approximately 65.7 per cent of households in Uganda experienced at least one type of disaster (UNHS 2005/06). The regional distribution is shown in figure 4 below. The table shows that the Northern region was the most severely affected because of the civil strife. Here emergency assistance is associated with the temporary resettlement of affected people and refugees in camps, adding further to the political sensitivity of emergency assistance.

Uganda's current disaster management policy was formulated in the early 1990s. It has three objectives: first, to reduce the socio-economic and environmental impacts of disasters on people and the economy; secondly, to address the causes of disasters. The emergency policy distinguishes between 'natural' and human-induced causes of disaster; and thirdly, to promote and uphold the rights of refugees.

Because of the highly politically sensitive nature of emergency assistance, the responsibility for its coordination has been centralized in OPM, represented by a junior minister. The implementation of disaster management policy has been devolved to seven regional disaster coordination offices that are linked to disaster risk reduction committees (DRR) at the district and sub-district levels. These institutions function in parallel with local government institutional structures and are not integrated into the ongoing activities of local government.

Qualitative interviews with local government staff and other key informants in Soroti, Amuria and Katakwi districts reveal that

Figure 4. Percent of households that experienced more than one disaster (2000-2005)



the DDR institutions are dormant and are only activated when there is an officially declared emergency. Last time the DDRs were activated in the three districts was during and in the immediate aftermath of the 2007 flood in Teso region. During this period the DDR assisted by collecting information and mobilizing local people for the emergency agencies led by UNHCR and WFP.

As shown in table 1 (section 2) Teso has experienced a series of floods and droughts since 2007 that have been less severe in magnitude and the number of people affected. For this reason these extreme climate change events were not officially declared emergencies by OPM. As a consequence the UN emergency agencies were active in these later extreme events and the DDRs have remained dormant.

Uganda's emergency response has by and large been one of response. The absence of a credible early warning system has further

limited preventive activities prior to the occurrence of disasters. The UNDP is currently working with the OPM on disaster risk reduction and management, as well as sponsoring a 3.6M USD program on SLM. The UNEP also is supporting the Ministry of Agriculture to develop an early warning system and integrate climate change into development programs.

During an interview in OPM it was made clear that the Ugandan government has allocated very limited resources to providing relief and rehabilitation support in response to emergencies. OPM therefore largely relies on the UN emergency agencies, which only mobilise their resources during major emergencies. As a consequence communities that are affected by extreme climate events that are limited in scope and space and only affect a more limited number of people fall below the radar and remain without any government support.

Local government is under a considerable pressure to assist, but it does not receive funding from central government for such activities, and its assistance therefore often remains symbolic.

The Government of Uganda has announced that it has initiated the formulation of a new National Policy for Disaster Risk Reduction and is also working on a program of action to implement the policy. It is not publicly known what the policy reform will focus on or the extent to which it will address the implementation challenges of the current policy.

## 5.2 NAPA

National policies so far appear to have been motivated by the need to ratify international protocols. Uganda signed the United Nations Framework Convention on

Climate Change (UNFCCC) on 13th June 1992 and ratified it on 8th September 1993. Uganda has also ratified the Kyoto Protocol, which provides the basis for an international response to the challenges of climate change. In addition, Uganda is also a party to a number of Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) that have a strong link with climate change, including the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), the Ramsar Convention, the Convention on Biological Diversity (UNCBD) and the Montreal Protocol. In response to commitments under Articles 4 and 12 of the UFCCC, Uganda developed and submitted the Initial National Communication (INC) in 2002 and National Adaptation Programmes of Action (NAPA) in 2007, produced by the Department of Meteorology in the Ministry of Water, Lands and Environment (MoWE) in its capacity

Table 2. Estimated Cost of NAPA Projects

	<i>Project Title</i>	<i>Limited Area Interventions</i>	<i>Country Wide Interventions</i>
1	Community Tree Growing Project	3.2	5.5
2	Land Degradation Management Project	2.5	4.7
3	Strengthening Meteorological Services	4.2	6.5
4	Community Water and Sanitation Project	2.8	4.7
5	Water for Production Project	4.0	5.0
6	Draught Adaptation Project	2.0	3.0
7	Vectors, Pests and Disease Control Project	3.5	8.0
8	Indigenous Knowledge and Natural Resource Management Project	0.6	1.2
9	Climate Change and Development Planning Project	0.5	1.2
	<i>Total</i>	23.3	39.8

Source: NAPA Uganda, 2007

as the National Climate Change Focal point (NCCF) under the Convention.

The drawing up of NAPA was an externally driven policy process carried out by a committee of representatives from the relevant central ministries with the task of making Uganda eligible to receive funding from the Least Developed Country Fund (LDCF). According to the GEF website, a total of 49 NAPAs were formulated in 2005-2009, and the LDCF has had a total of US\$415 million available to fund them. However, until now only US\$177 million has been approved for 47 projects, attracting more than US\$550 million in co-financing in the process (<http://www.thegef.org/gef/lDCF>). Based on this, one can conclude that less than one project has been funded for each NAPA. Globally, the funding level for NAPA has been significantly lower than expected. This is a direct consequence of the political impasse and failure of United Nations Framework Convention for Climate Change (UNFCCC) to reach an agreement. The priorities of Uganda's NAPAs are shown in table 2 below. The extent to which these projects have been funded is not known.

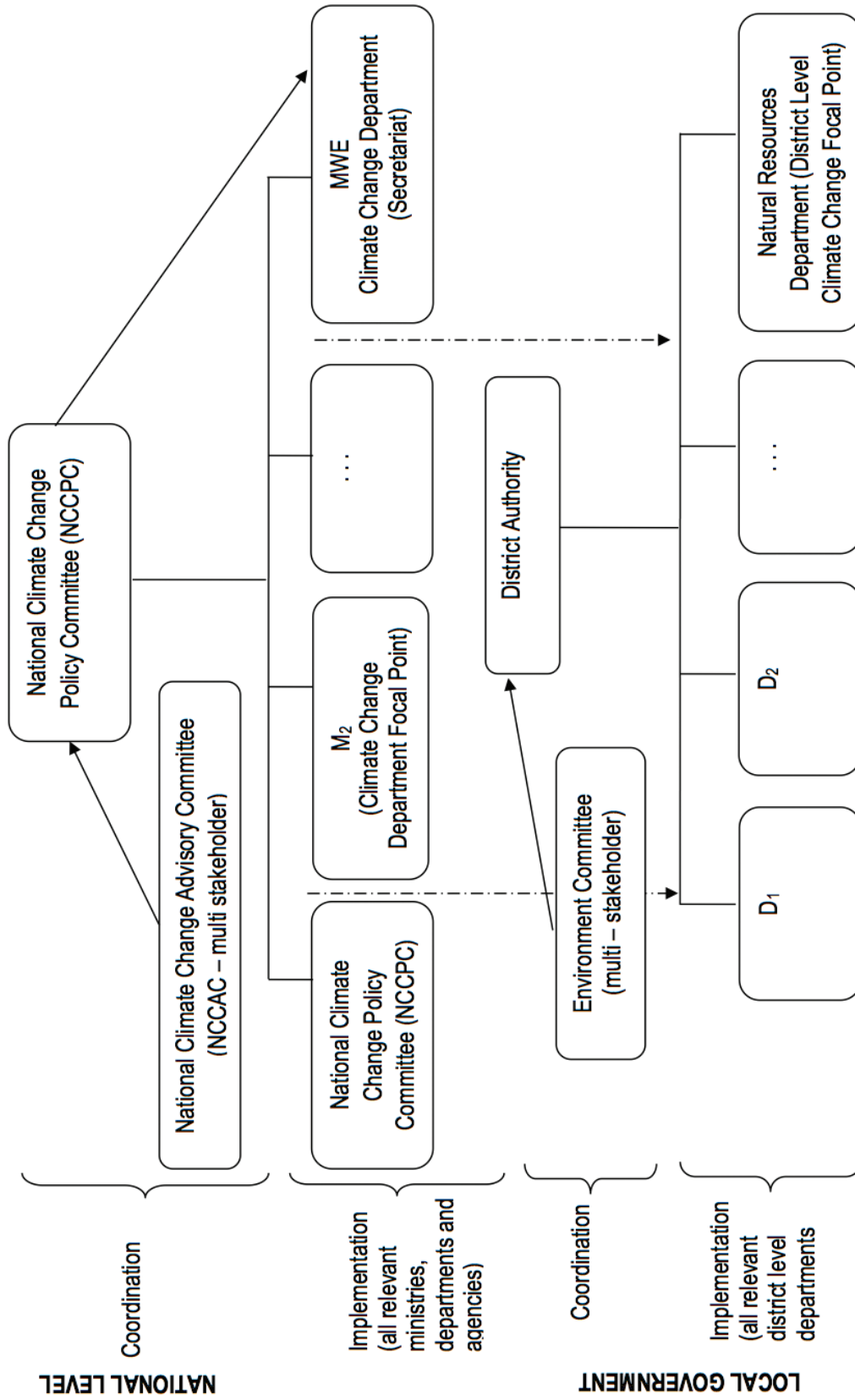
According to UNFCCC guidelines, NAPAs should describe a country's perception of its most 'urgent and immediate needs to adapt to climate change' (UNFCCC 2011: p2). While the Uganda NAPA was formally subject to a process of participatory consultation, in reality the identification and prioritisation process was done by technical representatives from central ministries. None of the seventy participants in three CCRI workshops that were held in 2012 and 2013 who represent nine local governments in Teso and Karamoja regions knew about the NAPA policy and priorities.

### 5.3 NCCP and implementation framework

A draft Climate Change Policy was formulated during 2012 and will take effect subject to approval by the Government. The process of formulating a new national Climate Change Policy has been driven by a newly established Climate Change Unit (CCU) in the Department of Meteorology in the Ministry of Water and Environment (MoWE) that functions as the National Focal Point for climate change under the United Nations Framework Convention for Climate Change (UNFCCC). The Climate Change Policy Committee in the Ministry of Water and Environment functionally serves as a Steering Committee for all climate change projects and provides advice on climate change to the Minister of Water and Environment. The Climate Change Policy Committee currently consists of the following members: Finance, Royal Danish Embassy, OPM, MOH, MAAIF, Justice and Constitutional Affairs, Energy and Mineral Resources, Works and Transport, the National Planning Authority and MoWE. Other organisations may be invited to CCPC meetings. The policy formulation process has been supported by international development agencies, including the EU, DFID, DANIDA, World Bank and World Food Program (WFP).

National Climate Change Policy places a priority on adaptation, mitigation, and research and observation. The policy prioritises climate change adaptation over climate change mitigation. This is in harmony with EAC regional climate change policy and logic, given Uganda's stage of development, which is characterized by low levels of emission. Under adaptation, the policy recognizes eleven sector-specific and two cross-cutting priorities that fall under nine different line ministries, as shown in annex 1. These line

Figure 5. Institutional architecture for climate change action in Uganda



Source: Ministry of Water and Environment, National Climate Change Policy, 2012.



ministries are represented but not exactly replicated at the local government and lower levels, making coordination and implementation at the lower levels of government questions for research. Under mitigation, the policy recognizes ten sector-specific and two crosscutting priorities that fall under six different line ministries, as shown in annex 2.

The NCCP proposes to strengthen the current climate change unit (CCU) and promote it to the level of a sectorial government department named the Climate Change Department (CCD) under the Ministry of Water and Environment. This department is to serve as the National Focal Climate Change organ. The policy also proposes that the Natural Resources Department should serve as the climate change focal point at the district level, with all other departments ensuring that climate change issues are integrated into the district development plans. The policy promises to provide an implementation structure to detail the accountabilities of the various ministries, departments and agencies concerned.

The NCCP emphasizes the multi-sectorial nature of climate change and seeks to mainstream climate change as cutting across other development policies. At the national level it is proposed to carry out such mainstreaming through the establishment of a National Climate Change Policy Committee, with the task of coordinating policy implementation and of ensuring information flows on resource allocations for the implementation of the policy, as well as a National Climate Change Advisory Committee to ensure working level coordination and provide technical input to the National Climate Change Policy Committee. The work of these two coordination mechanisms has been guided by the Climate Change Implementation Strategy, the objective of which is to enable more effective

planning and coordination of national-level activities, including linkages with meso-level institutions.

In addition to the CCD, three national ministries or authorities (Finance, NPA and MOLG) ensure policy implementation. Each ministry, department and agency with a role to play in the implementation of the policy responses is expected to designate a departmental focal point and is accountable for the implementation of the prescribed policy responses that concern it. The Implementation Strategy details the accountabilities of the various ministries, departments and agencies concerned around indicative climate change programmes. They are expected to report on their progress in the implementation of their respective tasks and in the attainment of their expected results. On the basis of these reports, the CCD is tasked with preparing a consolidated progress report on the overall implementation of the climate change policy.

The proposed implementation structure of climate change is summarized in Figure 5. As shown, the NCCP has finally embraced the local government system as the key implementation modality. At district level, the policy provides for district-level focal points with an environmental committee, and for departments.

## 6. DISCUSSION

### 6.1 Compliance of climate change policy and Decentralization Act?

The first of the questions raised in the introduction to the working paper was whether Uganda's climate change policies are compliant with the Decentralization Act and current local government institutional structures. Up till now, the answer has been a clear no,

Table 3. Compliance of Climate Change Policies with Decentralization

<i>Policy</i>	<i>Compliance with decentralization?</i>	<i>Analysis why</i>
Emergency response	No. Centralised coordination with concentrated local institutions is not integrated into local government.	Central government need to be seen to act. Resettlement camps highly politically sensitive.
NAPA	No. Implemented through projects managed by central ministries in parallel with local government.	Driver of reform was to become eligible to receive UN funding for climate change projects.
NCCP	Yes. Implementation of policy fully integrated with local government structures.	Policy formulation process guided by joint government–multi-donor committee. Policy reflects analysis rather than funding availability.

though when the new climate change policy takes effect, this is likely to change. The working paper reveals that neither emergency policy nor NAPA uses local government political and administrative institutions for their implementation. The newly formulated NCCP, which has not yet been approved by the government, is compliant with the Decentralization Act.

The fact that climate change policies have been implemented in parallel with existing local decentralization structures cannot be justified with an argument that there is inadequate capacity in local government.

As discussed in section four, all districts in Uganda had approved three-year District Development Plans (DDP) by 2009. These DDPs are decided by the district councils consisting of councillors elected from each of the sub-counties within the district. In a well-established district the DDP is implemented by 15-20 technical departments, covering a wide range of services. While local government continues to be hampered by various financial, regulatory, capacity and ad-

ministrative constraints, these constraints are not very different from those hampering the central administration. While far from perfect, local government is well placed to support climate change adaptation.

## 6.2 Political nature of Ugandan state and policy reform

In the introduction we set out to examine the extent to which the nature of the state determined whether or not climate change policies were compliant with the Decentralization Act. In section 3.4 we analysed the changing nature of the Ugandan state and described how the commitment to reform and devolution of power and responsibilities to local government during the 1990s gradually eroded during the 2000s. The section concluded that the attribution of success for development outcomes to central government during the past decade has come to override reform- and development-specific concerns.

Formulation of the comprehensive Decentralization Act in 1993 and the subsequent

devolution of power, financial resources and responsibilities for service delivery are consistent with our analysis of the nature of the Ugandan state in the 1990s discussed in section five. As one of the most reform-compliant countries in Africa during the 1990s, the new local government institutions received considerable capacity development support from UNCDF, World Bank and other international donor organizations. However, this does not explain why the government did not allow the emergency policy formulated during the same period to be compliant with the Decentralization Act. As discussed earlier, all decisions with regard to the coordination of emergency assistance are centralized within the OPM's office, which is headed by its own Minister. While the overall trend towards the recentralization of power to central government fits well with how NAPA was formulated and implemented, the political analysis is inconsistent with the fact that the NCCP embrace the local government system and in many ways resembles the types of reform that Uganda was known for during the 1990s.

### **6.3 Drivers of climate change policies**

Our analysis of climate change policies in section 5 revealed significant differences in the formulation process and drivers in this process between the three policies. At the same time we found a strong coherence between the interests of those driving the policy process and its implementation modalities. Given the high political sensitivity of emergency assistance, the formulation of emergency policy during the early 1990s was closely followed and guided by the government. We argue that there are three sets of reasons why the governance of emergency assistance policy is centralized and non-compliant

with the Decentralization Act. First, it is politically important to be seen to respond to emergencies and to ensure that assistance is seen to be attributed to central government. Secondly, control over when and when not to declare an emergency is important. Historically, emergencies in Uganda have been closely linked to civil conflicts. Thirdly, but not least, the resettlement of displaced people in camps as a consequence of emergencies is politically highly sensitive because of its security aspects.

NAPA is the first national policy that is fully dedicated to adaptation to climate change. As described in section five, policy formulation was driven by a need to be compliant with the United Nations Framework Convention for Climate Change requirements in order to be eligible for funding from the Least Developed Country Fund. Policy formulation therefore became centralized, with little more than token instrumental consultation among so-called stakeholders outside the central ministries and UN consultants. As discussed in section 5, central ministerially managed projects are the chosen implementation modality of NAPA, though it ignores the Decentralization Act and local government structures. Interviews with key informants in the ministries suggest that, to the extent that the NAPA priority projects were funded, a larger proportion of the funding was used on research or central ministry activities. Priorities suggest that activities that reached local farming communities were largely based on transfers of technologies made to assist farmers adapt to climate change, such as modern drought-tolerant crop varieties.

As examined in section 5, the NCCP formulation was guided by a Climate Change Policy Committee that comprises representatives from the OPM, Ministry of Finance, six line ministries and a donor representative

(Danida). The policy formulation process was supported by a group of international development agencies, including the EU, DFID, DANIDA, World Bank and World Food Program (WFP).

Given this very high level of support for policy development, it is not surprising that the NCCP implementation framework is compliant with the Decentralization Act. The NCCP implementation framework fully embraces the decentralised governance structures, which will greatly enhance the chances to establish local forums for dialogue and co-production of the ideas needed to address rural people's challenges in adapting to climate change.

#### **6.4 Implication of the gap between climate change policies and decentralization**

In the previous section we have tried to understand why a centralized mode of implementation was chosen for emergency assistance and NAPA policies. In the following we examine some of the negative impacts of this choice.

The fact that the decentralised emergency assistance institutions are not integrated with normal local government structures clearly has a negative influence on their efficiency. Qualitative fieldwork in Teso region indicated that the DRR committees at the district (LC5) and sub-country (LC3) levels were dormant and were only reactivated as a response to floods. The role of the RRD has largely been to make assessments of the current situation and to assist in mobilizing people to receive assistance from international emergency NGOs. With no budget and little or no interaction with or influence on decisions made by the OPM office, the role of the RRD can hardly be characterized as

the implementation mechanism of the disaster unit in the OPM's office. The emergency unit in the OPM's office is seriously underfunded and therefore limited in its ability to respond to emergencies on its own. Its track record is largely one of formal and official coordination, while the UN and international and national NGOs are the organizations that are taking the lead in emergency responses on the ground. The emergency unit at the PMP's office seems to be more interested in taking the credit for responding to emergencies than actually making a difference for the people affected.

It is therefore not surprising that central government funding for climate change adaptation does not feature in the District Development Plans of the three CCRI study districts, Soroti, Amuria and Katakwi. However, the consequence of such a top-down project-planning and implementation approach to climate change adaptation is a heightened risk that the support is irrelevant for the community. Compared with project implementation by the central ministry, implementation through local government institutions is much better placed to create opportunities for political and technical dialogue leading to joint priorities and co-produced social or technical approaches to climate change adaptation. NAPA therefore has, in our assessment, done more harm and good in some respects. The rushed external UN and central ministry-driven policy formulation process ignored the decentralized policy and technical level. This is likely to have delayed the formulation of the national climate change policy and funding for the meso-level government institutions that are best situated to provide and enable an environment that can assist smallholder farmers in their efforts to adapt to the effects of climate change.

A considerable number of projects addressing climate changes have been implemented over the past five to six years. However, a consequence of no adequate policy implementation framework is that development agencies have funded and implemented projects through central state institutions or NGOs. A GTZ study (GTZ, 2010) identified and logged the interests of 84 climate change actors across government (23), development partners (22), NGOs (20), research institutes (16) and the private sector (3). The majority are engaged in the environment, energy, agriculture and climate change-specific sub-sectors, with cross-cutting climate change issues. The support can be categorized into four areas: (i) policy and capacity building, (ii) adaptation, (iii) mitigation and (iv) cross-cutting issues.

### **6.5 NCCP: bridging the gap between policy and practice?**

In principle, the implementation framework for the NCCP can be said to bridge the gap between policy and practice. However, the extent to which this will happen in practice will only be seen during actual implementation. At least three issues are causing concern and could influence the implementation of NCCP.

The first issue is that there seems to have been little discussion about how the NCCP and the emergency assistance policy relate to each other. It is unclear how the integration of the NCCP within local government structures will affect the emergency assistance policy. In fact, when the Uganda CCRI team interviewed the key emergency assistance officer in the OPM, the officer was not aware of the new NCCP and was never consulted during its formulation.

The second issue relates to the fact that,

while the NCCP policy formulation process was highly inclusive, only limited consultation with local government stakeholders seems to have taken place. Whereas the district-level structures are provided for in the policy, it is less clear how they are linked to the national-level structure and the lower (sub-county)-level structures to deliver on climate change action. The extent to which it is the district council or MWE that sets priorities within the district also remains unclear.

During a CCRI meeting in 2013 involving politicians and technical staff from nine districts in Teso and Karamoja, the NCCP implementation framework was presented and subsequent discussions recorded and transcribed. Participants were overall very pleased with the integration of support for climate change adaptation in district planning and budgeting. However, no one had been consulted in the design of the implementation framework, and some were critical of the appointment of the district environmental officer as the focal point for climate change at the district level. They were concerned that the environmental officer would not have the political clout to mainstream climate change into the agenda across many departments.

Thirdly, the group of international donor agencies that supported the formulation of the NCCP were also involved in a joint project: the UNDP/CIF-led and multidonor- and government-funded area-based climate change adaptation project in Mbale district. This project is seen as a pilot project with the aim of developing an appropriate way to support climate change adaptation. In our assessment, the UNDP/CIP project comprises a range of technically relevant climate change activities and relevant experiences with participatory approaches for involving rural citizens in these activities. However, its implementation as a project, using paral-

lel structures to those of local government, undermines its relevance as a model for the climate change policy. The usual criticism of donor-funded projects applies to this project as well: (i) local politicians have little ownership of the project, as they have not been involved in its design and management and are unlikely and unable to take over the funding of project activities; (ii) a large part of the project cost is made up of project staff and international consultancy fees, something that is highly unlikely to be how local government would prioritise their budget; and iii) the funding level of the project is magnitudes higher than the kind of budget that local government is likely to have available for implementing the climate change policy.

### **6.6 Lack of understanding of climate change action by meso level institutions**

The fact that local government has until now largely been bypassed by emergency assistance, NAPA and most donor agencies and NGO-implemented projects is, however, not the same as saying there is a complete lack of activity. The CCRI's qualitative fieldwork in Soroti, Amuria and Katakwi districts revealed that local government technical staff at district and in particular at sub-county level are acting in various ways to the challenge of climate change, even when there is no policy guiding their action or budget line funding their activities. Understanding meso- and local-level institutional responses to climate change in the absence of relevant policies and budgets is urgently needed to inform the implementation of the proposed climate change policy. This will be the subject of a second CCRI working paper, to be finalized in early 2014.

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## Annex I. Climate change adaptation priority areas and institutional Location

<i>Sector - Specific Priority - Core sectors</i>	<i>Responsible Ministry</i>
1. Agriculture and Livestock	Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF)
2. Water	Ministry of Water and the Environment (MoWE)
3. Fisheries and aquaculture	MAAIF
4. Transport and works	Ministry of Works and Transport
5. Forestry and wetlands	Ministry of Water and the Environment
6. Biodiversity and ecosystem services	Ministry of Tourism and National Heritage
7. Health	Ministry of Health (MoH)
8. Energy	Ministry of Energy
9. Wildlife and tourism	Ministry of Tourism and National Heritage
10. Human settlements and social infrastructure	Ministry of Lands and Urban Planning
11. Disaster risk management	Ministry of Disaster and Preparedness
<i>Cross-cutting priority:</i>	
1. Gender issues and child welfare	Ministry of Gender and Social Development
2. Vulnerable groups	“

## Annex 2. Climate change mitigation priority areas and institutional location

<i>Sector - Specific Priority</i>	<i>Responsible Ministry</i>
1. Land use, land use change and forestry (LULUCF)	Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (MMAIF)
2. Land use and land use change	Ministry of Water and the Environment (MWE)
3. Reduced Emission from Deforestation and forest Degradation + (REDD +)	Ministry of Water and the Environment (MWE)
4. Wetlands	Ministry of Water and the Environment (MWE)
5. Agriculture	Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (MMAIF)
6. Energy generation	Ministry of Energy
7. Energy utilization	Ministry of Energy
8. Transport	Ministry of Works and Transport
9. Waste management	Ministry of Lands and Urban Planning
10. Industrial sector	Ministry of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives
<i>Cross-cutting priority:</i>	
1. Barriers to technology transfer	?
2. Large-scale diffusion of clean, low-carbon technologies	?